

APPROVED / REVISED
MINUTES
INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

June 2, 2009

Present: Peter Chipouras
Nelson Gelfman
John Katz
James McChesney
Phil Mische
Rebecca Mucchetti, Chairman
Patrick Walsh, Vice Chair

Absent: Michael Autuori
Joseph Fossi

Also Present: Betty Brosius, Inland Wetlands Agent

Item #1 on the Planning and Zoning Commission agenda, the Public Work Shop on the update to the Plan of Conservation and Development, was addressed prior to the Wetlands Board meeting.

At 9:24 p.m. Chairman Mucchetti called the meeting to order.

PENDING ITEMS

1. **#2009-032-S-SP:** (1) Application for a 5-lot Subdivision under Section 6-1 of the Subdivision Regulations for the Town of Ridgefield on property located at **32 Hickory Lane and 164 Florida Road** consisting of 11.686 acres of land in the RAA zone and (2) Special Permit Application under Section 9.2 as required by Section 3.2.C.5 of the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations to permit an accessway off Hickory Lane to serve three new lots in conjunction with the 5-lot subdivision. Owner/Apl.: Wynmar Properties, LLC. Auth. Agent: John F. McCoy, VII, P.E. Schedule walk for 6/7/2009.

Chairman Mucchetti addressed item #1, noting that the Planning and Zoning Commission walk on this application was scheduled for 6/2/09.

Mr. Katz motioned, seconded by Mr. Mische, to schedule the site walk for June 7th, as suggested. The motion passed, 7-0.

NEW ITEMS

There were no new items.

BOARD WALKS

The Board scheduled a site walk for item #1, as noted above, for **June 7, 2009.**

REQUESTS FOR BOND RELEASES/REDUCTION

There were no requests for bond release or reduction.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

MINUTES

There were no minutes for approval.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Brosius
Inland Wetlands Agent

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MINUTES
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

June 2, 2009

Present: Peter Chipouras
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John Katz
James McChesney
Phil Mische
Rebecca Mucchetti, Chairman
Patrick Walsh, Vice Chair

Absent: Michael Autuori
Joseph Fossi

Also Present: Betty Brosius, Director of Planning

Item #1, the Public Work Shop, was addressed prior to the Inland Wetlands Board meeting and prior to all other items on this agenda.

At 7:30 p.m. Chairman Mucchetti called the meeting to order. Items #2 through #4 were addressed beginning at 9:26 p.m.

PENDING ITEMS

1. **Public Workshop Meeting for input on the Plan of Conservation and Development** conducted by Planimetrics, consultants to the Commission. **Heidi Samokar, Jason Vincent** and **Glenn Chalder** were present from Planimetrics, to conduct the workshop. 26 members of the public were in attendance.

The workshop began at 7:35 p.m. and was designed to solicit input from the public. **Heidi Samokar** gave a quick overview that included a description of the Plan of Conservation and Development and its purpose, a scope of the Plan update, the timeline for completion, and an overview of the format of the workshop. She said the public attendees would be broken up randomly into three groups where discussion would be facilitated by one of the three consultants in each. The Commissioners were asked to wander between the group discussions and to listen, but they did not participate.

Heidi Samokar led the group discussion on Infrastructure, **Jason Vincent's** group talked about Conservation issues, and **Glenn Chalder** guided the discussion on Development. The first round of group discussions lasted 30 minutes, and the participants were asked to state their "visions" for the future of the Town of Ridgefield in the respective group category. The facilitator in each group wrote the issues on large

sheets of paper on the walls, and the “visions” were reviewed prior to moving on to the next exercise.

Each group was then asked to move in a clockwise direction to the next facilitator, where they reviewed the visions that were posted by the first group. Each participant was given four dots to post next to the visions that he or she felt was most important. The number of dots for each vision was counted by the facilitator, and the top four in each category were identified.

The attendees re-assembled as a large group.

Heidi Samokar led the final group discussion with all attendees, where the top two or three “visions” in each of the categories (Conservation, Infrastructure, and Development) were identified. It was noted that all three groups focused on issues and planning primarily related to the downtown area. A brief summary of the top vote-getters in the visions category for each topic is as follows:

Conservation:

- Open spaces would be connected, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.
- Pedestrian movement and accessibility would be the key element in the design of public spaces, open space corridors, and greenways.
- The comprehensive plan for the community would focus on pedestrian movement, bikeways, and non-car transportation.
- To conserve energy and to encourage pedestrian movement rather than vehicular transportation, businesses would serve local needs (fewer boutiques and offices in the downtown).

Development:

- Sidewalks would be connected and handi-capped accessible, for pedestrians, bikers, and the disabled.
- There would be more residential, higher density development in the downtown area, following “smart growth” principles, with appropriate retail offerings to serve local needs.
- Transportation services would tie parts of town together (e.g., busses).
- Parking in the downtown would be adequate.
- There would be incentives to attract “green” businesses to town.

Infrastructure:

- Unobtrusive parking would be located in places to serve local businesses while maintaining a better flow of traffic in the downtown.
- The youth would use the skate park and not local sidewalks, and there would be a trail system for pedestrians.
- Homeowners would use environmentally safe products in their homes and on their properties.
- You would be able to sit in an outdoor café on Main Street and not hear the sounds of loud trucks and vehicles.

