

MINUTES

NEW DURHAM PLANNING BOARD

JUNE 17, 2008

Chairperson Bob Craycraft called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Roll Call: Bob Craycraft (Chair), David Bickford (Selectman's Representative), Ron Gehl (Selectman's Alternate), Paul Raslavicus, Cathy Orlowicz, Paddy McHale

Others Present: Jodi Balint, David Tower, Mark Fuller, Samantha Cassell, Jeff Hertel, Cecile Chase, Toni Kirk, James Gamble, Ray Gamble, Mary McHale,

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

Workshop Session on Business/Commercial Zoning Districts: Attendees and board members spent half an hour reviewing displays of different aspects of business zoning. They followed with a discussion of issues triggered by the displays. Julie LaBranche of Strafford Regional Planning Commission provided the following summary of the discussion.

What Do Businesses Need to Be Successful?

1. Convenient and safe access for customers
2. Compatibility with existing uses
3. Appropriate sizing of business for customer base and site
4. Demonstrated need for services and/or products
5. Community growth projections support establishment of businesses
6. Encourage businesses that compliment each other
7. Availability of employee base in community and/or surrounding communities
8. Design facility to fit in with community character
9. Town should decide where certain uses are desirable
10. Availability of water, sewer and other services (although not a limiting factor)
11. Adequate parking
12. Positive working relationship with Town staff and land use boards
13. Sustainability – from “ideas” to plans to construction

What Uses in a Commercial Business District?

1. **Undesirable**
 - a. Auto dealership
 - b. Heavy industry

2. Desirable

- a. Medical office (also scaled for smaller mixed zones)
- b. Small social gathering places (such as a lounge, café or bistro)
- c. Affordable housing (including rental units)
- d. Health and Wellness facilities or clubs (i.e. as part of a medical facility)
- e. Seasonal businesses and services
- f. Business Park (variety of uses and sizes of businesses)
- g. Drive thru facilities acceptable for fast food, banks, etc. especially on Route 11
- h. Dense building clusters of compatible uses

How Can the Application, Review, and Approval Process be Improved?

1. Clear and consistent requirements (information, format, timeframes, etc.)
2. Clear guidelines using website and printed materials describing “How to Apply”
3. “Users Guide to Doing Business in New Durham”
4. Access to Town staff (administrator, planning) during pre-application period for advisory consultation

Application Requirements – what is needed and how/who should it be presented to Planning Board?

1. Review Process – meet with Selectmen if applicable, feedback from community and abutters, meeting(s) with Town staff; develop conceptual plan based on input
2. Appoint a primary contact person for all applications
3. Clear decision criteria should be established by the approval body for discretionary permits – ZBA or PB

Transportation and Access

1. Safe pedestrian crossings to/from existing and new businesses and services
2. Sidewalks – a plan may be developed within business districts and connecting areas and roads
3. Define transportation needs and limitations for certain uses (i.e. industrial, shipping and transportation of goods or supplies, customers)

Signage Considerations

1. Placement near road is important
2. Size -need adequate visibility especially on higher speed roads
3. Route 11 – establish a permitted maximum size for all businesses/properties
4. Kiosk-style and moveable signs are OK with size limitations
5. Not Desirable – blinking, flashing and neon signs

What Dimensional Requirements Make Sense?

1. Parking – number of spaces, minimum dimensions and location – depend on use and site
2. Height – existing maximum is 35 feet – may consider increasing height for mixed use structures and certain uses (allow for 2 stories to reduce footprint)
3. Setbacks – “form-based” to allow compatibility with existing structures and uses; standard minimum may be necessary

Other Issues

1. Historic Preservation – zones or requirements for retention of “historic” structures (defined by a certain age or style) or architecture/architectural features

Chairman Bob Craycraft called a short recess at the end of this discussion.

Jillson Woodworking Shop: The Board reconvened at 9:14. David Bickford stepped down from the Board as an abutter. Chair Craycraft asked Ron Gehl to sit in as the Board of Selectmen Representative. Cathy Orlowicz asked for the record if all abutters had been notified, there was a notice in the newspaper and postings in the Town Hall, Library, and Post Office. David Allen said yes.

Mr. Jillson summarized the proposal and changes made since the conceptual consultation on June 3. The Board asked questions and discussed the proposal.

Ron Gehl moved to grant waivers of the following application requirements because the lot is flat and there is no change to any structures on the property:

1. Topography
2. Survey Property Lines
3. Location Plan
4. Setback Lines
5. Showing Entire Parcel

Cathy Orlowicz seconded. Unanimous with no abstentions.

Cathy Orlowicz moved to accept the application as complete with the waivers.

Paddy McHale seconded. The vote was unanimous with no abstentions.

Chair Craycraft opened the issue for public hearing at 9:20 PM. There were no comments from the public. He closed public hearing at 9:21 PM.

Ron Gehl moved to approve the site plan for a woodworking shop at 24 Main Street submitted by Deborah and Scott Jillson subject to the conditions set by the Zoning Board of Adjustment at its June 11, 2008 meeting. Cathy Orlowicz seconded. Approved unanimously with no abstentions.

Ron Gehl stepped down from the Board and David Bickford returned as the Board of Selectmen Representative.

O'Reilly Subdivision. Jim Gove, Environmental Scientist for the applicant, described the natural resources viewed on the June 13 site walk. He told the Board the applicant did not believe the natural resources were unique, and would prefer to create a conventional subdivision. He is open to creating deed restrictions that will create the same natural resource protections, as there would be with an Open Space subdivision, including conservation easements on about half the land and setbacks from intermittent streams.

Board members discussed the June 13 sitewalk, the natural resources, and the applicant's proposals. Chair Craycraft summarized the discussion as being a board consensus to support a conventional subdivision while reserving the right to reopen the conversation if the board's third party natural resource review identified new concerns. He noted that the details of the easements and protections would need to be negotiated at the appropriate time.

Chair Craycraft noted that the next meeting would be held at 8 PM on June 24. A non-public gathering with Town Counsel will precede it from 6 - 8 PM.

Cathy Orlowicz moved to adjourn at 10:18 PM. Paddy McHale seconded. Unanimous with no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

David Allen (with a big assist from Julie LaBranche)
Land Use Administrative Assistant

Minutes Approved August 5, 2008