

9. Planning Board Annual Report

July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008

- a. **Members: 5 appointed by Town Moderator**
- b. **Term of Office: 5 years (Adopted Article 3, Special Town Meeting 10/17/73; amended Article 8, Special Town Meeting 6/18/74 and again as Article 29, Annual Town Meeting 5/19/75)**

It was a busy and very productive year for the Planning Board. After three years of work the Zoning Task Force presented its work to the Planning Board, which passed it on to the Selectboard. The 25 pages of Zoning Amendments passed the Annual Town Meeting in May and we are awaiting the results of the Attorney General's review. On February 21, 2008, the totally revised Subdivision Regulations were approved after a Public Hearing. We expect both the Subdivision Regulations (with an enclosed CD of the Regulations in .pdf format and the Forms in Appendix B in MS Word .doc format) early in the next fiscal year.

After over thirty years of distinguished service Albert Alden retired from the Board. We shall miss his sage wisdom and keen eye for detail. He was replaced by Nicholas Arguimbau.

The Board recognizes the hard work of Brad Compton, who has earned his stripes by doing extensive edits of all drafts, and by long hours sorting out computer problems associated with publishing the Subdivision Regulations and inserting headers and footers and keying the table of contents to the sections. He was almost solely responsible for getting the Subdivision Regulations into final form and translating them into .pdf format.

The Board recommended that maintenance of East Rum Brook Road be discontinued. Following the legally required public hearing the Selectboard did discontinue maintenance of the road.

At an October Special Town Meeting changes to the Zoning Bylaws were approved prohibiting more than two dwelling units in a principal structure and requiring two buildable acres per dwelling unit. The posting of the Public Hearing for these changes was challenged. Jan Conover of the ZBA, Town Clerk Jeannette Fellows, and Selectboard member Jim Toth met with Ted Cady, Chair of the Planning Board, at the Town Hall. It was determined that the Hearing had been legally posted. No one appeared at the hearing, but several did appear after the hearing closed. The Planning Board agreed to take written testimony from the four late arrivals.

The October Special Town Meeting approved Hettie Belle Lane. At the request of the Selectboard a special meeting of the Planning Board was called for October 17, at which the Plan for Hettie Belle Lane was signed. This was the only plan approved by the Board this year, a very unusual situation and probably a reflection of the depressed real estate market.

Part of the Planning Grant the town received included consideration of zoning changes to create a Village Center Zoning District. A Village Center Committee was formed and had several meetings. Eventually the Village Center Committee

decided to drop the effort for now for lack of strong support. It seemed there was a “if its not broken don’t fix it” attitude among residents.

In November a Public Information Meeting was held to explain the proposed zoning changes and the Public Hearing was held on January 16, 2008.

The county portion of Brush Valley Road running from Route 78 to the top of the hill was discontinued some years ago. This left a short section of Brush Valley Road running from Beech Hill Road to a dead end, which was judged by the Highway Superintendent to be confusing. He proposed changing the name of the short remaining portion of Brush Valley Road to Beech Hill Road. The Planning Board supported this recommendation and the Selectboard implemented it.

In December the last installment of the \$15,000 grant to assist us with our Zoning and Subdivision Regulation updates was approved by the Board for submission for payment.

In March the Planning Board invited Zoning Task Force Members who would like to informally discuss the future of zoning in Warwick to contact the chair. Those that did were invited to dinner at the Copper Angel paid for by private funds. At this dinner, Brad Compton decided to not implement his action plan.

In April the Planning Board spoke at the Senior Meal Site explaining the proposed Zoning Amendments to be presented at Annual Town Meeting. The Board developed handout materials explaining the proposed zoning amendments to be distributed at the Annual Town Meeting.

In May the Annual Town Meeting passed the 25 pages of Zoning Amendments by a vote of 52 in favor to 5 opposed. The Zoning Task Force was disbanded. The members of this group were extremely dedicated. It was a long and, at times, very tedious process. Each member made a significant personal financial contribution in the form of computer paper and toner to print out the often lengthy drafts, of which there were a great many.

In June the final decision was made to charge \$55 per copy for the Subdivision Regulations provided a free copy is available online, and to charge nothing for the Zoning Bylaws.

The Planning Board currently meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall. All townspeople are welcome to attend, but the meeting time is subject to change, so it is a good idea to check the town Web site or with a board member if you are planning to go.

Ted Cady, Chair
Elan Sicroff, Secretary

<u>Planning Board</u>	<u>(Moderator Appointees)</u>	
Nicholas Arguimbau, 24 Kirk Road		6/30/12
Ted Cady, 678 Winchester Road, <i>Chair</i>		6/30/13
Bradley W. Compton, 260 Brush Valley Road (<i>appointed 4/2/07</i>)		6/30/10
Elan Sicroff, 95 Chase Hill Road, <i>Secretary</i>		6/30/09
John Williamson, 31 Bass Road		6/30/11

¹ All appointments confirmed at the 7/14/08 BoS meeting, per the minutes.