

## PLANNING BOARD

### TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH, NH

Minutes of April 26, 2017

#### **Planning Board Zone Amendment Information Session**

**Members Present:** Chair Ivy Vann, Alan Zeller, Bob Holt, and Andrea Cadwell

**Staff Present:** Peter Throop, Director and Laura Norton, Administrative Assistant, Office of Community Development

Chair Vann called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. With no need for introductions she began by noting the meeting was a public information session to review the proposed Zoning Amendment on the 2017 Ballot. “That being §245-15.4 Traditional Neighborhood Overlay Zone II, the purposes of which are to allow for higher density infilling of lots and additional residential housing in close proximity to the currently developed areas of Town where there are established subdivided neighborhoods, to allow for the creation of additional housing opportunities adjacent to the developed core of Peterborough, and to allow certain small-scale businesses as accessory uses to a residence.”

Chair Vann announced the Board would walk through the zoning amendment and answer any questions so the public can be clear about what they are voting for. Copies of the proposed amendment were available at the meeting as well as on line at [www.townofpeterborough.com](http://www.townofpeterborough.com)

Chair Vann also announced there would be no public comment taken. “It is too late for public comment” she said adding “we are just going to take a ride through it.”

Chair Vann began with a brief review of the history and background of the amendment. “It is similar to TNOZ which passed in 2014 and it is the only amendment on the ballot this year” she said. She went on to note the extensive public outreach and engagement (a steering committee, public forums, hearings, surveys and table top discussions) that had transpired to create an amendment that would allow Peterborough to grow organically, the way it did pre-zoning. Chair Vann told the audience “it will allow the same growth as in the oldest parts of Peterborough rather than on larger lots to discourage extensive development in the rural parts of town” she said adding “and the development must have the ability to connect to existing town water and sewer or the ability to extend to it.” Mr. Holt interjected “at the applicant’s expense.” “Yes, not the towns” replied Chair Vann.

Chair Vann then reviewed the amendment which including *Purpose and Intent; Authority and Administration; Applicability; Permitted Uses; Minimum Requirements; Stormwater Management; Building Design; Parking and Driveways; Maintenance Agreements; Procedures and Waivers.*

Chair Vann reiterated that with current zoning (current minimum lot size of a one half-acre in the Family and General Residence Districts) “anything new has to go to the Rural District, there is no other place to put it. This also cuts down on long roads, degradation of natural resources and the isolation between homes. Our sewer system is expensive and adding more users makes it less expensive for all of us.” She concluded by noting “This will allow us to make existing neighborhoods denser to match older parts of Peterborough.” Chair Vann concluded by reiterating the amendment was by right for single and two-family homes (*onesies* and *twosies*), “anything more than that would require a Conditional Use Permit and be subject to subdivision and site plan review regulations.”

From the audience Francie Von Mertens noted her concern that the map presented was still not representative of what the Conservation Commission had requested and that their letter of recommendation was based on a color-coded map that identified specific parcels (map posted at the meeting does not). She also noted her concern with the “by right” language for single and duplex houses. A brief discussion about smaller, more affordable homes with more diversity followed. Also discussed was the demolition of existing building on lots, developers building what the market will bear and the extent of the Planning Board’s authority to meet the purpose of the amendment. “I struggle with that” said Ms. Von Mertens adding “how does that translate into what we want the developers to do?” Chair Vann replied “we all struggle with that but it is the best we can do.”

Mr. Holt offered the leverage the Board has is in the purpose and intent as well as the ordinance’s procedures. Ms. Von Mertens reiterated her position that if the Board can make the parking exist in the back and the porch and front doors face a certain way that they should certainly be able to have more influence on what the developer delivers. Mr. Holt noted the Conditional Use Permit criteria and seeing the benefit to warrant increased density. “If there is enough benefit we allow it” he said, Chari Vann added “that is as legally strong as we can get.” Mr. Holt concluded “the question is, *is there more benefit to all than to leave it as it is.*” Chair Vann interjected “we cannot prevent demolition, we just do not have that power.” “I know that” replied Ms. Von Mertens adding “I hope you follow the ordinance very closely and the spirit of all the purposes.” With the Vine Street project being the only example of TND I since it was adopted by the town, Chair Vann noted “we cannot tell people what their building will cost, only that it can

cover no more than 40% of the lot. The developer can put granite and high-end appliances in the house.” She went on to say the real difference in affordability would be the conversion of larger houses using her house as an example. “That is where we are going to get our affordability, not in a new home.” She said. A brief discussion about a condominium model in Jaffrey as well as cottage courts followed. “It is developer education” said Ms. Von Mertens. Chair Vann concluded by reiterating “we know what current zoning is giving us. If we do nothing, we know what we will get. If we do not change, we will not get what we want.”

Mr. Ward voiced his concern about demolition. He said “it seems to me you have worked on the terminology in the ordinance to make it clear that demolition of existing habitable dwellings is strongly discouraged.” “Yes” replied Chair Vann. Mr. Ward asked “should I be happy with that?” “I hope so” replied Chair Vann adding “we worked really hard on that, we have no legal power.” She concluded by noting “zoning is never finished, we are always working for more perfect zoning.” She noted the Board would rather develop this ordinance than to continue to push development into the rural areas “and we always have next year to reconsider (the ordinance).” She said.

Ms. Von Mertens asked if there was any supporting data to back up the Family and General Residence Districts were full. Mr. Throop noted an important link in the discussion is the land owners and what they choose to do with their land. He told the Board much of the land in the Rural District is largely owned by people who do not want to subdivide their land. “There is not a lot of will to do it” he said. Chair Vann interjected “MacDowell Colony is a good example.” Mr. Throop went on to say “but also lot sizes in the rural District attract a different segment of the market, so someone looking for small lot size is not likely to be attracted to the Rural District in the first place.” Chair Vann added “like the difference between moving to Peterborough *or* moving to the country.” A brief discussion about the “good” rural lots being gone, property lot prices and housing styles (cottage courts, micro housing) followed.

**Next Meeting:** Monday, May 8, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton

Administrative Assistant