

**Town of New Haven Selectboard Public Hearing on the
Proposed Town Plan
7:00 pm
Wednesday, December 14, 2016
Town Hall Cafeteria**

Present: Chair, Kathy Barrett, Vice Chair, Steve Dupoise, John Roleau, Doug Tolles, Jim Walsh and Clerk Pam Kingman

Visitors: Marcia Dupoise, Suzanne Sawyer, Daniel Monger, John Madden, Maura Lester, Sam Lester, Taborri Bruhl, Francie Caccavo, Susan Smiley, Doug McKain, Ruth Penfield, June Moncrief, Mel Simmons, Barb Torian, Tim Bouton, Susan Schaefer, Polly Darnell, Craig Zondag, Benj Putnam and Cindy Hill

Kathy Barrett opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

She asked folks to please sign in and to take a copy of the town plan.

This hearing is on the new town plan that the Selectboard put together, adding to what the Planning Commission had started. There are major sections added in the area of solar and energy and many statistics have been added to strengthen the positions of the Town.

Kathy opened the meeting up to questions.

An overview of the meeting is as follows:

- A lot of discussion around solar, some in the audience felt this plan did not lend itself to what the overall view of the public is.
- There is no other town that we are aware of that has “tackled” the energy piece, incorporating it into their town plan.
- Members of the Planning Commission feel the Selectboard has “fast tracked” the plan to get it through by Town Meeting. The PC had worked hard on the Plan for 20 months; they held public meetings for input; which the Selectboard has not done. Some of the plan is redundant, especially in the energy section.
- Feel the plan is giving off a negative vibe about our town
- Discussed the maps that outline where solar can be supported, and where it can't. At this point most of the electrical lines in Addison County are overloaded, and cannot accommodate any more solar.
- Selectboard does not feel they have fast tracked. They started working on it in July, and have had 2 work sessions since.

- Folks raised issue with some of the type setting. Cindy Hill, who put the majority of the plan together, said she did her best. The final copy will be cleaned up by a graphic artist.
- The town has intervened in many solar projects, mostly over concerns of the size; or siting, screening and setbacks. Some solar has been done well, but folks need to be conscious of their neighbors and not place the array right on the property line. We have spent \$120k over the past 2 years fighting solar. Some solar developers work well with the town, while others just don't care.
- Would like to see solar arrays for personal use, not being sold off out of state.
- Discuss the process of moving a town plan to a vote. Kathy Barrett put on Front Porch Forum today telling people if they could not make it to tonight's meeting; they could submit their concerns is writing. The Selectboard will discuss them at the next meeting on Tuesday, December 20th.
- Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) has not written their "energy standards" yet. Because of this, if our plan gets voter approval, then we will forward it to the Dept. of Public Service for certification with respect to all section 248 applications. The Dept. of Public Service has a checklist of 14 items for energy standards, which the Selectboard and Cindy Hill went through one by one adding them into our town plan. If you don't include every one of these items in that order the town may not have "substantial deference" in future 248 hearings.
- If the Town waits for ACRPC, we could miss out on some grants, and we would have no say in solar projects, or any ACT 250 permits. Some grant opportunities include planning grants, Village Designation and town owned lands. We need standards in the plan to have a leg to stand on.
- The Selectboard admits, the plan is not perfect, but it would put something in place. Then the Planning Commission could make changes over time.
- The Selectboard would like to see more room on the power lines for personal use. Farmers could install methane digesters, and help power their farms, but with the lines so clogged now, there is no room.
- Maps were discussed. Many of the maps in the new plan are exactly what the previous town plan had; the only new maps are

in the energy plan portion which depicts the constraints on the power lines.

- Discuss getting more involved in the town; there is one spot open on the Planning Commission and two on the DRB.
- PC members wish they too had access to Cindy Hill like the Selectboard did while re-writing the town plan. They hope they will have full access in the future. The Selectboard agreed, any Town committee has access to Cindy through the chair of that committee or through a person designated by the committee.
- The PC heard from many different people on all issues, but the diversity in the different voices is not coming through in this plan. Why didn't the Selectboard get more public input?
- The PC said they never formally received the town plan.
- John Madden feels this plan like past ones will open our town up to "urban sprawl" and shopping centers. There is an emphasis on high density residential. All looked at the planning areas map, which had a slight change by the PC, making some areas smaller.
- Some of the maps need tweaking, Jim Walsh was asked to work with Regional Planning on this.
- Jim Walsh raised concerns about not having up to date maps in the new plan, he would rather wait and hold a special town meeting and have the maps be right. Discussion about the Selectboard being given tasks to work on and how there has been ample time. Why is this being brought up now, instead of at an earlier time.
- The issue of Resource Extraction was brought up. 3 out of the 5 members agreed it should not be restricted to the industrial zone. Whereas the others have major concerns that gravel pits and quarries could pop up all over town. If it is left out of the industrial zone, it would have to go through the DRB, who would set hours of operation, have them install a pond to keep dust down, define when trucks could access it, and define the noise issue. Discussed putting the restriction to the industrial zone for Resource Extraction back in, some folks are more comfortable with it. Some thought if it was left out, then the property owner could petition the town to have the area zoned differently. This has been done in town for a few properties. Jim Walsh asked Kathy Barrett if she was related to the Heffernan's who own a gravel pit off Plank Road. She said she has a sister married to a

Heffernan and a brother married to a Heffernan, neither one of them have any kind of ownership or financial interest in the gravel pit.

- Pike Industries has been in operation in New Haven since 1973.
- Discussed all the Boards working more cohesively, have joint meetings throughout the year.
- The random quotes that are scattered throughout the plan were also a topic of discussion. Some people liked them throughout; others would like to see them just listed in the appendices. These quotes were taken from the Planning Commissions public informational meeting held in the Town Hall gym, all the quotes were put up on the wall for all to see what other residents were thinking.
- After this meeting, the Selectboard can only make changes that are not substantive to the plan. The final hearing would be Town Meeting on Monday, March 6, 2017, prior to voting on it by Australian ballot on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 .
- Some PC members would like to see the solar piece opened up a bit and not be quite as restrictive. The survey results the PC received, many said they would like to have solar in town.

The Board thanked everyone for coming.

The next scheduled meeting is on Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 5:00 pm. From 5 -7 the board will be working on the budgets.

Adjourn: 9:50 pm

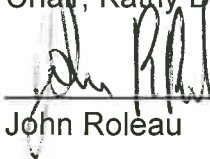
Respectfully submitted:

Pam Kingman

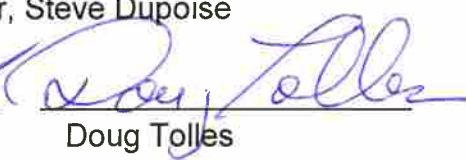
Approved:

Chair, Kathy Barrett

Vice Chair, Steve Dupoise


John Roleau


Jim Walsh


Doug Tolles