

**TOWN OF SUTTON**  
**Planning Board**  
Pillsbury Memorial Hall  
Meeting Minutes  
February 12, 2013

**Present:** Planning Board Members: Dan Sundquist, Chair; Peter Blakeman; David Burnham; Julie McCarthy; Carrie Thomas and Wally Baker: Ex-Officio; (Bob DeFelice; and Roger Wells, alternate, were absent); and Laurie Hayward, Land Use Coordinator; also at the meeting were David Crane, arborist for PSNH and interested members of the public.

**The meeting was called to order** at 7:00PM, by Dan Sundquist.

**Public Hearing:** Mr. Sundquist, The Chairman of the Planning Board made a motion to open the Public Hearing; the motion was seconded by Carrie Thomas and voted unanimously. Dan gave a brief opening statement and explained that David Crane, who is an arborist for PSNH, was in attendance. The notice of public hearing that was placed in papers and 3 other locations in the town was read.

David Crane spoke. He said that they have a 4 or 5 year cycle. He plans to trim 90-95% of the roads in Sutton. Similar trimming will also go on in New London and Warner. He did say that the average outage record for New Hampshire is .34 per mile and that includes cities and large towns that are less treed and seldom have tree damage outages; the Sutton average is .35 which is very good for a small rural town. He says the Sutton scenic roads rate is maybe 3 times that of the rest of the roads. He drove the town scenic roads today and found a number of dead and decaying trees. He counted 35 trees in 10.5 miles of roads. He would like to include removal of dead and decaying trees in this trimming. The contractor is Ashplandh and he stated that the crews are familiar with the town and that they are his highest performing crews. He says the 2 groups working in Sutton have a very good record for their work, by which he means that there are far fewer outages caused by downed trees after they have completed maintaining a section of line. As far as what determines which trees they remove, he said that they will take large trees on a case by case basis. He said that as they speak with homeowners, they often tell the crews of additional trees that require maintenance. Dan Sundquist asked if, of the 35 trees, there were any live take downs. Mr. Crane said that 15 are actually dead, only 3 are live trees; but they are simply too close to the wires and with arcing could be a fire hazard. The remaining trees are damaged or dying trees. Dan read the letter from John Gibson. Mr. Gibson has property on Shadow Hill Road. Dave Crane asked to respond to that letter. He noted that the Route 114 cutting that is referenced in the letter and was completed the year prior was cutting along a main line and that the specifications for that cutting are very different from the specifications for cutting on any of the scenic roads. He did say that he did not find any trees on Shadow Hill that he would include in the list. There is one tree on which the top is broken and that broken portion is overhanging the lines. He would like to have a crew go out tomorrow to remove the top. Peter Blakeman asked whether they expect to have trees marked before cutting. Mr. Crane stated that they had not planned to mark the trees before trimming begins.

Dan Sundquist asked which scenic road has the most trees that are being considered for removal. Mr. Crane responded that North Road has the largest number of questionable trees and a history of outages caused by tree damage to lines. Wally Baker confirmed that to be the case and indicated he would be happy to see the

crews remove damaged trees on North Road. Peter Blakeman asked if there were roads without problems. Mr. Crane stated that there were none on Shadow Hill, Harvey Rd, or Music Hill. He did say that there were a few on Penacook Road towards the end. Asked about Keyser Street, he said there was a large pine that is nearly touching the lines. Wally Baker noted that some years ago, there was some cutting on Keyser that was done well and included marking the trees beforehand. Mr. Crane explained that usually when they are marking trees it is for new lines or a rebuild of lines which requires the take down of more and healthier trees. They do clear four feet from sides but that is for brush and trees less than 4 inches. Wally Baker noted that there should not be an argument about dead trees; they should be removed.

