

Minutes of the Planning Board Public Meeting

Town of Gill

9-9-10

Members Present:

Doug Smith, Chair
Dick French
Jeff Blomstedt
Tim Storrow

Also present were Tupper Brown, Energy Resources Commission, Fred Sheard and members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. Smith turned the floor over to Tupper Brown to discuss the Green Communities Action.

Brown explained that he was there in place of Claire Chang and had talked with Peggy Sloan, from FRCOG briefly regarding the zoning aspects. Brown noted that the principal aspect of being a green community is the passing of as of right siting for research and development and the placement of businesses related to renewable energy such as windmills, solar, etc. Brown went on to say that since Gill has no sites suitable for windmills, and solar requires a 250 mw facility, the simplest solution is to have a village commercial district, which would allow as of right siting for manufacturing or R&D of Green businesses, but that it must be broad enough to allow for 50,000 square feet in aggregate dedicated to renewable energy.

Storrow stated that the Board was against changing their zoning for something that may not even happen, and asked what the benefit would be.

Brown stated that the benefit would be the possibility of state grants.

Storrow felt that changing the zoning would change the ground rules for what happens in Gill, for something that may not even happen, and therefore would be a waste of the Board's time.

Storrow stated that for him, there has not been a compelling case for this yet.

Brown explained that they may be able to become a Green Community without changing their zoning.

Discussion ensued with regard to the need for parking, road cuts, and state highway permission, and whether there is enough space in the town for 50,000 square feet of renewable energy businesses, even scattered around. Brown stated that the Energy Resource Commission needed to know if the Planning Board is interested in playing a supportive role in helping to obtain Green community status, and is willing to deal with issues that may arise, and needed to know if they should go forward or give up.

The Board felt that before they adopt by right siting, they should see if there is even the capability of it, and a compelling case for it; the fact that they would be a Green community in and of itself would not be enough initiative, and they didn't want to do it just to get the grant money. The Board also felt that they are a small town with a limited land base, and there are neighboring towns more suitable to this than Gill. The Board further felt that they were not

Note: These minutes are considered draft until approved by the Board

disadvantaging themselves by not doing by right siting, but that they were protecting themselves from anyone just coming in and doing whatever they want, without having to go through the usual process. Green businesses can still go through the Special Permit process through the ZBA and the ZBA could always give them special consideration because they are a green business. The Board felt that the Energy Resource Commission has asked them to make decisions without giving them enough information.

Brown and the Board discussed Peggy Sloan coming to a Planning Board meeting, and the Board agreed that if Sloan was willing to come to their meeting in October to discuss this further, that they would be willing to listen.

The Board thanked Brown for his time.

French stated that he would like to see the Board work on a vision plan for Gill, and suggested spending some of their meetings working on that. The Board felt this was a good idea.

The Board asked Fred Sheard if he was interested in becoming a member. Sheard stated that he was interested and would consider, but felt that he was not real experienced in planning. The Board thanked Fred for coming to their meeting.

The Board reviewed and approved the minutes from their 10-8-09, 4-8-10, and 8-5-10 meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. The next meeting will be Thursday, October 14th, 2010.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carlene Millett,
Clerical Assistant