

**TOWN OF FARMINGTON
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, April 5, 2016
356 Main Street, Farmington, NH**

Minutes

Planning Board Members Present:

David Kestner, Vice Chairman
Resta Detwiler
Glen Demers
Anthony Vittorioso
Jim Horgan, Selectmen's Rep.
Martin Laferte

Planning Board Members Absent:

Charlie Doke, Chairman- excused

Economic Development Committee Members Present:

Ann Titus, Chairman
Elaine Aylard
Denise Roy-Palmer
Randy Orvis
Resta Detwiler
Martin Laferte

Others Present:

Town Administrator Arthur Capello
Regional Planner Liz Durfee
Planning Dept. Secretary Diana Proulx
Randy Tetreault, Norway Plains

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

Call to Order:

Vice Chairman Kestner called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review of Minutes:

March 15, 2016-

Motion: (Vittorioso, second Horgan) to accept the minutes as written passed 5-1 (Demers abstained).

Joint EDC-Planning Discussion on Economic Assets, Needs and Opportunities:

Vice Chairman Kestner welcomed the EDC members to the joint meeting. He then turned the meeting over to Planner Liz Durfee.

Ms. Durfee began her presentation with a brief overview of the special districts and incentives programs in town. She suggested this is good opportunity to discuss planning related to economic development and presented fact sheets and updated Village District, ERZ and TIF District maps for review.

Tax Incentive Finance District (TIF) Update- The final components of the district, the implementation plan and the creation of an advisory board were approved by voters in March. Town Administrator Arthur Capello is the administrator of the district and Selectmen will appoint advisory board members. There are approx. 50 parcels in the district centered near the intersection of Main Street (Route 153) and Route 11. Work is underway on outreach materials that will be posted on the town website and available in the Planning Office for individuals interested in learning more about the district. The purpose of the TIF District is to help increase tax revenues from the development that occurs there to help fund the expansion of the sewer and water systems up Main Street and along Route 11. The construction of the sewer and water mains is scheduled to occur in two phases over the next 10 years. There will be a combination of revenue from new development, grants and other sources to fund the installation of sewer lines. The fact sheet presented will be reviewed by board members and town staff and then will be posted on the town website.

Community Revitalization Tax Incentive (79-e) District- This program is a tax break for businesses and property owners in the village center district. To qualify for the incentive the owner must make an improvement to the property valued at \$75,000 or 15% or more of the assessed value of the property with some associated benefit to the public. Postcards will be sent to property owners in the district to let them know that this opportunity is available. Information is also available on the town website and in the town office.

Economic Revitalization Zones (ERZ) – There are three ERZ zones in town. The state of NH has developed a fact sheet explaining ERZ districts. The program involves a tax credit for businesses that invest in equipment and create new jobs within the state. The credit equals the salary of each new job created. These programs create incentives for new businesses to come to town and to insure the existing businesses stay here Durfee said.

EDC member Elaine Aylard asked how long it will take to get the sewer to the TIF District. Ms. Durfee said phase one of the plan will take approx. eight years and phase two is about six years. The actual construction of the lines won't take that long but the infrastructure won't be installed until there is enough revenue collected from taxes, grants or other funds to pay the cost of the improvements.

Ms. Aylard added without sewer and water no business will locate in the district.

Ms. Durfee said there is major site plan review application for a proposed business in the TIF District that will come before the Planning Board in a few weeks. The business plans to have its own well and septic system and will have the ability to hook up to the town water and sewer in the future.

Ms. Aylard then asked if once the sewer is installed will businesses be forced to connect or will it be optional.

Mr. Capello said the sewer hook-up will be mandatory and connecting to town water will be optional.

EDC member Randy Orvis said there is too much emphasis on obtaining sewer/water in the TIF area. The soil conditions will allow for septic systems in a small area and water is already available there. He added that natural gas should be available in the district and suggested the town should encourage residents/business owners to contact the gas companies to urge them to make natural gas available and commit to being a customer. The first step is to convince existing LP gas customers to convert to natural gas so the gas companies will come to town. Deliveries would be possible by Route 11 or by rail he said.

Mr. Vittorioso said the town needs to be careful about attaching water and sewer to the TIF District. We need to do what is right for the town not what is right for the people who want water and sewer. It might be other things beyond water and sewer that benefits the town more and we can't be shortsighted he said.

Vice Chairman Kestner said the plan is only theoretical and if no businesses show up in the district there will be no money deposited for the sewer expansion account.

Mr. Capello said businesses in the district will have a base tax rate that will go to the town while taxes on the increased value of the business will be put into the TIF account. Deposits into the account will be made yearly though it may not be much at first he said.

Mr. Kestner noted the estimated cost for the two phases of the sewer expansion is \$3.5 million which is pretty big bite for a bond considering that the town just approved a new Police/Fire

station. It is sometimes difficult to sit as Planning Board member but also as a taxpayer he said. Ms. Aylard added the more business we can attract to town the better our tax income will be. Mr. Kestner agreed but asked at what level does everyone have to contribute to that.

Ms. Durfee said development can still occur in the TIF District as it always has as anyone who wants to build a new business and put in their own well and septic can still do that. There is so much discussion about sewer and water when discussing the TIF District because that is what the district was established to fund. The tax on the increased value over time or from improvements is not an extra tax on anyone. The tax is placed in the account along with grants and other funds. That is why the sewer/water is so closely related to the TIF she said.

Mr. Vittoriosio asked if the only things that can be purchased with the account funds are sewer and water lines.

Ms. Durfee said if there is value accrued in the fund after phase one and two of the improvements plan have been completed those funds go back into the general fund.

