PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire

Minutes of July 12, 2010

The Peterborough Planning Board held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, July 12, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Town House.

Members Present: Chairman Leandra MacDonald, Vice Chair David Enos, Richard Freitas, Michael Henry, Barbara Miller, Rick Monahon and Ivy Vann.

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development.

Chair MacDonald called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. First item on the agenda:

Informal Discussion with Craig Hicks on Workforce Housing:
Mr. Hicks distributed a graphic that outlined two lots he owns in West Peterborough. The graphic showed the existing lots and how they would look after a lot line adjustment. He noted both parcels were lots of record with one off Wilder Street and the other off May Street. When asked about frontage Ms. Vann interjected "he has plenty for his district." Mr. Hicks noted he would like to investigate creating work force housing on his property. "I have more people bugging me about another neighborhood" he said. Mr. Hicks explained how he would like to build 20 to 30 housing units all under1000 square feet that would include a mix of senior and work force housing. Chair MacDonald noted the Planning Board's support of a housing development made up of small homes. "No one has done that in Peterborough" she said.

Mr. Hicks spent some time reviewing the right-of-ways and the deeds to the properties. He also reviewed the density calculations for the District. Chair MacDonald asked about the topography with Mr. Hicks replying "it is pretty decent land" adding "there is some wetland on the uphill side." Mr. Hicks noted he could have "crammed in more units" but added he grew up on Mountain View Drive, and "this kind of tags along that neighborhood." He noted the price would be in the neighborhood of $190,000.00 "which would free up apartments." Chair MacDonald agreed stating "it seems like people can afford an apartment but no one can afford a house, there are no small house subdivisions in this town." Ms. Vann asked if the houses would sit square on their lots and make a nice streetscape. She also suggested "putting in an alley and rear loading the garages."

Mr. Hicks spoke briefly about the improvements that had been made to West Peterborough over the past year. He told the members "the sidewalks, traffic calming and streetlights are *all* we envisioned." A brief discussion about critical mass and sustainability in the District followed and Mr. Hicks was encouraged to come back to the Board as his plans solidified (because) "the Devil is always in the details" said Chair MacDonald.

The discussion ended at 7:30 p.m.

Condominium Conversion at Depot Square:
Cy Gregg introduced himself and gave a brief history of how the Sharon Arts Center had approached him and asked to buy their space in the Depot Square. He noted several of the reasons the Center would like to purchase its own space, most of them being from a financial standpoint of owning versus renting. Mr. Gregg went on to note "the problem is that there are four lots and common amenities, and they are not the only business in the building." Mr. Gregg explained "the only way to do it logically is to condo-ize the building so that they can purchase their floor with the remainder becoming convertible space." Mr. Gregg concluded by noting "we have no intention now or in the future to sell additional condos."

A brief discussion of the Sharon Arts Center presence in town followed. "It is an anchor for the Downtown" said Mr. Gregg. Rob Degan of Monadnock Survey reviewed the concept of the consolidation and why it made the best sense to do it all at once and in conjunction with the Art Center's purchase. A brief discussion about the time line for the conversion and the definition of convertible space followed. Mr. Gregg interjected "for the purposes of the public there is no change, the only thing different is that the Sharon Arts Center would own their space." He added they would own "strictly the outline of the space they are in now, nothing more." Mr. Gregg also clarified what the external structure (the building, roof, etc.) was and what would remain part of the common land.

There were no other questions. Chair MacDonald noted she would entertain a motion to accept the application as complete. A motion was made/seconded (Enos/Miller) to accept the application with all in favor.

Closed at 7:40 p.m.

Two-Lot Subdivision at 302 Old Dublin Road:
Dan Higginson from Meriden Land Services introduced himself as the representative for William and Jennifer Sandlin. He briefly described the request as a simple subdivision of a 26 acre lot that would separate a house from its barn. He noted the structures have separate electricity and access and that the barn lot could accept a driveway. He noted several waivers to §674:36, 11(n) had been requested and the Board agreed they were reasonable.

There were no other questions. Chair MacDonald noted she would entertain a motion to accept the application as complete. A motion was made/seconded (Monahon/Enos) to accept the application with all in favor.

Closed at 7:45 p.m.

Deliberation:

Condominium Conversion at Depot Square:
Chair MacDonald asked about the state role in the condominium conversion and a brief discussion about the state standards followed. The members agreed that the condominium documents should be sent to the town attorney for review and that should be a condition of acceptance.

Ms. Miller asked about the fact that "this is a business, not a home" with Ms. Vann replying "it is the same thing, a condo is a condo."

When the initial motion was to approve the consolidation of the lot numbers Mr. Enos noted the process may be a two-step process where the members would first merge the lot lines versus the individual units. "I agree that would be the first step" said Ms. Vann said. A motion was made/seconded (Monahon/Henry) to merge the lots with all in favor. A second motion was made/seconded (Vann/Monahon) to accept the condominium site plan with convertible land subject to receipt of and review/approval of the condominium documents by Town Attorney with all in favor.

Two-Lot Subdivision at 302 Old Dublin Road:
Ms. Vann noted she did not see any reason the request should not be approved but suggested they review the list of waiver requests by the applicant. The members briefly reviewed the facts that the area was not in a flood hazard zone, it had no storm water management, no municipal water or sewer, and no building construction was planned.

A motion was made/seconded (Vann/Henry) to approve the two-lot subdivision with all in favor.

The members spent the next half hour reviewing suggestions for the next public hearing. Ms. Vann suggested a graphic showing the process in a step-by-step fashion and volunteered to create it. Ms. Vann also reiterated her feeling that they did not have "a political hope in hell" of getting the ordinance passed if they did not (1) increase the minimum regulated acreage size back to 20,000 square feet while incorporating language to account for vernal pools and (2) re-visit steep slopes. Mr. Henry noted he agreed with Ms. Vann on increasing the minimum regulated size. A brief discussion followed with Mr. Enos reiterating that while he understood the political argument, increasing the minimum size would result in "too many vernal pools that get dumped." Mr. Enos continued to remind the members that the Wetlands Workgroup "was a voice for the wetlands."

A brief discussion about how the Planning Board interpreted the current regulation as well as the flexibility of the proposed ordinance followed. The also discussed rivers and ponds as wetlands and the Shoreland Protection Zone. The members then discussed the almost immediate confusion people have over "buffer" and "setback" areas. Ms. Miller suggested more examples of how the ordinance works as well as how mitigation through Conditional Use Permits and Performance Standards can achieve reductions in the setback areas.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant