

MINUTES  
PLANNING BOARD  
October 18, 2023 7:00pm  
In-person/Zoom

**Present:** Deidre Daley-Chair- in person, Selectman Shawn Talbot (Ex-Officio) - in person, Nicole Talbot-via Zoom, Bruce Ruotsala- in person, Tim Somero-in person, Jennifer Minckler- in person.

**Citizens in attendance** – Sam Benedict- in person.

Open meeting with the pledge of allegiance – 7:00pm

Roll Call taken by Chair Deidre.

**Selectmen/Chair/Land Use Report:** Selectman Talbot report that Vertex Towers is moving forward. The paperwork is complete and they can now apply for permits to complete the tower.

The Broadband initiative is also moving forward and Selectman Talbot has signed off on the last paperwork to authorize Broadband to access grant money for extending coverage to the furthest reaches of town. Citizens will have an option hook up or not but will be available without a great cost individually.

On Tuesday, October 24, 2023 there will be a public hearing on the acceptance of Old Beaver Road.

On November 7, 2023 at 7:00 there will be a public hearing on employee hiring and retention initiative. The location is to be determined as Selectman Talbot is waiting to hear from the school about holding the hearing there. Public comment will be welcomed.

One obstacle is a warrant article from 2016 which restricts any bonus not part of the warrant or creation of any new positions. Legal counsel has been received over the last few years which stated and reaffirmed that the warrant article was non-binding and advisory only.

Two police officers will be leaving by March 2024 and the police force will be down to three officers at that time. A \$10,000.00 incentive bonus is going to be discussed as an option to help retain police officers. This would have a contract attached to it with a commitment time and if an officer resigns prior to that commitment time, the incentive would need to be paid back to the town. It is very expensive to recruit and train just to lose them to a higher paying town or to the State of NH. The cost of training can be from \$75,000.00 to a \$100,000.00 to prepare an officer to work on their own. Chair Deidre asked if the Town pays much less than surrounding towns. Selectman Talbot advised it is about \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00 a year/per Officer. Other communities start salary higher and then once their warrant passes, they get even more to retain them. Selectman Talbot also noted that those communities that helped the Police Department in the past can no longer do so as they too are in the same situation.

Selectman Talbot had a conversation with the Cemetery Sexton (Official) who spoke of necessity of putting in an island for more spaces. The Planning Board will invite the Cemetery Trustee, finance advisory committee and Bert Hamill the Planning Board Engineer, to come before the Planning Board on January 17, 2024.

Selectman Talbot advised Trick or Treat is October 31, 2023 from 5:00pm-7:00pm.

The Land Use Clerk reminded the members of the two day conference in November and the need of members to advise her what sessions they wish to enroll in.

The Chair advised that there is an update that will be in Dropbox under PB Documents regarding the floodplain. The state is completing new maps and we have been provided with warrant article verbiage as well as suggestions of draft language to update the floodplain ordinance. We will review at the next meeting. Chair Deidre asked that all regulations are on the regulation tab on the website. Chair Deidre listed those to be added which are zoning, subdivision, site plan, excavation, driveway, flood plain, positioning of a building, building permits, manufactured housing, groundwater protection ordinance, and campground ordinance. The Land Use Clerk is to work on updating the website.

**Minutes of October 4, 2023-** Motion to approve as amended by Tim. Motion seconded by Bruce. One abstention. Roll call vote. Motion carries.

The Land Use Clerk advised that she found an error in the approved minutes of 9/20/2023. The error was the paragraph of the application for waiver of subdivision/site plan review requirements which stated the following:

(note: ~~requirements~~-waiver requests for design and technical requirements must be reviewed by the Planning Board Engineer)

The word requirements is to be removed and the correct sentence should be  
(note: waiver requests for design and technical requirements must be reviewed by the Planning Board Engineer)

\*See **amended** minutes for correct verbiage of 9/20/2023

Motion to revised amended minutes of 9/20/2023 was made by Tim. Motion was seconded by Bruce. Motion carries.

**Old/New Business:** Chair Deidre provided an update on housing from SWRPC who advised that there is a need of 20 to 50 new homes a year in the Town of New Ipswich for the next 20 years, Rental availability is generally considered to have 3 levels (workforce, typical and upscale), while housing is considered to have 2 (workforce, typical). The lack of workforce housing and upscale rentals is creating pressure/higher prices on typical rentals and home, there is a need for multi-tiered levels of development.

Chair Deidre began the discussion of ADU's and wants the Planning Board to work with Zoning to consider if there are barriers that could be reduced to foster more accessory dwelling units in town. Two options the State allows for ADUs include going through the ZBA as a special exemption (which the Town of New Ipswich follows), but can be a conditional approval through the Planning Board or can be by right, which means the responsibility to do what the state requires or town requires fall on the building inspector.

Discussion of many topics on ADUs continued to include septic, electricity, mailboxes, owner domicile/availability for trusts, the need to discuss the process with the ZBA and what the Planning Board regulations state regarding an ADU being attached to main living area, etc. This topic to be discussed at the next meeting and the regulations will be reviewed.

Bruce posed a question about building lot sizes. Chair Deidre advised a conceptual hearing could be scheduled. The Land Use Clerk provided the page of the subdivision regulations that reference conceptual hearings.

Discussion of what needs to be revised on the zoning board ordinance as well as the regulations continued as well as commercial districts along with mixed use districts. This discussion is to be continued at the next meeting.

Public Hearings will be needed for any changes made. Chair Deidre would like to meet with the ZBA, but is waiting on response from ZBA Chair. Chair Deidre suggested 11/15/2023, 12/6/2023 or 12/20/2023 for hearings. The last date for a public hearing on Zoning Amendments is 1/25/2024. Anything changed on Zoning must go through a warrant. Flood plain must go to warrant.

Motion to adjourn at 9:45pm made by Bruce. Motion seconded by Tim

Adjourn 9:45pm