

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING - MINUTES  
JANUARY 26, 2016 – 7:30PM  
GOSHEN TOWN HALL – 42 NORTH STREET**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Don Wilkes, Cynthia Barrett, Russell Hurley, Lu-Ann Zbinden; Alternates Mark Harris and Garret Harlow; Town Planner and Zoning Enforcement Officer Martin Connor, AICP.

**EXCUSED:** Stephen Cooney.

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND DESIGNATION OF ALTERNATES.**

Chairman Don Wilkes called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. All regular members present were seated for the evening. Alternate Mark Harris was seated for Stephen Cooney. Alternate Garret Harlow arrived at 7:34PM. The proceedings were recorded digitally, and copies are available in the Land Use Office.

Mr. Harlow explained that, due to his duties as the Town's Highway Supervisor, he had submitted his resignation from the Planning and Zoning Commission effective January 31, 2016. Members of the Commission thanked him for his service and wished him well in his new position.

**MOTION** Mr. Harris, second Mr. Hurley, to amend the agenda to discuss item #5 first, and then return to the agenda as written; unanimously approved.

**5. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. 8-24 Referral – Woodridge Lake Sewer District Construction of Wastewater Transmission System from WLS D's Water Pollution Control Facility to the City of Torrington Municipal Sewer System.**

Richard Reis, Chairman of the Woodridge Lake Sewer District Finance Committee and member of the Woodridge Lake Sewer District Planning Committee, addressed the Commission on behalf of the Woodridge Lake Sewer District (WLS D). Dave Prickett, PE, the applicant's engineering consultant, also addressed the Commission regarding this matter.

Mr. Prickett explained that WLS D plant on Brush Hill Road had been under a Consent Decree with the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The WLS D had worked hard and spent a great deal of money in trying to meet the DEEP's requirements; however, at this point the most cost-effective solution would be to route sewage to the City of Torrington's sewer treatment facility. Mr. Prickett explained that the water pollution control facility would essentially become a pumping station. A small stretch of existing force main would be extended out to Brush Hill Road, north on Old Middle Street, east on Pie Hill Road, north on East Street North, and east on Route 4. Two new pumping stations would also be constructed on Brush Hill Road and on Pie Hill Road. A new gravity-fed sewer line would be constructed from the Town line down the hill into Torrington, where it would connect into an existing gravity-fed sewer line.

Mr. Prickett explained that there would be no new connections to the sewer system along the line, either in Goshen or Torrington. The proposed transmission system was located outside of the Sewer Service Area for both Goshen and Torrington. The transmission line would be 100% located within existing rights-of-way, with the possible exception of a small area right outside of the Water Pollution Control Facility where an easement may be required.

Mr. Reis stated that DEEP had made it very clear to the WLS D that they preferred for the sewage to be routed to the City of Torrington sewer system; it appeared their preference was to avoid having many small sewer plants throughout the state. He explained that WLS D had spent in excess of \$1 million dollars improving the collection system throughout the sewer service area. He stated that the WLS D believed it to be better not to spend significant funds now to build an updated sewer treatment plant that would likely only last 40 years, when they could instead make this connection and permanently resolve the Consent Decree.

**P&Z Minutes 01-26-16**

Ms. Zbinden inquired how much the project would cost. Mr. Prickett estimated it would cost \$15-16 million dollars, which represents a sizable amount of money for the 700 Town residents hooked into the sewer system. Mr. Reis explained that there were financing options available to the WLDS from the State and federal government, including a 40-year loan. Once the loan was paid off, the WLSD would only have to pay to maintain the infrastructure associated with its collection system. Mr. Hurley asked how long it would take to complete the work. Mr. Prickett stated that, if done all at once, the project would take approximately a year to complete. However, the work might have to be spread out in stages depending on timelines for receipt of funds. Ms. Zbinden questioned whether there would be any cost to the Town associated with this project. Both Mr. Reis and Mr. Prickett explained that there would be no financing by the Town and no encumbrances on the Town associated with this project. Mr. Reis stated that the Town was, however, working with WLSD in an attempt to secure grant money for the project.

