

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

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

(As Approved October 29, 2008)

Present:

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

Staff: Richard Harris, Town Planner

Liaisons: Helen Fantini (Planning Board), John Hines (Selectboard)

Public: None

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meetings – August 27, 2008 Regular Meeting

Mr. Harris stated that these minutes were not available at this time.

1a. Discussion of Regional Rail Transportation Plan

Ms. Bedard and Ms. Johnson stated that they attended the regional meeting on this project. Their assessment is that this is a real project which is driven by economic forces. It will have an impact on the region and South Hadley.

Ms. Bedard offered to write up her notes on the meeting for distribution to CPAC.

2. Review Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Regulations

Mr. Harris began a review of the Zoning Bylaw and Subdivision Regulations by providing a brief history as to the origins of modern zoning. Zoning Bylaws, in their basic form, regulate land use and have limited regulation of the land development process. Subdivision Regulations establish the process and requirements for subdivision of lands.

Massachusetts has a very archaic system of enabling legislation as it relates to zoning and subdivision issues. There are efforts to reform the legislation; however, for now we must work with what is in effect.

South Hadley's Zoning Bylaw has evolved and been transformed since originally adopted in 1946. The last major overhaul of the Zoning Bylaw was in the 1970's. Since that time, the bylaw has been amended on a "piecemeal" basis.

Overtime, South Hadley has come to rely on use of Special Permits to address many land use issues. Generally, the minimum lot sizes have increased.

South Hadley has a somewhat segregated zoning structure in that it is not “Euclidean”. A less restrictive district may not always allow uses that are allowed in a more restrictive district.

There are twelve zoning districts in South Hadley:

- One Agricultural
- Four Residential
- Four Business
- Three Industrial

Plus there are two “overlay” zoning districts.

As an example of how the zoning districts are “segregated” in terms of their permitted uses, Mr. Harris noted that most of the Business and Industrial districts do not allow residential uses.

Members asked various questions about what uses are allowed and the process for approval of projects.

Mr. Harris noted that uses are regulated in the following manner:

- Permitted by right
- Permitted by right, but subject to Site Plan Review
- Permitted only by Special Permit
- No permitted

He reviewed how each of these classifications varies.

3. Discussion of planning for the Fall Community Gathering

Ms. Young noted that this event is scheduled for November 12, 2008 – subject to receipt of the draft elements. Planning for this event will be a subject of the October 29, 2008 meeting.

Several members expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of VHB, Inc. It was noted that the Issue Papers were not delivered as soon as was needed. Similarly, the initial draft of the Transportation chapter (in the Spring) was sorely incomplete and deficient. There was an expectation that the draft chapters would be delivered quickly after the Issue Gatherings sessions were completed – all of the subcommittees worked diligently to finalize the papers as a follow up to the summer events. But, the planning for the Fall Community Gathering is having to be undertaken cautiously because the chapters have not been provided as expected. There was voiced some concern as to how the CPAC, whose members have devoted considerable time to this effort, will be able to complete the Comprehensive Plan.

4. Heritage Landscape Inventory program application

Mr. Harris described the proposed project which will involve identification of community elements which reflect and characterize South Hadley's heritage. He stated that this project could provide significant input to several of the elements which are to be undertaken as Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Plan. An endorsement by the CPAC would be helpful to the Town's efforts.

Motion – Ms. Clancy moved and Mr. Gelinas seconded the motion to endorse the Town's application for the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program and authorize the Chair to sign a letter of endorsement. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

5. Other Upcoming Events

- a. **Status of Banner(s).** The banners have not been moved. There was discussion as to possible locations for their relocation.
- b. **Columbus Day.** CPAC will have a table either at the Gaylord Library or on a spot provided by Mount Holyoke College during the morning and early afternoon.
- c. **Falls Clean Up Day (October 18, 2008).** Ms. Young commented that a group has organized for a "Falls Clean Up" on October 18, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The rain date is October 25, 2008.
- d. **Michael's Market.** This building is to be demolished in the near future.
- e. **Subcommittee Meetings.** The subcommittees identified the following dates for their meetings:
 - Transportation – October 8, 2008 (would like to have Matt Chase present)
 - Housing – October 8, 2008 (would like to have VHB representative present)
 - Economic Development – October 15, 2008 (would like to have VHB representative present)
 - Municipal Facilities – October 22, 2008 (would like to have VHB representative present)

6. Adjournment

Motion – Mr. Therien moved and Ms. Bedard seconded the motion to adjourn. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

As Approved
Richard Harris, Recorder