

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 20, 2011 – 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Munn, Pritchard, Roper, Steinfeld, Sherrard
Alternate members present: Fitzgerald, Kane, Zod (6:18)
Staff present: Murphy, Oefinger, Norris, Greenleaf, Kadri,
Doolittle

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

II. ITEM OF BUSINESS

1. Town Council Referral, requesting a report pursuant to CGS 8-24 regarding the Thames Street Rehabilitation Program

Mark Oefinger, Town Manager, thanked the Commission for attending tonight's meeting. He gave a brief history of the Thames Street Project detailing the cost saving measures that the Committee has undertaken to get to the current proposed plan.

The Commission discussed with Mr. Oefinger questions and concerns that they had. Sidewalks, safety, State reimbursement, drainage, start of construction and lighting were some of the items discussed.

MOTION: To recommend approval of the Thames Street Rehabilitation Program and forward it to the voters for referendum and a May vote. The Commission notes that the program is in conformance with policy documents for the Town and the City, with respect to the Thames Street rehabilitation and revitalization.

Motion made by Sherrard seconded by Steinfeld, so voted unanimously.

2. Town Council Referral, requesting a report pursuant to CGS 8-24 regarding the Phase II School Facilities Program

Mark Oefinger gave the Commission a brief history of the Phase II School Facilities Program and introduced Paul Kadri, Superintendent of Schools, who addressed the Commission detailing the scope of the project. He distributed and discussed a presentation on the Phase II proposal and explained the efficiencies expected with the proposed changes.

Wes Greenleaf, Board of Education, addressed the Commission regarding the numerous lessons learned over the course of the Phase I program, which has been helpful in the development of Phase II.

Commissioner Steinfeld voiced his concerns with the Phase I school project and expressed concern over Phase II. Mr. Kadri and the Commission discussed, in detail, cost savings, teacher layoffs and reorganization.

Mr. Greenleaf discussed the details of the proposed buildings including interior changes, HVAC, air conditioning, construction costs, boilers and the operations savings of the project.

Mr. Kadri gave an overview of the new middle school site. The Commission and Mr. Kadri discussed questions and concerns that they had; specifically: Pre-K, parking, use of Poquonnock Plains Park, traffic, busing, cost increases, safety, alternative sites, Phase III and affected voting districts.

Staff addressed the Commission, addressing the project in the context of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development and zoning regulations. Staff also noted that zoning, access and other siting issues would need to be resolved if the referendum is approved.

MOTION: The Planning Commission sees some benefits but has concerns with various aspects of the Phase II School Facilities Program as presented, but recognizes that infrastructure problems need to be addressed. The Commission recommends that this be forwarded to the voters for referendum and a May vote.

Motion made by Sherrard seconded by Pritchard, so voted unanimously.

Mr. Kadri thanked the Commission for their time.

The Commission took a recess at 9:13 p.m. and reconvened at 9:22 p.m.

3. 2012-2017 Capital Improvement Program – Review and Recommendations

Mark Oefinger, Town Manager, briefly discussed how difficult this upcoming year is going to be. He mentioned that he has been encouraging the City of Groton to add highway CIP projects to the CIP, but they have included them in their operating budget proposal. He briefly discussed the Capital Reserve Fund and noted that we are most likely looking at deferring many projects for the next few years. Due to the late hour, the consensus of the Commission was that this item would be addressed at a special meeting on January 31, 2011 at 6pm in Community Room 2 at the Town Hall Annex.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. made by Sherrard, seconded by Pritchard, so voted unanimously.

Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Katie Doolittle
Office Assistant II