

**THE PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF FRANCESTOWN, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

December 2, 2014

APPROVED MINUTES

Planning Board Members Present: Abigail Arnold, Lisa Bourbeau, L. Kunhardt, L. Ames, S. Pyle and P. Tolman.

Others present: Jack Munn of Southern NH Planning Commission

M. Callahan is taking the minutes.

The meeting was brought to order at 6:30 pm.

Master Plan Update (continued)

Jack Munn of Southern NH Planning Commission was present to review, discuss and get feedback on the issues on the topic list he forwarded to the Board last week.

- Population, lack of growth rate, reasons for changes and population growth in surrounding Towns, as well as the fact that roads and access impact population were discussed. Sara Pyle mentioned that lack of services and infrastructure impact the number of people who settle here. Abigail added that in the 1970s many seasonal homes were converted to year-round homes, the residents then retired and passed away, which distorts the rate of growth. In addition to the growth rate the conversation factor makes it look bigger than it was. It was also noted that the economy has had a big impact on growth.
- Land Use was discussed. Acreage, rights of way, and other issues were discussed as well as how land is classified on the list from SNHPC, i.e. how is land in Current Use classified? For example, a farm is considered residential.
- Housing was discussed. It was felt that since there are no low cost rentals, no starter homes and no affordable housing for young adults to move to, so they move out of town. Many homes are antique homes and often people do not want the work and expense involved in purchasing an antique home. Zoning is also an issue as homes can't be converted to multiple dwellings. There is no senior housing and no nearby medical facilities. Infrastructure, limited town water and sewer are also factors.
- Housing values have not come back up, although they have stabilized.
- School enrollment went down to 42, a few years ago, and is now at 61. There is talk about the elementary school being eliminated. A vocal group is causing this idea and they cite the small school as too expensive, the school is only partially used and enrollment is stagnant. Schools were built to accommodate growth, but growth did not take place. The School Board will not discuss closure for a few more years.
- Aging population. The community is considering its own ambulance service instead of using Peterborough. There is no local hospital.
- Employment It is felt that the work force for local businesses is small. Accessibility, location, labor pool and infrastructure create a problem for businesses and customers. Better communications infrastructure might be beneficial. More business is desired in Town but no

one wants it located near them. Soft businesses might be attracted if services were improved. Small bakery, restaurant, brewery, would be preferred businesses. Parking is restrictive in Village. Conservation land was discussed. Main Street is challenging for business development due to lot size and no room for well and septic.

- Farmers still exist but not as only source of income. A spouse usually works outside the home. No self-sufficient farms. Quality and type of land don't allow for farms to be competitive. Roadside farm stand type farms exist. There are maple syrup businesses. Beef cow business in Town but owner has a day job.
- What draws people to Frankestown is small town living, beautiful village and historic character. Hunting, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding bring people to Town. Woods are important and summer ponds get a lot of use. Community feel, major motorcycle route, parade, Heritage Museum, beehive and the selection of beer at Village Store also draw visitors.

J. Munn indicated they are working on the demographics and will get a draft to the Board for review over Christmas. They are also working on broadband and will incorporate the 3 cell tower maps and he will continue to touch base with Mike on the Comcast renewal. He will have drafts when he returns for the January 6, 2015 meeting. He will forward ahead of time to allow for review.

Correspondence

S. Pyle received an email from Minutes Clerk, Marti. As of last night all approved minutes have been posted to the website. The Minute's binder in the Clerk's Office has been updated and is now complete. Audio recordings on the small handheld recorder have been saved to the server. Minutes from last 11/18/14 meeting were just completed and Marti apologized for being late. Minutes will be emailed to Board members tomorrow.

Liaison Reports

Guy indicated that he went to a broadband conference, a conference on the population problem in New Hampshire, plus the last meeting. He wanted to put all 3 together and send out an email that provides all the information. He was asked if the conference addressed hard data v. census data which were discussed at the tonight's meeting. Guy said they addressed much of what was discussed tonight but not how the data was collected. He indicated that the most amazing thing to he heard at the broadband conference is that New Hampshire is ranked number one in broadband accessibility, 85%, and number two in number of households with a computer. Discussion ensued.

Old Business

L. Kunhardt asked if the sign ordinance language had been forwarded to Bart. S. Pyle indicated it had not but she would forward it to Bart and have it back for the next meeting.

Motion:

A. Arnold made a motion to adjourn. S. Pyle seconded the motion. Approved by all.

Next Planning Board Meeting: January 6, 2015

Adjournment: S. Pyle adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.