

MINUTES

NEW DURHAM PLANNING BOARD

JULY 15, 2008

Chairperson Bob Craycraft called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

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

Others Present: Mark Fuller, Mary McHale, Anne Zamzow, Julie LaBranche, Ron Gehl

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

Business/Commercial Zoning District: Julie LaBranche, Senior Planner from Strafford Regional Planning Commission described the tour she and David Allen had made to see the areas being discussed as potentially part of a Business or Commercial Zoning District.

She said the Mill Road site needs professional site analysis before making it a Business Park site because thin soil and considerable ledge could mean high site preparation costs. She noted the old gravel pit off Valley Road as a potential Business Park site because it has good highway access; low site preparation costs, and appears to be underutilized.

She said the "downtown" area has good potential for a mixed-use district and has some predominant architectural styles that could be the basis for a design code for the area. She mentioned visiting the Ridge Road intersection, Merrymeeting Lake-Powdermill area, and Kings Highway and described future potential in at least two of those areas.

Board members asked questions and discussed the options. Cathy Orlowicz urged the board to extend the benefits of a Business District to the entire town.

Paul Raslavicus moved that the Planning Board begin writing a Zoning Ordinance for a mixed-use district in the Village Center. Specific boundaries are to be drawn to include the general area of Main Street and Old Bay Road from the Alton Town Line to Davis Crossing, Route 11 away from wetlands, and the connecting roads. Paddy McHale seconded.

David Bickford informed the Board that he owns property in the area and feels he can participate objectively in the discussion and vote.

Yes: Bob Craycraft, Paddy McHale, David Bickford, and Paul Raslavicus.

No: Cathy Orlowicz. Approved 4 yes, 1 no, and no abstentions.

The Board will work on a table of uses, and natural resource protections for the district at its next meeting.

Cocheco River: Julie LaBranche described the purposes and benefits of the proposal to designate the Cocheco River as a State Designated River under the New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program. She emphasized that the designation does not affect the role of the local Planning Board in land use planning along the river. Designation does improve the chances for some types of grant money to protect and enhance the river, it helps raise awareness, and it makes additional expertise available to the town.

Paul Raslavicus moved that the New Durham Planning Board, as stewards of the natural resources of New Durham, write a letter of support for the Nomination of the full length of the Cocheco River as a State Designated River. Paddy McHale seconded. Yes: Bob Craycraft, Paddy McHale, David Bickford, and Paul Raslavicus. No: Cathy Orlowicz. Approved 4 yes, 1 no, and no abstentions.

Driveway Regulations: The Board continued discussion of amendments to the New Durham Driveway Regulations. Board members agreed by consensus that the draft edited for clarity was easier to understand and they wanted to go forward with that draft. Road Agent Mark Fuller agreed and said his only concern was how to be clearer about the 15% grade limitation and the 10% change in grade. David Allen will work with Mr. Fuller to address the issue for the next Planning Board meeting.

Board members also requested clarification that the regulations cover all access points to public roads regardless of whether a structure is involved. They specifically noted that heavy truck traffic from woodlots can cause damage to town roads.

Class VI Road Policy: The Board continued its discussion of the Class VI Road Guidelines in response to the Board of Selectmen's request for input. Paul Raslavicus presented a written proposal for edits to the existing guidelines. His proposal included the following:

- Change the guidelines to a clear and firm policy;
- Eliminate the second paragraph
- Edit the statement of purpose to “any structures that are built on Class VI roads are accessible to emergency vehicles.”
- Require a finding by the board of Selectmen that a waiver of the 600 foot distance limitation would not be contrary to the spirit of the Master Plan (Section 4.a);
- Require application of the New Hampshire DOT minimum road standards for rural streets for access to 3 or more lots; and

- Make the requirement for maintenance of the Class VI section of road a permanent part of the deed for the lot.

Bob Craycraft suggested that

- The property deed be amended to prohibit any further subdivision;
- The Town engineer looks at the section of Class VI road in question and assures the Board of Selectmen that it is feasible to maintain the road so that there is little risk of negative impact on water quality;
- The applicant define a permanent building envelope on the property acceptable to the BOS;
- There be an absolute maximum distance from a class V road; and
- The proposed development meet all other Town ordinances and regulations including subdivision regulations, even if no subdivision is proposed.

David Allen suggested that the policy should limit consideration of a building permit to structures that can be reached by emergency vehicles within a 15-20 minute time period. This would limit such permits to areas closest to the town center.

The Board agreed by consensus that the guidelines should be changed to a policy, that the distance from a Class V road should be measured from the proposed structure rather than from the intersection of the driveway with the Class VI road, and that the maximum allowable distance should be 1000'.

Paddy McHale offered to draft a letter to the BOS with the Planning Board's suggestions.

Fire Department Construction: Bob Craycraft asked staff to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen summarizing the Board's discussion on July 1 regarding the fire department site plan.

Paddy McHale moved to adjourn at 10:15 pm. Paul Raslavicus seconded. Unanimous with no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

David Allen
Land Use Administrative Assistant

Minutes approved with edits on February 17, 2009