General additional “visions” identified:

- Copps Hill Plaza would be better connected (for pedestrians and vehicles) to the downtown.
- There would be “eco-village” incentives for trash recycling, environmentally sound building and design.
- You would want to spend more time in the village/downtown area because of the attractiveness, services, and accessibility.
- All public buildings and places would be fully handi-capped accessible.

Heidi Samokar next asked the participants to identify potential “solutions and strategies” to achieve the visions.

Conservation:

- Restrict first floor uses on Main Street, encouraging more retail and services needed by the public, to encourage more pedestrian movement and less dependency on vehicles.
- Provide services that people need, not the “mall” or “chain store” type of retail, but services and products that meet local needs.
- Concentrate food retail in one area, other types of goods in another, to encourage one-stop shopping with a variety of choices in each category.
- Greenways should be connected, and existing open space may be traded for land that would provide connectivity.
- There should be public funding for open space acquisition.
- Use of open spaces should be defined.
- Incentives like Transfer of Density may be used to encourage concentration of density for business and residential development, while preserving greater areas of open space.

Development:

- Sidewalks should connect the Copps Hill area to Main Street.
- Developers should be made to improve their properties in conjunction with the overall plan to provide connectivity throughout the business areas.
- The town should (1) continue to secure public grants for improving sidewalks, (2) include accessibility in the design of all new improvements, and (3) mandate that all new development provide for sidewalks and accessibility.
- There should be a traffic light at the intersection of Routes 35 and 116.
- Retail should be concentrated near higher-density residential development, adhering to “smart growth” principles.
- Development may be concentrated near the intersection of Routes 7 and 35, where transit systems can be accessed.
- Bus service could provide access to remote parking, with transportation to retail shopping and public transportation services.

Infrastructure:

- Unobtrusive parking is needed (including, perhaps, an attractive, modestly designed parking garage).
- Walkways for pedestrians should be clearly marked, visually appealing, and accessible.
- Parking meters on Main Street would encourage turn-over of parking availability for shoppers.
- Access to remote parking areas should be provided (by bus, for instance).
- Signage should be uniform and coherent.

Additional miscellaneous strategies and solutions:

- Parking for high-density residential developments may be provided on the perimeter of the site, to encourage more pedestrian movement and less dependency on cars.
- Cell phone service should be provided for the entire town, for safety and convenience.
- Goods and services that people actually need should be provided in the downtown.
- Incentives like attractive rents and tax abatements could encourage desirable businesses.
- Sustainability will be important – all new development should be LEED certified.
- Alternative energy sources should be encouraged and explored.
- The biodiversity of open spaces should be identified, to encourage preservation of critical environmental areas.
- Visual ecology should be protected (tree protection, ridgelines, etc.).
- Businesses that provide alternate energy and “green” building concepts should be attracted to town.

Heidi Samokar thanked the participants for their input and noted that the next meeting would be held on June 30th, where representatives of the various town boards and commissions would provide input to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the consultants, on the issues that they serve and the services that they administer.

The work shop ended at 9:20 p.m.

NEW ITEMS

2. **#2009-037-FC-SP(ACC):** Special Permit Application under Sec. 9.2 as required by Sec. 3.2.C.5 of the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations to create an accessway serving an interior lot in conjunction with First Division of property located at **75 New Street**, consisting of 1.037 acres in the R20 and RAA zones. Applicant/Owner: Pauline G. Morena. Auth. Agent: Donnelly, McNamara & Gustafson, P.C. *65 days to commence public hearing ends 8/6/2009. For receipt / schedule walk and public hearing.*

Chairman Mucchetti suggested a site walk for June 7, 2009, and a public hearing for June 23, 2009.

Mr. Mische motioned, seconded by Mr. Chipouras, to schedule the site walk and public hearing on the dates suggested by the Chairman. The motion passed, 7-0.

3. **#2009-038-VDC-REV(SP):** Village District application under Section 8.3 and Revision to Special Permit Application under Sec. 9.2.A.7.e of the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations to permit an awning with signage for business located at **24 Prospect Street (Piccolo Pizza)** in the CBD zone. Owner/Apl.: Pretty LLC, Matt Criscuolo. *65-day action period for revision ends 8/6/2009. 35 days to receive VDC report ends 7/7/2009. For receipt, refer to VDC.*

Mr. Katz motioned, seconded by Mr. Mr. Mische, to acknowledge receipt of the application and to refer it to the VDC for review. The motion passed, 7-0.

4. **Chairman Mucchetti** added this item to the agenda, for the purposes of scheduling an **Executive Session** to be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9th, prior to the public hearings and regular meetings scheduled for the Inland Wetlands Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission. Commission counsel would be in attendance, to discuss pending litigation concerning Eureka V, LLC, owners of 153+ acres on Bennetts Pond Road.

COMMISSION WALKS

As noted above, the following site walk was scheduled for **June 7, 2009:**

- **#2009-037-FC-SP(ACC):** Special Permit **75 New Street**, Morena
- The following Commission site walks had been previously scheduled for **June 7, 2009**
- **#2009-030-SP:** Special Permit **40 Grove Street**, 40 Grove Street LLC
 - **#2009-032-S-SP:** Subdivision and Special Permit **32 Hickory Lane and 164 Florida Road**, Wynmar Properties, LLC
 - **#2009-034-SP:** Special Permit **269 Nod Road**, High Ridge Custom Homes, Inc

REQUESTS FOR BOND RELEASE / REDUCTION

There were no requests for bond release or reduction.

MINUTES

There were no minutes to be approved.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Brosius
Director of Planning