

Present: William J. Keller, Jr. (Chairman), Lisa Eggleston, Christopher Morely,
Michael Hunter, Michael Fee, Jody Kablack (Planner)

Absent: Eric Poch (Associate)

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Public Hearing: Petition Article 55, Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 4275.g
Water Resource Protection District, Special Permit

Chairman Bill Keller opened the hearing on Article 55 of the Town Warrant.

Ralph Tyler (Petitioner):

Mr. Tyler began by asking the Planning Board if it is their intent to abandon Article 50 in terms of changing the impervious surface limitation.

The Board responded it is not their intent to abandon the article.

Ralph Tyler: In reference to the Board's article to develop to 70% impervious surface, the Board is correct in saying it would bring the Town to the State standards (minimal). Mr. Tyler stated he has had discussion with the Department of Environmental Protection regarding the Planning Board's article and it is their opinion the Board's article is not a good idea. According to Mr. Tyler, they were shocked by the proposal. In addition, Mr. Tyler stated the DEP would like higher standards. Mr. Tyler opined the Planning Board predecessors had more foresight. The Town is very dependent on Route 20 water sources; a small increase in real estate taxation is not sound public policy. This article in his opinion, defies common sense. Mr. Tyler also stated he would be amenable to rewording his article to include some type of language that should a decision not coincide with other groups, it will have to be explained. The idea is to get other groups to agree – over 25% impervious surface may have good intent but in general is crazy. The Board's interest in tax revenue would also be adding to traffic issues. Additional businesses could result in gridlock and is not worth the revenue generated. The Board does not want to widen Route 20 and both the Town Engineer and the Board of Selectmen agree it would be detrimental to traffic flow. To summarize, these policies would ruin the Town; traffic, snow and ice removal, gridlock, contamination of wells. He encourages the Planning Board to abandon Article 50. The existing sites the Board feels would be bettered by this are already covered in the bylaws for run-off in Zone II; there is no sound reason to allow people to do more.

Bill Keller: Do you have anything else regarding article 55?

Ralph Tyler: No.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To recommend disapproval of Article 55.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To close the public hearing.

The Board had a brief discussion on articles which were still on the warrant and the Board's positions.

The Chairman, Bill Keller, informed Board members he had a phone discussion earlier in the day with the Conservation Commission Chairwoman in which that Commission was requesting the Planning Board to postpone Article 50. The Commission would now like to discuss the substance of a letter they submitted to the Town Crier. Planning Board members expressed their displeasure with the lack of communication by the Conservation Commission. The letter to the Board was received after the article was published in the paper. When Chairman Keller had spoken with the Conservation Commission (Bridget Hanson) the Commission acknowledged the Planning Board's draft they received in January. In addition the Planning Board had met with them on February 10th to discuss the article and answer any questions the Commission may have. Chairman Keller and Board members feel Town Meeting floor is not the appropriate place for a technical discussion of the article.

Steve Meyers was in attendance and told the Board he did not know much about the letter the Commission submitted to the paper. He stated he was in favor of the article but thought it was a good idea to have a joint group, along with the Water District, someone he felt knew about water as a scientific issue. He did not agree with the Board's opinion the Commission used the timing of the article in the paper as a strategic move.

Mike Fee: That is the result and that is what we are dealing with.

Steve Meyers: Agrees that is the result. He also opined that Mr. Tyler had some good questions including whether it is worth the tax revenue it would generate. Also, how would the Planning Board enforce it and maintain it? What is the economic benefit versus the risk to water quality?

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.