

Final Minutes - Planning Board Work Session

October 25, 2022

Members Present

Greg Meeh, (Chair), Kent Ruesswick (BOS rep), John Schneider, Lucy Nichols,
Joshua Gordon, Anne Dowling

Ann Berry, Hillary Nelson, Logan Snyder (alternates)

Members absent

Scott Doherty, (Deputy Chair), Lois Scribner (secretary) – meeting was recorded
by Joshua Gordon

Others Present

Mike Tardiff, Director NHCRPC: Community Power Committee members Howard
Moffett, Tim Meeh, Beth McGuinn

Agenda

1. Call to Order

Greg Meeh called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

2. Minutes of October 11, Vision Session for Commercial/Industrial zones

Greg mentioned some additions and corrections he wanted to see in the October
11 Minutes:

- Line 23, needs to say, 'Hillary Nelson was seated as an alternate', and thus could second the motion
- Line 111, regarding the Exit 18 closed gas station, should say that 'aquifer protection zone and gasoline storage are not compatible'
- Line 112, among possible uses for the commercial zone at Exit 18, after agricultural production center, add 'food hub, and indoor farmer's market'
- Line 121, insert 'other ideas presented were a solar or electric farm, indoor agriculture facility, cannabis processing dispensary if it were to become legal'

- Line 139, note that Lisa Carlson asked about development being encouraged to reduce the high property tax rate in town. Greg had referred to studies that showed most development did not reduce tax rates if looked at over time – there is dispute over this.

Joshua Gordon moved that the Minutes as amended be approved. Kent Ruesswick seconded. All members who had been present on October 11 voted to approve. Lucy Nichols abstained.

3. Update from CNHRPC post Vision Session and for Master Plan ongoing work

Mike Tardiff, director CNHRPC, shared the aggregated comments from the October 11 Vision Session that his staff, ‘the 3 Matts’, had put together. He noted that there had been some interesting conversations. There was less discussion about Rt 106 Commercial zone, compared to the discussions about Exits 17 and 18 zones. Mike suggested that the conversations indicated it would be good to revive the Economic Development Committee in town.

Members were asked to read over this summary and mark it up. Return those markups and suggestions to secretary to forward on to Mike.

Members discussed some of the points they noticed from the Vision Session evening, including:

- There has been a change in tone among residents and property owners in terms of being more open to development than some years ago – perhaps because this meeting was specifically structured to be about the Commercial and Industrial zones – this will allow a different tone to be expressed in the next Master Plan in terms of economic development
- Maybe it helped that the Board was emphasizing that development should be ‘in scale’ – appropriate for Canterbury – small scale development (ex. elderly housing for 25, rather than 250, or a small soccer field not a massive stadium)
- There is already opposition from homeowners on Hethlon Road to a small duplex development proposed on Boyce Road - it is only 2 duplexes with 4 units but it does abut onto Hethlon Road properties and there had been anxiety and anger expressed at recent ZBA hearings

- If a developer sees there is nowhere in town that specifically allows a project, then they will look for other opportunities where they can realize their project
- Members were interested in the idea of community sewer and water, given the difficulty in accessing well water down by Exit 18 (wells need to be several hundred feet deep) – that would be something to elaborate upon in the Housing chapter
- Members acknowledged the lack of housing that young families or downsizing seniors could afford – ‘starter’ and ‘ender’ housing - they discussed the matter of what terminology to use having heard the opposition from a young resident at the last vision session to the idea of ‘affordable’ housing – is this taken to be ‘low income’ or ‘trailer park’ housing and conjures up fears of drugs and crime? Should it be called ‘Work force housing’ or is that now unhelpful? ‘Work force’ was the term used by state legislation some years ago. What is needed is housing for professionals like teachers who might work in town but cannot afford to live here – there was consensus that ‘variable types of housing’ are needed – the ‘missing middle’ housing that costs less than \$600,000 – that median income housing may be necessary as pressures of development are seen in coming years
- The Board needs to ensure that residents in town feel they are heard
- There was discussion about the new development at Exit 17 with retail outlets – the parking provisions are not user friendly – it is not good for pedestrians – there has already been pressure on Concord and Boscawen from applications for building permits – ultimately these changes will have an impact on that part of Canterbury around Exit 17

It was agreed that the Board would like Mike to return soon with draft chapters to work on. The Board agreed to meet on November 15, and November 29, to free up the Tuesdays of Election Day (Nov 8) and Thanksgiving week (Nov 22). **Mike said he could come back on November 15. His staff were working with new software, and he would have drafts of the chapters on Economic Development and Housing that will include information distilled from meetings and also data. Mike will send these as reading material out in advance for members to look over. Chapters 5 and 6 can be discussed on November 15 too.**

4. Budget issues and the Master Plan work

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99 The Board had asked if the CNHRPC office could assist with the rewriting of the
100 site plan and subdivision regulations to make them consistent. Mike said it would
101 cost around \$4950 from the town and they would apply for a Invest NH Program
102 grant – Matt Taylor had started that grant application. Greg has to give budget
103 figures to Jan Stout by November 1, so Mike said, put in for \$4950, for the
104 updating of the Land Use regulations or for continuing work on the Table of Uses.

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106 5. Canterbury Community Power Committee (CCPC)

107 Howard Moffett, Chairman CCPC attended along with members Greg Meeh and
108 Beth McGuinn, and Planning Board members Kent Ruesswick and John Schneider
109 who are also on the CCPC. The CCPC has 8 members in all. Howard outlined their
110 progress and purpose so far.

111 Community Power involves joining with other municipalities, 22 so far in NH, to
112 purchase electricity in bulk from the wholesale sector, to offer residents lower
113 energy default service rates than they can currently get from the 3 utility
114 companies operating in Canterbury. There is no change in the distribution costs.
115 The wires transmitting the electricity will still be operated by Eversource, Until or
116 the Co-op. There is a good prospect these municipalities can use joint purchasing
117 power representing about 20% of NH population to beat the local default energy
118 service rate. They might be able to create some interesting options for renewable
119 power as well.

120 The primary task for CCPC is to prepare an Electric Aggregation Plan to be
121 presented at Town Meeting in 2023. They have a tight timeline. They would be
122 looking to put a draft out for public hearings in mid-December and mid-January.
123 Although there is a template to work from, it must be completed with Canterbury
124 specific conditions, goals and preferences. They were required to go to Town
125 Meeting by law. The document would be 18 pages, so it needs to be summarized
126 both for Town Meeting but also for public hearings prior to March.

127 Members asked questions about how this would work. There would be choice.
128 Resident could stay with their utility, or their private competitive purchasing. If
129 residents using the 3 utilities did nothing at all, they would be enrolled in the new

municipal purchasing so it would become an opt-out scheme. If you had a different contract, then you would have to opt-in to the new municipal scheme. It would apply to both residential and commercial contracts.

The CCPC also wanted to ensure that the issue of Energy and Community Power were included in the next Master Plan, particularly because these issues were not raised in the last Master Plan. Both the Energy Committee and the Community Power Committee will want to be part of submitting something for the Master Plan.

Mike Tardiff was still present. He noted that the Master Plan was in phase 2. They would be including the issue of energy in 'Town Services'. Energy is also pertinent to commercial development – it is one of those issues that can be relevant to more than one chapter. Beth McGuinn will be working on language in Master Plans, paying reference to other towns' documents so they were not reinventing the wheel.

Howard noted that their CCPC draft Aggregate Plan needed to go to the Board of Selectmen, the PUC and the Community Power Coalition first with final language but it could still be in draft form for the town Master Plan. They wondered if a couple of Planning Board members wanted to work with them. It was suggested that if the CCPC could come up with a draft for the Planning Board members to look at, it would be helpful.

Howard said the CCPC would send draft language to Mike Tardiff before November 15, so that it could be discussed again at that work session.

There was a consensus that this work should move forward. John Schneider proposed a motion that the Planning Board support working with the CCPC. Joshua Gordon seconded. All members voted aye. Hillary Nelson abstained?.

Mike Tardiff and the CCPC members left. Board members discussed some of the general issues to do with electricity costs and supply.

6. New Business

- (i) John Schneider reported attending a zoom meeting of the CNHRPC which had focused upon housing issues. There is said to be a short fall of 20,000 units.

- (ii) Greg raised the issue of reducing frontage size that had been mentioned on October 11 – if this was done in the residential zone it would not result in providing more reasonably priced housing – should they look at the cluster development idea and the road frontage needed for cluster dwellings? Hillary suggested they work with Matt Baronas, the mapping staff member at CNHRPC, to identify places in town that would be advantageous for such development – looking at soils, access to transportation, protecting large open spaces and so on. (No action item specified at this time).
- (iii) Kent mentioned attending School Board meetings and hearing about the committee set up at last Town Meeting to study the school district and possibility of dissolving it. He thought they would be asking for more money from Town Meeting. There was discussion among members as to whether this initiative was an attack on public education, the increase in alternative forms of private and home schooling recently encouraged by the state Legislature, as well as the logistical problems for families needing school buses in this area.

7. Adjournment

Greg asked for a motion to adjourn. Kent seconded. It was 8.30pm.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Planning Board members to look over the draft summary of October 11 vision session from CNHRPC prior to November 15 meeting and send comments/ suggestions to secretary to return to Mike T**
- **Mike Tardiff to get drafts of chapters on Economic Development and Housing to members prior to November 15 meeting**
- **PB members to look over the draft language from Canterbury Community Power committee prior to November 15 meeting**
- **Chair to complete Budget estimates for town office/selectmen**

Respectfully submitted, minutes based on recording taken on October 25,

Lois Scribner, secretary

