

HARWINTON PLANNING COMMISSION – SPECIAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019

TOWN HALL 6:45 P.M.

Present: Chairman Michael Orefice, Paul Roche, Debra Freidus and Land Use Coordinator Polly Redmond

Absent: Lee Hall, William Starr, Jon Truskauskas and Alternate Member Michael Rewenko

1. OPEN MEETING – ESTABLISH QUORUM.

Chairman Orefice called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. All regular members present are seated with Alternate Member D. Freidus seated for J. Truskauskas.

2. APPOINT ALTERNATE MEMBER ROLAND PERREAULT TO NEW TERM 11/30/19 to 11/30/22.

P. Roche **motioned** to appoint Roland Perreault to a new term 11/30/19 to 11/30/22 as an Alternate Member of the Planning Commission, seconded by D. Freidus. Motion passed unanimously.

3. ADJOURN.

P. Roche **motioned** to adjourn the Special Meeting at 6:50 p.m., seconded by D. Freidus. Motion passed unanimously.

Roland Perreault is sworn in at this time by Nancy Eldridge, Town Clerk.

HARWINTON PLANNING COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019

TOWN HALL 7:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Michael Orefice, Paul Roche, Lee Hall (sworn in for new term 11/5/19 to 11/5/24 by Atty. Michael D. Rybak prior to the start of the meeting) Alternate Member Debra Freidus, Alternate Member Roland Perreault and Land Use Coordinator Polly Redmond

Also Present: Town Counsel Michael D. Rybak

Absent: William Starr, Jon Truskauskas and Alternate Member Michael Rewenko

PUBLIC HEARING

1. OPEN HEARING – ESTABLISH QUORUM.

Chairman Orefice called the hearing to order at 7:00 p.m. All regular members present are seated with Alternate Member D. Freidus seated for J. Truskauskas and Alternate Member R. Perreault seated for W. Starr.

2. PRESENT AND RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE 2010 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

Chairman Orefice reads an introduction letter that notes the purpose of the Plan of Conservation and Development and what it addresses. Legal notice of this public hearing has been published in the Republican American on 11/29/19 and 12/8/19. Notice of the proposed amendments and hearing date, including copies of the Draft Plan, have been sent to the Northwest Hills Council of Governments on 10/7/19, the Harwinton Board of Selectmen on 10/7/19, Town Counsel Michael D. Rybak on 10/7/19 and

the Harwinton Town Clerk on 11/4/19 in accordance with State Statute. Notice of the public hearing was published on the town's website on 11/4/19 with a link provided directing the user to the draft Plan of Conservation and Development.

Chairman Orefice refers to the Survey within the Plan that received 452 responses and pointing out questions that received fifty percent or more responses. Those questions are:

Question 4: *Would you support Zoning Regulations that would allow the sale of alcohol in establishments located near a school?*

Yes 39.96% No 47.77% 12.28% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 5: *Would you like to see more housing in Harwinton that is affordable to families earning under \$65,000/year? (This would fit the State's definition of "Affordable Housing".)*

Yes 29.62% No 51.22% 19.15% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 7: *Would you support multi-unit rental housing in Harwinton?*

Yes 17.29% No 68.96% 13.75% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 8: *Would you like to see more senior housing in Harwinton?*

Yes 58.00% No 25.11% 16.89% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 9: *Would you be in favor of "Cluster Housing"? (A neighborhood of homes where the houses are clustered closer together on smaller lots to preserve more of the overall site as open space or recreational space. This is seen as an alternative to traditional large lot subdivisions.)*

Yes 30.00% No 54.44% 15.56% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 12: *Should the town support the ability of farm owners to hold events or activities on farms that bring visitors to their farms such as farm weddings, corn mazes, fruit picking, farm B&Bs, etc.?*

Yes 88.96% No 3.53% 7.51% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 13: *Would you support regulations that create and promote a Town Center with areas for townspeople to congregate?*

Yes 57.78% No 18.22% 24.00% Not sure, would need more information.

