

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



**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES (*DRAFT MINUTES - Subject to change once approved and amended by the board at its next meeting on Nov.1*)**

**October 20, 2021**

**Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.**

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Tom Alberti, *Ch.* – Present at Town Hall  
Tim Moore, *Vice Ch.* - Present at Town Hall  
Laurie Milette - Present at Town Hall  
Karen Robinson – Present at Town Hall  
Greg Taillon, *Selectman's Rep.* Present at Town Hall  
Maxann Dobson, Alternate – Excused  
Bill Coye, *Selectman's Alt.* - Present at Town Hall  
John Cashell, *Planning Director* –Present at Town Hall (non-voting)

Also Present: William Hall, Civil Design Consultants  
Stephen Doherty, DC Development & Construction  
Barry Gier, Jones & Beach Engineers  
Coleman McDonough, 125 Development NH Corp.

**2. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 6, 2021 MINUTES:**

Draft minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting were included with the meeting materials. Ch. Alberti made a clarification of the discussion on private roads on page 2. He said that the story shared by J. Cashell regarding residents of a town with private roads becoming public was a different town than Plaistow.

*G. Taillon moved, second by K. Robinson, to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting as clarified.*

*The motion to approve the minutes as clarified passed 5-0-0*

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

Ch. Alberti opened the hearing

*Continued from September 18, 2021 and Corrected Notice*

**PB 21-13:** The completeness of an application from DC Development & Construction, LLC, for a zero lot line, non-age restricted, condominium style, Planned Residential Development (PRD) subdivision. The plan proposes 16 units, built on a public right-of-way, with on-site shared and individual septic, and a community well, with proposed connection to municipal water when it becomes available. *The applicant is also seeking a Conditional Use Permit for a roadway crossing.* The property is identified as Sweet Hill Road Rear, Tax Map 41, Lot 83 in the MDR Zoning District. The property owner of record is John Alden Palmer, Jr. Revocable Trust of 2006, Janice Palmer, Successor TR If the application is found to be complete, the Planning Board may immediately conduct the public hearing.

Ch. Alberti said the application was found complete and asked the applicant's representatives to give an update. Bill Hall, Civil Design Consultants, 344 North Main Street, Andover, MA introduced himself present on behalf of the owners as well as Stephen Doherty of DC Development & Construction, developer for the project. He said they would give an update on the project as they did not have new plans to present as they are being revised now. He said they received comments from the Fire Department who are ok with the layout; the Highway Department who would like the center island to remain grass and not be planted; had a positive meeting with the Conservation Commission; have received the Keach Nordstrom Associates (KNA) comments and are working through them; and today had received several pages of comments from Alteration of Terrain (AOT) and will work through those as well for the next meeting. Other than that they are waiting on comments from the Wetlands Bureau.

Ch. Alberti asked if the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for wetlands crossing was going to be on the plans. B. Hall said he thought so and pointed out where the crossing is planned approximately 350' into the property's proposed roadway as a 6' open bottom box culvert and this was discussed with the Conservation Commission. Ch. Alberti noted that, due to HH DES comments and the KNA review, the planning staff recommends continuing the public hearing to November 17<sup>th</sup>.

He asked for comments from the public; there were none. Ch. Alberti continued the application to November 17, 2021. No further abutter notices will be sent out for this continuation.

Ch. Alberti recused himself from the next hearing, noting he is an abutter, and handed the hearing to Vice Chair Tim Moore.

**PB 21-14:** **The completeness of an application from 125 Development NH Corp that proposes a subdivision of an existing parcel in Newton, NH into four (4) lots. The proposed subdivision does not revise the two (2) lots in the Town of Plaistow, NH that are part of the subject parcel. The parcel in Newton, NH is located on Puzzle Lane. The two Plaistow parcels are known as Greenfield Abutting, Tax Map 63, Lot 82 and Ridgewood Road Rear, Tax Map 71, Lot 19, both in the LDR Zoning District. The applicant is the property owner of the Plaistow parcels. If the applicant is found to be complete, the Planning Board may immediately conduct the public hearing.**

T. Moore noted the first task is to vote on the completeness of the application and that if it is found complete the public hearing can be conducted.

