

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT 2007

The Planning Commission engaged in the following major activities in 2007 – (1) finalizing a Municipal Facilities Master Plan, (2) finalizing a report outlining options for necessary improvements to the Town Garage, (3) initiating a Brownfields study of the Town Garage site and (4) continuing review and drafting modifications to the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations, i.e. zoning regulations.

Building on the November 2006 Planning Charrette, the Commission analyzed the solutions presented and developed a comprehensive Master Plan for the Municipal Facilities. This proposed plan was presented to the Select Board for adoption and for an amendment to Chapter 8 of the Town Plan. After required public hearings and other necessary process, the Master Plan was adopted and the Warren Town Plan was unanimously amended by the Select Board on October 9, 2007.

The Planning Commission concluded its study of proposed improvements to the Town Garage and presented a report of its findings to the Select Board on May 8, 2007. Included in the report was a recommendation of some alternative sites that should be considered for the Town Garage. Should the Town Garage be relocated, the current location has been discussed as an ideal site for affordable housing. To even consider that as a possibility, the Town applied for a Brownfields assessment of the site with the Central Vermont Brownfields Inventory and Assessment Initiative. That assessment is in process and the results will not be finalized until 2008.

The Commission continued the reviewing and drafting revisions to the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations. Proposed amendments required to retain eligibility for federal flood insurance and others, which are largely administrative in nature, will be presented to the Select Board in early 2008 for consideration. Work on more substantive changes dealing with district dimensional requirements; district boundaries; densities; development review criteria under subdivision, conditional use, planned unit and planned residential development; proposals to foster affordable housing; and other matters will continue. This will be a lengthy process, continuing probably through 2008. As part of the process, the Planning Commission will begin to hold specific public meetings on various topics to discuss proposed draft changes and to obtain feedback. The Planning Commission also has received a Municipal Planning Grant for 2008 to assist in analyzing the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations for ways to promote development of affordable housing.

Copies of the revised Warren Town Plan and the current Warren Land Use and Development Regulations are available at the Town offices or on Warren's web site at <http://www.warrenvt.org/>. Planning Commission meeting agendas and minutes are also available at this site.

Nick Morehouse had a change in his job which required significant travel and therefore resigned from the Planning Commission. We wish to thank him for his help and contributions during the time of his participation. He has just recently been replaced by Craig Klofach who will begin serving in January.

The Planning Commission meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of the month at the Municipal Building.

Planning Commission

Mike Ketchel, Chairman
John Donaldson, Vice Chairman
John Goss
Jim Sanford

Lisa Miserendino
Don LaHaye
Nick Morehouse [resigned]