

Westmoreland Planning Board  
March 21st, 2016  
Meeting minutes

**A. Call to Order, Seating Members**

Present: Lauren Bressett, Steve Houle, Dawn Lincoln, Mark Hayward, Jim Starkey, Bruce Smith, Clay Stalker, Tim Thompson

Lauren Bressett called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

**Review of Minutes 2/15/2016**

Dawn Lincoln made a motion to accept the minutes as read, Jim Starkey second,

Patricia Rodriguez was in attendance and pointed out the typo of R7, should have read: R17

Board members approved the amended minutes.

**B. Application/Hearing**

**6:35 pm** Proposed Master Plan Public Hearing

Lauren Bressett opened the hearing at 6:35 PM, asked if any of the board members had any issues after reviewing the final draft. Jim Starkey apologized for not seeing the Section 8 goal #4 pg 25, prior to this hearing, but in preparation for the hearing, he found some items he has concerns with in the content of Section 8 and the conservation plan being in the appendices. He read portions of past minutes of the planning board of Sept & Oct 2012, which the planning board at that time had their own concerns of accepting the 2012 Conservation Plan and did not do so. And he feels if it is part of this master plan, we would, be accepting it.

Some discussion ensued; Bruce Smith stated that the subcommittee wanted the summary of the Conservation plan, later the entire plan was added to the appendices and the summary moved into Section 8.

Bruce Smith questioned why the survey itself was not in the appendices; Lauren Bressett stated it more or less is with the answers to all the questions that were received, there is just not a blank survey. The board decided it was not necessary to have a blank survey included.

Lauren Bressett tabled this section of the hearing to the end, so any of the public in attendance could speak to their concerns with the proposed plan,

Lauren Bressett asked Patricia Rodriguez and John Corduff if they wanted to speak in reference to the updated master plan. Patricia Rodriguez commented that the board had this information all along and went and approved the quarry anyways. She also stated she is making it a point to let all people in town know this.

Lauren Bressett asked Patricia Rodriguez if she had any specific ideas or changes she would like to add. Patricia Rodriguez stated, just let it be known you are not following the master plan, she and John Corduff left the hearing.

No other members of the public present, Lauren Bressett closed the hearing at 6:51 pm

Board members returned to the tabled discussion.

Jim Starkey made a motion to keep the first paragraph of Section 8 Pg 25 as follows *Westmoreland remains a rural community with small town character and a bucolic natural setting. Westmoreland residents value*

the rural character of their community and wish to maintain it. The community surveys performed for the 1986, 2003 and this Master Plan all demonstrate residents' interest in retaining Westmoreland's rural character. Such was also a priority of attendees of the two Community Forums (5-18-2008 & 11-18-2008) held to obtain input for the 2012 Conservation Plan. A copy of the 2012 Conservation Plan can be obtained from the town office.

and remove the remainder on the page and remove the Conservation Plan from the appendices of the proposed master plan:

Discussion ensued, Dawn Lincoln and Jim Starkey had concerns with linking the conservation plan to the planning board, when back in 2012 there was opposition to accepting it by a majority of the planning board.

Lauren Bressett asked if someone wished to second the motion, there was no response. She then stated at this point Jim Starkey's motion is dead for lack of a second to the motion..

Dawn Lincoln made a motion to amend the first paragraph, to read as follows *Westmoreland remains a rural community with small town character and a bucolic natural setting. Westmoreland residents value the rural character of their community and wish to maintain it. The community surveys performed for the 1986, 2003 and this Master Plan all demonstrate residents' interest in retaining Westmoreland's rural character. Such was also a priority of attendees of the two Community Forums (5-18-2008 & 11-18-2008) held to obtain input for the 2012 Conservation Plan. A complete copy of the 2012 Conservation Plan can is available at the town office.* And to remove the Conservation Plan from the appendices. Jim Starkey second, motion passed.

Jim Starkey made a motion to strike the remainder of page 25.

Lack of a second on the motion, motion dead

Lauren Bressett made a motion to keep a summary, with editing to be done, Dawn Lincoln second, motion passed, Jim Starkey voted no

Board members continued editing the summary of page 25 ( see attached)

Board members agreed the Zoning map should be a fold out map

Bruce Smith stated he feels the brief summary of the survey process and number of responses should be included at the beginning of the appendix with the survey results.

Lauren Bressett reopened the hearing at 7:30 pm, for any additional public input. Richard Paul stated he did not feel the Conservation Plan should be part of the Master Plan. Board members updated him (as he had just arrived) that the board has taken it out of the plan.

Lauren Bressett closed the hearing at 7:35 pm.

It was noted that because of significant change to the document, a second public hearing will be held at our next meeting, April 18, 6:30 PM at the Town Hall.

## **C. New Business**

### **1. Elections**

Jim Starkey made a motion to elect Lauren Bressett as Chair of the Planning Board, Tim Thompson second, motion passed.

Jim Starkey made a motion to elect Dawn Lincoln as Vice Chair of the Planning Board, Bruce Smith second, motion passed.

2. Board members up for renewal, Bruce Smith, Tim Thompson, Alt Alison Fissette, Alt. Members need to let Jo Ann LaBarre know if they will stay on the board.

There being no additional old business or letters, Bruce Smith made a motion to adjourn, Dawn Lincoln second, motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at  
7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted  
Alison Fissette  
Planning Board Clerk

## **SECTION 8**

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

## **Goal # 4**

Westmoreland remains a rural community with small town character and a bucolic natural setting. Westmoreland residents value the rural character of their community and wish to maintain it. The community surveys performed for the 1986, 2003 and this Master Plan all demonstrate residents' interest in retaining Westmoreland's rural character. Such was also a priority of attendees of the two Community Forums (5-18-2008 & 11-18-2008) held to obtain input for the 2012 Conservation Plan. **A complete copy of the 2012 Conservation Plan can be obtained from the town office.**

**The Conservation Plan includes:**

1. A summary and analysis of natural and cultural resources
2. A set of conservation priorities based on community values
3. Suggested implementation strategies to further conservation objectives.

**The values expressed by the public in the various Master Plan Surveys and the Community Forums fall into six major themes:**

1. Agriculture – working farms, prime agricultural soils
2. Cultural Identity – historic homes & village district, scenic vistas & rural character
3. Economic Vitality – small business
4. Natural Areas & Wildlife – habitat & biodiversity
5. Recreational Activities – trails, water based, school/town facilities
6. Water – wells, water quality in streams, ponds & the Connecticut River

Actual conservation of any parcel of land is a voluntary action on the part of its owner. Many Westmoreland landowners have their land enrolled in the Current Use Program, which affords a temporary degree of preservation of a property's existing amenities and use. The voluntary protection of Westmoreland land parcels will occur to the degree that residents choose to participate and see land conservation actions as useful ways to maintain the rural character they treasure.