

TOWN OF SUTTON
Planning Board
Pillsbury Memorial Hall
Meeting Minutes
June 9, 2015

Present: Planning Board Members: Roger Wells, Acting Chairperson; Julie McCarthy, and Carole O'Connell, members; Jim Lowe, Alternate; and Walter Baker Jr. Acting Ex-Officio; (Carrie Thomas, Chairperson; Bob DeFelice and Peter Blakeman, members; Dan Sundquist, Ex-Officio; and Lisa Hogarty, Alternate, were absent); and Laurie Hayward, Land Use Coordinator (LUC).

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM, by Roger Wells, Acting Chairperson.

Administrative:

Minutes of previous meetings: The Acting Chair asked for a motion regarding the minutes of the previous meeting on May 26, 2015. Julie McCarthy moved the minutes be approved as written; O'Connell seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously.

Correspondence: The Chair asked the LUC whether there was any correspondence. The LUC explained that she had received a telephone call from Jon Feins who was looking for copies of tapes of the meetings held in May and will want the tape for this meeting as well. The LUC explained that the first May meeting minutes were approved so she had deleted the digital "tape" record from her files. The second May meeting digital "tape" is still available because those minutes had not been approved until just a few minutes earlier. Asked why the "tape" minutes were requested, the LUC did tell members that she knows that Jon Feins knows how to look up minutes on the town website; but, in this case, he wanted the "tape" which is a digital record. O'Connell asked if Feins has the right to make the request. Both the Acting Chair and the LUC answered that he does, as does anyone. The digital voice record is available until the minutes of a meeting are approved by the Board. The LUC told members that she understood that either Jon Feins or his father, Martin Feins, would come to the Town Hall on the next day and bring a flash drive and that she would copy the digital "tape" of this evening's meeting. Members asked if the reason for the request was known. The LUC indicated that she did not ask.

The Chair asked whether there was any additional correspondence. LUC stated that there was other correspondence; but, it was all related to Open Conditions so she will talk about those when they take up the Open Conditions Report.

Old Business: The Chair opened the discussion about the Master Plan and the article for the InterTown Record which he has written. The LUC told members that copies of the articles were in their packets. Wells explained that there were a few typing errors in the original file that he then corrected and resent to the LUC. Wells additionally explained that Bill Thomas' edits, the historical language tweaking, were not included. Wells asked members if they felt the work he has done is "reasonably on target" and ready for him to send to the Editor of the InterTown Record so that he can ask for a meeting to get some input including about the possibility of using color and being allowed to have just a small bit over 500 words per article. O'Connell said that it was clear that Wells worked hard on the articles and the

effort is appreciated. Baker said he thinks the idea is good. Baker also noted that Bob Bristol would have used more colorful language. O'Connell noted that Bristol's language had been discussed before and was kept mild.

O'Connell suggested that the "-s" be removed on "Conversations at Vernondale's". She told members that it is more accurately called The Vernondale Country Store. There was a very brief discussion about whether to use the commonly heard "Vernondale's" or any other form of the name. Wells said that he had not heard anything from Bob DeFelice who is a member. The LUC offered to send DeFelice a copy of an email O'Connell wrote regarding the store's name.

O'Connell also suggested that some of the articles might be a bit wordy. Wells suggested that O'Connell and anyone else who wished to should send suggested edits to the LUC who could then forward the suggested edits to him. Lowe expressed some concerns regarding having InterTown staff edit Wells language. Wells said he would not allow his precise meaning to be changed. O'Connell had a few more suggestions about keeping in character. Wells asked if the LUC could put the final versions of the "Conversations..." articles on the Town website. The LUC said that she could and offered up that the Planning Board and Master Plan website "bulletin boards" could be used to publish the articles and draw attention to the work to done on the Master Plan. Wells suggested holding off on the website until everything has been decided and the articles are ready to be published.

O'Connell also suggested placing something in the Post Offices. Baker agreed that putting up notices about the "Conversation..." would be excellent. It was agreed that notices should use color and be larger and noticeable- maybe red with white lettering. Wells reiterated that comments should be sent to the LUC and she will forward them to Wells. Wells called for a motion that the Board wishes Wells to continue to prepare the articles for the InterTown Record and that Wells is to contact the editor of the InterTown regarding publication. **McCarty moved that Wells continue to prepare the articles for the InterTown Record and that Wells also contact the editor of the InterTown regarding publication. O'Connell seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously.** Wells will try to have a finalized version for the next meeting. There was a brief conversation about publishing the articles and generating interest in the Master Plan. Wells asked the LUC whether there is any money for the Master Plan advertising. The LUC explained that there is some money in the budget for publishing and, as there have been no new Planning or Zoning cases in 2015, there is some money available. The LUC added that it depends on what amount and that something \$100-150 should be no problem; more than \$150 and it would need careful consideration as the Land Use Budget is tight this year. O'Connell asked if members thought it might be reasonable to seek a business to support the articles- perhaps Vernondale. Wells told members that he will try to have everything connected to the InterTown articles tacked down for the next meeting.

Reports:

Select Board Report: O'Connell asked Baker what the pictures on bridge supports are. Baker explained that is an elementary school project. Lowe added that this is part of a worldwide project where people identify other people who they feel represent the town. Bob DeFelice, a Planning Board Member, is one of those chosen. Baker explained about some highway issues that are being worked on. He told members that they are expecting bids on the "red-listed" box culvert at Hominy Pot sometime this summer. The Select Board is also moving forward on the Corporation Road project which should be complete next year. Baker also explained that Steve Bagley, the Road Agent, has been working with the LUC to get a Road Management System in place so that a plan can be developed to

bring the roads up to standard over the next few years. Baker said that bringing the roads up to standard will cost millions of dollars. Part of the way they hope to manage the process is by using the new software to help develop a plan based on by determinations of what roads and what options and what years to bring each road up to standard.

The LUC added that Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission assisted by providing survey data on all of the paved roads in Sutton. The gravel roads have been surveyed by our Highway Department personnel. The LUC told members that the data from these surveys is now being entered to the Road Management System. This means that the town will have a full inventory of roads and their conditions. Road conditions, road importance, and road traffic level are all quantified in this system which allows for prioritization and the creation of budget and CIP recommendations. Baker told members that the Highway piece represents 39% of the town budget. Baker also pointed out how hard the current Road Agent works and how he stays on top of things and keeps the Select Board informed of issues. It was agreed that the Highway Department has benefited from his efforts, including his willingness to makes use of tools like the new computer program. O'Connell asked Baker who she should call about the beaver dam that is threatening to flood over the road at the spillway from Kezar Lake at King Hill and Penacook Road. Baker said O'Connell should let the Road Agent know. Baker also offered that he will let Bagley know as well.

Land Use Coordinator Report: The Open Conditions Report: The LUC told members that the report in their packets shows that the Open Conditions are shrinking. She spoke with Greg Mapes who called and asked what distances the Planning Board had required between the swamp maples that he is to plant. The LUC told Mapes that he should plant the trees 20 feet on center. She said that Mapes questioned that because he thought that was too close. Wells said that, in the woodlands, they grow even closer than that.

The LUC told members that the other Planning Board open item is the ITW cell tower installation on the Blaney property off Route 103. The LUC contacted Kevin Delaney the Operations Manager for ITW and asked him what the status is. He told her that they expect to return to complete the site soon. They had another job that needs to be finished before they recommence work in Sutton and expect to put up the tower this year. O'Connell asked what cell company will be putting their equipment at that site. The LUC said that she does not know.

The LUC explained that the only other item connected to the Planning Board is the T&G Holdings condition for minor subdivision that required they remove a tree that limits sight distances. She spoke with Bob Stewart and he was going to let the owners know that a tree needs to be removed.

The LUC explained that there is one Zoning Board of Adjustment Open Condition which involves the proper screening of the TDS equipment installed across from Blaisdell Lake at Route 114 and Brown Avenue. The screening they installed was inadequate and TDS has now hired Brian Thompson of Whiskey Pine Landscaping to design and install proper vegetative screening.

Wells reminded the LUC that it would be good to have a Planting Guide in the Regulations. The LUC apologized for not having it for the meeting and promised it for the next meeting.

Work Session: Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations- Wells asked members if they wanted to move into a work session at this point.

Wells reminded members that they continue to go over the same material in regular meetings and do not get through the process. He suggested that they take a Saturday and spend the day working out

the language. They could begin in the morning, bring “brown bag” lunches and just work through everything in one day. Wells stated that he would rather do that than to go bit by bit doing it late in the evening in small pieces. O’Connell noted that she works on Saturday and would need to leave at noon. She could attend the morning portion. Wells suggested that the LUC send out an email to all Board members and ask what their availability is for different dates. The LUC recommended holding this work session in September. She explained that the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) members have been working on a revision of the Zoning Ordinance. ZBA members asked her to have town counsel review their suggested revision to date and she has forwarded that. She expects that the ZBA should have much or most of their work done by September. The Planning Board could then start with that suggested revised Zoning Ordinance and perhaps save some time and effort in getting to the final jointly agreed revision to present to the public for input. The goal is to have that agreed revision ready at some point in December or January- in advance of Town Meeting in March 2016.

The LUC told members that, as requested at the previous meeting, she contacted town counsel and asked Wells’ “one question” whether they can simply have language in the Zoning Ordinance that points to the Regulations, stating that driveways must meet the standards in the Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations. The LUC stated that town counsel said that could be done if their intention is to only apply those standards to subdivisions and site plan reviews. If they wish to cover simple driveway permits and any other items that do not come as part of a subdivision application, they should have the authority for that in the Zoning Ordinance. Wells also mentioned that he would like someone like Peter Blakeman, a member who is an surveyor and engineer, go over any revised language. The LUC stated that, although Blakeman often cannot make meetings, it is her experience that he can still give a great deal of assistance at times convenient for him. She suggested that when they have language written she can submit it to Blakeman so that he can give his comments and suggestions.

Wells asked members what they thought of an all-day work session and what their availability would be. Lowe stated that he feels it is a good idea. O’Connell also agreed that it is a good idea. Wells asked the LUC to let members know that we would like to set a day meeting and to poll members about the best month and the best day of the week. He suggested asking for first, second and third choice. Baker suggested that it might be better to do this during the week as people don’t like to give up their weekends.

Wells did tell members that he read the draft language that the LUC sent to them. [The language was based on proposed language that Wells had sent in late 2014 and that the LUC edited based on Board member suggestions.] He stated that he thought it was simpler than the initial draft language. There was a discussion about questions that need to be answered. Wells suggested that what they need is a matrix on Warner, Sunapee, New London, Newbury, and Lyme ordinances and regulations that will help them through the process of deciding what parameters are appropriate for Sutton. Wells noted that he feels some other towns’ limitations can be rather onerous. Lowe pointed out that the Board should not make the language so complex that people cannot read it and figure out what the intent is. Wells pointed out that the important decisions are about policy. Wells gave the example: when the grade is 25% or more, are driveways allowed or not.

Wells and O’Connell indicated that they would like to see maps to support the regulations. The LUC told members that she and Dan Sundquist, the Select Board Ex-Officio, have done some work on maps for use with the Regulations. Wells and O’Connell both wanted large scale maps. The LUC stated that Sundquist has already produced a good map for the steep slopes in Sutton. She is currently working on a soils map. In order to keep it visually simple, she may only show the more difficult soils.

Wells asked the LUC whether she had sent Sundquist's latest version of the Soils Regulation. The LUC said that she had and the Planning Board had taken a vote to accept that draft and present it at the next public hearing for input on change to the Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations.

Wells questioned whether there really is a need for both a soils regulation and a steep slope regulation. Lowe questioned what the purpose is of having articles on slopes and soils in the regulations. Wells indicated that there is a relationship between soils types and, similarly, between slope grade, and density and how much density can be supported. Wells indicated that there is a somewhat obscure formula for how much additional size a lot must have to accommodate certain soil types.

Wells indicated that he is quite comfortable that by simply looking at steepness, they can develop some requirements for reduced density. The LUC pointed out that there already is a Wetlands Overlay District in the Zoning Ordinance. With the addition of a Steep Slope Overlay District, the Board could write both Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations that can be used to determine lot size and building envelope. The LUC quoted the Lyme New Hampshire Regulations that call for 80% of the land where slopes are in excess of 20% to be taken out of the lot calculation used to determine adequate building area. This results in a reduction of development density. Wells reminded members that the numbers used by other towns need not be the numbers they choose. What Wells really is most concerned about is that any changes they make take away any surprise for someone applying to the Planning Board. Wells stated that "taking away surprises" addresses the main concern of the Planning Board Chair, Carrie Thomas. The point is to make so that anyone should be able to go to the regulations, look at the appropriate map, and know what the requirements are and what they can do with their property in their specific instance, including whether they need to go to the Zoning Board or not. Baker agreed that it is a good thing to work on providing more clarity and specifics by a combination of maps and Regulations. The LUC said that she could develop a matrix and have it for the daylong work session meeting. Wells added that it should be a short list of fundamental constraints. Wells asked the LUC if would email the request for best days for a one-day work session and she agreed to do that.

Next regular meeting is scheduled to be held on June 23, 2015 at 7:00 PM.

The Acting Chair asked for a motion to adjourn.

There being no further business, Lowe moved, McCarthy seconded and it was unanimously voted that the meeting be adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Hayward
Land Use Coordinator