

**TOWN OF FARMINGTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, September 3, 2013
356 Main Street, Farmington, NH**

Board Members Present: Paul Parker, Charles Doke, David Kestner, Glen Demers, Martin Laferte,

Selectmen's Representative:

Board Members Absent/Excused: Charlie King, Joshua Carlsen

Town Staff Present: Director of Planning and Community Development Kathy Menici,
Department Secretary Bette Anne Gallagher

Public Present: None

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

- **Pledge of Allegiance**

At 6:11 pm Chairman Parker called the meeting to order and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Review and approve Meeting Minutes of August 20, 2013**

Martin Laferte motioned to approve the minutes of August 20, 2013 as written; 2nd Charles Doke. Motion carried with all in favor.

- **Discussion of changes to Section 4 and Section 5 of the Site Plan Review Regulations regarding Change of Use in the Village Center District**

Planner Menici explained that when she was working on adding the language that the Board had already adopted for a streamlined review and approval process by the Code Enforcement Officer in the Village Center District she realized that Section 4 - Applicability identifies each level of site plan review so that section needed revision to include the new process. The handout in tonight's packet was included in the July 16th packet for review only at which time the Board continued the discussion to tonight.

The Planner said that Section 4 now lists three possible applications but a fourth bullet point needed to be added as well as an additional paragraph. She read the four bullet points and the new paragraph "C". The change already adopted by the Board is shown as Section 5.1.

Planner Menici explained that this is just a change in process but must be agreed upon by the Board and then adopted at a properly noticed public hearing. The Board briefly discussed the changes and all agreed to them and to move forward.

Paul Parker motioned to accept the language as presented in Draft 1 and move forward to public hearing on September 17, 2013 for the changes to Section 4 and Section 5 of the Site Plan Review Regulations regarding Change of Use in the Village Center District; 2nd Charles Doke. Motion carried with all in favor.

- **Any other business to come before the Board**

Planner Menici said the Board had the final report from FST on the subdivision road for Richards Way for construction up to the binder course. The Planner said there will be one final review when the wear course is laid

although she was not sure how many inspections might be necessary at that time and the Town already has in escrow a surety bond for the wear course and any adjustments to the binder course that might be necessary. The developer has posted the lots for sale and the project has now moved into sales mode.

Chairman Parker asked if there was anything in the report that raised concern. The Planner said there were no concerns and the developer, Candid Arcidy, has dealt right up front with each problem or setback as it occurred. She said Mrs. Arcidy had maintained an excellent attitude throughout this long process and had been easy to work with.

The members agreed that it was good to see this project go from something that was not viable to a win-win situation for both the developer and the Town.

Chairman Parker said that earlier in the year he had brought up the two positions on the CIP Committee. Charles Doke had been the alternate but did not want to continue because he wanted to concentrate on helping with the Community Planning Grant. The Chairman said Martin Laferte has now expressed interest in serving as the alternate for CIP.

Paul Parker motioned to nominate Martin Laferte as the alternate member for the CIP Committee; 2nd Glen Demers. Motion carried with all in favor.

Planner Menici said she would pass on to the Board of Selectmen the Planning Board's recommendation that Martin Laferte serve as alternate to the CIP because they make the actual appointment and she will include a copy of the minutes of tonight's meeting.

Mr. Laferte said he has a great deal of experience with CIP programs and is more than happy to help. Chairman Parker said the Committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month. Mr. Laferte asked who would notify him when he is appointed. The Planner said notification would probably come from the Board of Selectmen's secretary Megan.

PUBLIC HEARING - 6:30 pm

Proposed revisions to the Town of Farmington's Planning Board Rules of Procedure

Planner Menici said it was not quite 6:30 pm and since the hearing could not be held until that time, the Board might want to take a final opportunity to review the changes before the Chairman officially opened the public hearing.

At 6:28 pm Paul Parker motioned for a five minute recess; 2nd Martin Laferte. Motion carried with all in favor. The meeting was reconvened at 6:34 pm.

Chairman Parker said at the last meeting there was some discussion about the changes but thought what was presented tonight was a little different from what the Board decided at the last meeting.

Charles Doke said the Board had agreed to take out a specified number because people could have personal issues or illness and each situation would be taken on a case by case basis.

The Chairman read paragraph "B" and said that he would like to see added that failure to notify will result in an unexcused absence. Planner Menici said the language provided is what the Board agreed upon. Chairman Parker said he was looking at a sentence from a different draft and brought this up because it was a good addition to paragraph C which he then read.

David Kestner said he had not been at the meeting at which the specific numbers were dropped at Charlie King's recommendation. He said he has what dates back earlier than that and doesn't have a problem with what

Chairman Parker is saying but wonders why it wasn't caught during the last discussion.

Charles Doke said it was his recollection that it was not overlooked but that the Board decided not to use a number or percentage and paragraph "D" was added about behavior or absences and that is what is in this final draft. He said it doesn't make sense to rehash what was done and the Board should go with what is here.

David Kestner said he was looking for background information because the minutes don't give the "flavor" of the discussion as it moved along. He said he had the different drafts but he missed the discussion about the percentages and numbers and that is why he was asking.

Charles Doke said the reason he gave is why percentages and numbers were not included.

David Kestner said that paragraph "D" took care of what the Chairman was looking to do. He read paragraph "D" and said the paragraph equates out to what Chairman Parker wanted. He added that Bette keeps track of attendance with reasons for absences.

Glen Demers said the language was self explanatory and should not be changed. Martin Laferte said paragraph "D" covers what the Board talked about and additional language isn't needed.

Chairman Parker opened the hearing to public comment but there was no one in attendance and closed the public portion.

Charles Doke motioned to adopt the proposed revisions to the Town of Farmington's Planning Board Rules of Procedure; 2nd Glen Demers. Motion carried with all in favor.

Planner Menici said the article distributed to the members was for information only. Jack Mettee, the consultant for the Community Planning Grant, forwarded the Seacoast On Line link to this article that appeared in the Portsmouth Herald. The article contains interviews with officials from Exeter, Durham, Somersworth, Newmarket and Portsmouth and talks about what they are doing for economic development. She said it struck Jack Mettee that all these towns are doing what Farmington is already doing through the Community Planning Grant. The Planner said she gave a copy to the Town Administrator, Keith Trefethen, and they agreed it should be given to the Economic Development Committee.

The Planner said that what jumped out is that Farmington is not playing catch up through the grant activities but is keeping pace with other communities in the region. The other towns are basically pursuing the same kind of activities that Farmington has undertaken through the grant.

Chairman Parker commented that Farmington is moving ahead of some towns. The Planner said that some towns have bigger budgets but the point is that Farmington is moving forward at a complimentary pace to other towns in the region and she hopes all are successful.

Charles Doke asked what form of government the other towns have. Planner Menici said that some are cities but Newmarket is a town with a town administrator the same as Farmington. The difference is that a city council or town council form of management allows those communities to bring forward changes to their zoning ordinances at any time of the year. Towns such as Farmington or Newmarket must wait until town meeting because the residents are the legislative body that makes changes.

Planner Menici said that although some towns have a more expedient approval process than Farmington the current Board of Selectmen together with the appointed boards and commissions have shown that they are committed to identifying the regulatory changes necessary to move Farmington forward.

The Planner said that from a professional's viewpoint she is proud to be associated with Farmington as both the elected and appointed officials plan ahead adding that these are big changes for a small town to make and it takes a lot for people to change their thought processes. She commended all for their efforts.

Charles Doke said that change is necessary for the Town's survival. Chairman Parker said it is good to look ahead and use the tools and innovative ideas available.

David Kestner said that looking at both TIF and 79-e it was apparent that there would be some big ticket capital improvement items and it would be critical to consider the timing of these and the school bonds because there cannot be back to back ten million dollar (\$10,000,000) bonds.

Planner Menici said that is why the Board chose experienced consultants who have worked successfully in other communities and can assist Farmington in avoiding pitfalls.

Mr. Kestner said that some of the editorials he has read regarding other communities have not been positive. The Planner said that any project will always have naysayers no matter how hard a community works and some will always point out why change is not good. She said that a review of the tax rate in some of the communities being criticized shows that the rates have not changed, have stabilized or in some cases have even gone down.

Mr. Kestner said he was not speaking against the project but just pointing out that for example some of the TIF area will need water and sewer that Superintendent Sprague estimates will cost one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per mile.

The Planner said that a review of the conversations had during the consultant interviews with Jack Mettee and Roger Hawk will show that Mr. Hawk stated he would not recommend that the Town start to expand water and sewer until a firm commitment from a developer is in place. She added that Mr. Kestner's comments were discouraging to her and it was not her intent to lead the Planning Board or the Board of Selectmen down a path that would be financially damaging.

Planner Menici said that in order to put together a program that shows what the costs are, she will be applying for a grant to hire an engineer to provide a hard cost estimate. This will enable Mettee Consultants to put together a comprehensive plan including realistic costs and that is what is needed for this project to work.

Chairman Parker said that Mr. Kestner's remarks were meant to insure the Board is aware of the pitfalls that can happen. He said he had read some of the same articles that Mr. Kestner referred to.

The Planner said residents don't watch all the Planning Board meetings and those that were held upstairs were not televised and she wanted to assure anyone watching that staff, Planning Board and consultants are all being careful.

Mr. Kestner said he would like to see some of the same expansion that is going on in Rochester happen in Farmington and he supports this project. He was just expressing concern because the more that is bonded out the more burden is placed on residents. He added that he does not view bonding as a problem but balance is necessary so residents can afford to fund the improvements.

Planner Menici said it goes back to the discussion when Mettee Consultants were being interviewed and during that process Roger Hawk was definitive about not taking on any capital improvements until there is firm commitment from a developer. She said that included having surety bonds, etc., in place.

Charles Doke said it was vital to have the regulations in position so the Town is ready for growth when it comes and the Chairman added it insures that when a developer is ready there won't be an extended wait.

Approved by the Planning Board on September 17, 2013.

Martin Laferte agreed stating the Town needs to be in a position where the background work is in place so the specifics of a proposed project can be dealt with in a timely manner when it is presented.

At 7:03 pm Martin Laferte motioned to adjourn the meeting; 2nd Charles Doke. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Bette Anne Gallagher, Department Secretary

Chairman, Paul Parker