

**WARREN PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
OCTOBER 24, 2011**

The regular scheduled meeting of the Warren Planning Board began at 7:01 PM. Present were J. MacDougall, A. Asselin, J. Piepowski, E. Stanley, M. Jamiel, C. Thibaudeau, R. Mello. Also present was W. Nash, Attorney Paul Ryan. M. Heald and F. Massie were absent. Town Planner, Caroline Wells was also in attendance.

Public Hearings:

- **Wightman's Farm, LLC, 560 Metacom Avenue, Plat 13C, Lot 157; Recommendation to Warren Town Council regarding change in Comprehensive Plan land use map from R-10 to Business.**

This will be on the November 8 Town Council meeting agenda.

Bruce Cox, attorney for Wightman's Farm provided documentation of notices sent to abutters.

Mr. Lombardo, AICP from JDL Enterprises, also a realtor, submitted data to demonstrate that this property, zoned for business, could produce more revenue for the town than if there were 20 houses on the same property with school costs for 12 students. He estimated that the revenue from business zoning could be a net of \$52,000. J. MacDougall questioned the size of the buildable area on the property and the estimate of 20 houses with 12 pupils. The applicant stated that there are approximately 5 buildable acres in the property in question.

Mr. Ed Pimental, AICP, a Certified Planner, and consultant, currently a zoning official in East Providence, stated zoning must be consistent with the future land use map of the Comprehensive Plan. He presented a detailed map analyzing current land use along Metacom Avenue, showing residential, commercial, and industrial areas as well as areas with neither. Most of the development of Metacom Avenue since 1945 has been commercial development. Changing the zoning of this property from residential to business would follow that pattern. He argued that there is no other land available along Metacom Avenue that has the depth needed to build something other than unwanted strip malls.

J. MacDougall restated that the hearing is not to discuss what the applicant plans to do with the property, but whether or not the concept of using the property for any business purposes was preferred over residential use. The public was invited to speak.

Ann Morrill, 1st Vice President of the Kickemuit River Council spoke of the concern for the area by the KRC. She pointed out that maps from 2006, 2007, and 2011, have changed citing that wetlands have been reduced or locations changed, the coastal buffer has been omitted and a dam has been changed. She pointed out that Metacom Avenue has vacant commercial properties that need to be utilized before more are created.

Dana Warren of Adams Lane spoke in follow-up of her letter of June. She questioned the discrepancy between the Waterman Eng. map used by the applicant, showing 5 acres of developable land and the Garafalo map from 2006, submitted for an administrative subdivision, which showed the property to be 2.6 acres. The neighborhood is opposed to the zone change and has collected 300 signatures from neighbors. She will present this to the Town Council at the meeting.

James Hozempa, 527 Metacom Avenue is concerned about traffic on Metacom Avenue and costs of increased housing insurance on his property.

Susan Luk, 348 Adams Lane spoke against changing the parcel to commercial.

Tara Maloney, 501 Metacom Avenue, who lives across from the parcel, abutting a commercial business, is concerned currently about traffic, trash from the commercial area she abuts.

The Browns, 536 Metacom Avenue are concerned about the traffic issues.

Ron Shears, 344 Adams Lane, spoke about access to Adams Lane, flooding issues.

Attorney Cox argued that the zoning currently is R-10, but the Comprehensive Plan calls for commercial zoning. All the issues pertaining to a commercial development would be addressed at the appropriate time: right of way, contamination, water run-off, traffic issues. The Comprehensive Plan speaks to the rational development of this property, encourage economic vitality, which is valid ground to change the front portion of this property to commercial.

Caroline Wells, Town Planner, pointed out the Comprehensive Plan imposed limits to the expansion of the Commercial area.

Planning Board discussion concerned both the beneficial nature of commercial development, its necessity in this economy, the issue of redevelopment of existing commercial parcels, and whether this request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. J. MacDougall cited the Metacom Corridor Study which encourages restriction of business uses, curb cuts and paving.

A motion was made by A. Asselin, seconded by M. Jamiel to deny the request, as there is no major error in the Comprehensive Plan, and a spot-zone would be created by approval. The vote was 4-3 to recommend denial of the change to business with C. Thibaudeau, J. Piepowski, and E. Stanley voting in favor of the change. Attorney Ryan stated that since there are 9 Board members, there must be at least 5 votes for a motion to carry. Therefore, no recommendation can be made to the Council.

Minutes of September 26, 2011

On a motion by M. Jamiel, seconded by A. Asselin, the minutes were approved.

Administrative Matters:

Zoning Board: W. Nash reported a request was approved for a 60 foot communication tower at the Highway Department Building. Approval for another 80 foot tower at the Touisset Fire Station was continued.

The annual meeting calendar for 2012 will include deadline dates for items to be placed on the agenda - Noon on Monday one week prior to the regular meeting. In January the date will be a Tuesday, Jan. 17, due to the Martin Luther King holiday. The December meeting will be held Dec. 17 due to Christmas Eve falling on the 4th Monday. A motion was made by J. Piepowski, seconded by M. Jamiel to accept the schedule. The vote was unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted;

Catherine Gresh
Recording Secretary