

**Westfield Planning Commission
Minutes
August 22, 2018 – 5:30 p.m.
Westfield Town Office, 38 School Street**

Attendees:

Brian Dunn, Dianne LaPlante, Yvan LaPlume, Pat Sagui
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk,
Guest: Jens Hilke, Dept of Fish and Wildlife

1. Call Meeting to Order

6:48 pm

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda

None

3. Motion/Second to Approve Minutes from the July 18, 2018 Meeting

Motion by Yvan, 2nd by Brian. Unanimous.

A. Business from the Minutes

None

4. Guest: Jens Hilke, Conservation Planning Biologist, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

- review maps

There are five (5) maps, available to the public at the Town Office during regular business hours. Each maps a different feature: conserved land; priority wildlife crossings; forest habitat blocks (85% of town); water ways and wetlands; locations where there are rare, threatened and endangered species.

PC requested a list of the types of rare, threatened and endangered species identified in Westfield. Jens will provide.

- discuss recommendations to maintain/improve wildlife habitat and connectivity between smaller forest blocks. Identify priority locations to maintain/improve.

Recommendations:

- The new forestry section is informational, not regulatory. Westfield's forests are part of a larger 50,000A forest block (west, north, south). Celebrate forests blocks as a natural resource with long term economic and resiliency value. Take those values into consideration in Town Plan
- Work with NVDA to develop natural resource map that includes forest blocks, and wildlife resource map
- Work with Jens to develop a plan for long term protection of priority wildlife road crossings; identify non-regulatory actions to enhance protection of road crossings such as outreach to landowners where there are priority crossings. This is especially important between smaller forest blocks in the valley.
- include language in Town Plan to protect locations with rare, threatened and endangered species from development. Provide information to landowners about funding available to purchase easements on these locations.

5. Plan Updates

∞Survey Responses

- top three takeaways – PC members can provide along with other comments on the draft plan.
- options to use survey data in Town Plan update – Alison and Pat will propose options to incorporate in addition to recommendations from PC members and SB members.

∞ **Energy Section** for Substantial Deference before the Public Utility Commission (PUC)

- Inventory and select preferred sites:

Westfield does not have closed mine sites, superfund sites, or closed dumps. These are three of the four categories of 'preferred sites' for commercial wind/solar identified by the Public Utility Commission. The other is closed gravel pits. While there are some, most are small, overgrown, or more than a mile from Single Phase power line.

• NVDA Regional Plan Energy Section has been approved by the PUC for Substantial Deference. Westfield's plan must align with the Regional Plan.

<http://www.nvda.net/files/2018-chapter-2-energy-2nd-revision.pdf>

∞ **Village Center Designation**

• Selectboard will vote at September meeting. If yes, need to add relevant language to Town Plan.

∞ **Resilience Section**

This is a new section mandated by the state and refers to planning for more extreme flooding events. Alison Low and Pat are preparing a draft to circulate along with rest of the draft plan.

6. Timeline for Plan Adoption

At this time, no change.

Dec 10 – Selectboard adopts at regular Dec meeting, preceded by public hearing the same night

Nov 24 – 15-day notice of Selectboard public hearing gets posted

Nov 5 – Planning Commission Public Hearing/presentation of plan

Oct 20 – 15-day notice of Planning Commission public hearing gets posted

Oct 4 – Copies of draft plan and public notice sent to adjoining towns 30 day prior to Planning Commission hearing

7. Confirm tasks/timeline for August 22 – September 17

Comments on Draft Plan

7A. Confirm Next Meeting Date

September 17

8. Other Business

- Agree on tentative meeting dates to act on ZA denial of building permit to rebuild Alpine Haven Holdings, LLC condominiums
- Dianne raised the question of whether we could paint a cross walk across Rte 100 near the store, even if it wasn't a mandatory traffic stop crosswalk. Pat will follow up with NVDA transportation specialist and/or VTrans

9. Motion/Second to Adjourn

Motion by Dianne, 2nd Brian. Unanimous.

Adjourned 8:05 pm