

## Planning Board: New planner welcomed to board

By Ted Hills | April 27, 2011 in Government, News



TED HILLS PHOTO | Ian McDonald (left) is all smiles as he is welcomed by Emory Breiner and the rest of the Planning Board.

The Planning Board welcomed its newest member at its April 12 meeting, Ian McDonald, who said he's excited to be joining the board. Mr. McDonald told the Reporter, "I've done a lot on Shelter Island and Shelter Island has done a lot for me since my family first came here in 1974. I try to do things for the community where I can ... [Planning] is also something that's interesting to me in my line of work, and I'm looking forward to being on the board for that reason." Mr. McDonald has been an architect since 2002 and has worked on many Island projects.

His appointment follows Peder Larsen's February resignation. Mr. Larsen had been on the board for five years but had to resign since he was moving.

### CASE MINOR SUBDIVISION

During the April 26 meeting, the board reviewed the final steps that Sam Case will need to take to complete his application, including minor changes to his proposed two-lot subdivision on North Ferry Road in the Center and the removal of a garage and three sheds that are labeled "to be removed." During the April 12 meeting, board member John D'Amato explained that these requirements are his "last set of instructions from this board to get you through to the actual signing and completion of the subdivision."

### NEW REVIEWS ON THE WAY

Aside from welcoming Mr. McDonald and briefly reviewing the Case subdivision at the April 12 meeting, discussion was short. Most of the subdivisions before the board are now in their final application stage and need no further input from the planners. Board members joked that they might set a record for the shortest meeting ever that night, and at just seven minutes long, it seems they were in the running.

The light agenda is a product of the economy, Mr. McDonald suggested. He noted a decline in the number of construction projects happening on the Island, and in a down market, people are less likely to take on the expense of a subdivision project, he said. "We're going to have a series of 10-minute meetings if we don't really start digging into something," commented Mr. D'Amato.

Fortunately, there are still plenty of land use issues the board can review in order to advise the Town Board.

One such issue is relaxing the prohibition on impervious driveways in the Near Shore and Peninsular Overlay District. There's a strong argument for doing so, according to Mr. Breiner: "If an owner is willing to collect and recharge runoff, it makes it difficult to deny an asphalt driveway." Mr. McDonald and engineer Matt Sherman have been drafting a driveway law, which the Planning Board will review after it's been presented to the Town Board and the Conservation Advisory Council.

The Planning Board continued its review of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) law at the April 12 meeting, a set of state-mandated rules that the town must adopt. The rules have been criticized by both Planning and Town board members alike for its lack of applicability to the Island, though Councilman Glenn Waddington lauded its goals during the meeting. The Planning Board is charged with advising the Town Board on possible changes to the law and figuring out what effect it will have on the planning process.

Another ongoing issue for the Planning Board to consider is the effect of creating a causeway zone and changing the wetlands code to restrict building on the causeways. After environmental consultant, Kyle Collins, makes his initial findings, the Planning Board will resume its discussion.

The planners will also discuss the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, which would bring in grants to cover 50 percent of town projects in the plan. The board will explore whether the program is appropriate for the Island and its implications.

Also on the horizon is a Watershed Protection Improvement District (WPID) bill, sponsored by Assemblyman Fred Thiele of Southampton. It allows a town to establish a WPID to protect groundwater and surface waters through stormwater treatment projects, updated septic systems and wetland restoration. The Planning Board must advise the town on whether this bill would be appropriate for the Island or if the bill is tailored to a more densely developed region, and how such projects would be funded.