



Rockingham Planning Commission

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MINUTES

ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION February 9, 2005 Salem Boys & Girls Club, Salem NH

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: B. Landman, Chairman (North Hampton); C. Cross (Newington); S & R Dodge (Seabrook); G. Coppelman (Kingston); G. English, F. Griffin (Exeter); A. Stoller, P. Griffin (Windham); M. Gross (Hampstead); F. McMahon, P. Olney, W. Bambury (Hampton); T. Moore (Plaistow); R. Day (East Kingston); G. Fredette (Salem)

STAFF: C. Sinnott (Executive Director); A. Pettengill (Business Manager)

GUESTS: R. Moldoff (Planning Director, Salem); M. Goodwin (Executive Director, Boys & Girls Club) M. Penney, A. Kenter (Geoinc); J. Ayotte (USGS); L. Anderson (NH Coastal Program)

I. Welcome/Introductions

Chairman Landman convened the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and thanked Salem representatives and the Boys and Girls Club for allowing the Commission to meet here. Goodwin, Executive Director of the Club gave some history on it. It's a brand new facility and opened in June. It took nine months to construct and is expected to cost a total of \$3.5 million. It also contains a Teen Center. The afterschool program has 240 children enrolled and 80 teens attend daily. Activities offered include swim team, basketball, cooking, theatre, kindergarten, early bird program. Goodwin noted that Gross and Moldoff were instrumental in the project.

II. Planning Update, Town of Salem

Ross Moldoff, Salem Planning Director, gave a brief update on Salem's recent planning activities. The Town recently changed their sign ordinance and no longer allow electronic signs except for temperature and time. The Town was taken to court and the judge ruled the ordinance unconstitutional since it banned some electronic signs but not others. There is a current proposal for an outright ban of electronic signs and much opposition. An impact fee increase is proposed to raise fees from \$2315 per single family home, to \$5532. He noted the Town has received proposals for approximately 400 elderly housing units in the past two years. The Planning Board has been amending the elderly housing ordinance to address density, height, location, affordability and age limits. In 2003 the Planning Board proposed a zoning amendment to require a Master Development Plan for the racetrack property. The amendment received 60% approval but failed due to protest petition by the racetrack. It's now expected that this property will become a large retail center, with potential for hotel, theater, supermarket and apartments.

III. Minutes of January 12, 2005

Olney moved to approve the Minutes of January 12, 2005 as presented; Fredette seconded. SO VOTED. Griffin, Coppelman, Cross abstained.

*****Agenda Items Taken Out of Order*****

IV. Groundwater Studies Update – Southeast NH

A. Groundwater Sustainability Study – Coastal Area: Project Update

Lindsay Anderson, Outreach Coordinator, NH Coastal Program, distributed an update on the Groundwater Database project in the NH Dept of Environmental Services newsletter “Availability of Groundwater Resources in Southeastern NH”. She explained that the project is an effort by many cooperative agencies to understand future water demands based on water storage and movement in surface and groundwater systems. The database currently contains approximately 10,500 locations where exploratory soil borings and/or monitoring wells have been drilled. Well database information comes from 1346 wells at 231 different sites. Many pieces of data are collected in hopes of establishing a groundwater database that will aid in the construction of a regional water flow model, a surficial geology map to provide insight into the distribution and thickness of surficial geologic materials to better the understanding of the resource, and a regional recharge map that will incorporate water recharge data.

Water use assessment will be one product of this data and will allow creation of future water use scenarios and bedrock flow models. Anderson fielded questions from the audience.

B. MtBE in Public and Private Wells

Andrea Kenter, Sr. Hydrogeologist with GeoInsights gave an overview of MtBe and the problems it creates with water sources. She explained that MtBE is a synthetic organic liquid that has been added to gasoline since the late 70s to increase octane and reduce vehicle emissions. It is colorless, tasteless and odorless. It’s use increased in 1990 after amendments to the Clean Air Act required the use of cleaner burning fuels and the addition of oxygenates to the gas.

Mike Penney, GeoInsights, explained the physical properties of MtBE. Because it has relatively high solubility in water, it dissolves in water and “likes” to be in water. It doesn’t vaporize easily and does not bind with soil. It won’t degrade and will not be consumed by bacterial. So, it has the potential for pervasive and persistent contamination of surrounding groundwater. He noted it is also a potential carcinogen. Penney reviewed the many ways it can be released into the groundwater, such as poor tank assembly, land surface deformation, mechanical damage, corrosion and vapor release. After a contamination has been detected, remediation includes digging it out, treatment with chemical oxidation and a point of entry treatment system. In July 2000, the State Legislature banned the sale and use of MtBE, but amendments changed the effective date. Penney said even modern filling stations with latest technology tanks and vapor recovery systems are likely to cause some level of contamination.

Joseph Ayotte, Hydrologist, USGS explained the occurrence in local wells and talked further about the remediation efforts. Many questions were fielded from the audience.

VIII. A. NHDES/604B Water Quality Planning Contract

Holden moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with NHDES for water quality planning as shown in Attachment 4; English seconded. SO VOTED.

B. NH Coastal Program Technical Assistance Contract

Holden moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with NH Coastal Program for local technical assistance; English seconded. SO VOTED.

C. National Flood Insurance Program

Holden moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with the National Flood Insurance Program for Floodplain Ordinance Review Community Assistance Visits; English seconded. SO VOTED.

*****Remaining Agenda Items were tabled for another date.

D. Other:

Sinnott distributed a letter he received on February 7th from the Southern Maine RPC requesting representation on an advisory committee being established to oversee an EDA Economic Adjustment Grant Study to develop economic redevelopment strategies in anticipation of the eventual closing of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Sinnott stated the study does not necessarily anticipate such closing in this BRAC round, but will begin to put together redevelopment/reuse strategies in case that occurs. *Griffin moved that Holden and Sinnott represent the Commission on the Advisory Committee, one to serve as alternate; Day seconded. SO VOTED.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Annette L. Pettengill
Recording Secretary

ACTION ITEMS:

Send letter to So. Maine Planning Commission re RPC representation on Study Committee