

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 Feb. 16 2022*)

Feb. 2, 2022

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.* Excused
Maxann Dobson, Alternate – Absent
Bill Coye, *Selectman's Alt.* - Present at Town Hall
John Cashell, *Planning Director* –Present at Town Hall (non-voting)

Also Present: Richard Anthony

In the absence of G. Taillon, Ch. Alberti appointed B. Coye as Selectman's Representative voting member for this meeting.

2. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF JANUARY 19, 2022 MINUTES:

Draft minutes of the January 19, 2022 meeting were included with the meeting materials.

T. Moore moved, second by T. Alberti to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2022 meeting as issued.

The motion to approve the minutes as issued passed 3(T. Alberti, T. Moore, B. Cole)-0-1(L. Milette)

K. Robinson joined the meeting.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Ch. Alberti noted that a Town resident wished to become an alternate member of the Planning Board and invited Richard Anthony, 4 Village Way, Plaistow to introduce himself. R. Anthony said he has lived in Plaistow for 20 years, currently serves on the Budget Committee and the Trash Committee. He said he has worked in financial services for 20 years and his interest in the Planning Board comes from having raised

two children in Plaistow and has a vested interest in having Plaistow be as awesome as possible. Ch. Alberti asked for any questions from the Board; there were none. Ch. Alberti noted that people become involved in the Planning Board for various reasons and noted that R. Anthony has been involved in the past.

T. Alberti moved, second by L. Milette, to accept R. Anthony as an Alternate Member of the Planning Board.

The motion to accept R. Anthony as an Alternate Member passed 4(T. Alberti, K. Robinson, B. Cole, L. Milette)-1(T. Moore)-0

T. Moore noted that R. Anthony has good qualifications but he is reluctant because the court case is still underway. He said once the court case is resolved he would be happy to reconsider. Ch. Alberti noted he had reached out to Atty. Cleary to see if there was anything that would disqualify R. Anthony and was told there is not, though recusal would be appropriate in any discussion should that case be brought up at the Planning Board. He noted that R. Anthony would need to fill out the material sent to him and return it to Dee Voss and he would need to be sworn in before officially joining the Board.

3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION

Ch. Alberti reopened the discussions regarding the Planning Board's role in this area, as well as the Community Survey and asked J. Cashell to discuss the information he had distributed. J. Cashell stressed that something like the Rte. 125 Commercial/Retail Corridor does not happen overnight but happens because of an increase in population and vehicle traffic. He noted before Rtes. 495 and 93 were built, Rte. 125 was a major highway up to the Winnepesaukee area and the commercial corridor had been growing for many years. He noted the aging population is part of the reason for the recent medical applicants. He also noted that the upcoming application for a large warehouse facility is driven by the consumer demand for delivery of goods driven by the internet, and noted that the vehicle traffic to shopping centers is being replaced by delivery vehicle traffic going to the consumer houses. He suggested that one of the main points in creating an economic development plan for any community is to recognize what is actually going on and attempt to discern where these changes are leading. He noted that the adoption of mixed-uses for the corridor was done in anticipation of what the demand will be and the changes being seen across the country.

There was discussion about what brings consumers out of their houses to get goods or services, and how mixed-use areas allow a consumer to do a number of different things in the same area (purchase, service, food, entertaining), as well as the monetary savings available to Massachusetts residents in New Hampshire.

C. Alberti suggested Plaistow is the vessel for some economic changes in consumerism as a convenient place to locate certain types of businesses that don't necessarily benefit the Town's residents. He said he is not seeing new restaurants, entertainment, beneficial services coming to the Town. B. Coye said that due to the border location, he sees people come in and mine the goods available here, save the sales tax, and then leave. There was discussion about items that purchased in New Hampshire that save money such as cigarettes, booze, tires, wood, groceries, etc. There was discussion about the effect of the many economic changes of the last 10 years and the pandemic on the area and how hard it is to predict changes. Also noted is the lack of large lots for development along the corridor and how it is surrounded by residential uses.

There was discussion about the potential for connecting to the Haverhill sewer system in the future and how that would impact the Town, and the possibility that might bring more restaurants to the area.

Ch. Alberti suggested thinking about what the Board wants to accomplish: write an economic development overview and draft, and then develop ideas and ways to drive in the direction the Board would like to see, and how to get there. It was agreed that a survey to determine what the community wants would help with this. K. Robinson brought in materials from the 2010 review of the 2004 Master Plan and noted that the procedures for this worked exceptionally well to get input and involvement from the residents. She said the process took 12-16 months, they had several community input sessions during the time and looked at land use, Town character, resources, open space and recreation, natural resources, housing, transportation, infrastructure, new economic development and new energy. She reviewed how the townspeople were invited to come in and prioritize what concerned them the most.

Ch. Alberti said this was for the whole master plan and he would like to concentrate on the Economic Development portion. He asked if we could expect the same level of participation in the midst of a pandemic. J. Cashell noted that the Regional Planning Agency could serve as facilitators for this work. There was discussion of how to engage the public in 2022. J. Cashell referred to Town dislike of a proposed train stop and layover station, and that the layover station was what the residents did not want. He suggested a train stop could prove important to the community in the future as mass transit will be even more necessary.

Ch. Alberti noted that with the lack of land for new development, part of the process would need to focus on economic redevelopment from the original use. The penchant to have everything delivered to the house was also discussed, but it was noted that the traffic is still out there visiting the stores. J. Cashell noted that the market is always ahead of what planners are looking at and suggested that the Town should put itself in a position of picking and choosing what it wants in the corridor. L. Milette spoke to the need of learning what businesses the residents are looking for.

There was discussion about the status of the ConvenientMD plan, cut-through drivers, and the NH DOT issues with the driveway and the potential creation of a 90 degree intersection. J. Cashell suggested focusing on this and working with DOT. Ch. Alberti asked about the recommendation of a No U Turn sign at Rte. 125 and Westville Rd.

Ch. Alberti asked if the Board should create an economic development plan by starting with a description of how things exist now, a description of what the Board wants to do and accomplish, what needs to be done to achieve these, the resources and tools would be needed, and then the plan to get there. J. Cashell suggested using the concept reviewed by K. Robinson to address this one particular issue. T. Moore said he liked the approach Windham took with the public information sessions and surveys, and thought the overall process could be managed by the Board, but to exercise and implement the plan outside help would be needed. J. Cashell said Gary Bluestone did the Windham study and has been doing these plans for many municipalities. There was discussion of the process and time line to introduce multifamily units into the overlay district and how New England is likely to have population growth.

Ch. Alberti asked for the next steps so things can be accomplished. T. Moore suggested getting together with the RPC we would be well-served, and he will contact Tim Roache and see if he will come to the April workshop if the budget passes Town Meeting. He suggested for this year, we should ask for information on what budget would be needed for something in the Windham format. There was discussion of the time available to the Board for work from the planning staff, and it was noted that Dee Voss wears many hats and does much work; J. Cashell suggested it might be beneficial to the Town to hire an assistant for her to assure the work gets done. He noted that Mr. Tombarello has been appointed Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer.

K. Robinson said she and L. Milette have several examples of surveys that could be adjusted to the Board's needs. Ch. Alberti said this could be focused on for the next meeting. L. Milette said she was not sure if the

\$5,000 the Board believed it would have for the Master Plan was still in the budget. B. Coye said he didn't remember cutting it.

The take a ways from this discussion are T. Moore to follow up with Tim Roache at the RPC and survey content.

Impact Fees: Ch. Alberti referred to the information on impact fees in the Board packets and asked for help in understanding the information. T. Moore read out the School Impact Fee. He noted the fees must be spent within six years and so would need to be spent in the next 5-6 years. It was noted the bonding for the school buildings has been paid off. T. Moore said that the suggestion at the last update would be to update these fees in five years. He also reviewed the Public Safety Fees and noted some of these are set to expire in each of the six years. And he believes that all the amounts are less than the bond interest on the safety complex which these fees were for.

Ch. Alberti asked who dictates how the money is used. T. Moore said that some time ago there was a form that went to the Planning Board and it would sign off that the proposed request to use the impact fees was a legitimate request, and then it would go to the BOS to decide whether to expend the fees for that purpose. He noted the Public Safety fees reduced the fire apparatus and the building bond. Ch. Alberti asked if the fees have to be given back if they are not use; T. Moore said that had happened a few times and that in some cases the people owed the refund said the Town could keep it. He noted the Waterline Impact Fees were discontinued once the fire suppression line went up Rte. 125 and they are no longer being collected and suggested the balance might be transferred to the Water Enterprise. It was also noted that the Recreation Impact Fees were used on the ball field.

It was noted the impact fees calculations were updated in 2019 and they carry over for a period of time. Ch. Alberti asked if the impact fees are covering the use as the commercial corridor expands and it was agreed some of these could be adjusted upward as costs grow. L. Milette noted that the new buildings planned will only be assessed fees on the parts of the building larger than what is already there. There was a question if the fees should cover everything if it is a whole new use. T. Moore said you can't use impact fees to pay salaries or administrative costs and it has to be based on growth as the original building has already been subject to the fees. He also said that once the impact fees have been paid the owners are paying property taxes on all the square footage. J. Cashell said the State provides statutes that enable the communities to create impact fees, which require a lot of work and the calculations must be justified.

5. NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS/COMMUNICATIONS:

Ch. Alberti said he had reached out to G. Colby about how once the Planning Board has done its work and handed off an application it no longer knows what happens after that and how Code Enforcement is a vital piece to the land use process. He asked if anyone knows the details of the Code Enforcement/Building Inspector's job. J. Cashell said all he knew is that the position is permanent. K. Robinson said she felt there is money in the budget for a stand-alone Code Enforcement Officer and asked if Mr. Tombarello has the qualifications if he had just been doing plumbing and wiring before. J. Cashell noted that some communities involve the fire department personnel in this aspect. He said NH law has required a joint meeting of the Planning Board and ZBA annually; T. Moore said this is not on the books now but they still could and there have been a few joint meetings. He noted there have been some joint meetings between the Planning Board and the ZBA, the BOS, the Atkinson Planning Board and the Newton Planning Board. Ch. Alberti suggested it might be a good idea to meet with the ZBA so that if the Board creates a Economic Development Plan the ZBA would be informed and less likely to grant variances for use that work against

it. T. Moore said the ZBA is limited in scope unlike the Planning Board which can look at the whole project. He said that if an Economic Development plan is put in place and something goes to the ZBA counter to what is in the plan the ZBA can rightfully deny the hearing. However if there is not any plan then there is no rationale to deny a variance. Ch. Alberti suggested at some time during the process a meeting with ZBA may be useful. T. Moore said on occasion the Planning Board might write a letter in favor or against a requested variance, but it does not happen often. There was discussion of how regular ZBA meetings run. T. Moore said when there is a joint meeting of the Planning Board and ZBA, the ZBA's initial data gathering session with the Planning Board session and when the point is reached that an approved variance is needed to continue, the meeting is turned over to the ZBA for their deliberative session, which is open to the public but not to public comment. After the ZBA session closes the meeting comes back to the Planning Board.

J. Cashell referred to the legal notice of the Planning Board's Public Hearing on Feb 16, 2022 and said there is a strong chance that the first four public hearings will be continued to the second meeting in March as there is a lot of information missing.

L. Milette noted she will be running again for the Planning Board.

Ch. Alberti welcomed R. Anthony as an Alternate Member of the Planning Board again and said they will be sure to have the necessary steps completed to bring him on board. He noted there will be a training session in the Spring. B. Coye reminded all present of the Deliberative Session on Saturday February 5, 2022 at 9:00 AM.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There was no additional business before the Board and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charlene A. Glorieux
Minute Taker