

Town of Plaistow, NH
Office of the Planning Board
145 Main Street, Plaistow, NH



PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 7, 2023

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM.

1. ROLL CALL:

Tom Alberti, *Ch.* – Present at Town Hall
Chuck Fowler – Present at Town Hall
Laurie Milette - Excused
Karen Robinson – Excused
Richard Anthony, Alternate – Present at Town Hall
Timothy Moore, Alternate – Present at Town Hall
Jay DeRoche, *Selectman's Alt.* – Present at Town Hall
Bill Coye, *Selectman's Rep.* – Present at Town Hall
Victoria Healey, RPC – Present at Town Hall
Jen Rowden, RPC – Present at Town Hall

2. MINUTES:

The minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting had been distributed prior to the meeting. There was some question of whether J. DeRoche had been present at the meeting and that T. Moore was present but not on the roll call.

Ch. Alberti appointed Richard Anthony and Timothy Moore voting members for the meeting in the absence of Karen Robinson and Laurie Milette.

B. Coye moved, second by R. Anthony, to accept the minutes of the May 3, 2023 meeting as issued.

The motion passed 4-0-0

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN SURVEY

Ch. Alberti said the goal for this discussion is to determine how to create actionable steps from the survey information, specifically how to update the Town's Master Plan and how to achieve some of the results.

J. Rowden reviewed the 2020 Master Plan and read the vision statement that supports the Economic Development Plan. She noted the main takeaways were more variety of commercial business, concerns about the safety and congestion of the streets and housing.

For the goal to increase diversity of businesses by ensuring that regulations support uses that are desirable to the Town the following were suggested:

Review uses within the zoning districts to ensure desirable uses are feasible within the districts and clearly defined. This is a Planning Board matter but there should be input from the Zoning Board and Conservation Commission. There was discussion about communication with the Zoning Board and a concern of crossing boundaries. J. Rowden said that Zoning Boards often have strong feelings about definitions, noting that saying "retail" is allowed encompass a large variety of type and size. She suggested getting Zoning Board input early in the process before going to public hearings. She suggested a joint meeting of the Planning and Zoning Boards, or a subcommittee of the Planning Board and request members from the Zoning Board and Conservation Commission, or by sending the proposed definition to the Zoning Board for comment.

Ensure design requirements match the vision and goals of the Master Plan with regards to community vitality, economic development and natural resources. What should the site look like, what type of architecture is appropriate, how storm water is handled if needed, etc.

Establish an Economic Development Committee to help promote Plaistow as a desirable location for business. (Select Board, with input from other Boards/departments). J. Rowland suggested that the Planning Board does not have to be the driver here; that these are typically established through the Select Board. She suggested such a Committee could participate in the Greater Salem Chamber of Commerce. She said such a committee would need to be established by the Select Board and it would need a diverse membership combining business, Board members, citizens, etc. There was discussion about getting volunteers, and looking for Plaistow citizens who are members of PACE of the Salem Chamber. Involving the Recreation Committee was also suggested. It was noted that Brentwood has a successful Economic Development Committee.

Ensure that appropriate infrastructure is available, safe, and maintained to support businesses. These need to be identified in each district and be determined if it can support the desired uses. (Planning and Select Boards). Coordinate the Main Street improvements with NHDOT to ensure the planned improvements fit the district. Evaluate the costs of maintaining Town-owned infrastructure (CIP). When considering infrastructure make sure they improve safety for people and natural resources (Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission).

Strive for a diverse housing supply that meets the needs of residents and employers. Look for opportunities for business and housing to coexist in an area. Some non-residential sites are more easily transformed into residential uses than others; smaller scale buildings are easier to convert. The Plaistow Housing Needs Assessment findings to better understand the types of housing residents need and businesses are seeking for their employees.

J. Rowden said that she could create an implementation schedule and noted that the Master Plan would need to be amended to add these strategies and a public hearing would be necessary for that.

Ch. Alberti will send a letter to the Select Board about the creation of an Economic Development Committee; J. Rowland suggested not putting that on the BOS agenda until it is adopted by the Planning Board. Ch. Alberti suggested that going forward in the workshop meetings the Board look at uses and definitions and amendment language. T. Moore suggested looking ahead to next year's budget to cover potential expenses from these projects and RPC involvement.

4. REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

J. Rowden reviewed the local, regional and state housing needs, noting that every town in New Hampshire must provide reasonable and realistic opportunities to build workforce housing, noting this is not necessarily low income housing. She noted the factors that have affected this issue over the years and that a healthy housing market does not currently exist in New Hampshire. She reported that the State requires municipalities to have reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing. Also the municipality must provide enough qualifying units to meet their fair share of the region's needs. She said the housing needs in the RPC region are projected to be about 14,500 units needed by 2040 and that by 2022 12,656 had been built. To meet the projection the region must increase its units by about 2,000 more than the last time period. There was discussion of whether the State might require types of housing building in municipalities. Finally J. Rowden reviewed the number of units needed to meet the State requirements. The lack of buildable land was discussed; J. Rowden suggested there is more land and ways to build than the Board members think.

5. HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PLANNING (HOP) GRANT

V. Healey reviewed the current status of work being and to be done on the HOP Grant. The Master Plan Housing chapter background review and committee meetings are ongoing until Summer 2023. The Build-out analysis is ongoing until Winter 2024. Community Engagement: Housing Preference Survey is slated for Summer to Fall 2023 and two community engagement public information workshops will be conducted in Fall 2023. The Master Plan Housing chapter is slated for Fall-Winter 2023. Land use regulations audit is slated for Summer 2023 to Winter 2024. Public input opportunities will take place Fall to Winter 2023. And finally Phase 2 of the HOP Grant application in the Fall of 2023. The survey will use pictures of housing types and setbacks and other items in the survey.

Involvement with real estate professionals was suggested for current trends information. There was discussion of when and how a committee would work, or whether the Planning Board would conduct most of the work during its workshop meetings.

6. OLD BUSINESS

It was agreed to postpone reading of the Planning Board Rules of Procedure until the changes are available in context.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a) MS4 Permit review: V. Healey discussed the next steps to be taken in the stormwater permit process. Responsibility for review, responsibility for inspection and maintenance and the threshold for when the new standards will kick in were discussed. T. Moore suggested getting recommendations from the Town engineer Steve Keach. Inspections could be made a condition of the site plan and could be done by the Town engineer at the owner's expense. Every year the owner of a site with stormwater management plan must submit a report to the Town verifying the stormwater infrastructure is functioning as designed. It was agreed to look at how the Town is currently managing these reports.

b) The Board agreed to not hold its workshop meeting scheduled for July 5, 2023.

c) A memo regarding allowing an imaging (MRI,CT Scan) office into a space between the now defunct Bed Bath & Beyond and Staples at 58 Plaistow Rd. This would require a change of use for the location but no site plan would be needed. There would be only 2 patient rooms and no walk-in service so there would be no increase to any parking. There was considerable discussion and it was agreed that it would be a good idea to accept this.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no additional business before the Board and the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene A. Glorieux
Minute Taker