*G. Taillon moved, second by K. Robinson, to accept the application for a 4-lot subdivision of land in Newton, NH (known as Tax Map 27, Lot 3) that includes property in the Town of Plaistow as complete. The Plaistow properties include Greenfield Abutting, Tax Map 63, Lot 82 and Ridgewood Road Rear, Tax Map 71, Lot 19.*

*The motion to accept the application as complete passed 5-0-0*

T. Moore opened the public hearing. Barry Gier, Jones & Beach Engineers, 85 Portsmouth Avenue, PO Box 219, Stratham, NH introduced himself as representative for the applicant. He noted the plan consists of a 165 acre parcel of which 159 acres are located in Newton and 6 acres in Plaistow in the LDR district. He said the intent is to subdivide the parcel into 4 lots located at the end of Puzzle Lane. He said the 4<sup>th</sup> lot which contains the Plaistow portion is on the west side. He said the Town of Newton has given initial approval and they are asking for two waivers: one on §235-18.G - Existing and Proposed Drainage Calculations and §235-12.B (2) (e) – Escrow.

T. Moore invited questions from the Board or abutters. B. Gier explained the reasons for the waiver requests. For the drainage calculations he noted there are no changes being made, it is merely a lot line creation and are asking the requirement be waived, and for escrow because there is very little property in Plaistow and he doubts there will be any review of any of the lines in town.

G. Taillon asked if the lots in Plaistow could be developed. B. Geir said they are not proposing that now but there may be something in the future.

Jim Andreotti, 4 Ridgewood Road, Plaistow said he understood this proposal has been before the Town of Newton for some time as a large light commercial industrial park and while what id before the Plaistow Planning Board is a four lot subdivision, his concern is a proposed plan for buildings on the lot, and urged the Board to take this into consideration when voting on any waivers at this point because the future of that land is to be built on. T. Moore said if sometime in the future the applicant presents a proposal to do some type of building that would be a new plan and any waivers granted on the existing plan are no longer valid and any new plans would be sent to the Town's review engineer.

David Jones, condo manager at Valleyfield Townhouses, 138 Newton Rd., Plaistow said he wanted to know what type of commercial properties are going in because they sit on top of an aquifer that supports most of that section of Route 108 with water. He said they have 89 acres that abuts the property under discussion and wants to know what type of runoff and construction there will be. He said he is concerned about the continued water safety and conservation. T. Moore said that because no dwellings of any kind re proposed on the Plaistow property the Planning Board has no say. D. Jones expressed concerns about the future water quality and availability for the whole area. T. Moore suggested that after the Newton construction is completed if runoff is discovered he can go back to Newton and ask them to revisit the situation.

L. Milette asked if any of the trees have been cleared out. B. Gier said there is no construction, it is just the lot lines and nothing has been cleared in Plaistow. J. Andreotti said that was not true, that mostly every tree in the area has been cleared out and land has been moved. He noted it's on top of an aquifer that supplies his neighborhood as well, wetlands have been crossed and it looks like the land is being worked now. B. Gier added this may have been done without his being aware. L. Milette said there should have been a timber cut permit taken for that.

Coleman McDonough, Owner, 125 Development NH Corp. PO Box 532, Plaistow said there has not been one tree cut in Plaistow; trees have been cut in Newton and the permits field and recorded with the State and the Town of Newton. He said there is a buffer and nothing has been cut in the buffer or the land in Plaistow.

J. Cashell asked about including a legend on the plan about the buffers and setbacks. B. Gier said the Town of Newton requires a 200' setback in light industrial/commercial zone. J. Cashell said that even though there is no development shown on the Plaistow land NH law requires an application be submitted to any town on which land that is included regardless of whether development will happen. He said the Town of

Plaistow wants to be sure of is that there is a note on the plan that any development that might take place must come before the Plaistow Planning Board. C. McDonough said that was one of the conditions of Newton's approval.

J. Andreotti expressed concern that the developer asked the 200' setback be reduced to 50 as a blanket variance on the project. He expressed concern about the wetlands and water supply with the number of buildings being put into the space with reduced setbacks, wells and septic systems, as well as light and noise pollution.

K. Robinson expressed understanding but noted that Plaistow can only protect Plaistow property. J. Cashell noted that it is exclusively Newton's jurisdiction for Newton property.

J. Cashell invited B. Gier to discuss environmental planning. B. Gier said there is a lot of planning that goes into this and the project before the Board went before the NHDES for their AOT permit, as well as the wetlands permits, subdivision permits, etc. for reviews and approvals, and that any future development will have to go through the same process both at the State and Town level. There was considerable discussion about wetlands and the Clean Water Act and development that was stopped years ago due to water issues. It was suggested that because all of this land is in Newton those concerned get together and speak to the Newton Planning Board and NHDES. C. McDonough said they have been to the Planning Board with each site plan, that there have been residents from Plaistow at meetings, that they have been accommodating and considerate of their neighbors.

L. Milette asked why the two waivers are necessary and what about other things we might consider necessary. B. Gier said these were required to be submitted with their package but since they are not going to be used they are asking for waivers. J. Cashell said if they come back in the future with another plan for this property all prior waivers are null and void.

***K. Robinson moved, second by G. Taillon, to grant the waiver request from §235-18.G, Existing and Proposed Drainage Calculations as the proposed subdivision does not include the addition of any impervious.***

***The motion to grant the waiver passed 4-0-0***

***G. Taillon moved, second by K. Robinson, to grant the waiver request from §235-12.B(2)(e) requiring the establishment of an escrow account as the lots in Plaistow are not being revised.***

***The motion to grant the waiver passed 4-0-0***

***K. Robinson moved, second by G. Taillon to approve the 4-lot subdivision plan proposed in the Town of Newton, NH, known as Newton Tax Map 27, Lot 3, including land in the Town of Plaistow known as Greenfield Abutting, Tax Map 63, Lot 82 and Ridgewood Road Rear, Tax Map 71, Lot 19 with the following condition:***

***– A note is added to the Plan that states: “Land shown in Plaistow, as part of Newton Lot 27 – 3, does not involve development nor subdivision of land in Plaistow. Development or subdivision of any part***

***The motion to grant the conditionally approve passed 4-0-0***

T. Moore closed the public hearing.

#### **4. PLANNING DEPARTMENT BUDGET:**

Ch. Alberti returned to the meeting. He asked for further discussion on the Planning Board budget. He suggested discussing the Master Plan update and how the roles of the Planning staff align with what the Planning Board's work.

Master Plan Update: Ch. Alberti asked about the largest expenditure; L. Milette said the expense was cumulative over a few years and it added up to approximately \$22,000. Ch. Alberti asked if there is anything that would prevent the Town's employees to make an official update to the document or if it requires a professional organization to be paid to do this. T. Moore said that once the outsourced project is completed the source material is sent to and owned by the Town. G. Taillon asked if enough of the Town staff's time has been funded to update the document. J. Cashell said the current plan is well constructed and updated, and the key is to ensure the document is reviewed and worked on every year and complete the assignments that need to be done so the Master Plan plays an active role in the Town. He cited issues that needed to be addressed worked on through amendments to Zoning such as the Village District and modification of the C1 District by creating the C3 District. He said this sort of consideration and work should always be part of the Board's work towards improving the community.

Ch. Alberti asked if the \$5,000 for the Master Plan in the 2022 budget warranted and if minor updates could be accomplished using Town employees. G. Taillon said it could be done as long as they have the ability and the time to do these modifications. K. Robinson said she would like to know what is the job description and duties of the Planning Director and Planning Assistant, as well as the hours they are expected to work. Ch. Alberti said he had some conversation with Greg Colby not about the individuals but about these roles and how they best serve the community.

J. Cashell noted some of the Master Plan discussion about Recreation and reminded the Board there is a Recreation Commission and perhaps we should reach out to them to see if we can play a more active or coordinating role in helping to meet the Town's needs. He suggested an ad hoc committee might be formed to work on what are the needs of the community. He noted Planning's statutory role and obligations in making sure the Master Plan is updated, that it has statutory authority and a role to play in the subdivision of land, and also site plan review, zoning ordinances and their public hearings in preparation for Town Meeting voting. He noted that to reach out beyond these roles the Board would have to be asked to do something by the Board of Selectmen. He suggested that one of the best things that could be done for the Town is determining how to best plan for implementation of the potable water project and expects there is an as-hoc committee working with the BOS to plan its long term implementation.

Ch. Alberti felt it would be good for the Planning Board to consider how it could work with the other Town committees and departments towards long term goals. He asked if the Board can accomplish minor updates that could be added to the Master Plan without requiring the use of all the Funds allocated in the 2022 budget. He asked if the Board could recommend reducing the Master Plan line item amount from \$5,000. J. Cashell said the Board does not need to do anything about updating the Master Plan right now; it just needs to pay attention to what should be accomplished every year. T. Moore said that when he learned a few weeks ago that the BOS would start looking at budgets and nobody on the Board had seen its proposed budget he asked about the Master Plan line item and if \$5,000 could be put in it, which would allow the Board to make some small changes. He said that nothing drastic would come about if this doesn't happen since the large update was recently done. However, his concern is that if it is not done this year more would need to be done in the next year and the amount of money needed would keep increasing as work is not done until it becomes quite large. He also noted there were items in the Master Plan that were not addressed in the last update in part because there were not

enough budget dollars to address them. He said that they did look at the Route 125 corridor and how it should be developed, and from that came the C3 District and the C1 Overlay District, but they did not have the budget or time to work on an economic development plan which is an important planning tool. He said this has been on the should-be- done- tomorrow list in all the years he has been involved. Ch. Alberti asked if the \$5,000 in the budget is just for someone adding information to the Master Plan document, not for hiring someone with expertise to develop the economic development plan with the Board. T. Moore said he believes with the \$5,000 the Board would get the update which were not done in the last update and get an estimate of what it would cost to hire a consultant and create an Economic Development plan.

J. Cashell said that some townspeople would want economic development and others want things to stay as they are. The more people in a community who get involved in the Town's government and understand what economic development is about and the benefits that come from it, the better it is for the Town. It is important for the whole community to understand all the aspects of development and come to a community decision.

Ch. Alberti said using the money in the budget to work with a consultant or organization to develop a strategy or vision on economic development is different from making minor updates to the plan and asked if the budget money should be used in that manner. G. Taillon said that the Town has a wonderful plan that not many people know exists, and perhaps we should do some training of department heads and other community members to explain the Master Plan vision. K. Robinson said that people had been invited to the Town Hall for several nights to inspect and learn about the plan and then look to creating a consensus of what the townspeople wanted, and said she felt this was the best way to involve the community. She suggested money should be spent so that something like that might be done again. L. Milette said that in 2018-19 the last update of the Master Plan was about stewardship of natural resources and from their outreach to the community only 5 people attended and what she learned from the meeting is that people want sidewalks. T. Moore said that the multi-day presentation was done as soon as the contract was awarded approximately 2016-17.

Ch. Alberti asked if the Board felt the budgeted money could be spent in an effective and responsible fashion or if it is not necessary at this time. L. Milette suggested that it is not necessary for 2022 but perhaps the Board should be discussing this and gathering information on what the real costs would be to do what we wish to do. She said the last time the Board had the consultant in he was going to do a corridor study of Route 125 and it would have cost \$35,000.

J. Cashell referred to the desire for sidewalks and said it is the same for all communities, and noted sidewalks are extremely expensive, approximately \$300/foot. He noted that pedestrians cannot walk safely along many roadways, and that what a community could do for itself is to plan for a walking park environment with significant parking and several miles of walking trails and referenced what Hudson, NH did with the old Bensons Wild Animal park. He said they used townspeople and their resources. He suggested Plaistow could plan to do something like that too. B. Coye noted the Town Forest and the trail system that is starting up by PARC.

Ch. Alberti said that if the Board just wanted to do some editing it could create a word document draft addendum and append it to the Master Plan, but if the Board wants to invest in consultants and develop a vision for something like economic development or land use then properly allot a budget line for it. G. Tallion said that the budgeting process was expected to be lengthy but this year it has been very efficient. He suggested the discussions about budget line items should start in August or September. There was discussion of removing the line item if the Board doesn't think it will spend the money, putting in a lesser amount, or holding the line item in the budget, or keep it there at \$1.00. Ch. Alberti asked about the \$1,000 for consultant support; J. Cashell said it was there to cover the need to hire a consultant to help review a particular of plan which could be for an engineering or water issue within the Board's jurisdiction. He said a lot can be done through the regional planning agency; it was noted that due to budget shortfalls last year the Town was not a member of the regional board but that it will resume paying dues in 2022. T. Moore said the reason for this line item is that

occasionally the Office of Planning and Development where there is a program registration fee of save \$500 and it allows the Town to take advantage of those programs and other unknowns.

There was more discussion about what level of funding should be asked for the Master Plan line.

***G. Taillon moved, second by T. Alberti, to recommend the Master Plan update line item go from \$5,000 to \$2,500.***

***The motion to recommend \$2,500 for the line item passed 4-1 (L. Milette)-0***

Planning Staff Job Descriptions: K. Robinson asked to receive job descriptions for the planning staff. G. Taillon said these descriptions do exist and can be made available. Ch. Alberti noted the Board is not questioning what J. Cashell and D. Voss do, rather that said he had spoken with G. Colby and L. Sadewicz about what has the planning department has looked like over the years and that for many years the Planning Director or Coordinator had a 40 hour work week doing what J. Cashell and D. Voss do collectively. Now, we have a director that attends the Board meetings, reviews applications, speaks with applicants, etc. and then the 12 hours are done. We also have an administrator who does a lot of great work but also was pulled into special projects by the Town administrator and others. He asked if the Planning Board's budget should be responsible for 40 hours that are not all Planning work, and could the Board find a hybrid where special projects come from a different resource. He suggested that perhaps 20 hours of Planning work paid from the Board's budget and 20 hours special projects paid from another resource so that the Planning Director could spend time on things like economic development, planning vision or community outreach. It was noted that D. Voss works for a lot of different Boards/Commissions/Agencies which reflects how valuable she is. Ch. Alberti noted that it would take G. Colby some time to determine how much of her time is divided amongst all her responsibilities.

G. Taillon suggested that what is at issue is the desire to have more of J. Cashell's time available to the Planning department. He suggested that in budget planning if the Board wants an increase in John's time it should be proposed. There was discussion of how such an increase to the line item would be received and suggested that it should be explained as increased essential duties to support the Planning Board. J. Cashell said that part of what he tries to do every year is bring in revenue and program grants that help the Town and also offset his salary.

K. Robinson said that her request for written job descriptions was so that the townspeople know what a person does and who to go to for specific needs. She noted that the community is looking at things such as is a Town Manager needed or a Town Advisor and want to know who has what responsibilities and how things work now.

There was a discussion of how budgeting works and how accounting affects the budget (e.g. D. Voss works a majority of hours for Planning and splitting her pay amongst many groups is not an effective accounting practice).

Ch. Alberti asked if the Board feels it should invest in the Planning Director role not just for the coming years but for the future and if that is a value for what it does and for the Town.

J. Cashell noted an intangible that is not always thought about, that one unnamed town was paying \$500,000 a year in legal fees because the Planning Board was not making decisions that it was obligated to make under the law and they were always in court, and that when he left the position they were paying \$125,000 for all their legal fees, and that having a professional can ensure that good decisions are made.

B. Coye said that if we bring a \$35,000 increase to the Budget Committee we will have to have detailed explanations of what the need is and how it benefits the community. Ch. Alberti agreed this requires more discussion. G. Taillon said he would send the two job descriptions to Ch. Alberti for distribution to the Board

and schedule more discussion time at the next meeting. Ch. Alberti said that for discussion we now have 12 hours of J. Cashell's time, what would it look like at 24 hours and is it a benefit to the community. Could we go beyond just looking at plans and signing off on them. He asked what Salem did to bring in Tuscan Village; probably not much, they had the racetrack land; how could Plaistow get a mini Tuscan Village at the old drive in? J. Cashell said you work the economic sector, you need connections and you have to bring them in and show them the potential, and the community has to be willing to work with them. He said we have the Overlay District and already have in effect which is the tool for a major developer to come in and start consolidating those properties if the market drives them in that direction, He suggested there is all kinds of potential being on the border and a lot of retail traffic.

## **5. OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS**

Chair Alberti asked if there was anything important to be brought forward. K. Robinson said the Board was going to go over the wording of zoning amendments and she has some information. It was agreed to go over this at the next workshop meeting.

## **6. ADJOURNMENT**

There was no additional business before the Board and the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene A. Glorieux  
Minute Taker