

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CPAC)  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**MINUTES OF MAY 14, 2008**

**(As Approved June 25, 2008)**

**Present:**

*Members:* Kate Bedard, Connie Clancy, Lucia Foley, Bob Gelinas, Martha Johnson, Dale Johnston, Jeremy King, Jeff Labrecque, Dan Luis, Jesse Lytle, Melissa O'Brien, Kurt Schenker, Martha Terry, Linda Young (Excused: Nathan Therien)

*Staff:* Richard Harris, Town Planner

*Liaisons:* Helen Fantini (Planning Board), John Hine (Selectboard)

*Public:* None

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**1. 6:30: Guest Speakers: Jeffrey Cyr, Water Superintendent – Fire District #1 and Bill Selkirk, Water Superintendent – Fire District #2**

Jeff Cyr, Fire District #1-Water Superintendent; Bill Selkirk, Fire District #2-Water Superintendent; and Frank DeToma, Fire District #2-Board of Water Commissioners were present to talk about the municipal water resources and concerns.

The CPAC members were provided with a variety of handouts by Mr. Cyr and Mr. Selkirk regarding the water systems. Mr. Cyr stated that the community has plenty of water supply. Mr. Selkirk echoed that sentiment. In terms of the water supply from Quabbin, Mr. Cyr noted that the district has not consumed nearly as much as they can draw from Quabbin.

Bob Gelinas inquired about the corrosiveness of the Quabbin-supplied water. Mr. Cyr stated that the water is not corrosive.

Mr. Cyr reviewed the District #1 water system noting that they installed the Industrial Drive water tank in 1992 to address the need for water pressure to serve the community's growth. The District does not have a mandatory water conservation plan. Rather, the plumbing code addresses measures which conserve water demand. Changes made 15-20 years ago in regulations and requirements are benefiting the water systems today as maintenance requirements have lessened, quality has been enhanced, and water demands are reduced.

Both districts maintain separate water systems to serve their respective geographical areas. However, interconnection between the water systems exists which allows them to serve each other when the need arises. At present, there are 7 points of interconnection between the two systems.

It is hoped that the water rates will remain stable for the next 5 years.

Mr. Hine inquired if the Quabbin Water Supply is stable given the demands in other parts of the state. Mr. Cyr noted that he had been able to negotiate a 10-year contract which provides a capacity of 3.8 million gallons.

Ms. O'Brien and Ms. Young asked about the benefits and advantages/disadvantages of having separate districts and the prospects of a merger. Mr. Cyr noted that the two districts provide separate water supplies which can be used to serve each other in emergency situations. He added that it is very possible for District #1 to provide the supply for District #2.

Mr. Selkirk noted his experience with 4 different efforts to merge the two districts.

In terms of District #2, Mr. Selkirk noted that they derive their supply from two wells. One well developed in 1963 has a depth of 139 feet and a pumping capacity of 1.3 Million Gallons per Day. The second well is fairly recent and has a depth of 129 feet and a pumping capacity of 3.0 Million Gallons per Day. However, for various reasons, the MassDEP will not allow the District to pump at the rate of 3.0 MGD.

Given that District #2 is reliant upon two wells for the source of the drinking water, Mr. Selkirk noted that the District is actively involved in aquifer protection efforts. This involvement led to development of a Water Supply Protection District provision in the Zoning Bylaw. When originally developed the Protection Zone was quite large; however, today, the area required for protection has been reduced considerably to ½ mile. The area around the wells has terrific soils for drainage.

One aspect of water supply protection which needs to be reviewed is the regulation of underground storage tanks. The Town bylaws used to have a section for underground tank regulations. However, Mr. Selkirk commented that this section was removed from the Town's bylaws when the new General Bylaws were developed. Whoever revised the General Bylaws was of the belief that the matter was regulated by the State. He noted, however, the local regulations can exceed the general State provisions. The Districts still have underground tank regulations; however, it would be helpful if the Town reinstated the underground tank regulations as well.

Questions of whether the Town sewer should be extended to all of District 2 and District 1 are periodically raised. Mr. Selkirk noted that such an issue is not a water issue. Mr. Harris stated that this matter was addressed when the Town's Sewer Facilities Plan was updated several years ago. It is the Planning Board and his position that municipal sewer should not be extended to Pearl Street or near that area since that would initiate much more intensive development pressures which would undermine efforts to protect the Mount Holyoke Range.

Mr. Selkirk described the significance of the Dry Brook Hill area for the well field. He noted how the area has to be protected. To this end, the Town and the District worked with the prospective developers of the condo community proposed to be located there, to insure that the development, if it occurs, will not adversely impact the wells.

The two superintendents discussed some of the technical aspects of merging the two water services including the need to size lines sufficient to accommodate the merger.

Water consumption has dropped substantially over the years as residential builders and commercial properties have become more efficient and IntelliCoat has diminished in its operations. Mr. Cyr noted that 20 years ago, District #1 consumed 240 Million Gallons per Year; however, in 2007, this consumption level had dropped to 160 MGY inspite of some population growth.

Mr. Johnston inquired about the water testing procedures and requirements. Mr. Selkirk provided a brief overview of the technical requirements and procedures. He noted that the State may begin requiring chlorination of the water. However, District #2 residents have consistently opposed such additional chemicals.

There was discussion about having Water Conservation Kits available. Mr. Selkirk stated that there were none for District #2.

