

MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD
November 2, 2022
In-person/Zoom

Present: Deirdre Daley (Chair) -in person, Josh Muhonen (Vice Chair) - in person, Shawn Talbot (Ex-Officio)- in person, Craig Smeeth- in person, Ray Somero-in person, Lou Guarino- via Zoom, Jennifer Minckler-in person.

Citizens in attendance: Lou Alvarez –in person, Sam Benedict - in person

Roll Call vote taken by Chair Deirdre. Chair appointed Lou Guarino as an alternate in place of Tim Somero.

Selectmen/Chair/Land Use Report: - Selectman Talbot advised Halloween went great. Initial drafts of the budget from FAC are being submitted to the Selectmen to review. Wendy Freeman, Chair of Zoning Board of Appeals stepped down. She had 18 years of service and her work with the community was commended.

Land Use Clerk had sent the Planning Board members notification of flood plain training to be held November 14, 2022 at 1pm. There was discussion of this topic and the relationship to the Planning Board. Fieldstone had provided a paper copy of the erosion control plan for Brook Haven Farm LLC, Map 6 Lots 20-1 & 20-8 but when scanned to pdf, it was not legible. The Land Use Clerk had asked for a pdf to be sent to her but as of now it has not been received. Dan Tatem will have his additional information submitted tomorrow. Scott Bourcier inquired on interview process and the Land Use Clerk advised the Planning Board is still reviewing. Craig has been enrolled in the 81st Conference and the Town Administrator has enrolled Selectman Talbot. Peter has not responded to the inquiries of Green Farm road as of this time. There has been no gravel pit as-built submitted to the Land Use Clerk by Fieldstone. The Land Use Clerk will send a reminder to them tomorrow.

Chair Deirdre provided an update about approving septic plans. She researched and found that New Ipswich is listed as one of the Towns that is a prior authorization town for septic systems. She advised New Ipswich can request to be removed from that list so that prior approval is not required. Chair Deirdre stated that the signing off of that permit is supposed to occur by the Planning Board and then it goes to the state. Deirdre researched other towns and found that large towns look at the design and location and small towns look at the placement. The state looks at the design. The septic plans in question, were reviewed by Bert and Chair Deirdre gave the Land Administrator approval for the plan based on that review and the requested approval is resolved with the applicant and the state. The new Building Inspector had initially reached out to Chair Deirdre to advise she needed to sign off on the septic plan. The request originated when the builder wanted to alter the location of the septic by 25 ft from the plans the State, which could not be processed without Planning Board approval. Selectman Talbot confirmed that the prior building inspectors only concern was the building envelope and did not look at anything else. Chair Deirdre will be speaking with Jim Feldhusen on this matter.

Chair Deirdre overviewed the gravel pit inspections after discussion of minutes, Brook Haven is the least changed because we are waiting on the engineer plans. When inspected, Brook Haven had just received their plans. They are grading to the final level of the bottom of the pit and plan to vegetate in phase 2 until phase 1 is complete. Two gravel pits are heading for closure. Kuusisto gravel pit may close within a year. Kouropoulos has pretty much dug as far as he can. The Tuttle gravel pit was inspected for the first time in many years. Junk like materials were found on the property and it was suggested that this may need to be addressed with the Board of Selectmen as the regulations on junk yards and gravel pits are specific. This is an inactive gravel pit but is listed as a gravel pit. There appears no action taken to take it out of gravel pit status. The state does have a list of all alteration of terrain permits and it was suggested that the Planning Board may be able to assist the state with resolving this list as a number of sites have completed. Planning Board members will receive the gravel pit report for review and Chair Deirdre notes a motion on the Tuttle pit materials may be appropriate to bring to the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Deirdre mentioned having a review of the driveway permit at the next meeting and for the application to be put into Dropbox for that meeting.

Minutes of October 19, 2022: Minimal changes were made. Motion to accept the minutes as amended made by Josh. Motion seconded by Craig. Roll Call vote. All were in favor. Motion Carries.

Old/New Business: Chair Deirdre asked Craig Smeeth to provide an update on Broadband. Craig explained there is a 3 part bill coming from ARPA funds to provide the town with internet to any home that does not currently have broadband for free. On November 23, 2022, if approved, the town has about a month to submit to Comcast, through the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator, the properties that should have broadband installed. This is done on town owned poles and if connected to the house Comcast will pay for that. The residents will need to agree to it. Craig will be sending a survey to those homes that do not currently have service. There will be no cost to the Town. There are 11 homes that currently do not have service in town per Comcast.

There was a discussion among the Planning Board of requesting additional information from the potential Engineers. Also discussed was how a change in the current billing process of the engineer to the applicant would affect the Planning Board. It was decided that the Board is not ready to make a decision tonight. A final request will be sent out to the Engineers addressing process considerations and communication with applicants to help the Planning Board to make a decision.

Returning to the topic of septic approvals, Chair Deirdre thought the Planning Board would prefer to move forward with a simple prior approval process that integrates with Code Enforcement. She showed the language of the Town of Hampton which is similar to New Ipswich that board members can review prior to the next meeting. The Planning Board would consider where the septic is located on the map for new subdivision requests. If there is a failed septic system it would not need review by the Planning Board as the state no longer requires pre-approval. Lou Alvarez question why and how would the building inspector know when to inspect? Chair Deirdre confirmed that the building inspector would need an item in their checklist to complete the inspection when it is open to be sure it is in the place. She asked the Board to consider if they want to change the application to streamline the process going forward.

Chair Deirdre mentioned backlots and asked Lou G to confirm his prior interest if current regulations were a way to get 2 houses with 250 feet of frontage. She looked at other communities and one of the towns –East Kingston, had regulations that the backlot must be 50 percent bigger than the front lot. Another town looked at saving scenic roadways. In another town backlots were allowed as long as the farmland was left in place. Chair Deirdre asked Lou G to look at the regulations for back lot language and make recommendations for the next meeting

Lou Alvarez mentioned the Board of Selectmen releasing the bond for Andy Krook. He took a ride to Kennybeck and Cravens Way. He believes that Cravens Way should have had speed bumps on both ways on the plans. Chair Deirdre thought the plans showed stop bars which are painted on the road. Lou was wondering if the Planning Board was willing to write that off. Chair Deirdre advised that if we find them on the plans we will reconsider. Lou A. was also concerned about Cravens Way on the Green Farm Road side on the left hand side. The culvert feeds into the storm drain on Green Farm and has debris built up and is half way up the pipe of the culvert with a lot of loose stone and sand. He feels there may not be enough flow and may clog everything up in 5 to 10 years. Chair Deirdre asked the Land Use Clerk to reach out to Peter Goewey to inspect this. Sam Benedict mentioned speed bumps and suggested installing speed divots instead which will not affect the plow. Selectman Talbot had spoken with Peter regarding this and Peter did not have a favorable response to it.

Motion to adjourn by Josh. Seconded by Craig. Motion carries.

Meeting Adjourn at 8:39pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Minckler
Land Use Administrator