

Windham Economic Development Committee

Strategic Planning Sub-Committee

Meeting Minutes Tuesday Dec. 20, 2011

DRAFT

PRESENT: Bob Young, Diane Connolly, Bev Donovan and Ralph Valentine

Meeting called to order at the offices of Windham Economic Department at 7:38 AM

Bob Young brought up a discussion about chairing the sub-committee. Ralph agreed to continue as chairman, as Bev declined to take on the position.

The Committee received the 8 Citizen Petitions and all agreed to review them before the next Sub Committee meeting. Petition # 3 would be the focus of today's meeting. Paraphrased, the petition requests that the voters expand the current Cobbett's Pond Watershed Protection Ordinance (Section 616) to include the Canobie Lake Watershed.

The Committee was advised that petitions 1 thru 4 will be heard at public hearing on the Jan. 4, 2012 and petitions 5 thru 8 would be heard on January 11, 2012.

Ralph advised the Committee that Bill Schroeder, President, Canobie Lake Protection Association (CLPA) would be joining the meeting at 8:00 am to talk about the petition and to discuss EDC concerns about the petition as well as the current ordinance.

Bob talked about the Canobie Lake Study which was presented to the public in September. The study encompassed the total watershed which crosses the boundary line between Salem and Windham.

The committee discussed the petition and the ordinance and how it would impact commercial development and how it would impact current residential homes. Focus of the committee should be the impact on commercial development, although if residential homes are negatively impacted their values could be negatively impacted putting more pressure on the need for more commercial development to help with the tax burden.

Ralph mentioned the need for a "relief valve" in the language of the existing Cobbetts Pond ordinance to avoid onerous or burdensome regulations on both commercial and residential properties, since in most cases there are regulations already in place which prescribe similar requirements.

Bill Schroeder joined the committee at about 8 AM. Bill gave a brief history of the CLPA and the genesis of the petition. The CLPA is made up of both Windham and Salem property owners. His group felt, as does the EDC, that the quality of Canobie Lake needs to be protected and maintained, and that CLPA would support "Lake Friendly" development. Bill stated that if certain portions of the existing ordinance are duplicative or overly burdensome his group would support changes to said portions. Bill said Salem does not now have a similar ordinance nor is one proposed.

Both Ralph and Bob think more detailed information about the actual impact of the Cobbetts Pond regulations on property owners would be of a great benefit. This information would help direct a collaborative effort to impact the language in the existing ordinance which would balance regulatory requirements on all affected owners. CLPA and EDC agree on the principle of "Lake Friendly" development which balances the protection of the lake and the regulatory responsibility of development.

The consensus of the subcommittee is to recommend to the WEDC that the following statement be presented to the Planning Board at the December 28, 2011 public hearing:

"The WEDC applauds the initiative to protect the Canobie Lake watershed area which protections already cover the Cobbetts' Pond watershed in Section 616. The WEDC, however, is concerned about balancing regulatory requirements with the protections afforded by the ordinance. In collaboration with the CLPA, the WEDC may at some point monitor the actual impact of the watershed regulations on property owners and may, at a future date, suggest "relief language" be added to the ordinance to prevent duplicate or overly burdensome regulations from impacting property owners."

Motion by Bob second by Bev to adjourn the meeting at 9:30. Approved 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ralph Valentine