

1 **Planning Board Meeting - Work Session - Final Minutes**

2 **March 28, 2023, Meeting House**

3 **Members Present**

4 Greg Meeh, (Chair), Kent Ruesswick (BOS rep), Anne Dowling, John Schneider, Rich
5 Marcou, Joshua Gordon, Logan Snyder

6 Hillary Nelson (alternate)

7 **Others Present**

8 Joe Halla (Chair ZBA): Deborah Follansbee (applicant), Greg Heath from Friends
9 Meeting House: Matt Baronas, Matt Taylor from CNHRPC: Kelly Short (Co Chair
10 Canterbury Conservation Commission)

11 **Agenda**

12 1. **Call to Order**

13 Greg Meeh called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

14 2. **Minutes of March 14, 2023**

15 Joshua Gordon moved, and Kent Ruesswick seconded, the previous Minutes from
16 March 14, and there being no discussion, those Minutes were approved by all
17 members.

18 3. **Welcome to new members**

19 Logan Snyder and Rich Marcou were welcomed as elected members.

20 4. **Joe Halla – Housing for farm families**

21 Greg stated that the Board could not discuss a particular property or person at this
22 time with regard to the issue.

23 Joe Halla mentioned that a farmer in town was looking to build another house
24 without subdividing their land. He had been to the Building Inspector and was told
25 that the zoning ordinance limited ADUs to 1000 sq ft. Joe pointed out that the
26 reference on page 27 of the ordinance, Table of Uses, was never intended to set
27 up such a limitation. That restriction came later. He was asking the Planning Board
28 to decide as to which part of the zoning ordinance would apply in such an instance,

and to let the Building Inspector know what the Board decided, and to let him know as well. Greg thanked Joe for making him aware of this issue. The Board will need time to digest the matter. Joe Halla left the meeting.

Joshua Gordon made a motion to table the issue until the next meeting. Kent Ruesswick seconded. All voted in favor.

5. Deborah Follansbee – Nature Preschool at the Friends Meeting House, preconceptual discussion

Deborah Follansbee introduced herself. She lived in Concord and had a career in child education. She had sold her school and was now looking to start a Nature Pre-school, based at the Friends Meeting House on Oxbox Pond Road. It would operate principally outdoors but they would need indoor access during inclement weather. She would likely be licensed for a dozen children. There would have to be water tests conducted and reported to the state. There is a fenced in play area.

The zone is Commercial. The Friends Meeting House was given a special exception from the ZBA for a church. The Table of Uses includes education related to a church but it was acknowledged that this pre-school was not connected with the church. It was a separate business, not a religious school. It would therefore require a ZBA hearing prior to site plan review.

It was explained to Deborah that the site plan review application had a check list of items for submission, and she should focus on item 1, the Narrative, and when requesting a waiver of any other items, the applicant needs to give a reason, for example, 'No change from existing site plan'. If an item will differ from the existing site plan (traffic, for example) the applicant can still request a waiver but needs to explain how it will differ and the reason the waiver should be granted. Mandy Irving (Town Assessor) in the office would help with the application when she was ready. The Board will want to see licenses and/or applications for state licenses.

The Board wished her luck and expressed approval for the idea of a nature playschool in town. Greg Heath and Deb Follansbee left the meeting.

6. Master Plan drafts

a) Natural Features chapter

- There was extensive discussion about the draft Natural Features Chapter, with Kelly Short from the Conservation Commission giving feedback to Matt

Baronas and the Planning Board. **The CCC next meets on April 13 so after that Kelly will have feedback from the whole commission and that could be shared with the PB on April 25.** For now, she was giving feedback from herself and Ken Stern, Co-Chairs.

- It was explained that the presentation of the chapter had changed, to make it more user friendly for town readers. It would also be available online, with live links to the maps.
- The 7 original objectives had been compressed into 4: Kelly had found some items omitted and she questioned whether reducing the number of bullet points or objectives really achieved the goal of making it more accessible when there was a risk of points being missed and too much packed into a sentence or bullet point (Greg concurred)
- She asked if bullet points throughout the objectives could be numbered for easier reference during future discussions – it was suggested that this could be done throughout the entire document for ease of reference.
- Naming individual farms had not been done, in the same way that individual businesses were not going to be listed. **Greg will consult with the Agricultural Commission on this.**
- There was discussion about mapping and showing the importance of Forestry, and land held in forestry management in town. It may be as much as 80% of the land. It had been agreed at an earlier meeting that mapping land in current use or in various types of forestry is not exactly accurate but getting too ‘granular’ would be too consuming in terms of time and labor. It is important to show some idea of the current use and forested land anyway. There are tax implications.
- There is likely a new conservation project spearheaded by Ken and Ilene Stern, off Bean Hill Road, to be turned into a major conservation project for town recreation. It will be possible to include this in the Master Plan as it should be completed by June this year and the MP is scheduled for much later this year.
- The CCC had included a long list of recommendations and **Kelly will look back over that to see if any were omitted in recent drafts and need to be put back. They could be in an appendix. She will send suggestions to Matt B.**

- Kelly also to write a Vision Statement for the Natural Features chapter to be consistent with other chapters.
- CCC to be included when the next draft of the Land Use Chapter is given to the Planning Board.
- Greg pointed out Dark Sky issues are missing – connected to issues of light pollution – Light and Noise both need to be dealt with in this chapter.
- Also, there is a large marsh between Baptist Hill Road and Shaker Road – a large and beautiful resource – it should be shown
- Further discussion about Mudder Trucks – Matt B had talked with other staff at regional planning – they needed more specificity about what the town was seeking to do – there is a wide range of motorized and electrical “vehicles” now that can do damage to Class 6 roads and trails at different seasons. Greg suggested wording something like “motorized vehicles only to be allowed on trails or roads designated and maintained for that purpose”. It is important to get specific language in the Master Plan, not because it is writing an ordinance, but it gives direction for future ordinances or amendments, and in case of legal action. It needs to be clearly stated what the town is trying to protect by creating restrictions (ex. the landscape, residents not enduring loud noises). Often these trail or road issues became issues for the private landowners who own much of the land in town.
- It was acknowledged that enforcement of any restrictions on snowmobiles and ATVs is difficult.
- Noise was raised as an issue that the CCC had originally raised – it needs to be in the Master Plan. As of now, noise issues are dealt with by the Obnoxious Uses Article 2 in the zoning ordinance and go to the Selectmen to be resolved. There are some references to noise in the Natural Features draft as it stands now. It was pointed out that reference to the Speedway Track making noise needs to include the fact that noise is heard daily when the Track is open outside of the winter months. It is not just the big race weekends that produce noise there. **John Schneider and Logan Snyder to work on a sentence about noise at the Track and send to Matt B.**
- Protection of scenic roads had been raised by CCC as an important issue and they wanted it included. There are references in both Natural Features and Transportation drafts – but Kelly raised the point about having a list of

objective criteria for making decisions about Class 6 roads being developed. That is important in the protection of large unfragmented parcels of land. For now, each application for development on a Class 6 road is dealt with on a case by case basis. It would help delineate the town's goals regarding the existing Class 6 roads. State law allows the town to convert a Class 6 Road to a Class A Trail by vote of Town Meeting. It is a complicated issue. A property owner may have purchased land to develop in some way. A Class A trail cannot be developed with housing, and it can restrict who has access. This all seemed to be linked to the idea Kent had of trying to get a committee together specifically to look at all the roads in town. The PB had walked a Class 6 road last year that was way too steep for development and that was mentioned as one possible criterion for evaluation.

