

## WOLFEBORO PLANNING BOARD

April 15, 2014

### MINUTES

**Members Present:** Kathy Barnard, Chairman, Stacie Jo Pope, Vice-Chairman, Member, John Thurston, Vaune Dugan, Members, Chuck Storm, Alternate.

**Members Absent:** Brad Harriman, Selectmen's Representative, Paul O'Brien, Member, Dave Alessandroni, Alternate.

**Staff Present:** Rob Houseman, Director of Planning & Development, Lee Ann Keathley, Secretary.

**Others Present:** Dave Owen, Town Manager, Mary DeVries, Executive Director of the Wolfeboro Area Chamber of Commerce and member of the Economic Development Committee, Rick Gagne, President, Wolfeboro Area Chamber of Commerce, Denise Roy-Palmer, Alan Harding, Mike Connolly, Economic Development Committee members.

*Chairman Barnard opened the meeting at 7:00 PM at the Wolfeboro Public Library.*

*Chairman Barnard appointed Chuck Storm, Alternate, to sit in for Paul O'Brien, Member.*

#### **Work Session**

- **Joint Meeting with the EDC and Chamber of Commerce**

Kathy Barnard stated the Planning Board discussed limiting first floor use for retail only in the Downtown core with the EDC previously however, was encouraged not to move forward with such by the EDC in order to avoid vacant space. She stated the Planning Board is interested in hearing the thoughts of the EDC and Chamber of Commerce with regard to responsibilities noted in the Master Plan Implementation matrix and whether to permit inns in the Downtown area.

Rob Houseman stated the matrix outlines primary and secondary responsibilities assigned to the EDC and Chamber of Commerce. He stated both the EDC and Chamber of Commerce had concerns regarding the proposed zoning change relative to first floor retail use and the Planning Board tabled such at the request of both the EDC and Chamber of Commerce. He stated the joint meeting provides an opportunity to review and update the matrix.

Dave Owen stated the EDC has discussed the lack of accommodations for events.

Rob Houseman stated the Bay Street and Wolfeboro Falls Limited Business Districts are the only two zoning districts where inns are permitted. He also noted there have been issues raised regarding wayfinding signs.

Stacie Jo Pope noted the Planning Board has been assigned 52 goals/primary responsibilities; noting 39 of such have been completed. She stated the Board reviews the goals and evaluates the matrix annually.

Vaune Dugan asked Staff to clarify "retail only" on the first floor.

Rob Houseman stated the Board was concerned for loss of retail, food services and personal services in the downtown area (businesses that generate foot traffic). He stated the Board didn't feel that real estate offices needed foot traffic to survive.

Rick Gagne stated real estate offices generate foot traffic with the pictures in their windows.

Rob Houseman stated that proof indicates the foot traffic is not necessary for real estate offices.

Stacie Jo Pope read the Greater Downtown objective of the Master Plan; noting the chapter speaks to maintaining retail in the Downtown area. She stated marketing studies and research were provided to the Board regarding the issue that supports Mr. Houseman's statements.

Mary DeVries stated that first floor occupancy is critical and asked what has changed since the previous discussion regarding such. She stated she doesn't feel the discussion needs to be a priority. She stated the Chamber of Commerce often hears frustration regarding comprehension of the documents provided regarding the process. She recommended providing a list of top 10 questions or a FAQ sheet for distribution.

Vaune Dugan requested the Chamber of Commerce track which documents are frustrating to the public.

Dave Owen recommended the public speak directly to staff regarding any issues.

Vaune Dugan stated there is often a misunderstanding on the part of the customer.

Stacie Jo Pope questioned whether a Town board or committee should accompany the Chamber of Commerce as the primary responsible party.

Kathy Barnard asked for any opinions regarding inns in the Downtown area.

Dave Owen stated he feels that inns are an appropriate use in that area and is in favor of permitting such. He stated the matrix is a useful instrument and noted the EDC designated two Economic Revitalization Zones in the Town (Business Park and intersection of Lehner/Center/Pine Streets). He stated the redevelopment of those areas would be useful.

Vaune Dugan asked if there would be issues if inns were permitted in the Downtown area.

Rob Houseman stated conversion of use does not require parking and parking could be an issue in the Downtown.

Vaune Dugan verified a variance process exists.

Rick Gagne asked if parking is required by the Town.

Rob Houseman replied yes.

Rick Gagne asked why the Town has such a requirement when most towns do not.

Rob Houseman stated most towns do have a parking requirement. He questioned whether the current parking standard would apply or whether there should be a lesser standard or no standard.

Alan Harding asked how many other communities have an Economic Development Director.

Dave Owen replied mostly larger communities.

Rob Houseman replied Nashua, Rochester, Dover, Somersworth, Portsmouth and Amherst.

Alan Harding stated someone deemed that an ED Director was not necessary for this Town and asked if there is value added by the position.

Dave Owen stated the BOS determined the position was not necessary.

Mary DeVries requested the request for an ED Director remain in the matrix.

Dave Owen stated Staff serves as the Economic Director.

Mary DeVries questioned whether it is fair to continue burdening Town Staff.

Vaune Dugan recommended proposing an internship or part time position.

Kathy Barnard asked if wayfinding signs have value.

Rick Gagne replied yes.

Mary DeVries stated the Chamber of Commerce receives calls from people wanting “those signs”.

Denise Roy-Palmer requested the following revisions to the project status of the Master Plan Implementation Matrix;

- EB.14; Phase 2 of strategic study not done, including marketing efforts by the EDC & Chamber of Commerce (ie: Economic Development webpage on Town’s website, etc.)
- EB.12; Provide professional guidance from SCORE and NH Small Business Development Center
- EB.2; Town Manager & Director of Planning and Development responsibilities
- EB.13; EDC did not see a benefit to proceed with Phase 2 of the study
- EB.10; Chamber of Commerce established a committee to review the Guide annually and update as necessary
- EB.7; Town adopted 2 Economic Revitalization Zones (Business Park and Center, Lehner & Pine Streets)
- EB.11; Planning Board zoning changes
- EB.4; Pine Hill Road Development District
- H.15; ERZ designation for Lehner, Center and Pine Streets

- **Rules of Procedure**

Rob Houseman reviewed the changes to the Rules of Procedure, see attached.

**It was moved by Vaune Dugan and seconded by Mike Hodder to move the Planning Board Rules of Procedure to public hearing. All members voted in favor. The motion passed.**

- **Conservation Subdivision**

Rob Houseman stated three applications have been submitted to the Board that did not necessarily protect natural resource aspects as originally intended by the ordinance; noting the Town has a mandatory provision that has not been used because each applicant has requested an exemption from the ordinance. He reviewed each of the applications with the Board. He asked the Board if they would like to include the Shorefront Residential District in the Conservation Subdivision Ordinance, whether the ordinance should apply to all zoning districts and whether the multiplier in the one acre zoning district should be increased. He stated the Town has a standardized form factor for lot shape up to ten acres in size.

The Board reviewed the thirty day period for review by the Town Planner and Conservation Commission and agreed to maintain the existing policy related to such. The Board also discussed the ordinance and requested the following information;

- Review form factor for 10+ acres
- Staff provide lot analysis

Vaune Dugan stated she feels that 175:49 doesn’t apply to the Village Residential District because the minimum lot size is ½ acre.

**Consideration of Minutes**

**April 1, 2014**

The Board tabled consideration of the Planning Board's April 1, 2014 minutes.

**It was moved by Kathy Barnard and seconded by Stacie Jo Pope to adjourn the April 15, 2014 Wolfeboro Planning Board meeting. All members voted in favor.**

*There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Lee Ann Keathley*

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