Question 15: *What would you like to be included in a Town Center?*

73.14% green space with benches and walking trails	15.96% co-working space
7.18% housing	57.98% community center
36.17% small grocery store	33.24% other

Question 16: *What types of economic development would you like to see the town encourage/support?*

67.14% Encouraging and supporting home-based businesses and telecommuting residents
56.34% Installing high speed, fiber-optic broadband
38.26% Expanding commercially zoned areas along Route 4 and Route 118
24.18% Attract light manufacturing
29.34% Promote tax incentives to attract new businesses
14.08% Other

Question 17: *What types of businesses would you like to see in town?*

67.87% Restaurants	31.18% Light manufacturing
42.93% Grocery Store	13.91% Clothing store
54.92% Coffee Shop	24.70% Other

Question 20: *Are you planning to relocate out of Harwinton within the next ten (10) years?*

Yes 32.96% No 67.04%

Chairman Orefice refers to the Purpose of the Plan of Conservation and Development found on page 12 and the five topics that follow: To Protect Our Natural Environment, To Maintain the Rural Character of the Town, To Make Harwinton an Even Better Place to Live, To Improve Municipal "Housekeeping" and To Regulate Future Land Use.

Pages 17 – 19 Gives a Brief History on How Harwinton Came to Be. On Page 21 the Overview of Harwinton Land has been updated. Page 39 gives Demographic and Economic Data which has been updated with various sources used.

Pages 48-52 outlines The Key Issues for Harwinton's Residents. Page 57 lists Municipal Facilities which has been updated. Page 66 Affordable Housing has been revised as well as Elderly Housing on page 67.

R. Perreault states that he worked on the Demographic Data noting that the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development had graphs and sources that were not cited. Some information implemented into this 2020 Plan has been from the Partnership for Strong Communities and the interpretation of their data, along with others, is that the projected population for Harwinton is going to become less than what it is now and education enrollment is dropping. Chairman Orefice points to the graph on page 40, Harwinton Population Projections, which projects population to drop to 4800 which may be due to affordability of housing.

Atty. Michael D. Rybak notes that the population in Harwinton has tripled in his time here in town growing up. School enrollment increased throughout the years and the schools in Region 10 expanded but these statistics in the proposed Plan is sobering news for policy makers at the local and state levels. The comments on Affordable Housing are on target, in his opinion, and he points out that there is a need for Affordable Housing and Senior Housing in town noting that new development for Elderly Housing was approved recently by the Zoning Commission off Twenty-four Bumper Road. Overall, he acknowledges that the Planning Commission did a good job with the draft Plan for 2020. He adds that the Plan of Conservation and Development is a very important document for the town, though advisory, the town should look at it for guidance. Atty. Rybak notes that the Planning Commission has saved thousands of dollars by doing the amendments themselves with Chairman Orefice noting that it took the Commission many hours to complete and that the Northwest Hills Council of Governments and Land Use Coordinator Polly Redmond helped a lot.

Atty. Rybak refers to State Statute 8-23 *Preparation, amendment or adoption of the plan of conservation and development* stating that now that all notices have been given and the hearing has taken place, the next thing to do after the close of the hearing is to act on it and give notice and a copy to the Office of Policy and Management.

Chairman Orefice notes that, in addition to the Northwest Hills Council of Governments comments on the proposed Plan, which will be taken into account, a copy of Cornwall's Draft Implementation Table for Economic Development was included. He believes the Planning Commission could put something like this together after the adoption of the Plan.

At this time, members of the public are invited to comment.

James Williams, 87 County Line Road, refers to survey question #16 that asks what types of economic development would you like to see the town encourage/support with one of the answers being, Installing High Speed, Fiber-Optic Broadband. He questions whether the town would pay for that or perhaps partner with Comcast. Chairman Orefice states that it would not be paid for by the town but pressure may be on the internet providers to pursue. R. Perreault notes that there are people who work at home that need to have a reliable connection. He points out that there are some areas in town where internet access is poor and NHCOG wants to try to collectively get support with other towns that also have poor access in order to get improvements and this is why it was a survey question. P. Roche refers to page 70 in the Plan that has information under the heading *Proposed Commercial Policy* on trying to establish high speed fiber transmission lines in Northwest CT and as we get to it in the coming months, this is something where town representation would have to be involved in by attending every meeting regarding this. This is not something the town would pay for it would probably be Service providers in coordination with federal/state government who would need to be responsible. L. Hall notes that 5G is coming out and will be available right off the cell towers. In order to put this kind of expense into an infrastructure it will cost millions and millions of dollars and based on conversations he's had with cable companies, they won't front that cost because they aren't going to make their money back on a town like Harwinton, it's too small of a population.

