Unapproved

Town of Voluntown

Planning & Zoning Commission

Wednesday February 14, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Chairman Scott Davidson called the regularly scheduled meeting of the planning & zoning commission to order at 7:34PM.

**Members Present:** Scott Davidson, David Nieminen, Carl Grenier, Neftali Soto.

**Alternates:** Max Hallowell, Bob Panko and Marc Ledoux Sr. Not present was Thomas Sweet

Also present were Pete Zvingilas ZEO and Jim Larkin, NECCOG

**Seating of Alternates:** Chairman Davidson seated Max Hallowell as a full voting member for meeting.

**Approval of Minutes:** Carl Grenier made a motion to accept the January 10, 2018 minutes with 2 modifications. Page 1 Line 10 under old business should read prevailing wage job instead of rate job. Page 2 Line 8 should read could find the people for POCD. David seconded the motion. All in favor, except for Neftali Soto who was not seated at the last meeting. Motion carried.

**Citizens Comments:**  None

**Old Business: POCD Discussion.** Vice Chair David Nieminen let the commission know he wasn’t present for last meeting so wasn’t sure what was discussed. Chairman Davidson had a discussion with Selectman Hanson who wants to be a part of the POCD, Chairman Davidson let her know that the POCD was ultimately the Planning & Zoning Commission’s responsibility. Selectman Hanson also mentioned that she would like to see a total rewrite. Chairman Davidson doesn’t feel that the Commission needs to go that route.

He feels the Commission needs to look it over and is having Jim Larkin speak to the Commission this month about some ideas and to just to take care of minor changes that need to be done. Carl Grenier likes the idea of community of involvement and welcome comments from the selectman.

Jim Larkin, NECCOG handed out to each member the state statute 8-23 which is Preparation, amendment or adoption of plan of conservation and development. Jim has looked through our POCD, the numbers can be easily updated to correspond with current census data. NECCOG could sit with the commission and go through the entire document in one meeting, i.e what does the commission like and doesn’t like just to give NECCOG an idea and then from that stage give input for demographics etc. Would enter new data and analysis and come back to Commission and review. Commission could have workshops to deal with different issues i.e. affordable housing. Current POCD has a lot of “ashen” things. Time frames and who is responsible for what isn’t listed. That part of the POCD could be strengthened. Looking to freshen up current POCD. Carl Grenier asked if we could freshen up with a community survey (zoning, taxes etc) Jim Larkin stated we could. Really would like to know what people think and be objective, but not make a huge project out of it and get some feedback that would be even valuable to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Chairman Davidson suggested that a workshop be scheduled. Jim Larkin stated NECOGG could go through page by page in a workshop setting. Extend invitation to other commissions (inlands-wetlands) Jim Larkin stated we could have subcommittee with EDC, wetlands and member from general public. Final document goes to the Board of Selectman, for comments. Selectmen are basically a member of planning & zoning. After some further discussion of open space, etc. Commission set a workshop for March 29th at 7pm. Kerry will find out availability of the meeting room for that date.

**15 Preston City Road Discussion:** Scott has been getting calls. He refers them to Pete Zvingilas ZEO, but no one has made a formal complaint. John Faulise has spoken with Al Daigneault and he does want to come in and get something done. Rain washing away dirt near stone wall into the road. ZEO Pete Zvingilas stated that Al Daigneault has to get his site plan straight and he hasn’t received any formal complaints, but he will speak to Al about getting some hay bales to help with the erosion. Commission has given permission to do several things with the property, but nothing has moved forward. Pete will talk with him to take care of hay bales and to come into see the P&Z Commission next month.

**CCJ Discussion:** 10.7 states Mylar plan has to be filed within 90 days. Mylar is outside of the 90 day filing. Decided Planning & Zoning will send a letter. Kerry will type up and send.

**New Business:** 8-24 Application Housing Authority Town of Voluntown site plan approval for residential unit additions, and an addition to existing community building. Jeff Dewey from Boundaries, LLC came to speak before the Commission on behalf of the Housing Authority. He provided detailed plans for the Commission to review during his presentation. 1st sheet existing conditions. Meat of the project is the 3rd page. Looking to add 12x15 additions on 2/3 (11) existing units. Units are basically studio apts and with addition they will become officially 1 bedroom units. No increase in occupancy. Wetland has approved their part of the project. Uncas Health has approved the project. Also proposing to add on community building and deal with drainage issues, but they will part of phase 3. Funds are currently not available for phase 3. There will also be improvements to restructure parking lot in phase 3 as well to better accommodate emergency services with loop drive parking area. Carl had some questions about the water/soil conditions from the gas station that had a spill sometime back. Jeff Dewey will be looking into that and report back to the Commission. Some other members had some other questions which were addressed. Neftali Soto asked who handled the water. Jeff will get the answer and get back to the Commission. Project falls under 8-30 affordable housing.

Carl Grenier made a motion to make a recommendation the Selectman to approve the improvement location at the Voluntown Housing Authority. David Nieminen seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Open for Discussion. David Nieminen is in favor of the additions and with phase 3 for the parking lot for emergency vehicles. Pete Zvingilas mentioned that they need to stay within architectural design. He sees no other issues. Housing Authority will more than likely be back at P&Z April meeting. David made a motion to close discussion. Carl seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

All in favor for the motion that was made by Carl Grenier and seconded by David Nieminen for recommendation to the Selectman to approve the improvement location at Voluntown Housing Authority. Motion carried.

**Correspondence:**  State of RI Comprehensive Plan Hopkinton, RI. Chairman Davidson shared with Jim Larkin, NECCOG who suggested that the Commission just take a look over it to see if any of it affects our area.

**ZEO Report:** 169 Bailey Pond Road getting rid of 2nd trailer Tues 2/20.

**General Discussion:** Appt. vs. Election Ordinance. Vice Chairman David Nieminen went before the Board of Selectman as a citizen and voiced his opinion that it is a horrible idea, which the Selectman should not be appointing from other towns, their family members, basically any conflict of interest. Voluntown has always had elected positions. Chairman Davidson let everyone know to state their opinion as it does effect the commission. Gives a lot of power to the Selectman and not the people of Voluntown.

**Discussion of Video Recording:** Board of Selectman interested in live streaming our meetings. Chairman Davidson does not care to have that added access to people watching at home making comments to people who don’t want to get involved. David stated pretty much the same thing to the Board in person at their meeting. Also asked them about FCC regulations, especially if we have heated meeting with citizens. Other towns, film meetings but not planning and zoning and other smaller board meetings. A lot of liability involved. The town is not ready for it. Chairman Davidson reiterated to voice your opinion. Other larger towns have public television. FOI comes into play as well. A letter will be written on behalf of the Commission to the Selectman on the issue. Kerry will have it ready for the next meeting for review.

**Adjournment:** Carl Grenier made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Max Hallowell seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.