

Townshend Planning Commission
Minutes Sept. 26, 2007

Commissioners present: Art Monette, Tiz Garfield, Tom Lyman, John Evans
Members of the public: Berenice Brooks, Deborah Whitney
Meeting called to order at 7:15 PM.

Minutes of 9/12 were approved with two corrections.

Mail: OHCC response to Hearing Recess Order

Dist. II Environmental Commission letter to Tim Upton, CVPS re land use permit application for Tower and Communications Facility Replacement in Townshend.

With no objections, the Chair asked to move immediately into discussion of the Otis Health Care Center response to the Hearing Recess Order #2W0984- proposed land use permit storage barn and proposed light replacement permit. The response includes elevations of the proposed barn, aerial views of the site showing the barn and access road from Route 35 plus written response from OHCC and several internal memoranda written since the Act 205 hearing on Aug. 6, 2007.

Ms. Brooks said that she had been told that the access road would only be used in August just before and just after the hospital fair day. This is not consistent with the information included in the response. She brought photos of the intersection with Route. 35.

Ms. Whitney expressed concern over the impact of further cutting trees and shrubs which were part of the Act 250 landscape agreement for the Route 35 parking lot. She has photos showing the access road in winter, including location of fence and swale, and a diagram of proposed additional plantings (submitted as evidence before the Dist. Environmental Court regarding the Route 35 parking lot.)

Berenice Brooks left at 8:00 PM

We agreed to draft a letter to the District II Environmental Commission pointing out the inconsistencies between earlier testimony on the use of the access road and the important prior commitments by OHCC for use of the road as an emergency entrance/exit road from the hospital, and also quit claim deed giving a foot and vehicular right of way to Walter and Elaine Meyer. This information has just been submitted to the Town.

We agreed on a new position based on the new information submitted.

- 1) Advocate primary access to the storage barn be made from upper parking lot, with the removable of exposed ledge at the Ambulance garage entry. (See OHCC memo of 9/1/07)
- 2) Cite WRC Speed Study of Route 35 traffic, done Oct 18-27, 2006 as evidence of danger of using the access on Route 35 for anything but emergency entrance/exit. Chair suggested that Tiz speak with Kendall Gifford at WRC for clarification of the report findings.
- 3) Point out the Act 250 landscape agreement on the parking lot permit and its possible impact on further cutting of shrubs and trees at the Route 35 access road site.
- 4) Give our opinion that the locked barrier gate is not needed if the primary access to the barn is from upper parking lot. A gate could hinder emergency entrance or exit at the Route 35 location.

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On the proposed light replacement permit, we agree to the need for better lighting in the OHCC upper parking lot and we hope that this improvement can be done in a manner similar to that in the Route 35 lower parking lot.

Tiz will draft a letter to Dist. II Environmental Commission and submit by email for final approval by Monday, Oct 1st, 2007

Old business

Art reported that the Municipal Grant application had been duly signed by Selectboard and himself and mailed to Montpelier. We will be notified in November whether we got the grant or not.

New business

Re the letter to CVPS about the proposed replacement tower, we don't remember hearing about this proposal, but will check the files to see if there is anything about it. Also, wait for CVPS response to Dist. II board.

Tom Lyman spoke about the Southern Vermont ATV Club that is maintaining trails on Mike Charles property and also building a picnic area on the top of Ober Hill and another on top of Rattlesnake Mt. Parking for cars is on a level spot behind stone wall, Joy Brook Road. ATVs take off from there. It is a member's only organization that seems to be doing a very responsible job for ATV recreation.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Next meeting Wed. Oct 10 at 7:15 PM

Respectfully submitted

Tiz Garfield, Acting Clerk.