



PLANNING BOARD
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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, November 05, 2020 – 6:30 p.m. – Virtual via Zoom

Members Present: Frank Catapano, Stu Gerome, Steve Gerrato, John McDevitt, David Moore, Catie Medeiros, Bob Dion (Alternate)

Members Absent: Steve Smith (Selectmen's Rep)

Staff: Mark Fougere – Consultant

Also Present: Tara Laurent, Police Chief; Dennis Malloy – NH State Representative

S. Gerrato opened the Planning Board public hearing at 6:34 p.m. A roll call was taken by S. Gerrato; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being held virtually through Zoom and recorded by audio. A checklist to ensure meetings are compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the State of Emergency was read into the record by S. Gerrato.

Attendance of Planning Board members was taken by roll call: F. Catapano – present; J. McDevitt – present; C. Medeiros – present; D. Moore – present; B. Dion – present; S. Gerome – present; S. Gerrato – present.

1. Rt. 33 – Chief Laurent

Chief Laurent and Dennis Malloy, NH State Representative, joined the meeting via Zoom. Chief Laurent stated that Rt. 33 has been the biggest area of complaint, traffic-wise, while she has been in Greenland. When Chief Laurent met with the State about the lights at four intersections, she was told that the most complained about traffic light in the State is Rt. 33/Bayside Road/Winnicut Road. They have tried a number of different settings over the last several years. An EPA study was done at each of the traffic signals, trying to make them as EPA-friendly as possible. The light at Rt. 33/Bayside Road/Winnicut Road has the longest setting in the State: if a vehicle pulls up to the light from one of the side roads, they will wait at least a full minute before getting the green light. Rt. 33 will continue to run until a vehicle pulls up on the side road. Because of the turning lanes, the most a vehicle will wait on the side road would be up to 2 minutes and 3 seconds.

Chief Laurent stated that the Rt. 33 conversation has been ongoing for years. She continued that it was recently brought to the forefront after the double fatal accident at the intersection of Rt. 33 and Dearborn Road. Rt. 33 has terrible traffic congestion as well as a lack of turn lanes, there are places where there are no decel lanes but wide shoulders. Chief Laurent stated that after speaking with some of the senior engineers, she has “bought” into the premise that speed limits should be set based upon the totality of the engineering of a road (straight vs. curved, the runoff, etc.). The days of setting a low limit to take care of a speeding problem should be gone. It has been found that there is a natural speed to a road that is safe and the average. If a speed limit is changed on a road, a study will be done; the target speed should be at the 85th percentile at the average of the vehicle on that road. Chief Laurent is

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a member of the State Speed Study Task Force that meets regularly to discuss different areas and credible speeds.

F. Catapano asked Chief Laurent if a traffic light was warranted at the intersection of Rt. 33/Willowbrook Avenue/Dearborn Road; he felt that was the most dangerous intersection. After looking at the Vanasse study, Dearborn Road is a concern for him. Chief Laurent responded that they wanted to have a passing zone because of the site distance. When the fatal accident occurred at that intersection, Senator Sherman and Representative Malloy drew enough attention that DOT agreed to a double line. Chief Laurent has been working with the engineers at Division 6 and was told that if we were better able to handle capacity, that intersection would not be dangerous. They are trying to get a center turning lane along that stretch of road. Chief Laurent has asked if a traffic signal would make that intersection safer; the overall answer was 'no'. The State felt that intersection would improve if the rest of Rt. 33 could be handled better.

Chief Laurent has reviewed the Vanasse study. Over time as more businesses have gone in along Rt. 33, she has studied the area and there are several intersections rated 'F'. She reviewed the 'F' rated intersections with the Board, adding they needed to remember the side intersections are important to the Town's citizens.

J. McDevitt asked how the State planned to address the Rt. 33/Bayside Road/Winnicut Road intersection. Chief Laurent responded that the short answer is nothing; they do not do anything that is not on the 10-year plan. They will help in any way possible, but the Town has to get on the list. There are 13 corridors in the State on the list; Rt. 33 needs to be one of them. M. Fougere noted that Greenland has submitted designs and cost estimates to RPC this year as well as the need for a corridor study. It is an expensive project.

