

The meeting was called to order at 7:11 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Dubitsky (Chair), Pete Fiasconaro (Vice-Chair), Helen Weingart, Dave Garceau (virtually online), Alternate Ken Fortier.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Randy Godaire, Alan Burdick, Eric Beer, Alternate Bill Ireland.

ALTERNATES SEATED: Seat Ken Fortier for Eric Beer.

ALSO PRESENT: Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) Jay Gigliotti, Jim Larkin from NECCOG and Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 03.11.21 SPECIAL MEETING:

Motion to approve by P. Fiasconaro, seconded by H. Weingart. Correction to Also Present – Add comma after Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) Jay Gigliotti. All in favor, motion carried.

CITIZENS HAVING NEW BUSINESS:

Dick Weingart of 75 Bujak Rd, Chaplin addressed the Commission regarding the 8-24 referral of proposal from a property owner to purchase Tutko Rd Right of Way from the town. 75 Bujak Rd is at the corner of Bujak and Tutko Rd. The abutting property at the Ashford town line (Baker) has access rights to Tutko Rd. Mr. Weingart intends to ask the town as a condition of the sale to grant an easement that abuts his property that is intended to avoid any clashes as there is a difference of opinion with the attorneys. He also expressed concerns with the referral that is for the Right of Way and not the road bed. The Commission can only consider what is presented and another 8-24 proposal for the road bed would need to be submitted.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Plan of Conservation & Development:

Jim Larkin was commended for his diligent work on the POCD. The Commission was presented with the updated draft POCD that was reviewed and includes the following changes:

Regarding curb cuts, the FHWA considers reduction of curb cuts as a safety improvement in corridors. There are other recommendations in regards to speed concerns.

Acknowledgements

Add Dave Garceau to the list of Planning and Zoning Commission members.

Western Route 6 Corridor

Pg. 11 Statement regarding diversity should read – Promote a diversity in business types and avoids the over development of a single use. Revise language regarding diversity throughout the POCD.

Town-wide Economic Development Strategies

Pg. 15 Add Strategy – Encourage diversity of businesses and business development to prevent domination of any one type of business.

Transportation

Pg. 16 Regarding roads that are Rural Minor Collectors – (see map in Appendix).

Discrepancy with unnamed roads on the DOT Road List– Old Hampton Rd, Nutmeg Ln, Middle Rd and Bujak Rd Connector (the First Selectman is checking on).

Bridges

Pg. 18 - Add the date the state-owned RT 198 Bridge next to Diana's Pool was repaired.

Pg. 19 - Strategy should read – For any future improvements to the RT 198 Bridge, request the state incorporate safe bicycle and pedestrian access.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Pg. 21 - Strategy should read - Seek funding to create a bicycle lane from Garrison Park on RT 198, across RT 6 and along Chewink Road to the trailhead for the Airline Trail.

Electricity

Pg. 24 should read - The Town of Chaplin is serviced by standard electrical transmission lines through a distribution network constructed and maintained by Eversource.

Housing

Pg. 25 – Regarding a shrinking community - add the population for 2010 and 2019.

Affordable Housing

Pg. 26 - Remove the State Statute definition for Affordable Housing and replace with a general description.

Accessory Apartments and Mixed Use

Pg. 27 Regarding Accessory Apartment - requires occupation of either the main home or accessory apartment by the owner or immediate family member. Regarding best places to create mixed-use buildings – RT 6 is the best place to create mixed-use buildings that include residential.

Lasting Marks on the Land

Pg. 31 Add Strategy – Consider enacting an ordinance that prohibits the removal of highway boundary stone walls. Add photos of rural roads and stone walls.

Natchaug River

Pg. 33 – Regarding threats to the Natchaug Basin – The Conservation Action Planning (CAP) identifies the biggest threats to the Natchaug Basin. Strategy regarding storm-water infrastructure should read – Inventory existing municipal storm-water infrastructure including all state and town owned culverts, catch-basins, outlets and level spreaders.

Chaplin Fire House and Volunteer Fire Department

Pg. 35 Regarding the cellular tower disguised as a flagpole should read – decommissioned cellular tower.

