

**Joint Planning Board / Economic Development Committee Work Session
April 27, 2010**

A joint work session of the South Kingstown Planning Board and the South Kingstown Economic Development Committee was held on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 in the Council Chambers at the South Kingstown Town Hall, 180 High Street, Wakefield, RI.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

A. ROLL CALL:

Planning Board:

Mack - Present	Clendenen - Present	Riendeau – Present	Morrison – Present
DelGiudice – Present	Kenerson – Present	Castovillari - Absent	

Economic Development Committee:

Fish – Present	Bryers - Present	Durocher – Absent	Marcus – Present
Viele – Present	Moffat – Absent	Mazzier – Present	Kermes – Absent
Tanzi – Present	White - Present		

Mr. Vincent Murray, Director of Planning, Mr. Raymond T. Nickerson, Principal Planner and Ms. Nancy Letendre, Special Legal Counsel were present as well as Mr. Douglas McLean and Mr. Nathan Kelly, consultants from the Horsley Witten Group for the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update.

I. Presentation of Short Promotional Film "Welcome to the Village of Peace Dale," Produced by Peace Dale Neighborhood Revitalization Incorporated (PDNRI)

Mr. Murray noted that this film depicts a fine example of a grass roots neighborhood revitalization and economic development – a model to be applauded. PDNRI is proving to be a significant ally and resource for the local business community. The film will also be presented at an upcoming Town Council meeting. Copies are available in the Planning Department office and the Department is reviewing the potential to link the film via the Town website (www.southkingstownri.com).

2. Status Briefing (Horsley Witten Group) Regarding 2010 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update:

Mr. Murray introduced Doug McLean, one of the consultants from the Horsley Witten Group who is working on the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update.

• Schedule for Project

Mr. McLean stated that the first public workshop on the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update was held on April 6, 2010. It had been advertised via blast email, a notice on the Town's website and press releases in the local newspapers. The meeting provided an opportunity for residents and interested

parties to comment on land use and other planning issues. The workshop discussion was seen in large measure as echoing the theme topics and issues emerging from the survey of public attitudes.

- **Survey of Public Attitudes**

Mr. McLean distributed results of survey questions that specifically related to economic development and reviewed the results with the Planning Board and the EDC. He mentioned that as part of its information gathering techniques, Horsley Witten had conducted a series of informational interviews with community leaders in addition to the survey. Economic development issues discussed included re-use of mill complexes, promoting tourism, home occupations/telecommuting, keeping our small town atmosphere and shopping opportunities in balance, reaffirming our commitment to economic development, issues relating to the proposed research and technology park at URI, South County Commons and general commercial growth in the town. Mr. McLean pointed out that the trends that have emerged from the consultant's findings so far are supportive of sustainable "green" industries such as agriculture (e.g. farmers markets) and aquaculture, mill re-use, infill and home-based work.

Mr. Murray explained that the Comprehensive Plan suggests future land uses as depicted in its Land Use Plan Map which is the foundation of the Town's Zoning Map. South Kingstown is largely a residential community which has experienced significant growth in recent decades and there has always been a strong trend in the Comprehensive Plan toward growth management. Perhaps with the economic downturn, some changes in attitudes, a trend toward sustainability, traffic issues and becoming a self-contained community, there may be a little more acceptance of economic development issues. We have, however, very few properties that are zoned for commercial or industrial purposes (Totals available are: Commercial – 520 acres including the SMD; Industrial – 306 acres.).

A lengthy discussion ensued relative to the tax treaty (established in 2007) which is a process geared toward helping developers launch development projects while saving money. It was a point of consensus that the Town needs to be more proactive in informing potential applicants about the program and its requirements.

3. Review of Plan Element Concerning Economic Development (Review of Current Element, Discussion of Issues and Priorities for Updated Element)

Mr. Murray began the review by assessing the goals and policies of the Economic Development Element with the intention of building on, strengthening and expanding them, keeping a focus on balancing economic growth while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, re-use and infill. The potential re-use of Palisades Mill by new buyers as well as the recent success of the winter farmers market at the Peace Dale Mill were both noted as positive economic developments in the context of the existing plan.

A discussion ensued that led into the modification of the use codes.

4. Review and Discussion of Proposed Modifications to Zoning Ordinance Use Table to Promote Economic Development as Recommended by the South Kingstown Economic Development Committee

Mr. Fish stated that the EDC, in conjunction with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Update, had completed a review and recommendation of changes to the Zoning Ordinance Use Table so that these

changes could be incorporated into the Update. Ms. Mack asked that the Economic Development Committee further researches the ideas of technology-based and "green industries" for appropriate uses for the mills in South Kingstown. Ms. Letendre felt that it would be helpful to think of how the areas in question should look and then think of what type of businesses would help to achieve that atmosphere. Mr. Murray noted that if any Special Use Permits would be required they must have standards to accompany them in the Zoning Ordinance. A lengthy discussion ensued relative to changing the use codes, use codes versus performance-based zoning, the EDC's recent review of and recommendations relative to the current use codes and the treatment of Special Use Permits.

Mr. Murray stated that he and Mr. Nickerson would develop a review of the use code work that has been completed, make an assessment of what is most feasible in the short-term and provide the results to both the Planning Board and the EDC. He noted that the general intent of the EDC recommendations to increase flexibility and modernize the zoning code was very positive and represents a good example of cooperative assistance among the Town Boards.

5. Other Items of Interest and Concern

There were none to be discussed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m. by unanimous consent of both memberships.

