

**WARREN PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 28, 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, C. Thibaudeau, R. Mello, M Heald, F. Massie. Also present was W. Nash, Attorney Paul Ryan, Town Planner Caroline Wells. M. Jamiel was absent.

Special Items:

Caroline Wells, Town Planner, presented a draft report of the Metacom Avenue Corridor Plan Study, a traffic and land use management plan. A conclusion reached is that the area should be considered a mixed-use village, but currently, the parts do not relate to each other. There are no incentives to walk as good sidewalks and crosswalks, landscaping are needed.

Concerning traffic, the #1 resolution is that any development must meet the needs of all – walkers, bikers, and area residents - not just car traffic. There are peak traffic counts of 21,900 vehicles/ day, and 29,000 on Saturdays, and speeds of approximately 4 to 6 miles over the speed limits 100% of the time. A center turn lane is being suggested, and possibly a bicycle lane. A bike spur connection to downtown will also be studied. The DOT is interested in employing roundabouts to slow traffic but keep it moving, possibly at Tupelo Street in Bristol. The DOT also has funding available to study high accident areas such as Fatima Drive in Bristol and Vernon Street in Warren.

In order for the area to become more vibrant and diverse, and to give developers more options, Form Based zoning will be explored. Concepts of ‘Complete Street’ and low impact development will be employed. Warren has a 48% impervious surface cover in the area of the Kickemuit River. At numbers greater than 25% impervious, the river is negatively impacted. Incentives for creating green space are needed to encourage replacement of asphalt, such as in the Ocean State Plaza.

Caroline will be scheduling a meeting, probably in the first week of December. After that, she will be returning to the Planning Board with a more detailed plan.

Minutes of October 24, 2011

On a motion by A. Asselin, seconded by C. Thibaudeau, the minutes were approved with minor changes.

Old Business:

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.

J. MacDougall read a letter from Attorney Bruce Cox for Wightman’s Farm, requesting the issue be taken up at the regularly scheduled January 23 meeting, the earliest he can attend. A motion was made to continue to the January 23rd meeting. All were in favor.

Touisset Farms: GRF Associates, LLC, owners: land off Chase Avenue – Plat 17, Lot 7: Review of Final Plan amendment and decision from May 23, 2011.

J. MacDougall felt the draft decision failed to touch upon things discussed by the Planning Board. A. Asselin made a motion, seconded by F. Massie, to table this item until the decision and engineering plans are revised.

New Business:

Karen Fisher, owner: 326 Market Street; Plat 23, Lot 24; Request for a recommendation to the Warren Town Council for a ‘contract zone’ amendment to allow a photography studio use, by Scott Sylvia.

Since no one was present to speak on behalf of the zone amendment, A. Asselin made a motion to recommend that the Town Council deny this request for a map amendment on this parcel. The photography studio in question has been in operation since the beginning of October. The motion was seconded by R. Mello. The vote to recommend denial was 6 – 2 with C. Thibaudeau, M. Heald opposed. There was a consensus that the Town Council needs to employ some zoning controls other than the present ‘contract zone’.

Gary D. Fenster, owner; Plat 15A, Lots 71 & 72 Seymour St; Minor Subdivision

Gary Fenster is proposing to create two house lots that exceed the required 10,000 square foot where formerly only one house had stood. In addition he is proposing to relocate an existing 15’ wide easement, along with a water line, that provides access to the land-locked property to the south. It was stated that both parties to the easement are in agreement. Because this property has a slope of greater than 10%, water run-off is an issue.

John Salamon of 89 Seymour Street who abuts the property downhill to the west, has concerns that the additional development, and relocation of the right of way, will increase the amount of water already running downhill onto his property.

J. MacDougall pointed out that regulations require that a Minor Subdivision be referred to the Technical Review Committee for a recommendation. Soil and erosion data will also have to be provided.

A motion was made by A. Asselin to send this request to Technical Review to address water run-off issues. Seconded by J. Piepowski, passed unanimously.

Reports: Warren Tree Commission

R. Mello stated he is waiting for minutes, thus can make no report.

Administrative Matters:

Zoning and Planning:

W. Nash reported the town granted a 2nd pole tower at Touisset Station.

Karen Burnes, 314 Market Street was granted permission to convert to a knitting school and provide parking.

Accardi Electric was granted an Administrative Subdivision on Pennsylvania Avenue (Plat 21, lots 23, 24, 25) that created two house lots – 90’ x 100’ and 60’ x 100’ from 3 contiguous 50’ x 100’ lots that held 1 house and a garage. Members questioned how lots could be approved that didn’t conform to zoning requirements. It was stated that approval was given by the Zoning Board to separate one of the lots from the other two, then the Administrative Subdivision adjusted the lot sizes. F. Massie made a motion, seconded by A. Asselin to continue this until next month to see the Zoning Board’s decision.

James Nightingale of Maple Road, and abutter John Ryan, did an administrative subdivision with lots 297, 299, and 300 in Plat 16.

The board reviewed the 2011 Annual Report to the Town Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Gresh
Recording Secretary