TOWN OF WARREN

PLANNING BOARD

WARREN PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
August 26, 2013

The August meeting of the Warren Planning Board began at 7:00 PM. Present were F. Massie, J. Piepowski, C. Thibaudeau, D. Kallfelz, R. Mello, B. Heckert, S. Thompson, and R. Silva, and M. Heald. Also present were Town Planner Caroline Wells and Town Attorney Stephanie Federico.

There is a quorum for this meeting.

Approval of Minutes:

On a motion by R. Mello, seconded by C. Thibaudeau, the minutes for the regular scheduled meeting on June 24, 2013 were approved.

New Business:

a. Discussion and Action on the Minor Subdivision of the May Manchester Estate (Plat 17, Lot 8).

Representing the May Manchester Estate, Nancy Tobin requested separating the land around the existing house from the acreage which will remain for agricultural use. The proposed lot incorporates enough room for a new septic and well, if needed, and a garage. The technical Review committee unanimously moved to recommend the approval of a Minor Subdivision to the Planning Board at their July 29 Special Meeting.

On a motion by S. Thompson, seconded by R. Mello, the meeting was opened for public comments. There being none, it was closed by R. Silva, seconded by R. Mello. A motion to approve the TRC's finding of fact concerning the Minor Subdivision was made by R. Mello, seconded by B. Heckert, and unanimously approved by the Planning Board.

b. Discussion on Comprehensive Plan elements with a focus on economic development.

A motion was made by C. Thibaudeau, seconded by R. Silva to open the meeting to a public forum for a community workshop. As approved, the meeting was relocated to an adjacent room and opened to the public present.

Administrative Matters:

- Discussion and Action to move up September meeting (proposed date: September 16)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Gresh
Recording Secretary

Planning Board Workshop

Comprehensive Plan – Economic Development (1)

August 26, 2013

<u>Talking Point:</u> "Maximize the unique and valuable attractions and benefits of the historic downtown village and adjacent waterfront area, capitalizing and building on existing strengths and encouraging business growth."

- Uniqueness of downtown
    - Pursue public private partnerships
    - Protection/preservation of historic assets (churches, commercial, residential)
        - Need to implement customized design review to change perception
        - "atmosphere" of Warren is rooted in historic assets
        - Identify historic sites
        - Properties not being managed (homestead tax exemption?). Absentee landlord laws? Spillover among elements and economic vitality is impacted
    - 1976 Warren Townscape Plan and historic fabric
    - 1997 Chamber of Commerce Plan recognizes historic assets, etc.
- Water Street as best example of capitalizing on historic assets
- Design standards for Main Street (?)
    - Steps? Analysis of zoning, form-based codes, design guidelines, etc.
    - Making the connection between preservation/design and economic development
- Gateways
- Traffic/Parking issues (signs/wayfinding)
    - Truck routes?
    - [street]light locations
- Main Street needs "walkability"
    - 20 mph speed limit with emphasis on ped/bike capture—not drive-through
- Importance of enforcement (spped, property maintenance, etc)
- Include omitted parts/actions of old iterations
- Route 103, Industrial Park and other economic opportunities
- Child Street/Market Street need emphasis

<u>Talking Point</u>: Establish consistent zoning regulations and well-defined design guidelines for proposed business expansion and new development in all commercial, manufacturing and industrial areas, ensuring predictable expectations, enforcement and aesthetics.

- Large spaces (mills)—people want 1st floor spaces, not anything requiring an elevator
    - Neighboring properties to mills have negligent landlords and "seedy people" that keep out investors (Child and Market Streets)

    - Need regulations/enforcement of violators
    - What do we want in mills?
    - Are we attracting people who take pride in Warren? Residential areas impact business
    - Enforce existing regulations (junkyards, speed)
- Manufacturing zoning. Trend toward bringing in "small craft" manufacturers
    - Square footage breakdown of large spaces to accommodate new businesses. Town approval process takes too long for new business
        - Can we have quicker reviews? TRC review?
        - More efficient approvals [removed: "streamline"] specifically for large existing buildings
- Misinformation at Town Hall. Look at staffing? Facilitation process to give accurate information to businesses
    - Consider "office hours" for walk-in businesses
    - Coordinate and improve communications

<u>Talking Point:</u> "Stimulate diverse agricultural producting on available arable land, providing links to outside expertise and advice, encouraging and facilitating connections to Town and other local restaurants, grocery stores and kitchen incubators."

- Agriculture as economic development.
    - Is "open space" agriculture? Warren buys development rights, but does not [foster] local agricultural development. See Westport model for how this is done
    - Look at what can be produced on land
        - Cash crops are attractive, but then the market drops
    - Are there value added products beyond culinary uses (for manufactured products, for example)
- Link food producers and local consumers
- Be a "agriculture friendly" community and make this part of Warren's identity
- Use the Chamber and the emphasize the Enterprise Zone
- Aquaculture opportunities exist in Warren (oysters, mussels). Maine has used this to this to market local seafood
- Identify prime waters for aquaculture and work with boat/recreational users [to find compromise]