Mr. Demers said the TIF District dissolves after the water and sewer projects are completed as the whole purpose for the TIF is to bring water and sewer to the district. He added the likelihood of a big box store coming to town without sewer is unlikely as they are not going to want use available space for a septic system.

Mr. Kestner added that money that is deposited into the TIF account does not go into general fund so the rest of the town ends up subsidizing that area.

Ms. Detwiler asked how far the TIF District extends along Route 11.

Mr. Demers said it runs from the Holy Rosary Credit Union to Paulsen Road.

Ms. Detwiler asked if after the postcards go out, will follow-up phone calls be made.

Ms. Durfee said she did not think there was enough staff or time for phone calls. She suggested the town consider other ways to reach people who don't watch or attend meetings. Making information available at events such as Hay Day could be another way to reach people she said.

Mr. Laferte noted that the fact sheet should say sewer and water and that the district includes development along Rt.153. Ms. Durfee will correct the omissions.

Discussion also included the need for someone to research and write grant applications, review of land use ordinances to determine if they are overly burdensome to small business, review of

sign regulations and recent Supreme Court ruling regarding signs and participation in the UNH business survey program.

EDC Strategic Plan- Ms. Detwiler said the EDC does not currently have a strategic plan for this year. EDC members said they have been concentrating on implementing the TIF District for the last three years and recruiting new members for the committee. Members said they plan to elect new committee officers, bring new members up to speed, contact business owners and develop a mission statement and a strategic plan for this year. Mr. Horgan suggested that after members have had a chance to re-group, they should meet more frequently with the Planning Board.

Strafford Economic Development District- Towns in the designated district are eligible for funding through 50/50 matching grant. The members are working on a strategy to identify qualified projects and are looking to incorporate projects in Farmington that create jobs. Ms. Roy-Palmer suggested the sewer line expansion could be included as an eligible project.

Brown Fields Project- Ms. Durfee said there is money available from the EPA for assessment of contaminated sites to identify what contaminants are present or not present in an effort to get the property back to productive use. She added the next meeting will be held April 11 and project members are in the process of selecting sites for assessment and obtaining landowner permission to assess the sites.

Vice Chairman Kestner then thanked EDC members for attending and addressing the issues with the Planning Board.

Recess-

Motion: (Laferte, second Demers) to take a five minute recess passed unanimously at 7 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:05 p.m.

Conceptual Review for “Hattie’s Place” Map U8 Lot 32-1, 256 Main Street requested by Randy Tetreault, agent.

Randy Tetreault of Norway Plains presented a sketch of the proposal to the board and said the owners would like to expand the facility which was started by his aunt in 1995. The present owners purchased the property in 1999 and ran it as a shared home until recently when the residents were moved to Rochester so renovations to the property could begin. He said the existing 12 bed shared home would be expanded by about 2500 sq. ft. The existing septic system would be relocated and has been approved for a 15 bed facility by the state. The owners would like to have 16-17 beds to make the facility work better financially so they may purchase a small strip of land from the abutting Cemetery Association property for additional site loading capacity. He said the piece of land they are looking at is a 25’by 200’ strip not connected to the cemetery area. They may then seek a lot line adjustment if cemetery associates approve the land

sale he said.

Mr. Tetreault said the current parking area has six spaces with a handicapped drop off area. He said he calculated that 12 beds with staff equal about two beds to one space. So an additional 4 beds would equal the need for 2 more spaces he said.

Owner Desire Packard said on a typical day there is one staff member, one Visiting Nurse and maybe one family member that may use four parking spaces. We have six spots now so I don't think we need more than eight spaces she said.

Discussion also included lighting, safety and security issues, addition of a dumpster cover, impervious cover may exceed 35% of the land area, drainage plans, number of employees additional entrance or exits, sidewalks and ramps, requirements for a sign and lighting for the sign.

Mr. Tetreault said they plan to continue the application process and will return to the board as soon as additional information can be provided.

Other business:

Ms. Durfee said she was contacted by a realtor regarding a Chestnut Hill Road subdivision that was approved in 2006 and is now up for sale. Discussion included whether the active and substantial development of the site plan has been completed, there was no five year exemption at the time, the short paper trail includes the Notice of Decision and some minutes, condition of the base road, DES permits have expired, no inspection records on file with the town, requirement that bonding for the road must be in place before lots are sold and conflicting information in the minutes. She then asked the board how they wished to proceed.

Mr. Horgan suggested the board members conduct a site walk to see the conditions for themselves in the event the owner comes before the board to discuss the matter.

Mr. Kestner suggested that a professional inspection is needed to determine if the base road and drainage were installed properly.

Ms. Detwiler said the owner should produce paperwork to show the proper approvals, inspections and permits were obtained.

Ms. Durfee added that the new lot owners would have to construct a road to their parcel to obtain a building permit.

Mr. Laferte suggested that since the plan is over 10 years old the board could request the owner to come before the board and go thru the site plan approval process again.

After some additional discussion, consensus of the board was to request that Ms. Durfee Continue her investigation of available paperwork

Contact DES to discuss the status of permits received and if any additional permits are needed

Contact Stantec to request inspection of the subdivision and the cost for the inspection

Contact the property owner and request copies of proof of inspections and permits

Obtain owner's permission for Stantec to conduct the inspection and a site walk by the board,

Provide smaller copies of the plan for board members

Provide an update for the board at the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD:

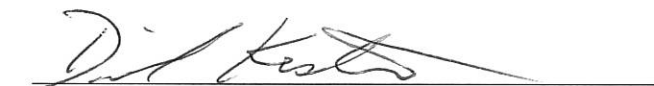
Mr. Horgan asked Ms. Proulx to try to find easels for Selectmen's Chambers.

Adjournment:

Motion: (Laferte, second Horgan) to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 8:05 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary


Vice Chairman, David Kestner