

FILED Sept 23, 2011
AT 10:00 AM.

**EAST LYME PLANNING COMMISSION
WORKSHOP MEETING
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 20th, 2011
MINUTES**

L. Blais, Arc
TOWN CLERK

PRESENT: George McPherson, Acting Chairman, Francine Schwartz, Brian Schuch, Frank Balantic, Brian Bohmbach, Alternate

ALSO PRESENT: Gary Goeschel, Planning Director

ABSENT: Mike Bowers, Chairman, Joan Bengtson

Acting Chairman McPherson called this Workshop Meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:02 PM. He noted that he had seated Alternate Brian Bohmbach at the table this evening.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was observed.

I. Additions to the Agenda

Mr. McPherson asked if there were any additions to the agenda.

Mr. Goeschel said no.

II. Public Delegations

Public Delegations is the time when members of the public are invited to speak to the Commission about certain matters. Issues or concerns related to approved subdivisions under construction (Item VI) and in-house proposals or general topics of discussion (Item VIII) are open to comment. Items, referrals, or applications subject to a decision by the Commission, a public hearing, or in litigation may not be discussed. The members of the Commission will not directly answer questions or make comment during delegations.

Mr. McPherson called for Public Delegations.

There were none.

III. POCD Chapter 8 – Circulation and Transportation

Mr. Goeschel noted that they had received a copy of this Chapter with the last meeting packet and had asked that they review it and submit any suggestions that they might have. He said that the suggestion of the train stop at Rocky Neck State Park was made as it is an area that affords many parking spots, has easy access and is close to the highway.

Mr. McPherson suggested that they put it in as a recommendation due to the proximity to I-95 and the easy access.

Mr. McPherson said that the suggestion encouraging bike paths along the sides of the roads was a good one although the biggest problem would be with the widening of the roads. He said that they could recommend Routes 156 and 161 for this type of thing – 161 in particular to encourage such travel connection between the both parts of Town. He said that it would be difficult near Gorton Pond as there is virtually no road there and it is a State road.

Mr. Bohmbach asked if the recommendations have been prioritized.

Mr. Goeschel said that it is a guidance document and that they could certainly prioritize the recommendations. He said that he could incorporate comments from Mr. Minuitti also.

Mr. Bohmbach said that he thought that it would be nice to have sidewalk access from one end of the Town to the other.

Mr. Balantic noted that they would have to encroach even more to get a center lane plus sidewalks and a bike lane. Also, regarding the train station at Rocky Neck, he said that while it is a nice area for it that he is not sure that he sees the big need for a train station. While it would be nice to be able to get to NY without having to go to Old Saybrook or New Haven to catch a train he is not sure that there is a big need in this area. He said that this was only his opinion. He also mentioned the parking issue downtown and said that he thought that the perception of what parking was available was less than what was really there.

Mr. Goeschel said that there is a difference between the perceived parking and the real parking and that the perception is basically less than what is actually available there. There are many more spaces especially with the re-striping that will take place once the new parking area is finished.

Mr. Balantic suggested that the 'dog bone' design at the crosswalks was probably not practical and said that it should be removed as the document should reflect feasible items that they would really like to see happen.

Mr. Goeschel said that he thinks that the crosswalks that they have designed do work and that they probably could take the 'dog bone' design out. He noted that he would suggest that they make sidewalk connections with the primary arteries and would incorporate some of the ideas into the update.

Mr. Balantic said that overall he thinks that it is a good plan for 10 years although he does question the suggestion of the bike tunnel underground and the train station and the need for them as he would rather see items that are truly needed and more practical suggested so that they at least have a chance of being funded and done.

Mr. Goeschel asked that they submit any other suggestions that they might have.

ADJOURNMENT

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. Balantic moved to adjourn this Workshop Meeting of the East Lyme Planning Commission at 7:45 PM.

Mr. Schuch seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary