

**GRISWOLD PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

January 22, 2007

GRISWOLD TOWN HALL

I. PUBLIC HEARING (7:00 P.M.)

1. Call to order:

Chairperson G. Rooke-Norman called this combined public hearing of Griswold Planning & Zoning Commission and the Griswold Board of Selectmen to order at 7:06 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Chairperson Gail Rooke-Norman, Members Philip Anthony, Daniel DeGuire, John Schumaker, Alternates Martin McKinney, John Taylor, Town Planner Carl Fontneau, ZEO Peter Zvingilas, Recording Secretary Donna Szall

Absent: Member Clyde Seaman, Alternate Courtland Kinnie

3. Determination of Quorum

G. Rooke-Norman appointed M. McKinney to sit for Clyde Seaman. It was determined that there is a quorum for this public hearing.

A. Hatfield stated that she, First Selectwoman Anne Hatfield, and Second Selectman Paul Brycki were present. Bill Stetson is absent. She stated that there was a quorum for the Board of Selectmen.

4. Matter Presented for Public Comment

A. Draft Update to the Plan of Conservation and Development. This planning document reviews land use trends, sets goals with suggested implementation steps and time frames, and guides development and conservation for coming years. Display maps and goal implementation summaries will precede.

G. Rooke-Norman explained that the Plan of Conservation and Development was produced at no cost to the Town. She stated that the current planner and the prior planner Demian Sorrentino should be commended on the work done on this plan. She explained that the current planner will give the explanation of the current goals and implementation steps. G Rooke-Norman stated that after the presentation, we will open the floor to comments and suggestions from other board members and the public.

C. Fontneau stated that there are handouts at the back of the room. He explained the history of the present plan of conservation that was prepared by the SECCOG as a consultant to the town and was enacted in 1993. He stated that the Plan of Conservation and Development (PoCD) was to be updated every ten years and that the Town is a little late and clearly the 1993 PoCD is out of date.

C. Fontneau explained that the current plan was done in house and has been electronically digitized and with in-house mapping that makes the plan easier to amend.

C. Fontneau explained that the plan of conservation and development is a mission statement for public land use for the Town. He stated that the plan of conservation and development is on the Town's website as well as in the Town Clerks office and Planning Office. He explained that the plan was to provide advisory input.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that P. Anthony arrived at 7:12 pm. He made his apologies to the assembly.

C. Fontneau explained that the public hearings would probably be continued to February and March. C. Fontneau explained the goals and implementation section of the plan.

G. Rooke-Norman thanked the other boards and Commission for their input to the plan of conservation and development. She asked the Board of Selectmen for questions and concerns.

A. Hatfield thanked the planning and zoning Commission for their hard work and in saving the taxpayers' dollars. She thanked C. Fontneau for his work in taking over the project. She stated she was impressed with the document as a whole. She stated that the BOS will consider the goals and recommendations. She stated that she supported the planning document.

P. Brycki stated that the plan was well done and he thanked the former town planner for his work and the current town planner's work on the document. He thanked all the volunteers for their help on the document. There was discussion of this matter.

A. Hatfield stated that the plan is very thorough and that it could be amended from time to time within the ten year time line. There was discussion of this matter including the advantages of doing the work in-house.

P. Brycki stated his concerns in 4A, G-3, page 100 for sidewalks and that the side walk regulations should be reworked and cited some examples that included curbing and how the state policy of using salt on the roads would affect them. A. Hatfield stated that the Town Ordinance needed changes to address those concerns. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Brycki talked about the goals on Rte 164 and Rte 12 for commercial and industrial uses. There was discussion of this matter including concerns for spot zoning.

G. Rooke-Norman explained that the village commercial was to be encouraged especially on Rte 138. She stated that Rte 12 to Plainfield was considered for commercial within the plan. She stated that there had been no increase in the Industrial zoning so that the rural character and ecology could be preserved. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Anthony stated that Route 12 is the heaviest traveled route and it would be attractive for commercial development and would fall in line with the plan and be environmentally safe.

P. Zvingilas asked if there are areas where industrial could come in. G. Rooke-Norman stated the industrial concerns for manufacturing requires water and sewer support. There was discussion of the matter including an expansion of the industrial use on Rte 12.

Melvin Jetmore, Vice Chair of the Economic Development Commission stated that developers would come to town if there was an approved industrial zone since it is costly and time consuming for the developer to implement zone changes. He stated that the uses could be limited in the industrial zone. There was discussion of this matter including whether there was an industrial zone location in mind.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that on page 102 G-2, R-2 she wrote that P & Z Commission to review and analyze the addition of the industrial zone in the vicinity of railroad tracks, Rte 12 and other suitable areas. There was discussion of this matter including the use of rail to move materials.

Norman Higgins, Pleasant View, stated that the town should consider having sidewalks on one side of the road or the other for public safety; and that subdivisions of ten or more units should have sidewalks.

Dan Candales asked about R-5-I on page 116 concerning the approved changes to the zoning map to increase the minimum lot size requirement for residential use throughout the town. D. Candales asked what the Commission was looking for regarding minimum lot size and what zones would be affected. G. Rooke-Norman asked C. Fontneau to explain this. C. Fontneau stated that it is a general recommendation and explained that there are R-20, R-40, R-60, and R-80 zones and that there were no special recommendations made for the size of the lot. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Brycki asked about the on page 115 R-5-C changes were made to exit 85. He stated that he did not see any changes for exit 86. He stated that there is city water already available and that CL&P and Yankee Gas could be easily brought in. G. Rooke-Norman stated that there is a lack of sewer for the area. She stated that the plan could be revised to present an opportunity for development. There was discussion of this matter including extension of the sewer line up Rte 201 toward I-395.

P. Anthony asked A. Hatfield if there were grants available that could be obtained to extend the sewers on Rte 201 as an enticement to development. A. Hatfield stated that the focus is on the Borough for grants, citing that the Small Cities Block Grants are given to the Borough. She explained that there are other avenues, such as asking our congressman for funding as well as through STEEP grants which are more competitive. There was lengthy discussion of this matter including other sources of funding.

M. McKinney stated that it seemed that Lisbon was getting all the benefit of the waste treatment plant because of the way the payment was structured. He stated that it wasn't good for Griswold in that situation and the way it was structured let Griswold and Jewett City down with the high buy-in and tie-in fees for the sewers works against developers interested in Griswold. There was discussion of this matter including incentives to attract new business in the town.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that she made an addition to establish the highest priority with the Board of Selectmen, the JCDPCU and grant writers/coordinator to extend sewer lines to commercial and proposed commercial areas at exit 85 and exit 86 in the plan. There was further discussion of this matter.

P. Zvingilas asked if there was a provision for the town to purchase the water company. G. Rooke-Norman stated that it was an intriguing idea that is out of anything that we looked at. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Brycki stated that the state would accept from the town a competitive bid if the public utilities became available; the town would be notified and have a chance to bid on it.

J. Schumaker asked if the sewer could be extended up Rte 12. P. Brycki stated that it would not be feasible and explained why. A. Hatfield stated priorities have to be set for the sewer; they can't be extended every which way then it would do anyone any good.

P. Brycki explained that J.C. Electric looked at hydroelectric generation and that there was a site plan for using the Towns water sources but that there was no follow through by the Borough. He asked the Commission to consider hydroelectric power. M. McKinney stated that it was recommended by C. Kinnie that all the dams within the town could be utilized for this purpose. There was discussion of this matter.

M. Jetmore recommended that a paragraph be added to the plan for energy conservation methods for construction by developers. He gave some examples for energy conservation for municipal buildings and for commercial developers.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for public comments and suggestions.

P. Brycki pointed out in the plan where it addresses maintaining roads; he cited examples of where the traffic has increased because the roads are used to go to other towns. He explained that a traffic count was done on these areas. A. Hatfield asked when a traffic count was done. P. Brycki stated that it was done about 10 years ago. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that on page 108 R-1C that the Commission felt there should be an effort to formally abandon unimproved town roads and to get a program together. There was discussion of this matter including CT 8-24 reviews by planning and zoning.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for other comments or questions.

P. Brycki stated that he had a few more and that he will write them down to be discussed at another meeting. There was discussion of this matter.

D. Candales asked on page 116 R-6-A for clarification on revising the open space requirement. He asked if there would be another change to the open space. G. Rooke-Norman stated that the open space issue had been drafted about a year ago and that there have been some changes to open space requirements within the last year especially the fee-in-lieu of open space. She stated that there might be some others. She asked C. Fontneau to explain this. C. Fontneau stated that there are some minor changes to what already exists since the plan was developed over the past two years. He gave an explanation that the 7% would be increased to the statutory 10% for a conventional subdivision. There was discussion of this matter including that any regulation change would require a public hearing.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for any other comments from the board.

M. McKinney stated that he would like to see Griswold own the power plant rather than Jewett City. There was discussion of this matter including the issue of consolidation.

P. Anthony stated that the sidewalks should be the next priority, and he cited some examples within the Borough around the senior center where they were needed. A. Hatfield stated that she is working on a downtown renovation. There was discussion of this matter including that the town pays for the Borough sidewalks and drainage on Railroad Avenue.

G. Rooke-Norman asked who pays for the sidewalks. P. Brycki stated that the Town pays for much of the sidewalks under the agreement during the receivership. He stated how the grant works for locations of Borough based on income. A. Hatfield explained the process. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman stated for the record that she was flabbergasted that the Town pays for sidewalks instead of the Borough. There was discussion of this matter.