- CCC was invited to give input to the issue of cluster development and the trade off between higher density alongside protection of natural or agricultural land.
- Also, CCC was asked to recommend a list of forested land in town that could be designated as Town Forests, agreed to at Town Meeting and administered by CCC. They have Briar Bush Forest for now.
- It was mentioned that there are several things needing correction in the Town Report and some questions about asterisks relating to CCC managed property. Kent invited Kelly to come into the town office to discuss details.

The Planning Board looks forward to continued cooperation and participation with the Conservation Commission as the town works on the Master Plan drafts.

b) Transportation

There was a shorter discussion about the draft Transportation chapter.

- School buses are not mentioned and there is a lot of school bus traffic in town
- Shaker Road includes both town and state administration – speed limits differ as well (30 and 35 mph) – **Matt B handed out data about speeding on Shaker Road – the PB needs time to digest and come back to that**
- What is Rt 106 classified as? It was determined that Rt 106 is a 'principal arterial'.

- Scott Doherty had passed on a request to do one more part of Shaker Road for speeding, on the 'roller coaster' section just north of the intersection of Shaker and Baptist Roads
- There was one more death to be included on Shaker Road in the section opposite New Freedom Academy --- this led to a discussion about the potential value of a guard rail on Shaker Road and on I 93 South bound.
- The issue of widening shoulders for pedestrian or cyclist use is complicated because that could impinge on private property – but perhaps there should be a list of specific places in town, for example parts of Baptist Road, where widening could make the road more safe
- The **cross-walk** issue referenced – that was hoped to be created in the town center to allow school children to cross Baptist Road more safely – the state DOT refused to do that – **perhaps it should still be mentioned as an aspiration though? And be specific about location.** And the town could try again, recognizing it often takes time to get the state to agree to such changes and they tend to respond to deaths on roads.

The Matts left the meeting.

7. New Business

- a) Joshua Gordon reported having talked to Art Rose about **multi-use properties** in Manchester. He had said there is a form for an application if a use has changed that a Planning Board can use to decide if the use is sufficiently different to require a site plan review. Art Rose was to get the form for Joshua. It could be a solution to the intractable problem with something like the McKerley properties. **Joshua was asked to follow up.**
- b) **Rules and Procedures document** – this was distributed earlier. It was dated from November 2011. Somehow in the history of the Planning Board it had been omitted from the binders. It stated that officers were to be elected in April. It would be more efficient if that could be done in March following the town elections. **Can the Board change these regulations? Hillary to look into that, is it by state statute or at the town level?**
- c) **Searchable data for PB** – so far it had seemed as if there was no one in town who could make the PB documents available as a searchable database.
- d) **Items for next agenda** – to include Additional House on a farm issue – let Joe Halla know that will be on April 11 agenda: discussion of the Master Plan

Housing Chapter given out tonight by Matt B: new officers (deputy chair):
searchable data - -as well as Harold French subdivision.

8. Adjournment

Logan Snyder made a motion to adjourn, and Kent Ruesswick seconded. All were in
favor. It was almost 9 pm.

List of Action items:

- Greg: consult with Ag Comm over listing of farms
- Joshua: look into mixed use form from Manchester
- Hillary: look into changing PB rules for voting officers in March not April
- John/Logan: come up with language for the Transportation chapter re the
Track noise to be sent to Matt B
- Board to read through MP Housing chapter distributed at meeting 3/28 snf
look at speeding on Shaker Road data from Matt B
- Board to consider the issue Joe Halla raised about housing on
farms/restricted size
- Secretary to make sure Joe Halla gets response: and put agenda items
together for April 11 to include tabled items from 3/28
- Secretary to ensure CCC gets to know when Land Use chapter will be
discussed at PB
- Kelly and CCC – to get feedback to PB from Natural Features chapter draft
for April 25 PB meeting/work session, including a Vision Statement: and
input on land in town as Town Forests: and density of cluster housing
tradeoff for protection of land: and consider the original list of
recommendations from CCC as an appendix for that chapter – send to Matt
Baronas.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Scribner, secretary

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