Mr. Crane stated that the work is expected to go all year, moving from north to south and crews are now working in New London. They will contact most landowners as soon as they have approval from the Planning Board. Likely much of the work in Sutton will take place in the summer months. Wally Baker asked whether the crews will notify the town beforehand where they will be cutting. Dave agreed that he could notify Paul Parker, Sutton Road Agent, before they plan to set up in a certain area. Selectman Baker also noted that during the summer Mr. Parker has the prisoners go in and do some trimming of brush. Mr. Crane noted that he might prefer to have his crews go in first and Paul's crews only later if needed. Mr. Crane reiterated that PSNH plans to be on almost every road in town at some point this year. Peter Blakeman asked if there was a reason to separate off Keyser St. Dave Burnham asked if they might want Paul Parker to monitor the cutting. At this point in time there is no plan to do the kind of cutting that was done in New London last year. After cutting they expect a roughly 40% improvement in tree related outages. Dave Burnham noted that he lives on Route 114 and he was happy to find last year that the PSNH crews listened to land owners when the land owner really objected to certain trees being taken down. Dan explained that there has been some negative input and his sense is that having PSNH representatives take more effort in terms of working with land owners is well worthwhile, especially as PSNH regularly comes back to towns with tree trimming requests. Al Donati spoke addressing Mr. Crane and describing a specific condition on Corporation Hill. Mr. Crane explained that he had seen several trees on Corporation Hill that may need trimming or removal. Mr. Donati's concern is that two feeds come through the woods and are quite close. Mr. Crane explained that they did not plan to do anything to improve that section at this point. Jane Williamson of North Sutton also spoke. She asked that trees in her area be marked. She said she was concerned about live trees being removed and asked if anything could be done to avoid removal. He agreed to look again at the tree in question and with his crewmembers to see if there were any alternatives. Wally Baker noted that, until recently, there were no trees between roads and the stone walls; there has been a lot of growth of brush and saplings and that is what PSNH is mainly addressing. Mr. Crane agreed that throughout New Hampshire the forests have grown in closer to roads. The Chair thanked Jane Williamson for her comments. Brian Tilton spoke next. He said that he echoed the sentiments about the Route 114 cutting last year. He stated that in Route 104 in Danbury there was also a cutting and wood was left in place and remains there. Dave Crane said that generally the wood that is felled belongs to the abutter/landowner. Dan noted that on Route 114 most landowners retained their wood. Mr. Tilton asked if the Board could add a condition to approval that requires special care on scenic roads. Dan explained that is stated in the letter to the Planning Board asking for approval and is expected. Brian asked about the possibility of using "tree wire". Mr. Crane explained that tree wire is much more expensive to use and there are some issues with insulated wire that make finding problems more difficult, repairing the wire more difficult, and, if a wire comes down, it is more likely to be a live wire on the ground. It can also be much more expensive to repair. Dan asked for any additional questions. Mr. Crane agreed to confer on at least one tree on Keyser Street.

Dan offered Mr. Crane a couple of options going forward: he could request approval tonight, regardless of some open issues, or he could leave the application open and come back in two weeks having addressed

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homeowner concerns including two pines on Keyser St are live but a problem and on his cut list. Dan suggested flagging the trees on Keyser Street. It was agreed that this application would be placed on the agenda two weeks from this date and that Mr. Crane will send the list of trees that are proposed to be removed to the Land Use Coordinator, Laurie Hayward. And the Planning Board will take up the PSNH request in deliberation in two weeks. Dave Crane stated that he will mark trees on all streets, not just Keyser Street. Peter Blakeman moved and Julie McCarthy seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously to continue to two weeks from now and that, as Mr. Crane would be on vacation, the Land Use Coordinator will email Dave Crane the decision. Mr. Crane asked if he had the Boards permission to remove the broken top to the tree on Shadow Hill and the Board agreed that it could be done.

**Administrative:**

**Previous minutes:** Carrie Thomas moved to approve the minutes of November 13, November 27, January 8, and January 15 and Peter Blakeman seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously to approve all.

**Correspondence:** Dan explained that one of the cases they heard last year, the Kuhlman remodel should have had DES Shoreland permit beforehand and they did not apply timely. The letter received from the DES indicates that was a failure on the part of the property owner to apply for a Wetlands Permit and the DES, although aware of the failure, decided not to pursue it further. There was a brief discussion about the need to develop a process to make sure that after Building Permits are issued, paperwork and inspections are followed up on to ensure compliance with regulations. It was noted that the current work to develop a database of Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment decisions and Building Permits issued will go a long way in terms of providing the information needed for timely follow up.

**Work Session:** It was agreed that the Board would not open a work session this evening, but would put the work on the subdivision regulations forward to the next meeting in two weeks.

**Other Business:** Dan Sundquist explained that he is retiring from the Forestry Society after 24 years and has put his name in as a candidate for the Select Board. He noted that, if he were to be elected to the Board of Selectmen, it might make sense for him to be the Ex-Officio member of the Planning Board. Still the possibility of his moving to the Board of Selectmen does bring up the issue that they should have two alternates. It was agreed that the Planning Board would seek some people who might be interested beginning with an advertisement in the InterTown Record.

**Next meeting is to be held Tuesday, February 26, 2013 at 7pm.**

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8: 30 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Hayward  
Land Use Coordinator