

MINUTES

NEW DURHAM PLANNING BOARD

APRIL 15, 2008

Chairperson Bob Craycraft called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Roll Call: Bob Craycraft (Chair), David Bickford (Selectman's Representative), Ron Gehl (Selectman's Alternate), Cathy Orlowicz, Paddy McHale. **Excused Absence:** Paul Raslavicus. **Unexcused Absence:** none. **Others Present:**

Public Input: Chair Bob Craycraft asked if there was any public input. There was none.

Business or Commercial Zoning District. David Allen introduced Denise Roy-Palmer to speak with the Planning Board. Ms. Roy-Palmer is Executive Director of the Wentworth Economic Development Company, located in Wolfeboro. She has been on the staff since 1993. Mary McHale represents New Durham on the Board of Directors.

Ms. Roy-Palmer said the mission of the WEDCO is to help businesses in the region expand, help businesses in other areas to relocate here, and to help new ventures in the region get started. She said that in her experience, the best place to start this work is to look for businesses that already have an investment in the town, either because they are located here, or because the owner lives in town. For example, it is valuable to help existing home based businesses get to the point of being able to move up into a storefront. She also noted that the Town has a great deal of untapped expertise around Merrymeeting Lake and it should find a way to take advantage of it.

Ms. Roy said it was important for the Board to do an inventory of the assets the town has. These might include a significant base in agriculture, mountain vistas that might encourage tourism, the fish hatchery, etc. Does the town want to make it a tourist destination?

In terms of trends, it is quite probably that smaller businesses will be moving north on Route 11. People prefer working close to where they live and the cost of commuting is increasing rapidly. Paddy McHale asked if it was possible to figure out what kind of businesses might be most likely to move to a particular geographic area.

Ms. Roy-Palmer said it is very unpredictable and, in response to question from C.O., she said that WEDCO has not done any surveys that would give direction to the PB.

Ms. Roy-Palmer described the experience in Milton and Farmington with setting aside land for an industrial park. Both have been successful, in different ways. The land set aside in Milton was the old poor farm so it was easy to work with in terms of septic and land preparation. The Town sold land very inexpensively and that was very effective as an attraction for businesses. Some of the land in Farmington was quite usable, but it was not uniformly good, and that made it harder to work with. Also in Milton, the Town planned it so they did not need to pay for roads and other infrastructure until they had a buyer for the land.

Board members asked how zoning could be most helpful. Ms. Roy-Palmer said that anything that made the zoning process clearer and simpler was always helpful for businesses. Eliminating the need for a special exception from the ZBA would take one-step out of the process for a business and that would be helpful. In addition, anything that makes it clear to a business of what they will need to do and how likely they are to run into additional costs or delays is very helpful. She applauded the work on the Town's website saying that it made information easily available, clear, and simple.

Ms. Roy-Palmer also emphasized that it is important for towns to understand that it is easier to get smaller than larger businesses, and easier to get 10 small businesses with three employees than one big one with 30 employees.

Driveway Regulations: Chair Bob Craycraft reminded the Board they were making revisions in the Driveway Regulations because of recommendations from Town Counsel, John Teague. He noted that at the last meeting, Paul Raslavicus had pointed out that there was no option written in for a situation in which the regulations might make it impossible to make productive use of a lot, and the Board had asked David Allen to check into the question with Mr. Teague.

Cathy Orłowicz suggested that any part of a driveway that is not needed for access to buildings would not need to be accessible for emergency vehicles. She also noted that the Board could not conduct a formal public hearing because there had not been proper public notice. Chair Craycraft agreed and suggested that the public hearing should be scheduled for the May 6 board meeting and in the meantime, the Board should get all the information it needs from Town Counsel or other sources to make a complete decision.

Therriault's Landing: Board members reviewed the information from the Town of Middleton and the Strafford Regional Planning Commission regarding the proposed Therriault's Landing subdivision and airplane landing strip. Members did not see any part of the plan that made them concerned. Chair Craycraft asked David Allen to review the proposal with Fire, Police, and Highway Department heads to see if any of

them had any concerns, and then draft a letter to SRPC based on what he heard from those people.

Master Plan Natural Resources Section: The board agreed by consensus that if the six additional references suggested by Bob Craycraft are approved they should be added as “Supplemental Resources” on page 24. They also agreed to schedule public hearing for May 6, 2008.

Site Plan Checklist. Board members suggested several edits to the draft of a revised checklist. They agreed that the checklist is an administrative aide and in the future should not be considered part of the actual regulations. They agreed to take this revised checklist to public hearing on May 6, and at the same time to add a sentence to both the Subdivision and Site Plan regulations clarifying that the checklist is not a part of the regulations and the Board can change them without holding a public hearing.

Open Space Conservation Subdivision Regulations: Board members reviewed suggestions that David Allen had made regarding the application process for an Open Space Subdivision. The focus of these suggestions is for the Board and applicant to identify the natural resources on the site and develop an understanding of how to protect those resources before any planning is done for roads, draining or a subdivision layout. By consensus, Board members agreed with this plan and asked Mr. Allen to move it to the next step.

Cathy Orlowicz asked that the regulations address the issue of type and location of mailboxes to avoid future problems similar to the current controversy regarding Chamberlin way. She also asked that the regulations address the issue of multi family units in an Open Space conservation Subdivision.

New/Old business

Fire station addition. David Bickford shared a sketch of a proposed addition to the Fire House. Board members noted that the Board does not have authority to dictate site terms to another branch of government. They also agreed they would like the Board to have the opportunity to provide guidance and influence the Department’s planning just as it would any other site plan. The Board asked David Allen to ask the department to provide the board with the same information that a formal applicant would be asked to submit, and that the Department comes to a board meeting to share their plans and get Board feedback.

Adjourn: Cathy Orlowicz moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:57 PM. Paddy McHale seconded. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

David Allen, Land Use Administrative Assistant

Minutes Approved 6/3/2008