

Charlemont Master Plan Action Committee Meeting
July 13, 2006
Minutes

Present: Paul Fantucchio, Ruth Cannavo, Amy Wales, Gisela Walker, Dan Miller, John Hoffman, Josh Smith, Neal Lear, Suzanne Willard, Doug White, Gloria Jean Purinton . Peggy Sloan, Planning Director, FRCOG; Greg Lewis, WCty News

The locale had to be changed to the Charlemont Inn as the Hawlemont Cafeteria was not available.

Committee approved the minutes of the June 8th meeting

GWalker passed around a list of previous committee participants and encouraged people present to become officially appointed.

Review of the complete draft zoning revisions:

GWalker gave a brief summary of the major changes that differentiate this first draft from the old zoning regulations from 1979:

1. Replacing the one-size-fits-all Rural-Residential (RR) zoning district with three or four suggested new ones: Village Centers (town center and East Charlemont), Village Residential, Mohawk Trail Agricultural and Scenic District, and RR for the rest of town.
2. Proposed increase of minimum lot size from 1 to 2 acres in the last two districts above.
3. Addition of Site Plan Review process for larger development projects
4. Cluster Zoning provision for subdivisions
5. Dimensional changes (setbacks) specified for the individual districts
6. Providing clear Home-Based Business guidelines
7. Parking lot and signs provisions
8. Procedural clarifications.

Walker thanked PSloan for her assistance and expertise in the process so far and for the excellent maps the FRCOG has provided to the town .

This was followed by questions and discussions of specific issues such as

- the likelihood of manufacturing moving into town and where to put it;
- the impact of the Endangered Species Act and Floodplain regulations,
- the length of specific setbacks,
- the height of buildings in relation to fire fighting equipment,
- the expansion of the proposed Mohawk Trail District south of Rte. 2 to the River,
- new technology re cell phone towers,
- how to minimize visual impacts on the Mohawk Trail without rigid zoning dimensions, and
- the validity of an East Charlemont Commercial/Village District.

PSloan re-iterated that this is a first draft, that much input will be collected and that many details will most likely change.

The agenda then moved to the outreach campaign that needs to take place to bring as many residents into the process as possible.

GWalker went over a timeline she had developed assuming that the Zoning Regulations will be voted on at annual town meeting some time in May.

The key features of such campaign were a set of Public Meetings in early October, a first Public Hearing in December, Neighborhood meetings in various parts of town early 2007, targeted meetings with landowners of the various districts and a second Public Hearing in April. The Committee discussed the best ways to reach out to people, PFantucchio described the new telephone message system that delivers automatic messages to all households; we discussed mailing postcards, using the town website and the newspaper.

John Hoffman and Amy Wales agreed to assist GWalker with developing the outreach campaign and materials further.

The next meeting will take place on the 2nd Thursday in August, 8/10 at 7 pm

PS

The dates for Public Meetings have since been set for October 12 and 16, 2006!