Paul Honig, 71 Town Line Road, states that on the Northwest Connect Model website it states there would be a partnership with municipalities and some type of private corporate partner where the municipalities would pay to put fiber optic on the poles and the corporate partner would bring the internet from the poles to the house, so there would be some sort of town investment. Their website estimates the cost to be \$6.00 per month, per house.

Jeff Neumann, 207 Blueberry Hill Road, states that the policymakers need to look at a lot of things. Speaking as the town's building inspector, building is up and businesses here are expanding here in town. There are sizable homes in town and improvements are being made because people are staying in town even though we are down 21% compared to the rest of the county. He supports the elderly housing that is going in, as mentioned by Atty. Rybak, on Twenty-four Bumper Road, which is a great way to help people stay in town. As a final comment he states that the Board of Selectmen and the land use commissions need to take this document to heart.

Chairman Orefice states that the hearing can be closed tonight as there are no outstanding documents the Commission is waiting for.

3. CONTINUE OR CLOSE HEARING.

P. Roche **motioned** to close the hearing at 7:35 p.m., seconded by R. Perreault. Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING

1. OPEN MEETING – ESTABLISH QUORUM.

Chairman Orefice called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. All regular members present are seated with Alternate Member D. Freidus seated for J. Truskauskas and Alternate Member R. Perreault seated for W. Starr.

2. APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: 10/23/19

P. Roche **motioned** to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by R. Perreault. Motion passed unanimously with L. Hall refraining from vote due to his absence at the previous meeting.

3. MICHELLE & MEGAN JANIERO – APPLICATION FOR TWO-LOT SUBDIVISION, 16 WILDCAT HILL ROAD.

Steve Latour, P.E., Berkshire Engineering, is present to represent. Plans prepared by Berkshire Engineering Plans are reviewed titled Subdivision Plans, 16 Wildcat Hill Road, dated 11/12/19 includes a Record Subdivision Map, 11/5/19, Site Development Plan, 11/12/19, Driveway Profile, 11/12/19 and Details and Notes, 11/12/19. The property contains 23.793 acres of land with Lot 1 being 10.760 acres (presently with house construction taking place applied for by Tino Janeiro) and Lot 2 being 13.033 acres. Torrington Area Health is in the process of reviewing the septic and IWWC has accepted the application with a decision due on January 6, 2020. Mr. Latour points out that this is a subdivision of the land and not a resubdivision as the property was afforded a first cut to Mr. Janeiro. P. Roche **motioned** to accept the application and set a public hearing date for Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the town hall, seconded by R. Perreault. Motion passed unanimously.

4. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION – REVISIONS TO THE 2010 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

It is noted that all members received a copy of the Northwest Hills Council of Government's comments on the draft Plan, and copies are available at this public hearing. Regarding Affordable Housing and Elderly Housing (pages 66 & 67 in the Plan), the Commission agrees that the Board of Selectmen need to address these matters and perhaps a letter from the Commission to the Board of Selectmen should be sent. This will be revisited at the next Planning Commission meeting to be held on January 8, 2020. In response to comments by Jocelyn Ayer, Community & Economic Development Director at Northwest Hills Council of Governments, who suggested that "the town include in their Plan an implementation table that includes overall goals, specific tasks or actions to achieve each goal and then name the board/commission/organization who will lead the effort for seeing that this goal is achieved over the 10-year period that the Plan is in effect", the Commission will address this at their next meeting.

P. Roche **motioned** to approve the amendments to the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development as presented with the suggested changes of the NHCOC that LUC Redmond will do. Once those changes are made, Chairman Orefice and LUC Redmond will do a final review before sending a final copy to the Office of Policy and Management, NHCOC, Harwinton Town Clerk and having it posted on the town's website. R. Perreault seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS.

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

P. Roche **motioned** to add to the agenda: **Election of Officers**, seconded by L. Hall. Motion passed unanimously. P. Roche nominated Michael Orefice to the position of Chairman and Lee Hall to the position of Secretary, seconded by D. Freidus. Motion passed unanimously.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

None.

8. CORRESPONDENCE.

None.

9. INVOICES.

None.

10. ADJOURN.

P. Roche motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m., seconded by R. Perreault. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Polly Redmond
Land Use Coordinator

RECEIVED FOR RECORD AT HARWINTON CT

ON 12-18-19 AT 12:30pm

ATTEST TOWN CLERK

James P. Boyan