

Conservation and Open Space Commission
Minutes
Regular Meeting at Windham Town Hall
January 22, 2007, 7:00

Called to Order: 7:00 pm by Chairman Westerfield

Members Present Michael Westerfield, Jean de Smet, Barbara McGrath, Diane Smith.
Others Present: Tara Risley, Professor Catherine Carlson.

Citizens and Delegations: None

Approval of minutes of November, 2006: Approved (Smith, de Smet)

Correspondence: None

Presentation on Environmental Management by Catherine Carlson: Prof. Carlson gave a powerpoint presentation to the Commission, outlining the steps to take for Land Conservation. 1) Inventory existing public and private open space, and environmental resources that exist. We noted that Natural hazards and historic and visual resources are not incorporated into our final map. 2) Many methods can be used to prioritize and evaluate, but a general goal is to connect valuable patches. 3) Implementing the plan requires public buy-in through collaborative decision making, open meetings, involvement of all stakeholders (including developers, business and municipal). We need to work on this step. After consensus, there are many tools for implementation, including regulation, financial incentives, purchase, setting urban growth boundaries, easements, using overlay zoning, and creating environmental quality corridors. Prof. Carlson emphasized that increased density of development has significantly less negative impact from stormwater run-off.

Priority Resource Analysis: Members will read and make recommended changes within 2 weeks. The Planning Commission expects to present the new Plan of Conservation and Development soon, and there was discussion of whether our narrative needs to be incorporated into that plan. Our plan will continue to change, so the exact wording may not be necessary to incorporate.

Possible Recommendations for Preservation/Development: Tabled, as our latest map was not available. We assume it was borrowed by the Planning Commission.

Discussion of Conservation/Open Space Issues regarding Proposed Roanoke Avenue Development: After lengthy discussion, the Commissioners agreed that, although our map was not available, the proposed development is probably not in an area that is a priority for preservation, the affect on Inland Wetlands will be determined by that Commission, and any effect on public services is not within our purview. Some members expressed strong concern with the tendency to construct high density housing in previously undeveloped areas on the outskirts of the city. While our commission encourages high density development in the city, this proposal is not a cluster or a

conservation subdivision, and would be more appropriate as in-fill in existing previously developed areas.

Public Education: Tabled.

Other Business: Commissioners were surprised to learn that the Chronicle reported that the Town is planning to use our Open Space funds to purchase Little League fields from the American Legion. Jean will express our concern with the lack of input from our Commission at the public meeting.

Citizens and Delegations: None

Closing: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 8:40.

Respectfully submitted by Jean de Smet