

**PLANNING BOARD  
JANUARY 8, 2013 at 7:30 PM  
TOWN HALL, 41 SOUTH MAIN STREET**

In attendance:

**Members:** Kate Connolly, Bill Dietrich (Vice-Chair), Judith Esmay (Chair), Joan Garipay, Michael Mayor, Iain Sim

**Alternates:**

**Staff:** Vicki Smith

Others: See Attendance Sheet

1. **MINUTES:** The minutes of December 4, 2012 were approved.
  
2. **INFORMAL REVIEW OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE’S PLANS TO IMPROVE THEIR CREW DOCK AND ERODING RAMP LEADING TO IT**

At Dartmouth’s request, this informal review will be held in February.

**3. DISCUSSION ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROJECT**

Smith provided a brief overview of the Neighborhood Meeting Guide for the Planning Board (“Guide” hereafter) and Neighborhood Worksheet and Reflections (“Worksheet” hereafter). These draft documents were created by a small group (Judy Brotman, Zoning Administrator; Jonathan Edwards, former Planning & Zoning Director; ESMAY; GARIPAY; Smith) for use at the neighborhood planning meetings.

Smith said the goal of the meetings is primarily educational. Meeting preparations include finding a contact person (facilitator) from each neighborhood to help find suitable locations for the meetings. The hope is that neighborhoods will self-organize and contact staff when they are ready for their neighborhood meeting. When ready, staff will generate and distribute a meeting mailing to each individual household within the identified neighborhood area. The mailing will include an invitation to the meeting, zoning information (zoning map of that area of town, and the current objectives, uses, and dimensional controls within that area), neighborhood map and the Worksheet.

At the neighborhood meetings, the meaning of “growth” will be explained and the seven core principles from the 2003 Master Plan will be discussed. The remainder of the meetings will be steered by a list of proposed questions noted in the Guide. After the meetings, information from the Worksheets, and comments made during the meetings, will be compiled and used to develop a purpose or character description of each neighborhood. Those findings will be presented to the Planning Board in a public meeting session, at which point the

appropriate follow-up will be determined. After the first neighborhood meeting, the Board will evaluate what happened, fine-tune what was done, and move on to the next neighborhood.

Board Comments/Questions:

- CONNOLLY said it is a nice idea to have a friendly gathering, but these neighborhood meetings will be open to the general public and should be held in a convivial setting, such as at the Black Center.
  - ESMAY said the goal is to make it personable for the neighborhood by finding a place with ample room within walking distance of the neighborhood.
- CONNOLLY said the Residential Project Committee (RPC) identified areas with great similarities that could be starting points. DIETRICH suggested the bird streets and Blueberry Hill are good candidates to begin with, or to follow Occom Pond and West End.
- SIM suggested amending the Guide to list the overarching goal first (to obtain a very specific sense of each neighborhood that will enable the Board to draft a zoning statement that adequately describes it). He said what he took away from the Ray School meeting in October is that there is a level of misunderstanding, or an absence of really grasping this planning process, documents, and so on. This is a good opportunity to explain the mandate we have from the NH Supreme Court to plan for future growth. SIM said we are dealing with differences of viewpoints amongst members of the community and have to balance the desires of a group of residents with the issue of individual landowner property rights.
  - Smith said it is very important to bring up property rights in the context in which zoning is used to control what happens. However, the point of the neighborhood meetings is for the Board to listen. ESMAY said the desire was to make the Worksheet challenging but not discouraging. Smith said we'd like to make sure that adult members of every household complete it, including those people who cannot attend their neighborhood meeting.
- CONNOLLY asked if the questions could be more specific and address placement of structures, amount of green space, etc.
  - Smith said the questions are mostly about residential uses. The Zoning Administrator has been asked to script something about non-conformities and provide examples that she is either worried about, or have been presented to her as problems.
  - ESMAY suggested revising the Worksheet to add "loss of open space or greenery" where it states "*Zoning regulates land use and where structures can be placed on a lot. If zoning regulations didn't exist, what potential changes in your neighborhood would be worrisome for you?*".
- SIM said drafting a description and a goal statement for a neighborhood, noted in the Follow up section of the Worksheet, should be done by the neighborhood groups.

Public Comments / Questions:

- Bill Young asked if the Board has a sense of which neighborhoods are defined.
  - ESMAY said there are no set lines. We want neighbors to define their own neighborhoods.
- Carol Weingeist relayed a neighbor's suggestion to break down "*Would you welcome housing diversity in your neighborhood?*", noted on the Worksheet, to "*What type of*

*housing is currently in your neighborhood? In your view, what type of housing is appropriate for your neighborhood?"* She said her neighbor also felt that "housing diversity" is an "against term" and questioned the meaning of "Workforce single-family home".

