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5 **Stratham Planning Board**
6 **Meeting Minutes**
7 **January 22, 2014**
8 **Municipal Center, Selectmen's Meeting Room**
9 **10 Bunker Hill Avenue**
10 **Time: 7:00 PM**
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13 **Members Present:** Bob Baskerville, Vice Chairman
14 Bruno Federico, Selectmen's Representative
15 Tom House, Member
16 Mary Jane Werner, Alternate
17 Christopher Merrick, Alternate
18 Steve Doyle, Alternate
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20 **Members Absent:** Mike Houghton, Chairman
21 Jameson Paine, Member
22

23 **Staff Present:** Lincoln Daley, Town Planner
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26 **1. Call to Order/Roll Call.**

27 The Chairman was absent so the Vice Chairman Baskerville took roll call.
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29 **2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes.**

30 a. January 8, 2014

31 Mr. Federico made a motion to approve the minutes of January 8, 2014. Motion seconded
32 by Mr. House. Motion carried unanimously.

33 Mr. Baskerville asked Mr. Merrick and Ms. Werner to be full voting members for the
34 evening. Both members agreed.

35 **3. Public Hearing(s).**

36 The purpose of the following public hearing is to review and solicit public comment on the
37 proposed amendments to the Stratham Zoning Ordinance which would amend the follow
38 Sections:

39 **Town Warrant Article – Town Center District.** To see if the Town will amend the Zoning
40 Ordinance to add a new section, Section III. Establishment of Districts and Uses, Subsection
41 3.9 Town Center District and amend Subsections 3.4.5 District Purposes, 3.6 Table of Uses,
42 3.8.6.a Review and Permitting Process, 3.8.7.a. and c. Building and Site Design Standards,

1 Section IV. Dimensional Requirements, Subsections 4.1.3 General Requirements, 4.2 Table
2 of Dimensional Requirements, 4.3 Explanatory Notes, and Section VII. Signs, Subsection
3 7.3 Administration.

4 The intent of the proposed amendments is to offer zoning to enhance the economic vitality,
5 business diversity, accessibility, and visual appeal of Stratham’s Town Center District, in a
6 manner that is consistent with the landscape and architecture of Town’s agrarian tradition
7 and historical significance

8 Mr. Daley started by referring to the draft language about how to preserve historical character
9 of buildings in the Town. He distributed information regarding the historical properties in
10 Town and guidelines from the National Registry of Historical Places. Two points have been
11 taken from those guidelines and incorporated into the Design Standards for the Town Center.
12 Mr. Daley updated the Board that if approved at the Town Meeting, any plans for buildings
13 in the Town Center will go before the Technical Review Committee (“TRC”) currently
14 known as the Gateway Technical Review Committee first and to the Planning Board for their
15 review and input. He stated that a member from the Heritage Commission will be on this
16 committee also.

17 Mr. Merrick liked the new language and felt it wasn’t too restrictive.

18 Mr. Daley referred to whether farming should be restricted in the Town Center. Ms. Debbie
19 Foss commented that responsible people wouldn’t have larger animals because of the lot
20 sizes. Mr. Merrick said that not everybody is responsible. Mr. Merrick and Mr. Baskerville
21 felt giving the option of a conditional use permit for people wishing to have livestock would
22 be the best option. The Board agreed with the change.

23 Mr. Daley confirmed that the Board was satisfied with the dimensional requirements for the
24 district as previously discussed.

25 Mr. Daley invited discussion on the design standards for a two way street. The Board was
26 comfortable with a mixed-use idea for streets including street lamps, on street parking,
27 planting strips, trees, and bike paths in certain areas.

28 Mr. Daley turned to open space and said Mr. Paine had suggested allowing payment in lieu
29 for open space. The proposed minimum amount of required open space is 10%. If
30 developing half an acre or more then open space should equate to 15% of that land. Open
31 space should be contiguous and thoroughfares or planting strips may not be included as part
32 of that open space. Mr. Paine suggested also using the State wetlands mitigation program
33 which assigns value to wetland areas. The Board was satisfied with this new language.

34 Ms. Werner asked if the Town Center Committee and Conservation Commission had seen
35 this revised language. Mr. Daley said he had distributed the document to all the relevant
36 committees and so far had only heard back from the Heritage Commission. He had
37 incorporated their comments into the suggested changes.

38 Mr. Doyle asked if there was a visual overview available to see how all these changes may
39 look. Mr. Daley shared the visuals from Plan New Hampshire. Mr. Merrick returned the

1 conversation to open space and commented on it being contiguous without including
2 thorough fares. He suggested a figure be added showing a required thorough fare cross
3 section to make it easier for a developer to reference.