Mr. Hurley asked if the WLSD was operating under any sort of deadline that had been issued by the State. Mr. Prickett explained that the Consent Decree had been in place since 1989, and there had been no penalties to date, as it was clear that the WLSD was working in good faith to resolve this issue. Since WLSD was working to move the project forward in the direction that the DEEP preferred, he anticipated that DEEP would be understanding of the time needed to do so. Mr. Prickett explained that they were in need of this referral by the Planning and Zoning Commission in order to move forward with the Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Torrington. Mr. Reis explained that the WLSD could then also move forward discussing this matter with residents connected to the sewer system.

Mr. Connor then briefly explained the 8-24 referral process and read into the record his memo dated January 21, 2016. Mr. Connor explained that this proposal had been the subject of an 8-24 referral review by the City of Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission the week previously; they had voted to issue a favorable recommendation to Torrington's City Council. Mr. Connor stated that the City of Torrington also felt it was important to avoid making changes to zoning and any additional sewer system connections based on this line extension.

**MOTION** Mr. Harris, second Mr. Hurley, to issue a favorable recommendation to the Town of Goshen Board of Selectmen and the Town of Goshen Water Pollution Control Authority for the proposed wastewater transmission system from the Woodridge Lake Sewer District's Water Pollution Control Facility to the existing Torrington municipal sewer system, subject to the following provisions: Goshen's Sewer Service Area remains the same; the zoning designations for properties along the proposed wastewater transmission pipe route are not changed; and there are no costs associated with the proposed wastewater transmission system from the Woodridge Lake Sewer District's Water Pollution Control Facility to the existing Torrington municipal sewer system to be paid for by the Town of Goshen. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the proposal as presented is consistent with the Town of Goshen Plan of Conservation and Development.

The motion was unanimously approved.

- 2. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**  
No business was discussed.

- 3. **READING OF THE MINUTES:**
  - A. **November 24, 2015 regular meeting.**

Mr. Wilkes said that the last sentence of paragraph 5 of item 8A should be corrected; Recommendation 2, dealing with home-based businesses, should not be removed. Mr. Wilkes also pointed out that Mr. Hurley was mistakenly listed as having made and seconded the motion to approve the Zoning Enforcement Officer's report; the minutes should be corrected to reflect who had made and seconded the motion. Ms. Zbinden suggested adding the following sentence to the end of paragraph 6 in item 8A: "Permitting for shared septic systems can be difficult to obtain and very expensive."

**P&Z Minutes 01-26-16**

**MOTION** Mr. Harris, second Ms. Zbinden, to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2015 regular meeting as amended.

**4. OLD BUSINESS:**

No business was discussed.

**6. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:**

The Commission reviewed the report of the Zoning Enforcement Officer's activities over the previous month.

**MOTION** Mr. Hurley, second Mr. Harris, to accept the Zoning Enforcement Officer's Report for the period from November 25, 2015 to January 26, 2016; unanimously approved.

**7. CORRESPONDENCE.**

No business was discussed.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:**

**A. 2016-2017 Budget.**

Mr. Connor reviewed the proposed budget for 2016-2017 with the Commission. He explained that the current budget was \$3275, and the proposed was \$3125. Mr. Connor stated that this was the budget for regular expenses of the Commission. The Board of Selectmen requested capital budget requests to be submitted next month; at that time, Mr. Connor stated that he would be requesting \$5000 for expenses related to the update of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

**MOTION** Mr. Harlow, second Mr. Hurley, to accept the proposed 2016-2017 Budget for the Planning and Zoning Commission as presented; unanimously approved.

**B. Discussion of "Roads & Circulation" and "Housing" Sections of the Plan of Conservation and Development.**

The Commission first reviewed the "Roads & Circulation" section of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Mr. Harris questioned whether there was a procedure for putting a center line on town-owned roads such as Beach Street. He explained that the road can be foggy and it is often unclear how far over one is while driving there. Mr. Harlow stated that the roads had not been striped in many years.

