

Planning Board
Minutes of September 2, 2008
Approved October 7, 2008

Members Present: Tom Vannatta, Chair; Barbara Freeman, Vice-Chair; Travis Dezotell; Bill Weiler; Ron Williams; Ken McWilliams, Advisor

Mr. Vannatta called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The Board reviewed the minutes of August 5, 2008 and made corrections.

Mr. Weiler made a motion to accept the minutes of August 5, 2008 as corrected. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. All in favor.

CASE: 2008 – 014: Site Plan Review - The Fells – Parking Area – 456 Route 103A

Mr. Vannatta informed the Board that the sign-off sheet from Henry Thomas, Fire Chief has been received which satisfies the Condition for approval of the site plan.

INTERTOWN RECORD

Mr. Vannatta informed the Board that upon agreement with Mrs. Freeman, he sent an email to the Intertown Record to ask them to correct certain facts that were misquoted in the paper.

Mrs. Freeman commented that she did not want the public to get wrong information.

CASE: 2007 – 011: Simple subdivision – George Carafa – off Newell Road

Mr. Vannatta informed the Board that the Bradford Planning Board has responded favorably to the Carafa subdivision and has no objection to the subdivision in Newbury. Mr. Vannatta stated that he will check with the Land Use Clerk to make sure the mylar has been recorded.

CASE: Adm1 – 001: Joint Board Meeting

The Board agreed that a recruiting night is needed to try to recruit alternates for all of the Boards. The next recruiting night will be scheduled at the next Joint Board meeting on September 30.

CASE: Code – 042: Zoning Amendments for Town Meeting 2009

Affordable/Workforce Housing & Multi-Family Residential Development Opportunities

Mr. McWilliams informed the Board that Newbury is pretty well in compliance with the State's requirements for affordable housing. But the biggest issue in question is density. The density requirements need to change to allow a greater density to accommodate multi-family residences in certain areas.

Mr. Weiler commented that Newbury Center is a good place to change the zoning for affordable housing and multi-family uses because the services available in Town would be within walking distance. He stated that the land owned by the Davis family on the westerly side of Route 103 would be a good prospective area for such development.

Mr. Powell commented that Newbury Center has higher property values because of the accessibility and the commercial district; therefore it may not be so affordable. The Board may need to look away from the center of Town. A mile or two out from the center of Town the values are not so high in respect to the commercial district. Most people have their own transportation. He suggested that the Board should consider encouraging developers to create affordable/multi-family housing by allowing a common septic area to be built. That would eliminate the 2-acre need per dwelling unit. He stated that developers need incentives to create affordable housing.

Mrs. Freeman commented that the views away from the center of Town can also increase values, which would off-set the added commercial value. Therefore, the Board should look at both areas. One thing the Town of Newbury lacks is flat land. There are not that many places where multi-family developments can be sited.

Mr. McWilliams advised the Board that a building can also go up to three stories as long as it still complies with the height restriction.

Mr. Vannatta asked if the cluster development regulations could be modified to incorporate multi-family housing.

Mr. McWilliams stated that modifying the cluster development regulations to accommodate multi-family housing would be very feasible. Also, over-store apartments could be created.

Mr. Williams commented that another incentive that would promote affordable housing is to offer tax advantages to developers who create affordable housing.

Mrs. Freeman suggested that mixed-use zoning should be created in order to accommodate the affordable/multi-family structures. That way, the locations capable of supporting multi-family housing can be best used. This will also increase the opportunities to develop affordable housing.

Mr. Weiler commented that a study needs to be conducted to determine how many people need to be within a short distance of a business in order to make the business viable. Otherwise, mixed-use zoning is pointless.

The Board referred to the tax maps, topo maps, steep slope maps and USGS maps in discussion of possible locations for mixed-use zoning.

