

**TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY JULY 10, 2006**

Members Present: John Donaldson, Jim Sanford, Don LaHaye, Lisa Miserendino, John Goss and Mike Ketchel.

Others Present: Scott Baker, David Sellers, Lisa Loomis, Sue Carter, Alice Cheney, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

1. David Sellers/ Scott Baker – Town Garage Update
2. Review of input planning sheets for Master Facilities Plan and charrette, April Smith
3. Review of zoning districts for zoning revisions
4. Review & sign minutes from 6/26/06

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.

Mr. Donaldson asked Mr. Sellers and Mr. Baker to give the Commission an update on their work for improvements for the Town Garage facility. Mr. Sellers showed the members a rough site plan sketch that demonstrated potential layouts for a new facility on either the existing site or across the street on additional Town owned land. He went on to tell the members that they had done some test holes on the land across the street and found good soils and no ledge on the proposed development area. Mr. Sellers stated that initially they were just determining how all the equipment, sand & salt storage would fit, and also came to the determination that the school buses should be housed elsewhere. It was mentioned that the Town had plans to install an electrical hookup for the buses at the upper parking area by the school that would alleviate the need to have them parked at the garage. A couple of the Commission members asked what provision had been made for any future growth, as the site plan didn't show obvious room for expansion. Mr. Sellers said that this was very preliminary but what would the Commission think about a possible satellite garage, near the Access Road? The Commission thanked the architects for the update and looked forward to their next report.

Mr. Ketchel told the Commission that he had made a couple of attempts to get in touch with Ms. Smith but had been unsuccessful. He would make every effort to hopefully have her attend at the next meeting. Both Ms. Miserendino and Mr. Ketchel asked for an extension on submitting their input sheets. Mr. Goss submitted revised input sheets and the other members were asked to proof what they had done and make any additions they felt necessary.

The Commission moved forward with discussing possible modifications to the Town zoning districts. Mr. Donaldson brought to the members attention that they had overlooked the comments submitted by the Warren Conservation Committee and that they should revisit the districts already discussed in conjunction with the Committee's suggestions. In reviewing the Conservation Committee's suggestions the Commission thought it would be helpful to have an understanding as to their reasoning behind the requests. Mr. Donaldson said he would email them and ask them to supply additional information.

The Commission then reopened the discussion on Cottage Industry that had occurred at the last meeting. Though Table 4.1 shows that there is “no limit” to the maximum square footage utilized by a cottage industry, the Commission members felt that the DRB’s Conditional Use Review provided enough oversight. Discussion then turned to possible reduction in the minimum lot size for the Warren Village Historic Residential District (WVR). Concern was expressed by some Commission members as well as some local residents that decreasing the minimum lot size would negatively affect the historic character that exists in the Village. It was determined that further research would need to be done before any final conclusion could be reached. The Commission did approve by way of a motion by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by Mr. Ketchel to add a 30% maximum lot coverage requirement to the WVR district as they had also done for the Rural Residential District in the previous meeting. The vote for the addition to Rural Residential was unanimous and for the Warren Village Residential passed with a five to one vote.

Since there were residents from the village, the Commission decided to take the districts out of order and discuss the Warren Village Commercial District (WVC) next so that they could get comments from the public. In reviewing the “checklist” of possible changes/modifications, the topics raised were the addition of basic design standards to regulate scale and design of new development, address the concern over possible conversion of residential property to commercial uses, and to consider prohibiting the extension of the municipal wastewater system beyond the district boundaries. Mr. Ketchel pointed out that the Town Plan does encourage development in the WVC as long as it’s in a manner that maintains the historic character of the village.

There were opinions that both supported and opposed the idea of whether or not the Village could support much if any additional commercial development. Ms. Miserendino expressed concern about the possible loss of green space and access to the river that might occur if development was allowed without strict controls. She also expressed a concern for loss of residential living space that might occur with the increase of commercial activity. Ms. Cheney said that as a resident of the Village she felt there was pressure to expand the Commercial activity in the Village and she felt strongly that the residential aspect should be protected. The biggest concern was lack of parking for any additional commercial activity. Mr. Malboeuf stated that the choice was either between development in village centers or forcing that need out into the rural areas and creating sprawl. There was no easy answer and pros and cons for either choice.

Due to the lateness of the hour, Mr. Donaldson tabled the discussion and stated that it was a tough issue to deal with. He also suggested that possible solutions for the village might come out of the design charrette that the Commission was planning to conduct. He said that for the next meeting he wanted to discuss three districts: Sugarbush Village Residential (SVR), Vacation Residential (VR) and Alpine Village Residential (AVR). He urged the members to do some homework prior to the meeting to help expedite covering the material. The Commission will also continue discussion of the Master Plan Design Charrette and the research materials the members are putting together.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant

Planning Commission

John Donaldson date

Mike Ketchel date

John Goss date

Lisa Miserendino date

Don LaHaye date