

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

Minutes of November 18, 2013

Members Present: Vice Chairman Ivy Vann, Alan Zeller, Jerry Galus, Audrey Cass, Rick Clark, Barbara Miller and Tom Weeks. (Ms. Cass in at 6:40 p.m.)

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

Mr. Vann called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

Leadership of the Board

A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Weeks) to nominate and elect Ivy Vann as Chairman of the Planning Board.

Discussion:

Ms. Miller noted her concern that while Ms. Vann was very knowledgeable “sometime you are a little impatient” adding “please be sensitive to those of us who are less experienced.”

Ms. Vann accepted and all were in favor.

A motion was made/seconded (Miller/Zeller) to nominate and elect Tom Weeks as Vice Chairman of the Planning Board.

Discussion:

Mr. Weeks noted his intention was to *not* be Chairman of the Planning Board and with that said he reluctantly agreed to the Vice Chairman’s position. All but Mr. Weeks were in favor.

Minutes

With regards to the Minutes of **October 21, 2013** Chair Vann read a letter hand delivered that day from Michael A. Salera who noted Chair Harrington had made statements in this meeting that he felt exposed a personal agenda. He also noted those statements were not reflected in the Minutes of the meeting. The members briefly discussed the allegation and concluded the Minutes were adequately reflective of the conversation and no action would be taken.

A motion was made/seconded (Miller/Zeller) to approve the Minutes with corrections of typographical errors with all in favor. Mr. Galus noted for the record that Mr. Salera’s letter was considered when approving the Minutes. It was also noted for the record that the date of the meeting in which Mr. Salera voiced his concerns was held November 6th not November 18th.

A motion was made/seconded (Zeller/Miller) to approve the minutes of October 14, 2013 as written with all in favor.

Ms. Vann noted the second item on the agenda was the Work Plan Review. She noted Leslie Lewis, Chairman of the Capital Improvement Program was in the audience and suggested she go

next with her update for the Board. "Let's hear from Ms. Lewis first so she can get home" she said.

Capital Improvement Program

Ms. Lewis thanked the Board and asked "may I make one comment about the rural plan?" Chair Vann replied "of course." Ms. Lewis briefly explained a conversation she had with a friend about the proposed ordinance. She noted her friend was quite intelligent but extremely confused about the ordinance. "That was her take-away" she said and urged the Board to do community outreach regarding the ordinance. Mr. Throop interjected that he was more than happy to sit down with anyone who has questions and explain the ordinance. A brief discussion about ways to reach out to the members of the community followed. Ms. Miller specifically noted the Board of Selectmen was looking into the implementation of a Town House meeting system done by telephone. "Everything is live" she said adding "we are looking at the cost of bringing it here. It has a lot of relevance and use for public hearings."

Ms. Lewis went on to note Planning Board member Allan Zeller was also a member (Vice Chair in fact) of the CIP. Ms. Lewis noted the Fiscal Year 2015 CIP Summary projected on the screen. "This is what was voted to the Budget Committee on November 5th" she said adding "keep in mind this is a very compacted document to give you an overview of the large projects we have." She briefly reviewed the document by Department (noting the large number of infrastructure projects coming up at one time), Debt Service and total CIP by Fiscal Year. She emphasized the importance "smoothing out" the budgets and avoiding financial spikes in the 5-year projection.

Mr. Weeks pointed out the Union Street road work had been approved and asked "what are they going to do with all the concrete?" He noted a massive dump of concrete at the Highway Department years ago "that is still there." Ms. Lewis noted she would make a point of asking the Director of Public Works what their plans were,

Ms. Lewis then cited "the big elephant" as being the Main Street Bridge rebuild with the associated retaining wall and sidewalk construction. She gave a brief history of the red-listed bridge noting the project cost was an 80/20% split with the State/Town. General discussion about the bridge followed with specific attention paid to the old canal (running through the heart of the Downtown and dumping into the river), the estimated cost of the project (worst case scenario 5.5 million dollars), the aesthetics of the bridge (wanting a Rolls Royce versus a Toyota), Who makes decisions and who trumps them (the State with 80% investment rules with a heavy hand), Preparedness (if we are not clear as to what we want when our turn comes, the state moves on to the next project and we fall to the bottom of the list), the Transcript Dam (considering its aesthetics and the fact that there are no drawings or pictures of that area without the Dam being depicted, and the decision to breach or not to breach it) and finally the rehabilitation work on the Route 101 Bridge immediately following the completion of the Main Street Bridge work. "It is going to be almost 4 years of constant construction" said Ms. Lewis adding "it is important to understand that."

The members briefly discussed the other CIP projects that included:

The Summer Street Well and Pump House (a new well is needed due to naturally occurring iron

bacteria). Mr. Weeks gave a brief history of how and why the Pump House (half-built on the railway bed and half on *not so solid* material) has failed. *The North Well* (Ms. Lewis reported “it is not viable”) and *The North Dam* (the water is flowing under the dam comprising the water level and the wetlands behind it.)

Ms. Lewis concluded by noting “those are the main projects I thought were important to talk about.” She briefly noted storage expansion at the Police Department, bunched painting projects (Clock Face, Town House Copula and the Keyes-Sage House) Grove Street lighting at the bridge. Ms. Lewis noted all four lights would be replaced adding “we are trying to get the Greater Downtown TIF to pay for them.” She noted the Downtown Sidewalk work and finally the Safe Route to School Program grants to improve the access to the Peterborough Elementary School. “That is about it” concluded Ms. Lewis. The members briefly discussed the issue of traffic and the fate of the Downtown merchants in the midst of these large projects.