J. McDevitt, referring to the PDA, also asked Chief Laurent with the build out of Pease and traffic onto Rt. 33 if there had been any discussion with DOT about seeking a monetary contribution from the PDA for offsite improvements. Chief Laurent responded the discussion has happened. The State said it was the Town's discussion to have with the PDA directly. Greenland does have a half seat on the PDA. J. McDevitt questioned if the light at Rt. 33/Winnicut Road/Bayside Road was timed for peak hours in the morning and evening. Chief Laurent stated it was timed for peak hours. It is still long for the non-peak times because people are approaching at a higher rate of speed. If the light is tripped during a non-peak time, the wait would be one minute for turning. J. McDevitt suggested that the Selectmen apply some political pressure, especially at the Rt. 33/Winnicut Road/Bayside Road intersection. Chief Laurent stated that the conversation has started and suggested that M. Fougere or a representative from the Planning Board participate in the next meeting.

S. Gerrato stated the projects go before the GASIT hearings. He recommended attending those meetings to get the project known.

Chief Laurent, responding to a question from C. Medeiros, stated that new projects are accepted by the State annually. There is a deadline for applications to be submitted, which is early fall. S. Gerrato noted it still has to go through GASIT hearings.

D. Moore questioned if the 10-year plan was needed to shrink the break down lane and create a turning lane. Chief Laurent responded that what has been worked on is for safety reasons. She felt they progressed due to political support. Chief Laurent continued that the State and DOT stated they have available funds in 2022. Construction would probably not be done until January or March of 2023.

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Complete engineering studies must be done to ensure the shoulders of the road can handle the traffic, or do they have to be rebuilt.

D. Malloy stated that at their last meeting (Senator Sherman, DOT, RPC, and others) they learned about the width of Rt. 33. If a center turn lane was added, there will be three lanes that will be slightly narrower. The road may have to be reconstructed because the infrastructure beneath the passing and breakdowns lanes will not be sufficient enough; it would require significant engineering and repaving. They were also told at the federal level there is money available because it is considered an emergency type priority.

S. Gerome stated that in his experience with road construction, he did not remember anything varying between the center line and edge lines, noting that DOT is experts in that area. When Town roads are built, there is no difference between the center line and edge of pavement; it may be different on a highway or Rt. 33. F. Catapano responded that the lines at the edge of pavement are not meant to be driven on but to keep roads from deteriorating. The statement from Chief Laurent was correct: you do not put pavement on top of the shoulder and expect it to hold up like the rest of the road. S. Gerome stated he did not know why the Town would not qualify for any available federal funds. As a Town it was not being done cohesively and there are factors working in different directions. On the Planning Board level, Bayside Road has been the priority. Bayside Road is horrendous and known in the State. 100% of their concentration should be on the Rt. 33/Bayside Road/Winnicut Road intersection.

B. Dion was primarily interested in Rt. 33 to Post Road to Winnicut Road/Bayside Road. The number of lanes is reduced in that section, creating congestion and reduced flow. He heard that the Commission studying Rt. 33 is limited in scope between Bayside Road/Winnicut Road to the center of Stratham but not including the segment between Bayside Road/Winnicut Road/Post Road. Chief Laurent responded that adding a center turn lane only applies to the Bayside Road/Winnicut Road intersection to the old Great Bay College in Stratham; the bridge is the reason it is only that portion. The bridge is a long-term, expensive fix and has to be part of the 10-year plan. A double fail intersection gets the attention and that gives the Town access to some of the federal monies. Responding to B. Dion's second question, Chief Laurent stated that the 10-year plan is not limited to the 13 corridors mentioned earlier. The State chooses to do a specific number per year, as money dictates. B. Dion also asked how the segment between Winnicut Road and Bayside Road and the intersection with Post Road could be included in the discussions of getting improvements. He continued that they could not only look at the worst intersection. The segment he was concerned about was an integral part and needed to be improved. Chief Laurent agreed, stating the bridge has limited most of the changes to Rt. 33. She felt it may also limit any businesses coming to Greenland as well as housing. It was her understanding that the bridge could not be widened without a significant change. The 10-year plan is trying to get the road widened and the same number of lanes through to Stratham.

S. Gerrato stated that TAC has \$6 million available. Projects require a lot of criteria. TAC used \$5 million on the Greenway and there are intersections where fatalities occur. S. Gerrato felt it could be fought by bringing it to the attention of GASIT. He also discussed the bridge. Chief Laurent explained it holds up traffic because the road narrows going over the bridge and into Stratham. S. Gerrato suggested using two lanes in the morning going eastbound and switch in the evening going westbound. Chief Laurent did not think it would work due to the lanes not being wide enough going westbound. She noted that it still narrows down at the Rt. 151 intersection near the Vets Hall. That may be a possibility if the road was reconstructed. J. McDevitt noted that land would have to be taken by eminent domain. He continued that the key was the bridge.

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M. Fougere will reach out to RPC for an update. Chief Laurent asked that a Planning Board member participate in future meetings/conference calls regarding Rt. 33. D. Moore volunteered.

2. Mandatory Open-Space Ordinance (Article XXVI)

M. Fougere updated the Mandatory Open-Space Ordinance (Article XXVI) based on Board discussions. J. McDevitt stated a minor subdivision was defined; a major subdivision was not defined. A major subdivision is defined as more than three; three or less is considered a minor. M. Fougere will include a definition. J. McDevitt also questioned how 'close to planned greenways' was defined. M. Fougere responded it was not defined; it is nebulous. F. Catapano suggested changing it to 'abuts'.

F. Catapano did not like the name of the Ordinance: Mandatory Open-Space. Residential Open Space Conservation Subdivision Development is the correct name of the Ordinance. The name is not changing.

J. McDevitt asked about the controlling factors in a planned greenway. After a brief discussion, M. Fougere will strike that item. S. Gerrato requested that on Page 2, Section 26.1.2 – Conditional Use Permits, "or wildlife dependent on the subject land and water" be added to the last sentence beginning with "neighboring properties....". The consensus of the Board was not to add the wording.

MOTION: F. Catapano moved to approve the Residential Open Space Conservation Subdivision Development (Article XXVI) with the following changes and forward to public hearing on Thursday, December 03, 2020. Changes: (1) Add definition of 'major subdivision'; (2) Strike: 'The site adjoins or is close to existing or planned greenways.' Second – S. Gerome; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - yes, C. Medeiros - yes, D. Moore - yes, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - yes, S. Gerrato - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Age Restricted Housing (Article XIX)

Attorney Somers recommended changes to the Age Restricted Housing Ordinance. M. Fougere stated it helped to clarify things and where the Board wanted to go without opening it up too wide. J. McDevitt had no complaints and felt Attorney Somers did a good job. He continued that the Board required 100% of the units to be individuals aged 55 or older. J. McDevitt clarified that the Board could go from 100% to 80%; he recommended keeping it at 100%.

Further discussion was continued to the meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2020.

4. Work Force Housing Ordinance

The proposed Work Force Housing Ordinance was reviewed. J. McDevitt noted that in the Residential Zone, a single-family home or duplex could be built. He questioned, for discussion, if a duplex should be allowed in an existing subdivision of single-family homes and change the character of the neighborhood.

Road frontage for work force housing was discussed. F. Catapano stated in a subdivision, a couple lots could be work force housing with the houses looking similar. The most important thing was that there were no 4,000 sq. ft. houses and 1,300 sq. ft. houses in the same subdivision. M. Fougere stated that on the sample plan given to the Board, the frontage was 40 ft. The idea was not to increase the amount of land necessary to build the house.

M. Fougere noted that the Town has to provide the opportunity for work force housing, it is on the books, and protects the Board from issues.

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MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to approve the Work Force Housing Ordinance as written and forward to public hearing on Thursday, December 03, 2020. Second – S. Gerome; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - yes, C. Medeiros - yes, D. Moore - yes, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - yes, S. Gerrato - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

5. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: F. Catapano moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, October 01, 2020. Second – D. Moore; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - abstain, C. Medeiros - abstain, D. Moore - yes, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - yes, S. Gerrato - yes. Five in favor, two abstain (J. McDevitt, C. Medeiros). MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, October 15, 2020. Second – B. Dion; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - yes, C. Medeiros - yes, D. Moore - abstain, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - abstain, S. Gerrato - yes. Five in favor, two abstain (D. Moore, S. Gerome). MOTION CARRIED

6. Approval of Invoices

MOTION: F. Catapano moved to approve payment of the invoice to Fougere Planning & Development in the amount of \$1,466 from the Town Budget. Second – S. Gerome; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - yes, C. Medeiros - yes, D. Moore - yes, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - yes, S. Gerrato - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

7. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Topics for Public Hearing: Thursday, November 19, 2020

Items to be reviewed at the meeting on Thursday, November 19, 2020: Age Restricted Housing Ordinance, Master Plan including future recommendations for land use maps and the two ordinances for the public hearing on Thursday, December 03, 2020.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to adjourn at 7:56 p.m. Second – F. Catapano; roll call vote: F. Catapano - yes, J. McDevitt - yes, C. Medeiros - yes, D. Moore - yes, B. Dion – yes, S. Gerome - yes, S. Gerrato - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, November 19, 2020 – 6:30 p.m., Virtual via Zoom

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant