

**Town of Hanover
Planning Board Residential Project
Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2011**

Present: Michael Hingston, Judith Esmay, Bill Dietrich, Kate Connolly, Joan Garipay, Jonathan Edwards, Judith Brotman.

The meeting was opened at 1:30 pm by Planning Board chair Judith Esmay. The minutes of January 17 will be reviewed next week.

1. A general discussion was held concerning which documents should be used for our consideration of the rural residential zones. The decision was made to use the Master Plan as the primary document for the basis of our discussions, and not spend time debating settled issues.
2. It was agreed that the committee would review general policy decisions for the rural residence zone. Specific efforts made by other rural groups would be considered when helpful or necessary.
3. The February 5, 2009 memo by Senior Planner Vicki Smith, putting forth the Master Plan considerations for rural residence planning, was distributed. It was decided to review this document as a basis for the upcoming committee work.
4. There are many distinct rural areas, including some neighborhoods. The difference between the rural area neighborhoods and in-town neighborhoods are several – infrastructure, sewer/water, road/street and density.
5. The rural area can be defined as an area that is not served by water & sewer and is not in the forestry zone. While this is a useful distinction, there are additional considerations for the rural residential zone.
6. Review of February 5, 2009 Master Plan Excerpt, Core Principles:

Core Principles, #1 – *Protect and preserve our natural resources* – generally fine

Core Principles, #2 – *Respect, protect and strengthen the distinctive qualities of the urban and rural parts of Hanover* – discussion ensued about the 3-to-1 ratio for population density. The committee consensus was that for now we should use the Master Plan's 3-1 ratio.

Core Principles, #3 – *Actively manage future growth* – This does not imply prohibiting growth, but rather we should look to manage the rate of growth, the nature of the growth and the location of the growth. Growth can occur without creating change, or with creating change we like.

*As a policy, the committee should recognize that growth will and should occur. This rural residential project is to channel that growth to what is appropriate. How do the core principles affect any/each rural neighborhood?

Core Principles, #4 – *Encourage affordable and diverse housing and development where served by existing municipal infrastructure* – The Town will not extend the sewer/water service beyond what we have now. Development should be directed so that there is only a minimal need for additional roads, schools and municipal infrastructure. The town should encourage additional affordable housing in the rural areas, acknowledging that there will be some distinctions between in-town and rural housing areas.

Core Principles, #5 - *Expand opportunities for, and accessibility to, outdoor recreation* - Definitions are needed for each piece of this statement to ensure clarity of the meaning of the statement. The practice of requiring each subdivision to have a public trail or trail access is a start, but needs to be carefully monitored to ensure the requirement doesn't rise to the level of "extortion" as noted by the NH Supreme Court in a subdivision case (not involving Hanover).

Core Principles, #6 – *Reduce excessive reliance on automobile transportation and its adverse impacts* – The increased ridership of Advance Transit is a positive step in this direction, with the municipality contributing to the cost of providing this service. Continue to investigate and encourage transit-accessible areas and multi-modal transportation, including developing parking areas in subdivisions.

Core Principles, #7 – *Preserve a healthy balance between community and campus so that neither dominates nor has an adverse impact on the other* – The consensus of the committee is that this goal is less applicable to the rural residential area than the urban residential areas.

7. Review of February 5, 2009 Master Plan Excerpt – Guiding Development Over the Next 25 Years:

A review of the 10 bullets in this section culled out the following statements/suggestions:

- Use cluster housing to protect against sprawl
- Eliminate minor subdivision procedure
- Require full subdivision review for all proposed new lots
- Possibly a simple exchange of bonus for affordable housing unit(s)

*Agreement that guiding development in the rural district is a main policy objective for the committee.

8. Review of February 5, 2009 Master Plan Excerpt – Land Use and Community Vision:

Land Capability:

A narrow application of these general guidelines (limiting development on certain areas) has failed four times and will continue to fail.
Limiting land development based on septic/land capability is no longer as true as it was only a few years ago.
Limiting development based on available municipal sewer and water consideration is generally not a rural issue.

*It was stated that policy statements are found within the second bullet in this section:
“Development may be permitted, subject to stringent review that includes impact identification....”

Prevent Sprawl:

Much of this section has been worked on at other times

Preserve Downtown Character:

Does not apply to this project

Protect the Character of Hanover’s Residential Neighborhoods:

Work is on-going on this section as a part of this larger project.

Population and Housing:

Policies about population growth, development densities, development types and housing needs are needed to guide rural development.

Rural Character:

This area should be the focus of the committee at this time.

Rural development is currently driven by 3 distinct groups:

Those folks seeking privacy,

Those folks who like the rural landscape but want neighbors, and

Those folks who cannot find an affordable in-town home.

*Policies will need to be developed to deal with entitlement issues – hillside development, external lighting, noisy activities, tree clearing, view shed protection, and other similar issues. There are several “balancing acts” that will need to be reviewed and have policy developed concerning this aspect of rural development.

Some rural areas have “pockets” of neighborhood characteristic

Generally, the rural area is not a neighborhood

It was the consensus of the committee that we should not take on issues better dealt with by other entities.

Some traditional single-lot subdivisions should be discouraged.

In-town Character:

This area has been studied over the past year!

9. Next week’s meeting will continue the review of the February 5, 2009 memo (3 pages remain to be reviewed). Michael felt that there are 5 remaining areas in town. He proposes a 2-week discussion around each area (but not a final resolution for each area), with the objective of discovering the common features and different features – cautioning that divisions do not mean neighborhoods. There should be broad policy discussion after

the 12 weeks, looking to set general policy for “today” and for “10-years out” (but no further). The committee concurred, noting that many compromises will need to be made. There are known issues and unknown issues. The work to develop policies for rural development will not be easy.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/jlsb

Judith Lee Shelnutt Brotman,
Zoning Administrator

NEXT MEETING: Monday, January 31, 2011 – 1:30 pm