

OCTOBER 28, 2013

Attending the meeting: Jon Trefry, Tom Ayer, Phil Pouech, Mike Bissonette, Andrea Morgante, Joe Colangelo, Alex Weinhagen and attached list.

Jon called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and explained this in an informational meeting on the newly adopted rural zoning changes.

Alex reviewed the revisions effecting RR2 and the Ag districts and the proposal objectives of expanded allowed uses, to define design standards and to clarify development density.

Carol Muller, resident of Richmond Rd who has a 2 acre lot so is not affected by the changes asked if it is financially possible to exempt current landowners from the new density changes as she feels it is not fair to take away the option of subdivision from those landowners.

Jon said he would not necessarily say it is not possible financially but it is not written that way in the adopted proposal.

George Bedard said doing the build out quoted by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and given the number of homes built in a year in those areas; it would take the Town over 100 years or more to get to the maximum build out number.

Nancy Baker said the plan is based on a Town wide survey stating residents want to keep the rural nature of the Town. She added the PC worked hard to come up with this plan.

Mary Hurlie asked if 1780 lots is the maximum build out how many are currently in the RR2 and Ag districts. Jon said about 650. She asked how many were there back 20 years ago?

That number was not available but Alex added in the last 10 years about 10 ½ new homes were built.

Mary asked what the primary objection was that resulted in the petition to appeal.

Mike B said the first issue to him is the process itself. Sending the plan back to the PC does not mean an entire overhaul but fine tuning can be done. Secondly fairness to people.

Lynn Gardner said what the Town had seemed to work well and sees no reason to change it as there has not been rapid development in the two areas and with the current zoning it appears that will be the trend for the future.

Marie Gardner said she does not think limited building regulations are needed at this time and the Town should concentrate on the Village area where the development is taking place.

Tom Ayer said the Town does not know what kind of development will happen all that is known is the set number due to density. A developer could put 10 houses on 5 acres which completely changes the rural character.

Carol Muller asked if 2/3 of the proposal is acceptable to most people why not drop objective #3. Jon explained it has been adopted with all 3 objectives so the Board can't just remove objective #3 at this time.

Phil Pouech said he likes the idea of ½ acre lots and he feels it gives flexibility to landowners.

Jean Isham, PC member, emphasized the Plan was created with a lot of input and was a long process. The Town Plan set the tone for these regulations.

George Bedard said the Town Plan for a long time has been understood to be a wish list for the Town and was not voted on by the voters and is not regulations. In his 25 years on the PC there was no question of what density was. People who buy land and want to live in the rural areas in the East side of Town in the wildlife habitat want 3 or 5 acres and are not looking to live in clustered groups.

Nancy Baker addressed infrastructure – she said it is really nice to build in secluded areas but the Town is then being asked to make improvements to the infrastructure to accommodate that.

Gill Coates addressed the wildlife corridor. He pointed out the deer are coming to the areas where the houses are. He strongly agrees on having a vote on such important issues as to him that is a pure form of democracy.

Andrea agreed that the deer are in the housing areas and she feels a need to protect the ability to maintain the forests. Clustering of houses reduces fragmentation which leads to spreading of invasive species and effects forest regeneration and hunting.

Gill responded that if what Andrea is addressing is so important the Town should buy the land and preserve it.

Marie said that building in Town to date has not fragmented the forests and they are in better shape than years ago.

Phil Pouech agrees with Gill that a vote is a good way to go and will have a better overall outcome by having a vote. He feels communities have a need to control and obtain what the people want and he feels that is what the Town Plan is doing.

Jon said he is concerned with fragmentation and so supported the proposal. He felt the best way is to put something in place and adjust if needed with going forward given all the work put into the proposal.

Thistle Hill Rd

Jon moved the Board vote to set the date for the site visit to Thistle Hill Rd for road and infrastructure review in preparation for the Town taking over the roads to be on November 15, 2013 at 7:30 a.m. with the Public Hearing to follow at 7:00p.m. at the November 18, 2013 Selectboard meeting. Second by Phil and approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 on a motion by Tom, second by Phil and approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Spadaccini, secretary

