

# MINUTES

## NEW DURHAM PLANNING BOARD

### NOVEMBER 28, 2006

A video recording of this meeting is on file with Office of Town Clerk. It is available for public viewing during normal business hours, and will be retained in accordance with the New Hampshire Municipal Records Board rules established under RSA 33-A:4, or for a minimum of 24 months.

Chairman Bob Craycraft called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**Roll Call:** Ron Gehl (Selectmen's Representative), Bob Craycraft (Chair), Cathy Orlowicz (Alternate), George Gale (Alternate), David Lindberg

Excused Absences: Donald Voltz (Vice-Chair), Mike Clarke Unexcused Absence: Christopher LaPierre

**Public Input:** Chair Craycraft asked if there was any public input on any issues other than the Buffer Ordinance. There was no input.

**Riparian Buffer Workshop:** Bob Craycraft introduced Jodi Costello, Director of New Hampshire Estuaries Project Ms Costello presented a powerpoint presentation about buffers. A buffer is more than a setback because it requires encouraging and maintaining vegetation in addition to prohibiting certain activities in the buffer area. The above ground and below ground parts of the vegetation make the buffer work by slowing down water speed and trapping sediment and nutrients.

The benefits of buffers include:

- remove silt and pollutants
- maintain stream ecology
- stabilize stream bank
- shade streams
- protect wetlands
- flood control
- wildlife habitat and corridors
- increase property values; and
- provide recreational opportunities

The width needed in a buffer varies depending on the resource to be protected, proposed upslope land use, the kind of soils and slopes and vegetation in the buffer area, and the function you want it to accomplish.

**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES  
OF NOVEMBER 28, 2006**

At the lower end, a buffer of 20-40 feet is needed for bank stabilization and aquatic food web. On the other end, a buffer of 50-250' is needed for protection of wildlife habitat. The New Hampshire Handbook for buffers suggests that a buffer width of 125' is a good general target.

Castallo said that the gis analysis done by the New Hampshire Estuaries Project showed that about 2.8% of New Durham is now covered by impervious surface (surface that will not let water soak into the ground. That is up from 1.7% 15 years ago. Research in Maryland indicates that impervious surface below 5% is necessary to maintain the health of a watershed, so New Durham is still in a safe area. Between 5%-10% imperviousness will begin to impair the quality of the water. From 10%-20% it will definitely be impaired and over 20% significant damage sets in.

Castallo also suggested that buffer protection should be a high priority in the Town's land acquisition planning. She described how the Shoreland Protection act works to protect buffers for larger streams and lakes. She described a project going on in Portsmouth which has reclaimed and restored what was once a buffer in a residential area.

**Riparian Buffer Ordinance:** Steve Whitman and Chris Kane described the changes they had made to the draft ordinance after the last meeting with the Planning Board.

Ron Gehl and Bob Craycraft reported that the Board had tried applying the draft ordinance to several subdivisions from the last couple of years. They were surprised to discover that more than 90% of the lots created in these subdivisions were well within the proposed buffer widths. He said only about 1% of the lots would have needed to be redrawn to meet the ordinance, and none of the subdivisions would have had to reduce the number of lots in the subdivision.

David Lindberg moved, Ron Gehl seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 PM.  
Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

David Allen, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved December 12, 2006