

## PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes, April 13, 2004

Members present: Deborah Emello, Karl Haglund, James Heigham, Andrew McClurg

7:05: There being a quorum, Acting Chair Heigham opened the meeting. He stated that the meeting was for the limited purpose of receiving from the Uplands Alternative Group more information on the group's plan for a land swap between the Belmont Uplands property (owned by O'Neill properties) and the former MDC skating rink site (owned by the Division of Conservation Resources) with a residential development following on the latter site.

Frederick Paulsen led the Group's presentation and called on the following speakers:

Michael Barum – introduction and legal considerations

David Johnson – site plan and proposed 150 unit structure at the skating rink site

Mark Haley – site suitability

Martin Duffy – financial feasibility of the alternative plan

Roger Colton – affordable housing, views of Belmont Fair Housing Committee and desire to avoid delaying litigation

Roger Wrubel – ecological value of Uplands and DCR support

Martha Moore – Town resident support

James Graves – stated housing goals and smart growth policies

Frederick Paulsen – proposed next steps in advancing alternative proposal.

The Board then thanked the speakers for their concise and well prepared presentations. Several members also expressed interest in the alternative site proposal.

Mr. Paulsen then asked that the Planning Board appoint a committee consisting of one Board member and several members of his group to continue the work started by his group. He stated that the Selectmen had refused his request to set up such a committee and referred him to the Planning Board.

Mr. Heigham stated that the Board would not commit to such a step in the absence of its regular Chair and that he was dubious as to how involved the Board should become while it still had pending before it the O'Neil application to change the zoning on the Uplands site. Mrs. Emello stated she was not comfortable in the Board's participating in what could be interpreted as coercion of O'Neil to accept an alternative site.

After further discussion, the Board announced it would not be forming or sponsoring an alternative site committee but that Mrs. Emello and Mr. Haglund would be willing to act as liaisons to Mr. Paulsen's group but could not be involved in direct contact with O'Neil.

9:00: The Board's limited business having been concluded, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Heigham  
Acting Chair