4 Mr. Daley said the last section deals with architectural design standards. One element
5 discussed was the elimination of flat roofs. Mr. Merrick asked if it would be acceptable for
6 instance for a restaurant to have a flat roof if it had gables on it so they can put their HVAC
7 units on the roof, which would be screened by the gables. He said that otherwise he thinks
8 they may put condenser units outside the building at grade Mr. Daley read the regulations
9 which wouldn't allow for the flat roof scenario. The tradeoff would have to be the units
10 outside the building at grade. Mr. Merrick felt flat roofs were satisfactory. Mr. Baskerville
11 said it depended on the building. Mr. Merrick argued you can make a flat roof looked sloped.
12 Mr. House said he has managed to make a flat roof sloped but it is a challenge. The Board
13 discussed the issue of flat roofs at length. It was agreed that a developer could ask for a flat
14 roof via a conditional use permit.

15 Mr. Baskerville opened the floor to the public. Ms. Foss talked about the livestock issue and
16 said she didn't understand why if somebody owned just one sheep that they would need to
17 get a variance.

18 Ms. Werner made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Mr. House.
19 Motion carried unanimously.

20 Ms. Werner made a motion that the Board recommends the Town Warrant Article Town
21 Center District for vote at the Town Meeting. Motion seconded by Mr. House. Motion
22 carried unanimously.

23 Mr. Daley talked about a possible warrant article being put forward for a traffic light at the
24 Winnicutt Road and Route 33 intersection, which is being sponsored by the owner of the
25 Stratham Village Market. There are several possibilities for how they want to frame the
26 Warrant article. The deadline for submittal is February 4, 2014 so Mr. Daley will see which
27 approach has been chosen. Money has been appropriated in the Capital Improvements
28 Program fund for that intersection as well as the Bunker Hill Avenue intersection.
29 Discussion ensued about which intersection should take priority.

30 Mr. Daley referred to the TE grant and said that the process was progressing nicely. The
31 conceptual design will be done by next month and will go out for bid. The goal is to have
32 everything completed by 2015. The Town is hoping this will spark interest and encourage
33 property owners to invest in the Town Center.

34 Mr. House asked if the Board would be looking at the PRE zone any time soon. Mr. Daley
35 said it's a possibility and suggested form based code for the whole Town.

36 Mr. Merrick said he wonders if anybody is going to develop in the Town Center with the big
37 rotary located there. Mr. Daley said the Town Center has very big break down lanes. The
38 TE Grant will be used to make the break down lanes narrower which will reduce the visible
39 appearance of the Route 33 which will change people's mentality as they drive through that
40 area. Mr. Baskerville said he remembered the State saying they would redo the whole rotary

1 section. Mr. Daley said there was discussion about that. Ms. Werner said the D.O.T. has
2 rated the intersection by the Collector's Eye as dangerous. Mr. Federico reminded everybody
3 how hard it is to get the D.O.T. to install lights or change road layouts.

4 Mr. Federico referred to the TE Grant and said he disagrees with the location that has been
5 chosen for the sidewalk as there's nothing there. He suggested putting a street in between
6 O'Brien Energy to the Post Office. Ms. Werner said the grant wasn't for a street, it was for
7 street improvements. Mr. Daley agreed that there isn't much reason to walk in the Town
8 Center right now, but what is encouraging is that the owner of the Village Market is looking
9 to revitalize that area of the Town Center.

10 **4. Miscellaneous.**

11 a. Report of Officers/Committees.

12 i. Heritage Commission

13 Ms. Werner informed the Board that on February 21 2014 the Heritage Commission
14 is going to hold a program at the Fire house about one room school houses. There
15 are four still in existence in the Town, 3 of which have been beautifully maintained.
16 She said the event will be very interesting and encouraged everybody to attend.

17 b. Member Comments.

18 There were no member comments to report.

19 c. Other.

20 Mr. Baskerville asked if the Rockingham County Conservation District had been
21 approached about septic rules as suggested at a previous meeting. Mr. Daley said he
22 hadn't done it yet but would look into it soon.

23 Mr. Daley said Lindt was before the ZBA last night requesting 4 variances, all of which
24 were approved. Lindt would be before the Planning Board again on February 5, 2014.

25 He continued by stating that there was another application also before the ZBA from
26 Kevin Roy Builders for a change of use variance for the property located at 257
27 Portsmouth Avenue, which is in the R/A zone. That property has had a medical use for
28 many years and Mr. Roy would like it to be changed to a commercial use for his Building
29 Company. The Board approved the variance and the next step is for the applicant to
30 come before the Planning Board to get approval for the expansion of the property and
31 change some of the drainage. Mr. Federico and Ms. Werner said it was voted at a Town
32 Meeting that this part of Town should not be used for commercial purposes. Mr. Federico
33 asked if there was any opposition at the ZBA meeting. Mr. Daley said nobody turned up
34 at the meeting to oppose it. Mr. Daley said the ZBA are entitled to reconsider their
35 decision within 30 days of their original decision. The Board of Selectmen may also
36 appeal the decision.

37 **5. Adjournment.**

38 Mr. Federico made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 pm Motion seconded by Mr.
39 House. Motion carried unanimously.