M. Jetmore stated that there are facade programs that are available. P. Anthony stated that he had discussions with the Borough warden regarding the small cities block grants to be used for the downtown facades and was told that the grants go to the sewer. There was discussion of this matter.

Ransom Young asked what receivership means and what happens in a receivership. G. Rooke-Norman stated that a receivership and what happens is not relevant to this public hearing.

R. Young voiced his concern for the lack of rider ship for the busses. He asked on page 114, G-1 that New London County has lost 25% of agricultural land, and cited other counties that lost less agricultural land. He stated that the Town should be developing minerals such as gravel and the Town should encourage it. He voiced his concerns for abandonment of unimproved town roads.

G. Rooke-Norman asked for comments from the Board. She suggested continuing this public hearing. There was discussion of this matter to continue it to February 26, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in this room.

M. McKinney made a motion to continue this public hearing to February 26, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

P. Anthony suggested looking at municipal parking for the Borough to encourage shopping within the Borough. He cited examples of small towns that are thriving because they have municipal parking. He stated that it should be a goal since it is desperately needed. There was discussion of this matter.

A. Hatfield stated that she is working on the parking issues at the Town Hall.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that there is a motion on the floor to continue this public hearing to February 26, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Joe Camputaro, American Industries, asked the Commission to consider widening the roads and with parking on one side of Rte 12 to make traffic flow easier for the large trucks. G. Rooke-Norman stated that parking is at such a scarcity and she would be reluctant to support that suggestion. There was discussion of this matter.

P. Anthony stated that municipal parking for the Borough be add to the plan of conservation and development.

J. Schumaker seconded the motion. G. Rooke-Norman asked for the vote. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

A. Hatfield made a motion to continue this public hearing to February 26, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. P. Brycki seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion was carried.

II. REGULAR MEETING (8:00 P.M.)

1. Call to order:

G. Rooke-Norman called the regular meeting of the Griswold Planning & Zoning Commission to order at 9:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Chairperson Gail Rooke-Norman, Members Philip Anthony, Daniel DeGuire, John Schumaker, Alternate Martin McKinney, Town Planner, ZEO Peter Zvingilas, Recording Secretary Donna Szall

Absent: Member Clyde Seaman, Alternate Courtland Kinnie

3. Determination of Quorum:

G. Rooke-Norman appointed M. McKinney to sit for C. Seaman. She stated that there is a quorum for this regular meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes:

A. Approval of Minutes of the Public Hearing of January 8, 2007

B. Approval of Minutes of the of the Regular Meeting of January 8, 2007

G. Rooke-Norman asked for a motion of the public hearing and regular meeting of January 8, 2007. P. Anthony made a motion to accept the minutes of January 8, 2007. J. Schumaker seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

5. Correspondence and Attachments:

There was no correspondence and attachments.

6. Matters Presented for Consideration:

A. Draft Update to the Plan of Conservation and Development. This planning document reviews land use trends, sets goals with suggested implementation steps and time frames, and guides development and conservation for coming years. Display maps and goal implementation summaries will precede.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that we have gone though the public hearing and any final decision should be tabled. P. Anthony made a motion to table this matter to February 26, 2007. D. DeGuire seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

7. Additional Business:

There was no additional business.

8. Old Business

There was no old business.

9. New Business:

A. Input from the Commission members to Town Planner on items in zoning and subdivision regulations needing possible revision.

D. DeGuire stated that the stone wall at the commercial subdivision on the Voluntown Road site in Pachaug was 8 inches wide. D. DeGuire will get more information for a reasonable wall width and height. G. Rooke-Norman stated that there was an expectation that the wall would be a certain way and that there was a safety factor. There was discussion of this matter including who the engineer was on the commercial subdivision and a request by the selectmen concerning letter that wall.

P. Anthony will speak with Gail Whitney regarding the P & Z concerns with the stone wall. There was discussion of this matter.

G. Rooke-Norman stated that D. DeGuire will get measures to C. Fontneau to write a regulation for stone walls for a February meeting. There was discussion of this matter including a definition and type of a stone wall.

M. McKinney stated that there was information about stone wall a few months ago. G. Rooke-Norman asked D. Szall to send copies of the stone wall materials presented by C. Kinnie at a previous meeting. G. Rooke-Norman asked if the Commission would be interested in revisiting the staff report of the January 8th meeting; that this information be on the agenda at the next regular meetings on February 12, 2007 and February 26, 2007.

J. Schumaker made a motion to put the zoning regulations revision on the agenda for the February 12, 2007. P. Anthony seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was carried.

10. Reports from the Enforcement Officer:

11. Adjournment:

D. DeGuire made a motion to adjourn. J. Schumaker seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna M. Szall
Recording Secretary