

## SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

### West Cornwall Water/Septic Study Group

February 21, 2017 at 5pm at Priscilla Pavel's Home at 14 River Road in West Cornwall

Members Present: Libby Mitchell (LM), Priscilla Pavel (PP), Todd Piker (TP) and Joanne Wojtusiak (JP).  
Members Absent: David Dolinsky (DD), Richard Griggs (RG), and Ian Ingersoll (II). Also present Ex Officio Members: Richard Bramley (RB).

The meeting was called to order by TP at 5:05pm. PP expressed her thanks for convening the meeting at her home as she is recovering from a fractured ankle and is in a wheelchair.

Minutes from the January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted as presented.

TP welcomed Stephen McDonnell from WMC Consulting Engineers, Jocelyn Ayers from NWCOG and several community members.

TP re-capped the contents of emails exchanged with Nick Stuller (present at the meeting) where he had inquired about whether WMC had identified the number of "out of compliance" properties in West Cornwall. Phrases like "lot size" and "declined permits" were tossed around and TP expressed his feeling that he felt uncomfortable trying to answer such questions as the study process was underway. Nick stated that he thought the answer to his question could help the Economic Development Committee in their planning process.

Steve McDonnell from WMC pointed out that zoning issues are NOT the focus of their work. They will be looking at health code parameters and he said that their initial thoughts are that the data provided by TAHD is good (i.e. accurate) and of the 60 or so properties included in the mapping he has, only about 6 (10%) meet current health code requirements. Simply put, it is impossible to get currently required systems on most existing lots. However, he noted that it is not the current policy of the health code authorities to put people out of their homes, but rather to find ways to solve difficult situations.

McDonnell said he is more than willing to help provide answers to any inquiries the group gets, but TP said he does not have time or interest in fielding these. LM said she was willing to be the point-person and interface for questions from the public and her offer was eagerly accepted by all. She said she will attempt to handle things via email to reduce expenditures from the limited WM C budget. McDonnell also said he will share any relevant data as it is gathered and keep the group in the loop at all times.

Everyone realizes that this report and any decisions to spend money to implement (or not) its recommendations will have a major impact on West Cornwall's future. JW suggested that it might be best not to provide piece-meal information to questioners but rather stress the positives of having the study underway by a well-regarded firm and an expectation that we will have a recommendation by this summer (August 2017). This approach will enable the Study Group to put together our

recommendations and, hopefully, generate wide-spread support from both residents and business owners – in WC and town-wide.

Jocelyn Ayer was invited by TP because of her responsibility for economic development at the Northwest Hills COG. She said that in reviewing both Cornwall's 2010 POCAD and the results of the visioning session conducted by Goman & York last year, it is clear that there is a desire for both residential and commercial vitality in WC. She noted that there is a need for a critical mass to have a vibrant community. The good thing is that the State has identified WC as a "priority development area" Jocelyn also mentioned the Main Street Initiative which serves a number of cities across the State. JW mentioned that most of their work seemed to be in bigger cities, but Jocelyn said we should look at it more for their approach and how we might re-imagine the future of WC .

LM observed that if just the existing buildings between the Pottery and the old Moose and the buildings in Railroad Plaza were fully utilized, WC would be a whole new town!!

TP referred the group to an organization he found interesting: [www.NADO.org](http://www.NADO.org)

Our next meeting will be March 14th at this same location. TP will be relaxing under the sun in Puerto Rico so LM will convene our next meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Wojtusiak  
Secretary