

**PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, New Hampshire**

Workshop Minutes of July 18, 2011

Members Present: Chairman Leandra MacDonald, Bill Groff, Tom Weeks and Rick Monahan.

Also Present: Carol Ogilvie, Director Office of Community Development, Laura Norton, OCD Administrative Assistant.

The Peterborough Planning Board held a Workshop on July 18, 2011 in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of the Town House. The primary purpose of the Workshop was to discuss the Draft Work Program for the upcoming year.

The Workshop was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Chair MacDonald. The Chairman also appointed Alternate Bill Groff to sit as a regular member.

Ms. Ogilvie had distributed a handout listing the considerations for the 2011-2012 Draft Work Program. She noted "many of these have been talked about in the past but they have come back up."

The first consideration was Workforce Housing. Ms. Ogilvie noted "this is probably a back burner issue; it is unlikely anyone is going to do anything and we are not far out of compliance except for the Rural District."

Mr. Weeks asked if the group would be discussing any of the topics at the workshop with Chair MacDonald replying "let's get an idea of the priorities tonight; I don't think we'll talk about anything specific tonight."

Chair MacDonald went on to the Healthcare District and whether or not to pursue the expansion of the district on Old Street Road. "It seems there is still some interest" she said adding "we'll have to look at some of the other properties but the first thing we need to do is have the neighborhood meeting. That might make a big difference in the Open Space Ordinance." The members discussed the new access road (Parmalee Drive) as well as the (dangerous) intersection at Routes 202 and 136. Chair MacDonald added "first we will have to have a discussion about spot zoning. MCH is a big player but they are not the only player, I wonder how anxious anyone else will be about it." The members also discussed the potential of extending the sewer lines up Old Street Road.

The group went back to Workforce Housing when Mr. Groff asked how the housing is set up. The discussion that followed included the Evans Road evaluation and the fact that the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority denotes affordable housing in the neighborhood of \$241,000.00 (which *all* agreed is not realistic). Chair MacDonald concluded the discussion by noting "we can revisit it but it is not a top priority."

Mr. Monahan in at 5:22 p.m.

Traditional Neighborhood Development was next on the list. Chair MacDonald suggested the group discuss it further when Planning Board member Ivy Vann was present to participate.

With Open Space Development next on the list Chair MacDonald asked Ms. Ogilvie “what is lacking?” Ms. Ogilvie replied “the biggest piece of it I see right now is on page 6” she went on to explain how Open Space applies only to single family homes; it does not (should it?) allow for duplexes and multi-family as well. Ms. Ogilvie added “and we need to discuss the lot size, I think that needs to be revisited.” It was noted the lot size is dependent on the district the land is located in with the example being the Rural District with a minimum lot size of 3 acres. Ms. Ogilvie also noted that a discussion about separating the buildable from the non-buildable acreage was in order. A brief discussion about minimum lot sizes, density, (less) frontage requirements, (less) infrastructure and (less) desirable land in Open Space followed.

Ms. Miller in at 5:30 p.m.

Chair MacDonald noted a trend of people moving back to the cities, walking and biking to work. Mr. Monahan advocated carving out a portion of the Rural District with steep slopes and calling it the Mountain District (or something indicating steepness). He also noted the complimentary ideas of extending the water and sewer and encouraging more density closer to the center of town. Ms. Miller suggested the members move on it and asked “can we give it a new name?” Mr. Weeks interjected “I don’t like the idea of calling it infill” and suggested rezoning “to get the density you want.”

The members went on to talk about the success of West Peterborough. “It is a village center up there” noted one member. Chair MacDonald agreed adding “it has been a successful upgrade of the area.” Ms. Miller also agreed noting “I am very proud of how it looks.” The members briefly discussed other areas of town that could serve as a village neighborhood node with one member adding “and maybe with even some light commercial use.” The members agreed with Mr. Monahan when he said “the question is not only how do we make Peterborough grow but how to plan for the eventuality of growth in the future.” Chair MacDonald remarked “additional sewer users will assist in paying for the extension of the services.” Mr. Weeks interjected “I think you encourage more density in thin density areas now or break up large lots. There is no place for anyone to go but out to the rural areas.” The members took a few minutes to review the zoning district maps. Chair MacDonald asked if Fash (Farashahi, GIS Specialist) could create a map identifying where sewer and/or water could be extended on existing roads. Ms. Miller asked about a matrix that would show the dimensional restrictions and allowable uses for each district “so we can get one good snapshot.” Chair MacDonald reminded the members that it is recommended that they read the zoning regulations every year. “It is not the most exciting thing, but it is important” she said.

Mr. Monahan recollected what he believed was an issue the Board had not reconciled. He went on to mention the Wilson Farm Condominium project approved by the Board in 2008. He noted “we felt the condo regs relative to roads really caught us significantly by surprise and left our pants way down around our ankles” adding “I am not sure that is fixed.” Ms. Ogilvie replied “it is not. I will revive that and bring it back to you.” Mr. Monahan added “I know we can’t retroactively go back *but*.” The members briefly discussed the Wilson Farm case, specifically the

private road and condominium issue. Mr. Monahan made note of the dimensional requirement and added “we are pretty powerless, the way our regulations are written it seems setbacks go away in condo projects. It does not yield good land planning.” The members also discussed minimum road standards and the process by which the town takes over a private road. Mr. Weeks noted “at the end of the day the town generally acquires the maintenance of the road” “they can” interjected Mr. Monahan to which Mr. Weeks replied “they do.” It was noted that the roads must meet the town standards with Mr. Weeks adding “and before a bond is returned they should come before this Board for a compliance hearing.” Chair MacDonald interjected “with proper dispersion of traffic and two points of entry and exit” adding “Robbe Farm was a learning experience for all of us.” Mr. Monahan noted “a way to go south and a way to go north, that is just dumb sensible planning.”

Chair MacDonald reviewed the discussion and noted that at their workshop she would like have a mapping session with all the overlays (wetlands, steep slope, wellhead and aquifer protection etc.) to see the whole picture. “We can start there, then as we get our act together we can open it up” she said. Ms. Miller reiterated the need to educate the public and Mr. Weeks asked about the Master Plan.

The members then briefly discussed village nodes. A member noted West Peterborough and the Healthcare District had been successful in accomplishing this goal. Another member noted that “having the Downtown and Village Commercial District is saying you have the zoning but it doesn’t mean they will come.” The members discussed light industry and business in the south and with reference to the two gravel pits one member noted “they will eventually become something.” Ms. Miller asked for clarity on what a village node was. Mr. Groff replied “it is like a village, like in a city, a little neighborhood.” “It can survive by itself” interjected Mr. Weeks. Chair MacDonald added “we will need the map overlay to go further with it” adding “(in the south) the missing link is the beautiful stone arch bridge.” She concluded by noting “reality always gets in the way of these great plans.”

Ms. Miller asked “should we prioritize?” The members agreed they should work on improving Open Space regulations, consider roads associated with condominium development (to include compliance hearings), and to have the Healthcare District expansion discussion and neighborhood meeting.

Mr. Weeks brought up a question about home occupation situations along Route 202 North and a brief discussion about commercial or office designation followed. Ms. Miller noted “there is no immediate need to make changes; it is a lot of work to make changes if they are not necessary” she added “is there enough reason to make a change?” Mr. Monahan interjected “those are the stray cats and dogs of our zoning” to which Mr. Groff replied “sometimes we should let sleeping dogs lay.” The members proceeded to discuss the Office Zone on Route 202 North and the vicinity of Roland Patten’s home to Con-Val. “Technically this is commercial right?” asked Chair MacDonald. She went on to note “they were all spot zoning to begin with is our contention.” The members once again reviewed the zoning map.

Chair MacDonald summarized the priorities for the up coming workshop. Mr. Monahan noted he would give a presentation on the Community Center at the Armory, and in closing the members

briefly discussed their membership. Ms. Ogilvie noted she had contacted a potential interested party but had not heard back from him. She noted she would follow up. Chair MacDonald also reiterated that Traditional Neighborhood Development would be discussed when Ms. Vann could be present. She asked that Fash (Farashahi, GIS Specialist) and Rodney (Bartlett, Director of Public Works) be available at the next workshop to review maps and overlays and discuss the extension of utilities.

The Workshop concluded at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton,
Administrative Assistant