

**ROXBURY PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL WORKSHOP
MAY 27, 2009
MINUTES**

PRESENT

Robert Munson, Chairman; Arlene Kershner, Damien St. James, Ralph Wescott, Regular Members; Joseph Famighetti and Steve Zaleta, Alternate Members; Chris Wood and Judi Lynch, Wood Planning Consultants; Barbara Henry, First Selectman; Members of the Public.

Chris Wood, Wood Planning, outlined the agenda for this evening's workshop which would include a review of the process and recommendations for the update to the 1999 Plan of Conservation and Development. The Planning issues which will be addressed include Conservation, Development and Municipal Services.

Wayne Piskura, who identified himself as a realtor in Town, said that there is no growth in Roxbury. It can be listed as the fastest growing town in CT only by percentage, not by actual numbers of population.

Roxbury was identified as one of the towns in the State with the lowest density. Demographics information was reviewed by Mr. Wood.

The major resource of the Town is open space. The amount of open space has increased thanks to the Land Trust. Parcels of ten acres or more which are not protected open space have the potential to be divided.

Chris Wood reviewed what has already been done on the Plan including updating current conditions, gathering input, and a series of focus groups. He indicated that there were few current recommendations that needed to be addressed.

The question of what has been learned was reviewed:

- Residents have little interest in commercial development.
- The interest has increased in home-based business.
- Residents like Roxbury the way it is.
- Residents also want to promote modest to middle income housing.
- Protection of natural resources is an important component.
- Residents are satisfied with municipal facilities.
- The need for expansion of the Fire Department and Ambulance facilities were recognized.

The Vision Statement for the updated Plan was discussed. Wayne Piskura said that the definition of rural character should be examined. Conservation can be a guided process, not necessarily just a hands-off attitude. He also said that the biggest change in Roxbury has been the loss of meadows. Members of the public agreed that the Plan

should emphasize the importance of maintaining the Town's agricultural heritage. Wayne Piskura recommended that development should "do no harm."

The definition of heritage should include:

- Historic heritage
- Agricultural heritage
- Mining
- Train Station

Judith Kelly recommended that the Plan address the problem of lighting. Outdoor lights can be detrimental to the habitat. They should be required to be turned off at a certain hour.

Chris Wood said that the draft Plan will go to the Board of Selectmen for review and they may schedule a Public Hearing. The Planning Commission may hold another workshop once a draft of the updated Plan is prepared.

Judith Kelly asked how future information will be circulated. She said that senior do not have computers and this was not a very means of communicating with everyone. Sarah Lauriat suggested holding another information workshop at the Senior Center.

Barbara Henry agreed that the attributes that should be protected include the Roxbury Station, heritage, mining and the railroad.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Giordano,
Planning Administrator

These minutes are not considered official until approved at the next Regular Meeting of the Roxbury Planning Commission.