Mr. McWilliams advised that the Board can also designate a block of land to be zoned for multi-family residential development. He stated that some towns allow duplexes in residential zones in a dispersed pattern without requiring increased acreage. The real estate market will drive the number of duplexes appropriate for an area. The Board can require design standards for duplexes so that they do not have the boxy commercial duplex look.

Mrs. Freeman commented that it is important to concentrate development in certain areas to maintain green areas and protect and preserve wildlife and the environment.

Mr. McWilliams informed the Board that some towns also practice 'Land Banking' as a way to provide a location for affordable housing. Land Banking means that the Town would purchase land or donate existing town-owned land for the location of affordable housing. He offered to initiate composite maps with the different layers of land conditions illustrated in order to facilitate determining where in town the land could support multi-family/affordable housing development.

Mr. Vannatta suggested a subcommittee should be assigned to narrow down the most appropriate places for multi-family/affordable housing development. The subcommittee should then report back to the Board. Mrs. Freeman and Mr. Dezotell volunteered to be on the subcommittee Mr. Geddes will be contacted and asked to participate on the subcommittee.

Conservation Subdivision Ordinance

Mr. McWilliams suggested that the discussion and creation of this ordinance should be placed on the back burner until the Affordable/Workforce Housing and Multi-Family Residential Development Ordinance is drafted.

By verbal consensus, the Board agreed.

Small Wind Energy Systems

Mr. McWilliams informed the Board that the State has passed a new law HB1628 that encourages the use and give incentives to renewable energy generation. HB 310 gives municipalities the authority to regulate small wind energy systems. He advised that the Board make some adjustments to the zoning regulations regarding the height regulations in order to accommodate the height of windmills. There are some ordinances already in place that can be used as a model.

Mr. Weiler commented that this law was put together without consideration for such things like noise.

Mr. Dezotell stated that he was recently at an event that had windmills for alternate energy use, and they did not make a lot of noise.

Mr. Vannatta commented that he heard there was a concern about the windmills relative to birds.

Mr. Powell stated that the bird issue pertains to the very large windmills that power hundreds of homes. The smaller one are not a problem to birds.

Mr. Williams commented that there are not that many rpm's to be a danger to birds.

Mr. McWilliams stated that he will put a Small Wind Energy System Ordinance draft together.

Sign Ordinance

Mr. Dezotell asked if the sign ordinance was going to be amended. He stated that he has heard a lot of negative comments about the sign ordinance.

Mr. Powell stated that the Board of Selectmen would like to see the sign ordinance amended to make it more practical for more of a variety of uses.

CASE: Adm1 – 061: Master Plan – Implementation

Mr. Vannatta stated that the Implementation Chapter of the Master Plan should be visited and a priority list should be prepared. He asked Mrs. Freeman if she had any specific ideas for the implementation of this chapter.

Mrs. Freeman suggested that this chapter should be placed on the agenda at the Joint Board Meeting. Each Board and Department should look at the chapter and start thinking about how they want to implement their section. She suggested that the members should go through the Master Plan, make a list of things that need to get done and cross them off as they get done. The Boards should prioritize their lists. These lists were derived from their own input during the writing of this chapter, so they should all be practical and able to be accomplished.

Mr. McWilliams stated that he will work with the Land Use Coordinator to make sure that whoever is going to attend the Joint Board Meeting will get the list that pertains to their Board for review. Since only the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen will be attending, the Historical Society, School District and Cemetery Trustees will have to share their plans for implementing their lists another time.

Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act

Mr. Powell advised the Board members that a representative from the Dept. of Environmental Services will be presenting and explaining the CSPA at the Town Office Building on Tuesday, September 23, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

CASE: 2004 – 006: Angel Hawk – Letter of Credit

Mr. McWilliams distributed a draft of the public notice for the public hearing on September 16, 2008 to consider revoking part of the Angel Hawk Subdivision. He also presented a draft of the Declaration of Revocation Of The Angel Hawk Subdivision By The Newbury, NH Planning Board.

Mr. Weiler made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dezotell seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Plunkett
Recording Secretary