- Carey Heckman asked how the fire hose of information these meetings will produce will be compiled. He said he watched the video of the Ray School meeting and was amazed at the range of selective perception that he heard from people about what they think they heard or saw as compared to what is actually on the video.
  - Smith said the results will be reported back to the Planning Board in a public meeting session. If those perceptions are wrong, people from the neighborhood should work with their neighborhood facilitator to distill them. When aired again to the Board publicly, and if still not sounding right to the neighborhood residents, we will go back to the neighborhood group to try to work it out together.
- Marilyn Denk asked how the town core will be addressed, as there is not any residential, per se, in the downtown. Green space is vital to this community and is missed in neighborhood pockets.
  - ESMAY said the core downtown was defined as a result of the Downtown Visioning Study. It will not be disturbed.
- Lisa Coyle asked once we have defined neighborhoods, will they be discreetly identified in the Master Plan.
  - ESMAY said that is our intention.
- Bill Boyle asked how the email distribution list was generated. He said it is not clear from the emails who the recipients are. How can he tell whether people in his neighborhood know about these meetings?
  - Smith said a number of people have asked to be blind copied so that their names and email addresses are not listed. People may be added to the list by providing their email address to her at 640-3214 or at [Vicki.Smith@HanoverNH.org](mailto:Vicki.Smith@HanoverNH.org).
- Boyle asked about the order in which neighborhoods will be addressed.
  - ESMAY said they are likely to begin with the West End and Occom Pond neighborhoods, which have already defined themselves. After that they hope to be approached by residents of other individual neighborhoods.
- Weingeist asked if it is the Board's desire to have this all done by 2014.
  - ESMAY said no one is in a hurry; there are no set deadlines. Personally speaking, it would be a colossal mistake to hurry this process and not do it justice. The technical re-write track is different. It can be done on a calendar. This cannot.
- Bryant Denk said the Hovey Lane neighborhood boundaries are defined. Those residents have met many times and submitted their thoughts to both the Selectboard and Planning Board. Will those previous statements be included? A main concern is the buffer between the institutional and residential zones.
  - ESMAY said we are starting fresh, beginning right now, but we carry something of an institutional memory of those times that they have been before the Board.
  - Smith said the 2004 Report and Recommendations from the Institutional/Residential Task Force affected so many of the neighborhoods. It is of sufficient size to be added to the neighborhood meeting mailings.
- Denk said height is a real discrepancy. People don't understand how it is determined.

- Cantwell Clark asked how the neighborhood phase relates to the Master Plan revision phase. It is sequential? Are they parallel? Does it influence? Are they not really related?
  - ESMAY said in terms of the business of this Board, they are sequential. In terms of how they relate, our review of the Master Plan will be very much informed by what we hear from the neighborhood meetings. In that sense they are overlaid.
- Jeff Boffa asked where the Zoning Ordinance revision fits in?
  - ESMAY said that is the fourth phase, after the Master Plan revision.
  - Smith said if a neighborhood decides there are things that really need to be changed now, and there is broad support for it, she does not see why the Board would not entertain submission of zoning amendments to make the changes.
- Boyle said he thought there was a mandate to change the Master Plan every ten years.
  - Smith said that is not required in New Hampshire. There is an obligation to keep the Master Plan up to date, so that it reflects what the community feels and where it's going.
- Barbara McIlroy cited the sixth core principle of the Master Plan, "*reduce excessive reliance on automobile transportation and its adverse impacts...*" She said the Board can generate more thinking within these neighborhood groups than just the topic of residential issues. McIlroy said she would like to see planning discussed in concert with zoning by perhaps limiting the number of cars allowed per household, regulating how a vehicle is parked in a driveway, restricting vehicles from backing out onto public streets, etc. Zoning is only one of the tools that can be used for planning purposes. The first paragraph of the Guide mentions "*future zoning amendments and infrastructure investments and improvements.*" None of the proposed neighborhood meeting questions reflect these issues. Much of what we wish for in the future has to do with infrastructure (sidewalks, bike paths, open spaces, storm water retention, parking, street lights, etc.).
- A male speaker said there are three excellent maps available at Dartmouth's library and the Hanover Chamber of Commerce.
- Boyle asked whether rental housing would be encouraged without a Rental Housing Ordinance.
  - Smith said fortunately, rental housing is not a zoning matter; it is an ownership matter. Whether people rent their property is a choice of the property owner.
  - CONNOLLY said the regulations that would control reasonable rental housing are in our Zoning Ordinance, they are simply not enforceable in a timely fashion. That is the problem.
  - SIM said a draft Rental Housing Ordinance has been submitted to the Selectboard. The matter is in their hands.
- Boffa said these zoning issues cannot be looked at in a vacuum. Density will ultimately have a very real impact on very large Master Planning type issues such as traffic, sewage, infrastructure, schools, costs, taxes, etc. It is important for people to look at their neighborhoods and think about what they want there, but also think about the larger issues that are then swept into these decisions.
- Heckman said one challenge is that some people obviously have very little regard for individual property rights. It will be very tricky to negotiate in terms of how people interpret these various things. Some people in our town clearly have a much higher idea of how intrusive regulations should be.

