



OLD VALUES - NEW HORIZONS

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### **Windham Economic Development Committee (WEDC) Approved Meeting Minutes Friday October 9 @ 7:30am Community Development Department**

#### **Attendance:**

Present: A. Letizio (Vice Chairman), R. Valentine, D. Morris, M. Oldenburg, G. Garfield, P. Gosselin B. Richardson, J. Desilets, L. Scott

Excused: E. Gallagher (Chairman), B. Higgins

Absent: B. Breton, (not required) L. Walker

#### **Pledge of Allegiance:**

A. Letizio started the meeting with pledge of Allegiance at 7:40 am.

#### **Approval of August 14 Minutes:**

We did not have a quorum of members today who were present at the August 14 meeting. Approval of minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

#### **Sub-Committee Overview:**

Technical Review: Discussion was held on the importance of reviewing the residential plans and applications as well as the commercial ones. It was reported by Mr. Valentine that a residential dwelling was approved by ZBA and PB to construct a home very close to a lot line which abuts an industrial parcel. The Northeastern CURP report dated 2015 made a note that we should consider providing buffer requirements for residential development when such development abuts non-residential property. As such Mr. Valentine recommended that we should also be reviewing the residential applications to determine the potential impact on non-residential development.

The committee is still looking for a member to sit on this subcommittee. Mr. Richardson is unable to commit to the position full time due to the meetings conflicting with his work schedule. Mr. Valentine volunteered to talk with Ms. Walker about the TRC liaison position. In the interim Mr. Richardson and Mr. Valentine will share the responsibility.

Market Square: Mr. Letizio discussed the genesis of the Market Square Subcommittee. A revised zoning ordinance has been forwarded to the planning board for their review and hopeful vote on sending the ordinance to a public hearing. Mr. Gosselin stated the major issue with the ordinance was with the store sizes. The maximum anchor store size is currently 40,000 square feet if the development has greater than 200,000 square feet. If the development is greater than 350,000 square feet than two 40,000 square foot anchor stores

can be built. A minimum of 75% of the stores are required to be less than 10,000 square feet. A maximum of 25% of the stores can be between 10,000 and 20,000 square feet.

Mr. Valentine expressed concern that the percentage of store space needed to add up to 100 percent. He feels this could potentially restrict redevelopment of stores as tenants move in and out.

The target development size of Market Square is 500,000 square feet with 5% being residential, 10 % office and 15% recreational. The maximum building footprint is 75,000 square feet.

Discussion was held on the Planning Board raising the percentage of office space from 5% to 10 %. Mr. Letizio and others are concerned that the developer may not be able to achieve the 10% or that may have to build space that will not likely be used due to the softness in the market. The committee discussed having Mr. Gallagher write a letter to the Planning Board stating we are in agreement with the ordinance with the exception that we would like to see the office space requirement back to 5%. In addition, Mr. Letizio suggested that we state our support for low impact development and the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as this development will impact those residents living in the watershed protection districts.

A motion was by Mr. Valentine and seconded by Mr. Garfield to authorize Mr. Gallagher to author the letter to the Planning Board stating:

- 1) Our support of the current version of the ordinance with the one exception being to reduce the office space to 5%,
- 2) Encourage low impact development and the use of BMPs, and
- 3) Remind the developers that they are subject to the watershed protection regulations.

The motion carries 6-0-1 with Mr. Gosselin obtaining because he will be acting on the ordinance as a Planning Board member.

**Master Plan:** Discussion was held regarding having the communications subcommittee educating the public that we failed to meet the goal for 2015 residential tax contribution. More specifically, the 2005 Master plan set a goal of 10 percent of the taxes being paid by non-residential properties by 2015. In 2005 it was 7.9 % while today it dropped to 7.6 %. It was acknowledged that we have many restrictions for commercial development and few for residential development.

9:00 AM - Mr. Letizio and Mr. Oldenburg had to leave. Mr. Letizio turned the Chairmanship over to Mr. Valentine.

**Sign Ordinance:** A brief discussion was held on nonconforming signs and the need to have them come into compliance even if a minor change such as a new tenant's name is made. It appears that the code enforcement staff understands the requirement however the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) has a different interpretation. Recently the ZBA overturned an enforcement action and stated that it was a misinterpretation of the ordinance. Mr. Desilets voiced his opinion that there are more pressing issues that need to be addressed and suggested we not try to put changes to the sign ordinance on the ballot.

9:10 AM - Mr. Gosselin motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Desilets and carried 6-0.  
Next Meeting: Friday, November 13, 2015