Ms. Young thanked all 3 gentlemen for attending and stated they are welcome to stay for the rest of the meeting if they wished to do so.

Ms. Young stated that the CPAC would take a few minutes break between panelists.

**2. 7:30: Guest Speakers: Connie Clancy and Willie Thomas, South Hadley Housing Authority on Affordable Housing**

Ms. Young welcomed Connie Clancy and Willie Thomas of the South Hadley Housing Authority.

Ms. Clancy introduced Mr. Thomas, the Executive Director of the South Hadley Housing Authority. Mr. Thomas provided some of his professional background and noted that he has been with the Authority for 9 years.

Mr. Thomas provided an overview of the South Hadley Housing Authority's inventory:

- Lathrop Village – 95 units; 100% occupied
- Newton Village – 40 units; 100% occupied
- Abby Street – 12 family units; 100% occupied

The South Hadley Housing Authority will mark its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June 2008. Coinciding with this anniversary, the Authority, working with WestMass Elder Care, Inc., will open the doors to its newest facility – Hubert Place.

Ms. Clancy provided some background on this new facility being built on Canal Street:

- Assisted living – but affordable for low and very low income seniors
- Rent is based on a person's income
- 44 one-bedroom units and a resident manager's unit

Mr. Thomas noted that the need for new housing is reflected by the waiting lists maintained by the Housing Authority:

- 54 applications were received for Hubert Place within the span of 1 month
- 85 applications on file for family housing with an average wait of 8-10 years; 43 of the family housing applications are for 2-bedroom units with the balance being for 3 bedroom units
- 35 applications on file for elderly housing (at least a 1 year wait)
- 22 of the applications for Hubert Place are from South Hadley residents
- 12 of the pending applications for family housing are from South Hadley residents
- 12 of the pending applications for elderly housing are from South Hadley residents

Ms. Clancy and Mr. Thomas described the process used for development of the Hubert Place beginning with formation of a committee 7-8 years ago to examine the community's housing needs. Funding for development of the facility and operation of services has been pieced together from multiple sources.

Efforts are underway by the Housing Authority to explore the potential for additional housing opportunities. Ms. Clancy and Mr. Thomas have met with representatives of the Mass Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to explore funding opportunities. However, to begin the effort, the Housing Authority needs to secure some land – preferably from the Town. Ms. Clancy commented that they would like to acquire a portion of the “Toth property” which is being acquired by the Town behind the Newton Manor property.

Two primary programs offering funding resources are: HOME and HIP. These are Federal/State partnership programs.

There was discussion about the requirement for affordable housing under Chapter 40B, MGL. Mr. Harris noted that the Town is just under or near 5% “low/moderate income housing” as inventoried under Chapter 40B. The “requirement” is 10% for all communities. He reviewed the ramifications of not being at or above 10% including the prospect of a Comprehensive Permit application

Mr. Thomas noted the need for incentives to be able to develop new affordable housing.

Ms. Clancy reviewed the Housing Authority's organizational structure. She also noted how the Authority relates to the organization for developing and operating Hubert Place.

There was discussion of some potential sites for new housing. Mr. Thomas responded to a question about the Gaunt property by indicating that the property was no longer available to the Authority – at this time.

Mr. Thomas provided his email address for members who wished to contact him about housing issues: [southhouse69@comcast.net](mailto:southhouse69@comcast.net)

Ms. Young thanked Mr. Thomas and Ms. Clancy for such an informative description of the Housing Authority's activities, resources, and concerns.

### **3. Minutes of April 23, 2008 Regular Meeting**

**Motion** – Mr. Gelinas moved and Ms. Bedard seconded the motion to approve the April 23, 2008 minutes as presented. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

### **4. Review of Subgroups and Meeting Schedules**

Mr. Harris stated that the Transportation element is not ready for review. A draft should be provided for the May meeting.

### **5. Review of Town Meeting Activities**

Mr. Harris noted that Town Meeting appropriated the additional \$40,000 for completion of the planning effort. However, the Moratorium proposal was voted down. He noted that the Planning Board will be discussing issues surrounding consideration of Special Permit applications at their next meeting.

Mr. Gelinas suggested that Mr. Harris should talk to the Committee about the Zoning Bylaw – just to provide an overview of what the Zoning Bylaw does.

### **7. Other Upcoming Events**

Ms. Young noted that there is an Open House for the Ledges Clubhouse and inquired about having a display for the event. Members indicated they thought that would be a good idea. A similar display may be appropriate for the July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks.

Mr. Harris stated that he will ask Ralph to provide an outline of the plan and the “boilerplate” of these first 4 elements for each of the subcommittees to review.

**6. 8:40: Review and selection of secondary pictures for website**

Ms. Young stated that Mr. Johnston had provided some 40+ photos for review for possible inclusion in the website. Two laptop computers were setup for viewing of the photos. Each member was asked to review the photos and provide their rating. Mr. Harris distributed a listing of the photos on the cds with a rating system to use. Mr. Johnston noted that some of the photos are best if viewed full screen and that the listing provided by Mr. Harris incorrectly describes some of the photos.

Members reviewed the photos and submitted their rating forms to Mr. Harris.

**8. Adjournment**

**Motion** – Mr. Lytle moved and Mr. Schenker seconded the motion to adjourn. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*As Approved*

Richard Harris, Recorder