Board follow-up:

ESMAY said the questions put before the Board are whether they are on the right track and may they proceed with the project. Smith said she does not think the neighborhood meetings will work well in the summer. We need to get going. ESMAY said the agenda for these meetings are pretty packed. If there is a large number that attends, additional meetings may be needed.

GARIPAY said she hopes neighborhoods will be defined by the area in which people feel they belong, or the area in which they feel others belong. She expressed concern for identifying neighborhood leaders. Smith said some volunteers have already stepped forward.

The Board reached consensus that these materials, as modified based on comments made at the current meeting, are enough to go on and they should launch the project as supported by the Board.

Technical Review

ESMAY reported that Smith has been in touch with Ralph Willmer. Willmer expects to have something for the Board in a couple of weeks. The Zoning Administrator and a small subcommittee will review the material before it is presented to the Board. Given the back-and-forth that may occur between Willmer and the subcommittee, ESMAY estimated that it may be two months before the Board will see anything. ESMAY said she was encouraged that Smith's recent request for information from Willmer was answered almost immediately.

CONNOLLY asked if Arthur Gardiner's proposed Zoning Ordinance clarifications will be considered at Town Meeting 2013. She said she sees no reason to wait on those proposed amendments. A mistake in the West End section also requires correction. Smith offered to draft the West End correction on a ZARC form for discussion at the February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Proposed amendments are also anticipated from Dartmouth and Bernie Benn.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

Next meeting: February 5<sup>th</sup> (Dartmouth's informal presentation & zoning amendments)

Williamson Translational Research Project at DHMC in Lebanon

SIM recounted the Lebanon Planning Board's recent review of a research project that has the potential to add roughly 300 people on Route 120. This is a project of regional impact and Hanover had requested that the traffic study include impacts to Hanover. SIM said the traffic analysis may have included impacts to Hanover, but the presentation of the analysis to the Lebanon Board did not. SIM said there was supposed to be contact amongst the Hanover and Lebanon Planning Department Directors to arrange a discussion amongst the Hanover and Lebanon Planning Boards about traffic impacts for all Route 120 projects.

NHDOT Ten Year Plan

ESMAY advised of recent meetings attended by Hanover and Lebanon staff and Planning Board Chairs, engineers from NHDOT, and staff from the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission. A list of ideas was developed to alleviate local traffic/safety issues including:

- Reconnect Hanover Street across I-89 for bus only, or full vehicular traffic
- 2-lane roundabout at Heater Road/Route 120 intersection

- Diverging diamond at I-89 Exit 18 interchange
- Extend or widen I-89 Exit 18 northbound off-ramp deceleration lane
- Construct acceleration merge lane on Route 120 between Exit 18 northbound ramp and Heater Road to allow free flow movement off ramp
- Construct park-and-ride facilities at I-89 Exit 17 or elsewhere
- Connect Labombard Road and North Labombard Road
- Construct bike/ped connection between DHMC and Centerra
- Construct separated multi-use bike/ped path on east side of Route 120 corridor
- Increase frequency of AT Blue Route to 15 minute headway all day between Lebanon and Hanover
- Consider 10 minute Blue Route service from Lebanon and Hanover to DHMC during peak hours
- Extend AT Blue Route operating hours to 9:00 PM
- Establish regular transit service between Claremont and Lebanon/Hanover via Route 120
- Establish regular transit service between Warner/New London and Lebanon/Hanover
- Establish a bike share program to serve Route 120 corridor
- Construct grade separated bike/ped crossing at Heater Road
- Encourage required use of staggered shifts wherever possible
- Evaluate possibility of one-way segments within or adjacent to Route 120 corridor
- Reconnect Mt. Support Road to Route 120 at the cul de sac
- Install countdown timers at all at-grade bike/ped crossings
- Investigate signal preemption for AT and other transit operators
- Make Evans Drive right-in, right-out only from Route 120 southbound
- Linking DHMC to Route 10

ESMAY said a smaller group of administrative staff, regional planners, and NHDOT staff will continue to fine-tune the list and submit a few for consideration in the next NHDOT Ten Year Plan. Hanover staff is included in the smaller group.

DIETRICH asked of the status of the Route 120 Corridor Study. CONNOLLY said that was a state funded study that the former Lebanon City Manager cut off.

A proposal was made for a Hanover/Lebanon Master Plan for the Route 120 corridor which extends from Lebanon Street in Hanover to Hanover Street in Lebanon. GARIPAY suggested the Safe Routes to School Study information would be helpful to the Route 120 planners. CONNOLLY suggested a previous proposal for consideration on the NHDOT Ten Year Plan, to improve curbs and install a sidewalk and bicycle lane on Greensboro Road, should be back on the list. SIM said a CIP must be developed to prioritize projects. Smith said linking the information gathered at the neighborhood meetings that involve infrastructure to Public Works and the Selectboard is critical. She said two benefits of having a formal CIP is growth management and to be sure that developers are paying their fair share for improvements.

**5. ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Rivard