

TOWN OF WARREN
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING
MONDAY AUGUST 8, 2011

Members Present: Craig Klofach, Mike Ketchel, Lisa Miserendino, Randy Graves, Jim Sanford, Don LaHaye and Dan Raddock.

Others Present: Sue Carter, Marilyn Miller, Alice Cheney, Rudy Elliot, Tracy Martin, Dave Sellers, Brett Pingree, Miron Malboeuf and Ruth Robbins.

Agenda: Call meeting to order at 7:00 pm

1. Public Meeting dedicated to discussing the Warren Village Zoning District changes
2. Review & sign minutes from July 25th, 2011
3. Other business:

Mr. Ketchel called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

The first order of business was to present the proposed changes to the Warren village zoning districts as contained in the Warren Land Use and Development Regulations followed by questions and comments from the public.

Mr. Klofach began the hearing summarizing the changes in the Warren Village Historic Residential District boundary lines and the district standards. He continued to explain the proposed Warren Village Mixed Use District, its boundaries and standards. Public comments were taken by the Commission which ranged from questions such as why the PC determined these changes were needed to pleas to keep things as they are especially concerning the setback requirements and the minimum parcel size as the feeling was that houses are already too close together. Other concerns expressed were that with smaller lots there would be greater potential loss in case of a fire and that snow removal would be more costly as it would have to be taken off site in a greater degree than is done currently.

One resident noted that large lots and generous setbacks were a "suburban" concept and not truly appropriate for a small village setting. There was a time when the Village was more active and vibrant and having a small business or home occupation was a natural fit. In regard to the proposal of a Mixed Use District, one person commented that any additional business activity should be along Rte 100 between the Village and the Access Road, while most others felt being able to work and live in the Village was most desirable. In general, the idea of a Mixed Use District was favorably received. Another resident felt the PC needed to utilize more common sense, look out for the townspeople and if they didn't like things the way they were they should go back from whence they came from.

A couple of those in attendance asked the members what their individual positions were on the various proposals. Points were made by the members that the changes proposed would have limited if any impact on many properties due to existing conditions such as setbacks already at the maximum or the required setback from the river and the necessity for review by the DRB for business activity being able to meet parking requirements. It was also noted by the Commission that the cost of land is often the obstacle to housing affordability and allowing smaller lots gave some options to landowners to create smaller, more affordable lots. It was also noted by the PC that change would not happen overnight, but gradually over time. Additionally it was brought up that the Village housed a valuable resource with many older trees that could potentially be affected by denser housing. The Commission agreed and noted that they have asked for the town Tree Warden to do a complete inventory from which possible protective measures could be based from. Attempts will be made to get that inventory done soon.

The PC also reviewed a letter that had been submitted by a land owner on Ellen Lane who was concerned about what the change from the Rural Residential District to the Warren Village Historic Residential would mean to them. The PC asked staff to respond with a letter and the materials provided at the hearing.

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and signed. Discussion about the link of the proposed changes and a section of Article 8 was discussed and it was determined that the Article 8 modifications could be made separately. A request was made for a list of those uses that were added to the newly created Mixed Use District from the existing WVHR District.

Mr. Ketchel asked the members if they wanted to make any further modifications to what they had in front of them. Ms. Miserendino said that she felt the reduction of minimum lot size from 1 acre to ¼ acre was too drastic but no motion was put forth to make any change. With no other changes suggested, Mr. Klofach moved that the PC approve the proposed changes as is which was seconded by Mr. Sanford. The vote was five in favor of the motion, one not in favor and one who abstained. The motion passed with a majority in the affirmative.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm

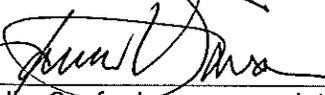
Respectfully Submitted,

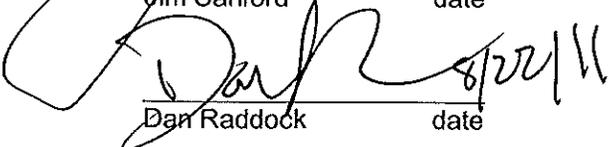
Ruth V. Robbins
DRB/PC Assistant

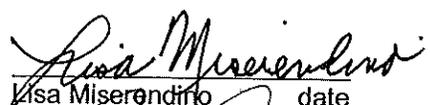
Planning Commission

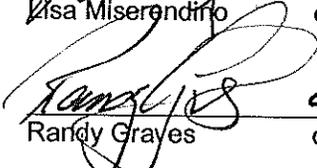

Mike Ketchel 8.22.11
date


Craig Klofach 8.22.11
date


Jim Sanford 8.22.11
date


Dan Raddock 8/22/11
date

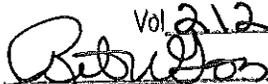

Lisa Miserendino 8/22/11
date


Randy Graves 08/22/11
date


Don LaHaye 8/22/11
date

TOWN OF WARREN, VT

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TOWN CLERK