

PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 29, 2009 – 6:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX-COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular Members Present: Sherrard, Steinfeld, Roper, Pritchard
Alternate Members Present: Fitzgerald, Zod
Staff: Murphy, Oefinger, Schneider, Cullen, Gilot

II. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. 2010-2015 Capital Improvement Program - Review and Recommendations

Mark Oefinger, Town Manager, thanked the Commission for meeting to review the CIP and outlined the status of capital reserve funds and the probable lack of State funding available to Towns due to the state of the economy.

The Commission reviewed each project with staff, and supported the CIP with the following comments. Items are listed by project number and letter subsection referencing the draft CIP.

1. Roads, A) Pavement Management Program Implementation – Mark Oefinger stated that he is trying to get all the paving for the Town and the subdivisions into the CIP. The CIP is to capture the roads that can be repaired, not major reconstruction. Historically the Town has budgeted funding for paving in the CIP and the Public Works budget. The 2009 pricing of asphalt is not expected to decrease. The Commission supports the concept of pavement management and believes that the integrity of the program should be maintained.

1. Roads, E) Bridge reconstruction – Mark Oefinger said he is still in discussions with Groton Long Point regarding the inclusion of additional funding required for the Beach Road culvert bridge to be added to 2012.

1. Roads, H) Replacement of Defective Roadside Barrier System – Mark Oefinger said the replacement of the wood barriers to be replaced by metal beam barriers will be first on collector roads, and then to those secondary roads that are most dangerous.

1. Roads, J) Thames Street Rehabilitation – The project proposes Thames Street to remain two-way with on-street parking changes, streetscape, drainage, and includes the road from the Submarine Vets Memorial to end of exit ramp from I-95. A Town-wide referendum is tentatively proposed for Fall 2009. Commissioners noted that the project should be reviewed carefully since a significant amount of work to be funded by all Town taxpayers goes beyond basic road construction needs.

3. Sidewalks, C) New sidewalk construction - Route 1 – Mystic – It was suggested that a signal light be added at the crosswalk on West Mystic Avenue at this busy intersection.

3. Sidewalks, D) New Sidewalk Construction – Drozdyk Drive – Staff said the price of concrete this year is \$85,000 and asphalt is \$30,000. The Commission and staff concurred on the need for construction of this sidewalk.

The sidewalk at Kolnaski School, which was included in last year's CIP, was discussed.

4. Parks and Recreation, C) Park Improvement Plan – Staff explained and the Commission concurred with the need for an improved drainage system for the Poquonnock Plains Park.

4. Parks and Recreation, D) Open Space Acquisition and Development – The Commission felt very strongly about keeping this funded, although they understand the difficulties with this budget year.

4. Parks and Recreation, F) Golf Course Improvements – Mark Oefinger said this is to provide more hard-surface cart paths and tee box renovations.

4. Parks and Recreation H) William Seely School – The Commission discussed the locational benefits of using Noank School instead of Seely School as a community center.

The Council-created Reuse Task Force Committee has not been appointed yet for the Noank School. Several parties have expressed an interest in the Eastern Point School as well as the Colonel Ledyard School.

5. Education, B) Catherine Kolnaski – The school is in need of more parking spaces. Shades in the cafetorium and media center may be funded by any leftover budget funds. The Commission said they support these projects, but resources should be found outside of the CIP budget.

5. Education, C) Fitch High School – The handicapped parking issues at the high school were discussed.

5. Education, F) West Side – The Commission said the building security cost seems excessive and a less expensive solution should be found.

Mark Oefinger updated the Commission on the Phase II School Design Committee. He is allowing the new superintendent time to become more familiar with the district before the committee seeks his input to move ahead.

6. Public Buildings, B) Police Station – Mark Oefinger explained the project to modernize the prisoner processing and detention areas. This project is being prepared for a bond referendum in November 2011.

7. Technology, A) Network Infrastructure Upgrade – The Commission felt that network upgrades anticipated should always be specified.

7. Technology, B) Computer Technology Acquisition – Hansen – Staff said this can be moved out of 2010. Public Works is not yet ready for the implementation of the next phase of the program. The Commission concurred.

8. Economic Development, C) Economic Assistance Fund – The Commission strongly supported this fund, although they recognized the problems with this year's budget.

8. Economic Development, D) Crystal Lake Road – The Commission wanted to underscore the importance of this BRAC related project in the CIP to identify the importance of this area as one of Groton's strategic planning

objectives and to the region's economic well being. Murphy noted that the text of this project could be upgraded to address this issue.

The Commission reviewed and had no comment on the projects under Water Pollution Control Facility and Miscellaneous.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. by Steinfeld, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Pritchard
Vice Chairman/Secretary

Prepared by Debra Gilot,
Office Assistant II