



PLANNING BOARD
Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840
11 Town Square • PO Box 100
Phone: 603.380.7372 • Fax: 603.430.3761
Website: greenland-nh.com

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, February 04, 2021 – 6:30 p.m. – Virtual via Zoom

Members Present: Frank Catapano, Stu Gerome, Steve Gerrato, John McDevitt, Steve Smith (Selectmen's Rep)

Late Arrival: Catie Medeiros

Members Absent: David Moore, Bob Dion (Alternate)

Staff: Mark Fougere – Consultant

Co-Chair Gerrato opened the Planning Board public hearing at 6:32 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 Co-Chair Gerrato.

Attendance of Planning Board members was taken by roll call: F. Catapano – present, J. McDevitt – present; S. Smith – present; S. Gerome – present; S. Gerrato – present.

1. 2021 Master Plan Draft

M. Fougere reviewed the maps for the Master Plan that were done by the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) at no charge. The water and sewer infrastructure map indicated the existing water system in Greenland, located mainly in the eastern part of Town. Also included were the two private trunk lines with sewer (two private pump stations: one located at Target/Lowe's, the other at the Travel Center).

C. Medeiros joined the meeting.

RPC will take a similar plan done several years ago by Tighe and Bond and put it in the same format as the plan being reviewed; that will be included in the Master Plan. That plan will show all future lines and different phases that were envisioned by Tighe and Bond.

On the Future Land Use map there are potentially four areas to be looked at: (1) The Great Bay sensitivity area (north end of Town between the railroad tracks and the Bay)—the Board has discussed concerns of water encroachment; recommendations are for larger setbacks, there is a concern about water quality and saltwater intrusion. (2) Rural Professional area around Rt. 33—the Board has discussed the possibility of allowing some low-level mixed uses on the western section of Rt. 33. (3) Mixed Use Village Center (remaining from the last Master Plan): The Board wanted to keep this area in case utilities were added to that section of Town. This is a 'blob' in the center without much structure. (4) Breakfast Hill: The Board has discussed the possibility of a mixed use or other type of zone to deal with the landfill issue and extending the water line in this area.

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S. Gerome stated the Board had discussed what could be done in the Great Bay area. M. Fougere responded the Board discussed saltwater intrusion into homes on the Bay; the alternative was running Town water to the Bay. The Board also discussed stricter septic system provisions in anticipation of the sea rise.

F. Catapano noted the water lines to the Seavey Way development were not shown on the map. M. Fougere will have the water lines, stub and Seavey Way subdivision added to the map. J. McDevitt: what were the options if the City of Portsmouth purchased another lot in Town and put in a well. They are taking hundreds of thousands of gallons of water per day at the current location. M. Fougere responded that the Board's attorney may have to be involved. S. Gerome, responding to a question from S. Gerrato, stated the Board should be able to restrict Town approval on a large groundwater withdrawal.

M. Fougere reviewed another sewer map that will be included in the Master Plan showing different phases. Also reviewed was the Utility Plan. The Master Plan is ready to be finalized. It was suggested that a public hearing be held on Thursday, March 04, 2021 to adopt the Master Plan.

2. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: S. Gerome moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, January 21, 2021. Second – F. Catapano; roll call vote: F. Catapano – yes, J. McDevitt – yes, C. Medeiros – yes, S. Smith – yes, S. Gerome – yes, S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Approval of Invoices

MOTION: S. Gerome moved to approve the payment to Fougere Planning & Development in the amount of \$1,041 from the Planning Board Town Budget. Second – J. McDevitt; roll call vote: F. Catapano – yes, J. McDevitt – yes, C. Medeiros – yes, S. Smith – yes, S. Gerome – yes, S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

4. Other Business

Dry Wells: S. Gerrato addressed rain gardens vs. dry wells. F. Catapano stated that bio-retention ponds are similar to the standard detention pond with layers of mulch, peat, stone, and loam on top. Wetland plantings are required and are a problem because plants do not last due to lack of water. The State now allows grass to be planted. F. Catapano stated if dry wells function and serve the same purpose, it should be an option. M. Fougere noted there is a move towards open drainage because it is less expensive and the rainwater can be treated before it exits into the groundwater. He continued when rain gardens are in residential uses, maintenance is required. In residential applications, rain gardens are not maintained by the town; on a commercial property a professional landscaper normally maintains the rain garden. S. Gerome added rain gardens are built to handle a large amount of water; a dry well cannot be put in clay soil and expect it to function like a rain garden. S. Gerrato commented there is not as much maintenance with a dry well and in the future, no one would maintain a rain garden. J. McDevitt stated he would like more information on dry wells. It should be part of the Site Plan (soil analysis); every site will be different. S. Smith noted good examples were the two rain gardens in front of the Town Hall that were not maintained. Due to lack of maintenance, they do not function as rain gardens.

Weeks Public Library Letter: S. Gerome commented on the letter the Board received from the Weeks Public Library from Craig McLaughlin. He commended the way the Selectmen handled the situation on

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Saturday, January 30, 2021 at the Deliberative Session; their letter was fantastic. S. Gerome continued that to accuse Town Boards of 'roadblocks' in the performance of their duty as a Board—the Planning Board considered it safety. The Board had the consensus of the Police Department, Fire Department, and many others on their side. He, personally, stated for the record that it was so off base and out of control. F. Catapano stated that Craig and Marcia McLaughlin seemed to blame everyone except themselves for why this project has been a nightmare. Blaming the Boards for doing their job was outrageous. J. McDevitt found C. McLaughlin's letter, at best, disingenuous. At worst, it was an attack on the Selectmen and Planning Board for doing their jobs. C. McLaughlin specifically blamed the Selectmen and Planning Board for their own mismanagement of funds. Asked by the Selectmen, the Planning Board did its due diligence by reviewing engineering plans, site plans, traffic impact, parking, drainage, etc. The Board had serious concerns that were relayed to the Library Trustees and the Building Committee; those concerns were ignored. J. McDevitt found it unfortunate it has gotten to this point. He thanked the Selectmen. S. Gerome stated it had to be noted, and wanted it noted, that the Police Chief and Fire Chief had great concerns about serious design issues that were never addressed. J. McDevitt 'blessed' the Building Inspector, stating he must have a very tough job.

5. Topics for Public Hearing: Thursday, February 18, 2021

Topics Include:

- Preliminary Conceptual: 51 Great Bay Drive (John Pearl, Jr.), Condominium Lot
- Subdivision of Land: 14 Stratham Lane (Martel Realty Trust), 1.45-acre lot from 4.12 acres (remaining acreage: 2.67)
- Preliminary Conceptual: 529 Portsmouth Avenue (formerly Sirois—corner of Cemetery Lane and Portsmouth Avenue; now Granite State Pioneer Group, Jeff Apsey), removing existing duplex & replacing with two-bedroom condex

6. Adjournment

MOTION: F. Catapano moved to adjourn at 7:08 p.m. Second – J. McDevitt; roll call vote: F. Catapano – yes, J. McDevitt – yes, C. Medeiros – yes, S. Smith – yes, S. Gerome – yes, S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor.
MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, February 18, 2021 – 6:30 p.m., Zoom

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant