

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

Workshop Minutes of May 20, 2013

Members Present: Jerry Galus, Barbara Miller, Alan Zeller, Tom Weeks, Joel Harrington and Rich Clark and Ivy Vann.

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

Ms. Ogilvie noted that in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chair the group could get started at 5:35 with an Open Space Development Powerpoint presentation that began with some background on open space development and the rationale for its consideration.

Ms. Ogilvie noted “there has been a lot of discussion for a long time about open space” adding “first we’ll give you some background and philosophy of open space and then we have an exercise for you.” She noted the exercise consisted of two maps of the same parcel of land, having the members split into two groups and have one group design an open space development project using the existing ordinance and the other using the revised ordinance. She noted “this will help us uncover things we like, things we don’t like and things that may need fixing.”

Ms. Ogilvie’s presentation touched on the background purpose of open space and the protection of natural resources and a cluster of homes in one area as a response to suburban sprawl. She pointed out the benefits of open space including less infrastructure and improved opportunities for social and community interaction.

Ms. Miller asked how an open space community could be more economical. Ms. Ogilvie pointed out that with fewer infrastructures there would be less roads and impervious surfaces. “It has been a common argument for this type of development” she said. Ms. Vann agreed noting “the shorter the road the less road there is to plow, repair and maintain.”

Ms. Ogilvie continued with problems with implementation, showing several examples before moving on to the Randall Arendt Response. She noted the his career of designing around the natural resources, identifying and “putting aside” conservation areas, primary and secondary wetlands, and steep slopes, then locating homes, roads and lot lines. Ms. Vann noted “you want to celebrate access to the things that shape where the houses would be” adding “a stone wall or a stand of trees.” Ms. Ogilvie replied “that is a good way to look at it.” Ms. Ogilvie then reviewed the difference between conventional subdivision versus an open space subdivision.

A review of the revised ordinance followed with the emphasis being on a site visit *before* the application is even filed. “This is very important” said Ms. Ogilvie as she reviewed the density point options (currently on a point scale) and allowable density incentives including uses and ownership of the open space, road and trail connectivity, natural resources, and use of solar power.

She noted a site visit before the application is filed “is very important.” The members reviewed the density point bonus options and points assigned. Items like geothermal, solar energy and other impacting ways to connect trails and streets were briefly discussed. The members also recognized the uses and ownership of the open space with Ms. Ogilvie citing several OEP websites and the New Hampshire Citizens Planner as informative resources.

Chair Harrington in at 6:03 p.m.

As Chair Harrington arrived Ms. Ogilvie noted the exercise consisted of placing 33 single family homes and 12 duplex and multifamily homes on a selected parcel of land. One group was to use the conventional ordinance and the other the revised ordinance. Chair Harrington, Mr. Weeks, Mr. Clark and Ms. Miller were assigned the current regulation (which netted 38 living units) and Ms. Vann, Mr. Galus and Mr. Zeller designed their lot with the revised ordinance (netting 48 units total). Ms. Vann noted “I don’t know if that is good or not” as she explained how the group took the 120 acre lot and divided it by 3(Rural District minimum lot size) which would allow 40 units, then adding density by preserving natural resources, (orchards, stone walls) and increased connectivity for pedestrian accessibility and socialization. She noted her group had in theory done a site visit before the application was accepted, discovering and identifying natural resources, primary and secondary wetlands and steep slope, automatically discarding them as usable land. She picked up the density checklist and noted “we met so many they could get what they needed (in density).”

The members reviewed and discussed the two approaches taken with regard to character of the land and gathering information on what is important (vernal pools, cellar holes) *before* the Board gets started. It was noted that traditional subdivision “are not approached this way and developers should not get punished for trying to do the right thing.”

Ms. Cass in at 7:00 p.m.

Chair Harrington asked “so what is the next step?” Ms. Ogilvie noted she would prepare and distribute a revised draft for the members to review.

John Patterson introduced himself as a member of the Conservation Commission. He briefly reviewed why that group felt a natural resource inventory should be required. “So we can see what is there, what is worth preserving and what is the cost” he said. Mr. Clark disagreed noting “that is like a parasitic charge” adding “rules are good but you have more and more and it takes forever to do anything.” Me. Patterson noted incentives would obviously have to be considered. The members also briefly discussed how to “round out” (up or down) the number of allowable lots and how developers may believe a natural resources inventory may be used against them with Chair Harrington noting a clump of Lady’s-slipper orchids or a bald eagle habitat.

Ms. Vann reiterated the preliminary walk-through “before you start, before you design you come in with vested parties (Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Heritage Commission) and walk the land, making a list of what is there and what should be conserved.”

Chair Harrington asked Mr. Patterson to address this issue and come back to the Planning Board with options and ideas. Ms. Vann interjected “we do the site visit and depending of what we see we could ask for a natural resources inventory.” Chair Harrington replied “who is this *we*?” Ms. Vann replied “us, the ConCom, and Heritage Commission.” A brief discussion about how specific a natural resources list could and should be.

With no other business the Workshop adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Norton
Administrative Assistant

Approved June 10, 2013