Town of Farmington
Economic Development Committee
Joint Meeting with the Planning Board
Tuesday, November 3, 2015

**EDC Committee Members Present**: **Planning Board Members Present:**Ann Titus, Chair David Kestner, Vice Chair
Elaine Aylard Glen Demers
Resta Detwiler Martin Laferte
Charlie King, Selectmen’s Rep. Resta Detwiler
Denise Roy-Palmer

**EDC Committee Members Absent: Planning Board Members Absent:**
Bill Tsiros, excused Charlie Doke, Chair, excused
Jodi Connolly Jim Horgan, Selectmen’s Rep.
 Anthony Vittorioso

**Town Staff Present:**
Liz Durfee, Regional/Interim Planner

**Others Present:**Jackie Bissell
John Bower
Dave Connolly
Bill Baxter
Robert Berner, Eversource Eastern Region Arborist

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:**Vice Chairman Kestner called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Joint Planning Board and Economic Development Committee Workshop:**
Planner Liz Durfee welcomed committee members and members of the public to an informal discussion of the Aquifer Protection Overlay District Update Project. Copies of “Got Clean Drinking Water?”, “Farmington’s Aquifer Protection Overlay District Update” and “What is Our Water Worth?” were available to the public and board members.
Ms. Durfee’s presentation began with a list of the members of the local update Planning Committee which includes Ms. Durfee, Resta Detwiler, Martin Laferte and Public Works Director Dale Sprague. The committee has been reviewing the existing ordinance, the state model ordinance for overlay protection districts and discussing updates to the ordinance to expand the district to include the area around town well six she said.
The purpose of the workshop was to give the public an overview of the existing Overlay Protection District, existing water resources and protection areas and why we should protect groundwater. The Power Point presentation included the following information:
*What is Groundwater? -* The water between the cracks and spaces in soil particles and rock beneath the surface of the land.
*What is an Aquifer?* – A geologic formation composed of rock, sand or gravel that contains significant amounts of recoverable water or water that could be withdrawn by a well. A “confirmed” aquifer is one that is covered by two hard layers.
*Why Should We Protect Groundwater?* -
Ensure the quality and quantity of drinking water
Minimize the cost of water treatments
Maintain the water cycle and provide water to streams, rivers and lakes
Support recreational activities and healthy ecosystems for the vitality of fish and wildlife
Attract new businesses with a sustainable water supply
Supports the local economy- reports of unclean water impacts business and tourism
*Potential Threats to Groundwater-*
Contamination from certain land uses
Leaking above and underground storage tanks
Mishandling of industrial chemicals
Storage and use of road salt and de-icers
Agricultural and storm water run-off
*RSA 485-C Groundwater Protection Act-* The chapter includes the classifications of groundwater, management zones, potential contamination sources, Best Management Practices and prohibited uses around public and private water supplies.
*How to Protect Groundwater-*Set quality standards through the use of zoning ordinances, public education, proper hazardous materials collection, easements and local regulations, management of potential contaminates and prohibit high risk uses such as landfills, junkyards, septage lagoons, road salt and de-icing chemicals and gas stations.
Her discussion included few changes are planned to the Overlay Protection Ordinance, some Best Management Practices are out of date, performance standards for manure and fertilizer storage, regulated substances, sealing inactive wells, local water source grants are available, expanding the protection area to include a third town well (#6), being consistent with land use regulations, complying with state laws, the Health Protection Ordinance and the protection of future water resources.
Ms. Durfee invited the public to view the maps with the locations of the town wells and the present protection areas, the water shed areas which flow into the Cocheco River, zoning districts and known contaminated sites.
Ms. Durfee gave an update on the process to amend the ordinance. The Planning Committee began meeting in July 2015 and will meet until December. The draft ordinance will be prepared by the committee, sent to the Planning Board for review, the information will be posted on the town web site and there will be a Public Hearing held in December she said. She asked anyone with questions or concerns to contact her using the contact information on her business card.
She then opened the meeting to public comment. Discussion included more restrictions around the well itself and reducing requirements as you move away from the well, the TIF District is located in the proposed protection area, existing uses are grandfathered, protecting a potential future well site, any change in use triggers a review by the CEO/Planning Board, residential uses are exempt from the ordinance, Farmington is not responsible to protect Rochester’s well area and the center of town is more developed but has less restrictions than properties located on Ten Rod Road.
Discussion also centered on the potential impact to existing and future home businesses which may have to be addressed by the Planning Board. Residents said fuel, chemicals, equipment and vehicle storage and repair could become a big issue with added costs and could trigger issues with the Dept. of Environmental Services which could negatively affect an existing business or prevent a potential new home business from going forward.
Ms. Durfee said many of these uses are already covered under state law and town regulations and inspections are presently required. She said she would take a look at how home businesses might be affected and if the proposed ordinance will add an extra layer of regulations on them and discuss it with the Planning Board at their next meeting. She encouraged residents not to jump to conclusions about the impact on property owners and to read the language first before deciding the ordinance will be overly burdensome. She added the Planning Committee wants to develop an ordinance the town will approve and residents will be able to provide feedback at the upcoming Public Hearings.

**Any Other Business before the Committee**: None.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectively submitted
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary