

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
CANTERBURY PLANNING BOARD

May 13, 2014

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. It was determined that a quorum was present.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Art Rose, Chair, Alice Veenstra, Joshua Gordon, Chris Blair, Doug McCallum and George Glines.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Snyder, Seth Cohn, Tyson Miller

OTHER PARTIES PRESENT: Doug Ruesswick

Draft Minutes of April 22, 2014: Joshua made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris seconded the motion.

Discussion of minutes: None.

Vote to approve minutes: Unanimous. Minutes of April 22, 2014 were approved.

Kent Ruesswick – Zoning Inequities in Town: Kent addressed the Board as a longtime resident of Canterbury. He's seen the Town before Zoning was in place, up to now. First concern is the Zoning Code itself. He'd like the Board to consider that if you look at the zoning map, he would guess 50-70% is agricultural conservation. Kent is unsure how it became that way. He's looked through Town reports and cannot determine it. By designating that amount of the Town in that zone, certain areas will not have the ability to develop. Nothing can be done in that zone other than a 300 foot lot subdivision basically. If you own 900 feet of frontage, you can do a 3 lot subdivision. If you own 1,000 or 10,000 feet of frontage, you can still only do a 3 lot subdivision. This applies to all the zones in Town. Every 300 feet there is a house and the backland is not brought into the equation at all. Kent started at Concord line and drove north on Route 132. Since he was a young boy, there have been 76 houses built along 132. There is still room for more houses. There were 28 original houses from Concord to the Northfield line – original meaning before he moved to Town. People say we want to keep the Town looking the same, but he doesn't see that. He sees a new house either there already, or coming every 300 feet and wonders if that's how we want to develop our Town.

41 He wonders this because 1) we can't get to the backland and forced all the
42 development on the front; 2) a Town shouldn't grow itself like that. What is the best way
43 for citizens to use their property? He does not believe 300 feet makes sense. If the
44 Board adopted more cluster/pockets of development, it might be beneficial to the Town.
45 He would like the Board to consider changing the way we've done things. Joshua
46 asked Kent about the frontage issue as far as 10,000 feet of frontage with a 3 lot
47 subdivision. Chris thought Kent meant 10,000 acres. Kent said 10,000 feet of frontage
48 if it's a single lot. Joshua asked if that's because its agricultural and conservation which
49 doesn't allow more than a 3 lot subdivision. Chris said you could develop it over time.
50 Kent agreed. You could do a subdivision, and 5 years later do another etc. Chris said
51 that seems impractical from a financial point of view. Kent agreed. Chris said it could
52 be done though, and maybe the intent was to slow the process down. Joshua
53 confirmed that what's being said is you could never get to the backland. Chris said the
54 back road area requires road frontage, you put your house on an existing road, or you
55 could build a road. Kent stated that you cannot build a road on the agricultural and
56 conservation zones. Chris asked how many roads have been put in since Kent moved
57 here. There was general discussion about that and it was determined there were not a
58 whole lot of them.

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60 Art said years ago a lot of this was set up with the intent of slowing things down. He
61 referred to the growth ordinance and talked about different types of development in
62 Town. Art talked about cluster developments and zero lot line type of things.

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64 Doug brought up the Congress for New Urbanism, Smart Growth. It's a group of people
65 trying to develop a comprehensive development strategy for towns that can preserve a
66 decent way of life. Canterbury really is anti-development in Doug's opinion, which is
67 probably why most of us moved here. It's an interesting subject and he suggested we
68 all look into it.

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70 Art brought up developing the elderly living situation as being a desirable one to pursue.
71 Joshua discussed young families not being able to afford to live in Canterbury due to
72 property size and the schooling. The Board discussed each school separately.

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74 Joshua pointed out there is no work force housing, property taxes are high,
75 demographically our generation is looking for more urban type of things etc., and all of
76 that suggests that big houses on large lots don't work in a lot of ways. The outcome is
77 Canterbury is getting older and not particularly vibrant the way young people prefer.
78 Kent stated he is reflecting what he has read and heard.

Doug explained that the Congress for New Urbanism has done a lot of positive work. This community hasn't had a real comprehensive master plan looking at what the future would be. Kent does not see zoning as stopping development in Canterbury. It's just pushed it into different areas of Town. What controlled the growth is when a lot of people wanted to move to Town and we only allowed 20 permits for example. Joshua said zoning controls where it happens and what it looks like, rather than like a cluster of homes here or there, you get the 300 foot thing.

Doug Ruesswick, Kent's father was also at this meeting. He gave his insight into the Town over the years. He pointed out that there used to be a lot of young families. He was part of the people who drew the zoning map. It was put together to take into account what the land types and slopes were. There were very few houses along the road. Now every 300 feet there is a house.

There was general discussion about other areas of the country, or world, where there was clustering, and green areas around it.

George talked about creating and changing zoning and its effect of the rights of property owners, without any compensation. Joshua disagreed. Chris brought up federal zoning laws. Chris said zoning is hurtful to some and a boom to others. George stated he's not anti-zoning, he just thinks perhaps Canterbury has gotten a little carried away.

Kent suggested that we look at what a piece of land is capable of carrying and then decide what can be done with it. If the Spruces is something we want to move towards, make it so that if someone wants to do something like that, they can. Doug thought that fell under zoning already. There was general discussion about cluster developments.

Art said he's been on the Board for 10 years and nothing in the Master Plan has changed and they like it that way. His understanding was that the farm stand zoning change came about because of a problem in town. It has come to the Board's attention that farm stands may have to be revisited and tweaked this year.

Art suggested Kent petition to change the zoning of his property, which he can do. Joshua thought Kent was talking about development patterns in Town. Art said he must have a goal in mind to be here at this meeting. Kent said he would like to build something like the Spruces but is also here as an overall concern for the zoning in Town. Doug felt it needed to be looked at comprehensively rather than putting a cluster of houses up on a hill. It's a cul de sac and it doesn't solve any problems. The new urban idea is to have places to live, recreate, stores etc. Alice said that makes sense in an urban setting. We're talking about density, and the economics don't work.

Alice felt if you wanted to incentivize elderly housing, assisted living, or work force housing, you need to give incentives to builders, like density bonuses. A density bonus would work like this: In the agricultural zone you can only do a 3 lot subdivision, but you can do a 6 lot if you do it by our rules. So if some did 6 lots, one of those has to be affordable and has to have limited equity risers on it. Chris said if you make 20% of the houses affordable, you get a 15% reduction in acreage requirements. These are different types of incentives.

Doug doesn't see what we have to gain by turning Canterbury into a Merrimack. Art said you look to develop the property with low impact on the infrastructure, which is through elderly type families. Joshua pointed out that doesn't get the young families in. Chris said we're talking about jobs, universities, larger homes etc. Doug felt Route 93 gives us all kind of opportunities for development and drawing people in. Chris said there's been no pressure to develop and he thought people are also scared that it could turn into a Merrimack or something similar. Chris said there's general sentiment towards work force housing and cluster developments.

Alice went back to the school issue. She thinks demographically we are losing youth population and we don't need to worry about moving young families in here and taxing the school system, she thinks if we don't get some young families in here and we don't get kids in here then eventually we're going to lose CES. Chris felt these are statewide, if not national issues.

Kent then brought up the inequity of things. He lives in an agricultural zone and is allowed by the Table of Uses to put in a single family dwelling. He is not allowed by Table of Uses to do a duplex, and he can't do a multi-family dwelling. Should we take away the right as owners in some parts of town and not others? Chris felt in general, yes. Doug said it comes down to whether you want planning or not, and whether you want zoning or not. This issue has no right answer. Kent asked if that was the right thing to do. Chris said it's the law and as long as you treat everyone in that zone the same, it is ok. Kent asked if going forward we should never look at it? Chris said no, and Doug thought we should look at the Master Plan every five years.

Doug Ruesswick stated that the Board hasn't given the Town the opportunity to vote on anything. Alice felt we could put up a survey on Survey Monkey and run it through Canterbury email and the newsletter and get a decent response. We could do it pretty simply to get a sense of what the community wants in terms of housing etc. The Board was in favor. Chris will locate the results of the survey done five years ago and will pass it around to the Board.

160 Art encouraged Kent to join the Board as an alternate. Are said it sounds like the Board
161 would entertain the idea of carrying this forward as a zoning change. Doug felt the
162 campground issue breaks open the whole zoning issue anyhow. Doug felt we should
163 do it comprehensively, not just pick at it. Kent asked if the Board would like him to join
164 the Board as an alternate and Chris said there is an alternate opening now.

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166 Kent thanked the Board and left the meeting.

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168 Art felt there is a general feeling throughout Town that something needs to change.
169 There was general discussion amongst the Board about property taxes in Canterbury.

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171 **Other business:** Alice talked about the Central Regional Planning's Comprehensive
172 Economic Development Strategy. She didn't get a big response from the Town with
173 burning projects it want funded, so Alice put in to make sure we were included in broad
174 band, high speed fiber optic into this area. There are about 35 projects that were
175 proposed to be reviewed. If we have other projects that pop up, we could put them in
176 for the next go round. Alice then talked about the Fast Roads Model in reference to
177 fiber optics.

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179 Joshua moved to adjourn Alice seconded.

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181 Lori Venie, Secretary

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183 **Next meeting: June 24, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**