Lile Gibbons, Geoff Steadman and Frank Mazza met the week prior to review comments on Chapters 1, 2, and 3 that had been received at the previous sub-committee meeting and at the public hearing, in preparation for today’s sub-committee meeting. Katie De Luca from P&A had sent in extensive edits. Highlights of our meeting which were brought forward to today’s sub-committee meeting included:

1. Comments from Katie De Luca from P & Z. Wording in the HM plan would be changed to reflect that the HM plan would be a “complementary” document to Greenwich’s Plan of Conservation and Development, would be consistent with the principles outlined in the 2009 POCD; the HMC would work “in coordination” with other town agencies, organizations and departments; would work to “strengthen the town’s long-range vision of planning and development”; the management review process of the HMC would be “in accordance with state statutes (so listed)”.  

2. In Chapter 2, page 2-8, the wording was strengthened to acknowledge that “what happens in watercourses upstream affects the downstream GHA” thereby giving the HMC jurisdiction to review upland building permits. However, the HMC does not want to be the lead agency with these reviews and would generally support the recommendations of the lead reviewer.

3. The Chair noted the letter from Attorney Swiggart still needs clarification.

The Chair will set up meetings with IWW and the Shellfish Commission to review their specific comments. Aamina Ahmad from the legal department will meet with Katie DeLuca of P&Z to review a conflict in wording between state and local statutes on “may” or “shall” review permit applications. They will also discuss an efficient manner for the HMC to receive paperwork from P&Z and to conduct its reviews.
Under the leadership of the HMC, Frank Mazza will ask Police Chief Heavey to set up a meeting in January with representatives from the three rowing organizations, the Harbor Master, the Marine Division of the police and possibly a representative from the Coast Guard to discuss rowing channels along the Mianus River and Greenwich Cove, safety rules, lanes for a possible regatta and other matters pertinent to the rowing community.

The Commission noted there is no mention of bird hunting in the plan which may or may not be still allowed in Greenwich coves. Geoff Steadman and Steve Kinner will review current rules and regs and report back.

The sub-committee discussed dock and pier permitting policies. It was acknowledged that waterfront homeowners have the littoral right to wharf out from their property but there should be guidelines in the HM plan as to retaining the historical character of the neighborhood, the effect of tides on watercraft, the effect on salt water vegetation; the effect on shellfish in a cove. If the dock permit from the state requires a dock be of sufficient height to require lights, the HM plan should comment that lighting would be a substantial change to the historical character of a cove. Geoff says the law gives homeowners “right of reasonable access”. Susie Baker and Roger Bowgen from the Shellfish Commission will help construct wording.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 are largely complete; need approval from the full commission at the December 15th meeting to post online.

Next steps: Schedule a sub-committee meeting the first or second week in January to review titles and contents of chapters 4, 5, and 6 for consistency. The table of contents may also need editing. If there’s time, the sub-committee will review Chapter 7. The plan is to submit the remaining 4 chapters to the full commission for approval at its January 19th (note change in date from the 20th to the 19th) meeting or, at the latest, the February meeting, then send to the Selectmen for approval. If edits are needed, the sub-committee will review those ASAP. The plan will then be sent to the DEEP and the Army Corps of Engineers for review and approval. These agencies have up to 60 days to comment. The plan would then return to the HMC for any further editing (and possible re-approval from the considering agencies). The goal is to have the plan sent to the RTM sometime in early fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lile R. Gibbons, HM Sub-committee Chair