

Minutes of the Heritage Committee Meeting
Town Hall – Second Floor Conference Room – 7 p.m.

Members present: Jack Quinn, Janet Banks, Ray Wilcox, Chet Kuras, Arnie Magid
Absent: W. Hansen, M. Winne, W. Moncrief
Also present: First Selectman Tom Frenaye

Vice Chairman Jack Quinn called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.
He welcomed the First Selectman Tom Frenaye to the meeting.
Citizen Comment: None

The Vice Chairman noted that the Committee was established as a 9 member committee; we have needed another member for some time. The First Selectman took note of this need.

Minutes: Ms. Banks moved to approve the minutes of the Oct. 20, 2009 meeting; Mr. Magid seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Open Space subcommittee – Mr. Wilcox reported that the Board of Finance restored the \$30,000 of Open Space funding used to fund the additional cost of the purchase of the Cannon land for the school district. This money was transferred back into the Open Space line item from the Contingency line item. Mr. Wilcox suggested that the Heritage Committee ask for \$300,000 for Open Space in the next proposed budget. There is still State grant funding available for the towns to purchase of development rights. Mr. Quinn reviewed the ranking process of properties for possible purchase of development rights.

Because of the proposed new power line and its possible effects to the Suffield and Siting Council rulings, CL&P will to do some work for the Town at Hilltop Farm. We need to address the water issues from adjoining properties. CL&P proposes to expand the wetland to the east and install berms. We must make sure that this would not adversely affect Hilltop Farm and adjoining properties. CL&P will remove all invasive species. We will put plantings along the banks of the swale and CL&P will install for us, a walking path. Most of the improvements will be done on “open space” at Hilltop Farm. Janet Banks and Ray will continue to meet with CL&P.

Commercial Subcommittee – Ms. Banks stated that as subcommittee, we really need new direction and new focus

Vice Chairman Quinn gave a brief history of the Heritage Committee; its origin and its duty as an ad hoc committee. It serves as a resource to the First Selectman. We have accomplished some things, i.e. the Town Center Village District, and the very successful program of farm preservation achieved by purchasing the development rights. We need to tell property owners and businesses, some procedures that they have to do, along the road towards Z & P approval. The process and procedures of the Design Review Board are not widely known. New businesses and property owners need to have a guideline of what approvals they need and know the proper sequence of action. It becomes apparent that boards and commissions simply do not communicate with each other. The website

could be a resource. The First Selectman noted that in the future, he would work so that the sequence of approvals be known and documented so that boards/commissions are informing each other. The guidelines and approval procedures should be made known.

The First Selectman left the meeting at 8 p.m. Mr. Quinn thanked the First Selectman for his attendance and interest.

Ms. Banks stated that we should reconvene the Commercial subcommittee. She asked who is our staff consultant? In the past, it has been the Town Planner and recently has been Patrick McMahon. We need new stimulus for direction. She reported that there have been very positive comments about the Town Center. There were particular parts of the overall Town Center proposal that had to be cut out due to lack of funding. One item was the stone wall at the corner of Mountain Road and High Street. This project is already designed. Mr. Wilcox suggested that we have seasonal plantings for the traffic islands. Ms. Banks suggested that the Committee go back to the original Town Center plan and re-address the components that were not funded. We need to think of West Suffield and what we can do there. She will try to put together a subcommittee meeting before the next Heritage meeting.

Mr. Quinn feels that we have to keep an eye on our completed projects, and monitor to see that all is well. He told the Committee of a damaged curb/sidewalk; a chunk of concrete is missing i.e. Mountain Road Market. This could be a safety concern. Liability is an important issue. Does the contractor have any responsibility? He has notified Patrick McMahon and also the First Selectman about this safety issue.

Signs – Mr. Quinn stated that the First Selectman having read past minutes suggested that once all the “Farmland Preserved” signs have been installed, the Heritage Committee should release a press release noting each location and noting the number of acres preserved.

Zoning and Planning Commission update – Mr. Kuras reminded everyone of the Z & P workshop, seeking input for the revised POCD, Plan of Conservation and Development to be held Thursday night. He noted some proposed zoning regulation that deals with old buildings and new use for them. He also reported that a new subdivision would be coming before the Zoning and Planning. Mr. Kuras discussed the proposed open space; how is it best used? Mr. Wilcox, Conservation Commission, reviewed the proposed subdivision plan as presented by Mr. Kuras. He noted that the plan had been before the Conservation Commission. The Committee discussed open space and how the Town is best served by open space proposed by developers. Mr. Wilcox noted he was making his comments as his update from the Conservation Commission. Mr. Wilcox stated that the map shown by Mr. Kuras was not the same map shown to Conservation and expressed his concern about this.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary HC.MIN.NOV.17.09
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