Chaplin Town Museum

Pg. 37 Add Strategy – Resolve the future of the Museum building and the site.

Municipal Services

Pg. 39 Add Strategy – As technology and online commerce advances, the town should update software.

Pg. 40 – Add photo of soccer fields.

Chaplin Elementary School

Pg. 41 - Add number of students at Parish Hill. Regarding moving the middle school grades should read – If the middle school grades (7-8) moved to the elementary school, the facility on Palmer Rd will need to expand.

Strategic Priorities & Implementation Plan

Pg. 43 Statement regarding diversity should read – Ensure districts allow diversity in business types and prevent the overdevelopment of one type of use.

Pg. 45 Add to abbreviations – IWC = Inland Wetlands Commission.

Pg. 48 Strategy regarding sustainable forest management and stewardship – change primary responsibility to IWC.

Pg. 49 Add to strategy regarding air conditioning upgrade – at Chaplin Elementary.

Pg. 50 Add to strategy regarding expansion opportunities – at Chaplin Elementary. Add to strategy regarding boiler replacement – at Parish Hill. Add to strategy regarding deed restrictions and building potential – at Parish Hill.

Appendix

Pg. 54 – Map of Existing Land Use - more detailed with PA-490 layers (part of property is in farm or forest).

Pg. 56 – Map of Future Land Use – change to Possible Future Zoning Areas (matches Scenario 1), modified local Historic District.

Pg. 60 – Remove Aquifer Potential Map (Aquifer Protection Zone shown in map on Pg. 59).

Motion to set Public Hearing on the new POCD for July 8, 2021, made by H. Weingart, seconded by P. Fiasconaro. All in favor, motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 8-24 Referral-Conveyance of Tutko Road Right of Way:

The referral before the Commission is for an opinion on the Conveyance of Tutko Road Right of Way. H. Weingart reported that all BOS minutes beginning on November 3rd regarding Tutko Rd refer to the sale/purchase of road only. There was comment from the public that believes the proposal is to transfer title of the road bed to a 3rd party. The referral will be clarified with the First Selectman and tabled until the May meeting.

Motion to table Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 8-24 Referral-Conveyance of Tutko Road Right of Way until the May meeting, made by P. Fiasconaro, seconded by D. Garceau. All in favor, motion carried.

B. Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 8-24 Referral-South Bear Hill Road Extension:

The referral before the Commission is for an opinion on a new road (South Bear Hill Road Extension) that would give access to RT 198 and allow the eventual abandonment of a bridge on South Bear Hill Road due to significant cost to repair. South Bear Hill Road would end at parcel 91-166 that is before the bridge that goes over Buttonball Brook. Dave Garceau suggested a turnaround on both sides of the bridge for snow plows and emergency vehicles. The new road does not appear to create a hardship for adjoining property owners, would add parking to the cemetery and appears to be on town land. The Commission recommends approval of the new road in 8-24 Referral-South Bear Hill Road Extension (D. Dubitsky will draft a positive memorandum of support).

Motion to draft positive memorandum of support for Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 8-24 Referral-South Bear Hill Road Extension, made by P. Fiasconaro, seconded by D. Garceau. All in favor, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORT OF THE ZONING OFFICER:

ZEO J. Gigliotti presented monthly report.

Miller Rd – The property owner is no longer living in the shed (waiting for \$100 to approve zoning permit).

Chewink Rd – Fines are now \$18,050. The owners intend to use proceeds from house they are selling in Willimantic to pay the outstanding fines and get dumpsters to clean up the property. It was suggested to them to use the proceeds to hire a contractor to clean up the property.

360 Phoenixville Rd – The property was recently purchased with plans for a tree farm that will be open to the public to cut your own tree.

ITEMS PRO RE NATA:

D. Dubitsky presented update on proposed bills before the Legislature that would have a significant impact to zoning. A number of area towns have started to issue proclamations opposing the state takeover of zoning for small towns. He will circulate a document approved by area towns to gauge interest for something similar and will update the bills on his Facebook page.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn (10:22 PM) by H. Weingart, seconded by D. Garceau. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,
Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott