

**TOWN OF FARMINGTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, March 3, 2015
356 Main Street, Farmington, NH**

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

Selectmen's Representative: Charlie King (late)

Board Members Absent/Excused:

Town Staff Present:

Public Present: Cynthia Copeland, Strafford Regional Planning Commission AICP Executive Director, Colin Lentz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission Regional Transportation Planner

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

- **Pledge of Allegiance**

At 6:07 pm Chairman Parker called the meeting to order and all present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Review and approve Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2015**

Martin Laferte motioned to approve the minutes of February 17, 2015 as written; 2nd Charles Doke. Motion carried with all in favor.

- **Committee Reports from Martin Laferte**

Mr. Laferte presented a report on the committees he represents on behalf of the Planning Board.

Capital Improvement Plan Committee – Mr. Laferte reported that this committee has good members that hold monthly meetings. Their main focus has been the TIF District proposal which they favor as much as the Planning Board members do.

Economic Development Commission – He said this committee leaves something to be desired. He has attended one meeting and noted that they keep putting off holding meetings. He said he feels they haven't accomplished much.

Strafford Regional Planning Commission – This committee meets the first Friday of every month in Rochester. He said the group of 20-25 members is able to accomplish a lot because it is comprised of full time commission employees. Some of the issues under consideration include a state Transportation Plan, Scenic Byways, Park and Ride and the Growth Report.

Joint Committee on Farmington/Rochester Water Issues – He reported that Rochester requested the

formation of a joint committee with Farmington to oversee issues related to the water sources shared by the two communities. The first meeting is scheduled for the spring of 2015. He said he is familiar with some of the issues in both communities as he is a former Rochester Water Commissioner and is in contact with Public Works Director Dale Sprague about water source issues in Farmington.

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

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

A) Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan – Cynthia Copeland and Colin Lentz from the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) came before the Board seeking feedback about existing and new transportation projects for inclusion in the State’s Ten Year Plan. Mr. Lentz said this is a chance for the Town to “make the case” to receive more of the limited public funds for issues related to State and federally owned roads, bridges, infrastructure and transit providers eligible for State and Federal funds.

Mr. Lentz explained that each year, the State receives money from Federal funding sources and the SRPC receives about 10 percent of those funds. Projects submitted by municipalities are ranked for possible inclusion in the Ten Year Plan.

Mr. Laferte asked if all of the counties are ranked the same way and where Strafford County ranks in terms of the amount of funding received. Mr. Lentz said the county ranking is based on the population size and the number of miles of roadways in the county. For example, the northern counties have less population, but cover a larger area consisting of more road mileage so the process is equalized. He added that Strafford County is ranked in the middle in terms of funds received.

Mr. Doke asked if the TIF District could be used to obtain transportation funds. Ms. Copeland said the TIF District is established for a specific purpose and once that purpose is achieved, the district is disbanded. She cited the town of Newmarket where a TIF District was established to install water and sewer lines and was disbanded when the project was completed. The Town then went on to apply for a transportation grant to further enhance the area she said.

Mr. Lentz said the commission is interested in hearing about local needs and goals related to transportation. In order to draw additional funds to the area, the community’s needs and goals must be clearly stated. The process includes meeting with the municipalities and regional transportation agencies. SRPC then reviews and ranks the projects, the results are reviewed by the Municipal Planning Organization staff and a report is sent to the NH DOT. The process then continues on the State level where the DOT will score the projects and present their findings to the Executive Council who will then hold a public hearing on the matter. The proposed projects go to the State Legislature which will propose a bill to fund the proposals and then to the Governor’s office if passed.

Members then discussed some of the priorities they would like to see included in the plan. Discussion included Routes 75 and 153 (downtown corridor), the “red listed” bridges in Town, safe access to the schools, safe pedestrian access downtown, intersection improvement to Route 11 and Spring Street and installation of a third lane on Route 11 in front of Barron Brothers Development.

Board members received a packet from the SRPC representatives which contained the 2015 Ten Year Plan Project Solicitation Workbook. At Chairman Parker’s suggestion, the members took a few minutes to complete the multiple choice questions on transportation planning priorities and to rank priorities for long range transportation projects in Farmington.

Discussion then turned to the various modes of transportation and their related agencies. Discussion included the viability of including Farmington in the proposed expansion of the rail service from Dover to the North Country, parking issues at the various train stations, the popularity of the Park and Ride Program, and the need for return of passenger flights at Pease. Mr. Doke added that it did not make sense for the State to partner with Boston at Manchester Airport when Pease International Tradeport has the largest runway and is capable of handling larger planes.

Mr. Laferte asked if State transportation funds, including funds allocated to Pease, are being used to expand Skyhaven Airport in Rochester. Mr. Lentz said the expansion funds are Federal funds from the FAA. Selectman King added that the City of Rochester was able to get Pease to take over the maintenance duties at Skyhaven.

Mr. Lentz then closed his presentation and told Chairman Parker he would keep in touch as the process moves forward. Chairman Parker thanked Ms. Copeland and Mr. Lentz for the informative presentation and discussion.

B) Nobis Engineering Reports – Chairman Parker presented the PSNH reports on utility pole maintenance for January 16, 2015 and January 23, 2015.

C) Tax Increment Finance Flyers – Chairman Parker reported on his efforts to provide more opportunities to educate the public about the proposed TIF District which will be voted on at Town Meeting. Members discussed suggestions for placement of the flyers and agreed to take a portion of the flyers and bring them to the suggested locations.

D) Town Meeting – Chairman Parker discussed the importance of having Planning Board and Economic Development Commission members present at the annual Town Meeting on Wednesday, March 11. He also reported that there were positive articles in the local newspapers and that the recent joint meeting between the two Boards is being aired several times a day on the local cable TV channel.

Mr. Vittorioso added that the proposal has gotten positive feedback on the local social media pages.

At 7:25 pm Martin Laferte motioned to adjourn the meeting; 2nd Charlie King. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Chairman, Paul Parker