The Commission's consensus was that most of the suggestions from the Regional Plan in Recommendation #1 had not been achieved. Mr. Connor noted that there had been some sightline improvements as per Recommendation #2. The Commission discussed that the funding had been obtained for enhancement of the rotary as per Recommendation #3; however, the work had not been completed. Mr. Connor explained that he had discussed this issue with Rick Lynn, Executive Director of the Northwest Hills Council of Government (NHCOG), and he was told that the total cost of the project was estimated to be \$1 million, which the Board of Selectmen felt was too expensive; additionally, the proposal would have required the acquisition of some property from the Congregational Church. However, the Commission had amended the Zoning Regulations to allow for common driveways as suggested in Recommendation #3. Also, the chip sealing plan proposed in Recommendation #4 had been implemented.

Regarding the capital improvements detailed in Recommendation #5, Mr. Connor stated that some work had been at the steeper section of Town Hill Road. Mr. Harlow said that some road widening had been done, along with a drainage ditch uphill from Dog Pond. Additionally, Mr. Harlow stated that road widening and drainage work had been done on Eli Bunker Road, and a culvert was replaced on Shear Shop Road. Ms. Zbinden noted that work had also been done on Hemlock Hill Road, and Mr. Harlow added that work had been done on the east side of North Goshen Road as well.

Mr. Harlow added that they were anticipating funds for the reconstruction of Milton Road; work was anticipated to start not this upcoming construction cycle, but the next. Mr. Connor suggested adding this project in the updated POCD. Mr. Harlow explained that the Highway Department was currently working on pavement maintenance, but would then be working on reconstruction. Mr. Connor requested that he put together information regarding what projects the Highway Department planned to focus on so that they could be added to the POCD; if the projects were listed within the POCD it could assist in obtaining grant funds. Mr. Connor also suggested including information from the results of the NHCOC's Regional Transportation Plan Survey in the updated POCD. He said that preliminarily, many comments were made regarding the need for biking/walking areas.

Members discussed Recommendation #6 regarding emergency vehicle access, noting that this had not been accomplished. In regard to scenic roads as discussed in Recommendation #7, Mr. Connor explained that a scenic road ordinance had originally been discussed but there did not seem to be a desire in Town to move forward on it. Mr. Harlow noted that dirt roads were a part of rural character that many residents wanted to maintain; however, maintaining them created significant expense. He advised that the Town might want to consider the tradeoff between rural character and high maintenance costs. Mr. Connor suggested that this idea be addressed in the POCD.

Regarding Recommendation #8, Mr. Connor stated that this had been achieved with the amendment of the Zoning Regulations to permit common driveways. The Commission then discussed the issue of Abandoned/Discontinued Roads, as detailed in Recommendations #9 and 10. The Commission noted the difference between "abandoned" roads and "discontinued" roads and agreed that they wished to have these recommendations remain in the updated POCD. The Commission discussed whether there were any abandoned roads accessible for recreational use, and Mr. Harlow point out an abandoned road off of East Street North on Torrington Water Company property. Mr. Connor asked Mr. Harlow to look into whether it was possible to keep and maintain roads for recreational use only, but abandon them for vehicle traffic.

The Commission then turned to discussion of the "Housing" section of the POCD. Commission members discussed that the Workforce Housing Study Group suggested in Recommendation #1 had been created, which in turn led to the creation of the Goshen Housing Trust as per Recommendation #2. The Housing Trust was currently working on Affordable Housing policies as detailed in Recommendation #3. Regarding Recommendation #4, Mr. Connor noted that the Zoning Regulations had been amended to allow accessory apartments by zoning permit; however, no incentives had been created. He stated that permitting accessory apartments by zoning permit was somewhat of an incentive, as many other towns require a homeowner to obtain a special permit in order to build an accessory apartment.

The Commission agreed to keep Recommendations #5, 6, and 7 in the POCD as currently stated. However, Mr. Connor stated that the Commission might wish to consider deleting Recommendation #8, as he did not see how transfer of development rights could work well in Goshen.

The Commission again thanked Mr. Harlow for his contributions on this section of the POCD as well as his service on the Commission. Members then agreed to discuss the next two sections – "Historical Preservation" and "Municipal Facilities" – for the next regular meeting.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** Ms. Zbinden, second Mr. Hurley, to adjourn at 8:37PM; unanimously approved.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Stacey M. Sefcik  
Recording Secretary**