

**TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY MAY 18, 2009**

Members Present: Mike Ketchel, John Goss, Lisa Miserendino, Craig Klofach, Dan Raddock and Don LaHaye.

Others Present: Sue Carter, Mary Gow, Charles Snow, Raymond & Marcella Gratton, Rebecca Peatman, Alice Cheney, Dorothy Tod, Rudy Elliot, Alex Maclay, Brett Pingree, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call meeting to order, 7:30 pm

1. Effect of Zoning Density on Trees- Eric Potter, Megan Moffroid, Warren Tree Warden
2. Warren Land Use & Development Regulations - ordinance updates recap
3. Other business: Review & sign minutes from May 11th, 2009

Mr. Ketchel called the meeting to order, 7:35 pm.

In past PC meetings, Ms. Cheney, a Warren Village resident, has expressed her concern over proposed higher density and the effect that would have on the many older trees in the Village. To help the PC understand the potential problem better, an arborist, Mr. Eric Potter from Waterbury Center was invited to speak to the PC regarding this issue. Mr. Potter, who is a Certified Arborist with a degree from Paul Smiths College, told the PC members that the root systems around trees could be very susceptible to damage from the type of excavation that would occur with denser development. He pointed out that trees 35 years and older were the most sensitive and that a comprehensive inventory of the trees in the village would be highly recommended before any development is allowed.

Ms. Megan Moffroid, the Warren Tree Warden and Landscape Architect, echoed Mr. Potter's comments about the need for a tree inventory and the possible threat to the older trees with increased building activity. She did however state that increased density could be accomplished in a responsible way if the appropriate measures were employed. Ms. Tod volunteered to help with a tree inventory and it was mentioned that grants might be available to help as well.

Several people from the town were in the audience with the understanding that the Commission would be talking about possible changes to the Village in addition to the issue about trees. Though that was not what the agenda indicated, the Commission listened to comments and concerns about possible greater density in Warren Village. Ms. Gow asked if the zoning for the Village had always been one acre and how maintaining the character of the Village was a very delicate balance. She also noted that the trees, the stone walls and the water (Mad River, Freeman Brook) had been identified in a past study as key defining elements of Warren Village. Commission member Mr. Raddock noted that even if the zoning had always been one acre, that many of the current lots are on one-half acre or less. Mr. Snow brought up the question of the effect of greater density on fire protection and if we had adequate water supply for higher density. Mr. Pingree asked if there was some way to get an artist's rendering to see what a denser Warren Village might look like. Ms. Cheney asked what had happened to the possible purchase and use of software by the Orton Foundation that would provide a visual such as requested by Mr. Pingree. Mr. Ketchel said that though the cost of the software was reasonable, the cost in time and money for current staff to devote to that project was not realistic at this time.

Due to the time taken for public comments and discussion, the second item on the agenda was tabled until the next meeting. Ms. Miserendino briefly reported on her research on setbacks and

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distances between buildings using Rochester and Moretown as comparisons to Warren. She said at some time she'd like to do a visual presentation. The Commission reviewed and signed the minutes and heard reports from members on other committees. The next scheduled meeting of the Warren Planning Commission is for Monday June 8, 2009.

Mr. Ketchel adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant

Planning Commission

Mike Ketchel date

John Goss date

Craig Klofach date

Lisa Miserendino date

Dan Raddock date

Don LaHaye date