Ms. Miller interjected “I just want to clarify this program still has to go to the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen for review, refinement and approval.” Ms. Lewis agreed and briefly reviewed the process and approved budget from last year. She reiterated the effort to “smooth out” the budgets over the Fiscal Years and avoiding spikes. Mr. Weeks noted he had first-hand experience with the North Peterborough Dam and that he would be happy to answer any questions the DPW might have. “I pretty much know what is there” he said.

Chair Vann thanked Ms. Lewis for coming in. “It is helpful for us to know what is coming down the pike” she said.

Planning Board Work Plan Review

Chair Vann briefly reviewed the time table involved for moving any other amendments to Ballot. Once that schedule was established she looked around the table and asked “so we want to do anything else?” the members reviewed *Condominium Developments*, *Road Standards* (which are regulation related, still requiring public hearings but do not go to Town Meeting) and *Private Roads*, and came to the conclusion that they would pick them up in early 2014 for outcome for the first of June.

One of the members interjected “well, it is quite a list” with Chair Vann replying “well the first five (on the list) are done.” She then noted *Elderly Housing* and said “I loathe that, it is housing for the elderly. We all live in elderly housing.”

Ms. Miller asked for clarification about the Ballot and town Meeting. “We have both” she said. A very brief explanation of the Ballot process followed. Ms. Vann concluded “so the question is do we want to take up any other issue?” She then suggested *Housing for the Elderly* and *Demolition Review* as well as any *Items suggested by the Code Enforcement Officer*. She looked to Vice Chair Weeks and asked “Tom?” Mr. Weeks replied “possibly 6 (Housing for the Elderly) and 7 (Demolition Review) could be done “they shouldn’t take too much time” he said adding “but once into 8 (*Other*, including setback requirements, membrane structures, underground utilities, “green” sheds in the wetland buffer, replacement of Sign Ordinance and revised definitions of lodging, B&Bs, Church, Day Care et al.) he noted more time involvement. Mr. Throop suggested inviting the Code Enforcement Officer to the next meeting to get a sense of what his priorities are. A brief

discussion about permitted signs and zoning took place after Ms. Miller noted both of the Plazas in town have been sold. Chair Vann redirected the conversation back to Demolition Review noting “right now let’s do number 7, that is straight forward.” She went on to say her sense was the Divine Mercy would be in December 9th for another Design Review and asked Mr. Throop to produce language for the Demolition Review for the meeting on December 16th adding “and then we can post the public hearings in early January, the 13th and the 20th I believe, which will get us in under the wire.”

Mr. Galus recommended both the Heritage and Conservation Commissions be informed early about this decision. Mr. Weeks agreed noting “let’s get their input ahead of time.” Mr. Throop noted he would check their meeting schedule and have their input (at least) by the December 16th meeting so as to go to public hearing on January 13th.

Update from Board Members serving on other Committees

Mr. Zeller began with an update for the Master Plan Steering Committee. He reported their very recent recommendation that the Town hire Dan Reidy of the UNH Cooperative Extension do facilitate a forum on the Visioning Statement for the Master Plan.

Ms. Miller noted her concern about people being confused with the Ballot and suggested an information card or similar media to explain what it would mean if you vote yes as well as what it would mean if you vote no. the members briefly discussed options for outreach. Mr. Zeller mentioned he had thought about a letter to the Editor. Chair Vann noted “I would like to do a mailing” adding “we have to be pretty careful how we manage this information.” Mr. Weeks suggested a purpose statement, including maps and sketches from Fash (GIS Data Specialist) to understand what it is all about. Mr. Zeller cautioned the Board “if the (news) paper writes something unfavorable we will never get ahead of it.” Chair Vann mentioned the possibility of talking to the various service groups in town (Rotary, Lion’s Club etc.) adding “I would be happy to do that.” She also encouraged the members to “think about what we want to do and who wants to do it, that way we will all be on the same page, otherwise it is easy for people to get mugged.”

Ms. Cass asked about the history of success using mailings. Chair Vann replied “it is a crap shoot but it is worth it. If we believe these ordinances will be for the betterment of Peterborough we have to give it to the public whether they agree with it or not.” Mr. Zeller agreed with Ms. Cass When she suggested contacting the local newspaper to offer information and clarification should they need it. Chair Vann replied “it would be worth calling them to ask them if they had any questions or needed to know more. Ms. Cass noted “that kind of invite is healthy.” Mr. Throop suggested they do nothing until the Holiday Season was over. “Probably April” he said.

Ms. Cass offered three more things including visualization at the voting stations and the Town House Lobby as well as elsewhere in the Town. “More information will strengthen the base “she said. Several prime locations were discussed including the Community Sign at Little Roy’s, the Kiosk at Depot Square and the small exhibit case across from the Town House. All the members agree not to get ahead of themselves, and that the timing for such activity would be in a timely fashion before Town Meeting.

Other Business

Mr. Throop informed the Board that they were down two full-time members. A motion was made/seconded (Vann/Miller) to appoint Audrey Cass a full member with all in favor. A second motion was made/seconded (Miller/Weeks) to appoint Jerry Galus a full member with all in favor.

Mr. Galus noted “now we need alternates.” It was noted the Board could have as many as four alternates. Ms. Miller asked Mr. Throop if anyone had approached him about the positions. Mr. Throop replied he had in fact had a conversation with one or two people “as of yet without commitment.” The Members agreed that a newspaper advertisement had recruited half of the present members and decided to take out an ad for alternates. Mr. Throop confirmed he would place an ad and hopefully have some responses by their December 9th meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant