



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, June 03, 2021 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

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

Staff: Mark Fougere – Consultant

Also Present: Susan Parker, Greenland/Newington PDA Representative

Co-Chair Gerrato opened the Planning Board public hearing at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken by S. Gerrato; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded by audio.

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

1. Susan Parker, Greenland/Newington PDA Representative: Board Concerns with Rt. 33

Susan Parker, Greenland/Newington PDA Representative, was introduced to the Board. S. Parker explained how the PDA operates and how meetings are handled. The best service she could do for either municipality was to keep an open mind and understand where the opportunities are for interventions.

Lonza Biologics has some basic shell space remaining in order to do a small expansion, the Lynx Project. The expansion is built into the approvals they received in 2006 when they built the 'iron parcel'. Any additional expansion will require other approvals and planning exercises. Specifically mentioned was the traffic load from Willowbrook Avenue to Ocean Road. They realize that traffic on Rt. 33 is an issue. S. Parker noted for the PDA record that she was raising concerns about traffic on the Rt. 33 corridor through Greenland and the traffic load, referencing two traffic studies (Vanasse and Rockingham Planning Commission). S. Parker recommended that a conversation take place at the right time about the traffic and it had to be done with planners that have the right expertise and others that have years of expertise on this issue. Certain techniques are in play and can be used; the PDA needed to make maximum use of all of them.

S. Parker discussed the RPC 10-year plan and near-term projects with the Board. S. Parker was surprised Greenland was not on the list but other things were, including the \$5 million greenway project. S. Gerrato stated that RPC felt other projects were more important. M. Fougere stated that when Lonza proposed their \$1 million, that drew attention. The Planning Board initiated a study by Vanasse & Associates which proved out the mile long ques. Letters were written by the Selectmen to the PDA and the City of Portsmouth; an attorney was hired. M. Fougere attended a Portsmouth Planning Board meeting to express Greenland's concerns. Greenland was accused of looking for tax money, which was

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not the case. The Rt. 33 corridor is 'one way in and one way out'. If this were happening in Portsmouth, they would be dealing with it; Portsmouth is getting their tax revenue. S. Parker stated she was not fine with that balance.

S. Parker clarified that the Board wanted support from the PDA to put some political muscle behind the corridor issues in Greenland. F. Catapano stated that someone needed to advance us so that instead of a greenway receiving \$5 million, Portsmouth Avenue would receive \$5 million. B. Dion asked S. Parker if there were other methods that may be more effective; he wanted the most effective method. J. McDevitt commented it would be political power, which Greenland does not have. S. Parker responded there were three approaches working at once: PDA, the Town Planning, and the feds. She asked how towns got on the list; S. Gerrato stated it was done by vote. He added that on May 05, 2021, he emailed Brian Schutt, NHDOT Chief Engineer, requesting a conference call with himself, B. Schutt and S. Smith. B. Schutt has not responded. S. Gerrato wanted turning lanes added to the worst intersections on Rt. 33: Van Etten Drive, Cushman Way, Coastal Way, Winnicut Road/Bayside Road, Tuttle Lane, Dearborn Road/Willowbrook Avenue.

S. Parker would like to meet with S. Gerrato and other members of the Planning Board to discuss what goes on the 10-year plan so she understands. She will further discuss the issue with someone at the PDA. The PDA is beginning to discuss another traffic study. F. Catapano noted the perception is that Greenland is against any expansion at Pease. Everyone on the Board wants Pease to continue to expand.

Before S. Parker meets with the Planning Board again, she would like to meet with several members to learn the practicalities of what has been done and how the Board views something that is effective. She will also have a conversation with the PDA, staff, and Board members, to see the lay of the land. B. Dion voiced a concern to S. Parker: The Planning Board tends to see the problem and focus individually different than the others. When talking as a group, the individual focus is discussed. B. Dion felt that hurt the Board. The Board needs to be cohesive as a whole and, probably, include Stratham; they share our problem. S. Parker added that two municipalities going into this is a very smart thing. It was noted that Stratham does not have seat on the PDA. M. Fougere stated that the Selectmen have contacted Stratham with their concerns about traffic. Stratham supports the expansion at Pease and has concerns about traffic.

J. McDevitt stated that the hesitancy of the State to get involved in widening Rt. 33 may be because the bridge over the Winnicut River would have to be widened, and Bayside Road and Winnicut Road may have to be aligned; it would be a lot of money. S. Gerome added the bridge was the key issue. M. Fougere stated that Vanasse and Associates did several different designs that included a roundabout and widening with pricing; he will send that information to S. Parker.

The next PDA meeting is Thursday, June 17, 2021; she will be updating the Board of Selectmen at their meeting on Monday, June 21, 2021. J. McDevitt asked S. Smith to find out who the Stratham contact was regarding Rt. 33. NH State Senator Birdsell, Windham, is in charge of NHDOT. NH State Senator Watters, Dover, is also involved.

S. Parker will return to the Board during a work session. The tentative date is Thursday, August 05, 2021.

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2. Capital Improvement Program

The Board was updated that CIP forms have been sent out. The Weeks Library will not be submitting. The School Board will be having their annual retreat at the end of July and will submit for the August 05th meeting. They plan to discuss the CIP at their retreat.

S. Gerrato suggested the Planning Board add money for land for the Fire Department. The land next to the Town Hall is a brown field and out back are filled in wetlands. Paul Sanderson, Osprey Cove, replied that assessments through Phase 2 have been done on the property for the proposed Fire Department; nothing was found.

3. Village Zone Update

C. Medeiros updated the Board on the Village Zone. It cannot be called the Village District due to requirements. M. Fougere stated that a 'village district' is a community within a community; that is not what the Planning Board intends. The Board will be creating a zoning district called 'the village'. F. Catapano stated 'village' would not be used; he preferred 'downtown district'. M. Fougere offered to have Atty. Somers review the Board's intent. F. Catapano noted they were trying to create a downtown area with mixed development.

The committee would like M. Fougere to assist with the architecture portion of the district ordinance, specifically the architectural review process. The committee is also considering a section for sidewalks: making sure they are installed correctly as well as setting the standard for sidewalks.

M. Fougere reminded the Board they were going to discuss the sidewalks for the 410 Portsmouth Avenue project; they will be looking for approval at the June 17th meeting. The paved sidewalks will be extended past their property to the property line. The stretch from the intersection is paved. On the north side, it is paved up to the school; on the opposite side it is concrete. J. McDevitt noted there are catch basins in front of Nik and Charlie's. He also stated the Board needed to decide if they wanted the applicant to put in concrete or asphalt sidewalks, adding asphalt tends to fail.

F. Catapano mentioned there is State funding available for sidewalks. M. Fougere stated it was the Safe Routes to School Program. S. Smith questioned if sidewalks on both sides of the road were needed. F. Catapano responded that sidewalks should be on both sides if there was a downtown-mixed use area. S. Smith questioned how much sidewalk the Town would want to maintain. B. Dion suggested phasing; it would not have to be on a calendar timeline, it could be on a structure timeline. If someone puts in a structure, there is sidewalk.

There was also a brief discussion about traffic at the intersection of Post Road and Portsmouth Avenue (near the Gazebo across from the Church).

M. Fougere reminded members that at the public hearing on June 17th, they would need to let the applicant know which type of sidewalk the Board wanted. The consensus of the Board was they preferred concrete sidewalks. There was no decision on curbing.

The Board also discussed the drainage issue at 529 Portsmouth Avenue. M. Fougere reviewed the Portsmouth Avenue improvement plan with the Board. The cross-culvert where the water from behind the duplex used to drain from was not supposed to be upgraded, or scheduled to be upgraded, when the project was done. There was a cross-culvert installed on the opposite side of the cemetery. A new catch basin was installed on the north side; on the duplex it is still a brick and mortar catch basin. The

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pipe is 36 inches that goes down the driveway across the street, underneath Portsmouth Avenue, onto his property, connects to an old manhole (which has collapsed); there was another pipe coming out of the manhole that went into the swamp. The outlet was 2 feet above the water. M. Fougere did a site visit earlier in the day and there was a lot of water on the property as well as next door, close to the neighbor's septic system. Lowering the pipe is the only way to solve the problem. The property owner is willing to give the Town an easement; technically, the Town has an easement because the Town's pipe is there. P. Sanderson stated the easiest way to fix the problem would be a directional bore to get underneath and connect up to the existing drainage on the other side. The road would not have to be torn up if a directional bore was used.

M. Fougere noted it would be a Selectmen issue. F. Catapano noted that 529 Portsmouth Avenue could not be developed until the drainage was fixed; septic could be an issue. S. Smith added the septic was existing and fine; it has been reviewed and engineered. M. Fougere commented it was impacting at least two residents.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, June 03, 2021. Second – C. Medeiros; roll call vote: B. Dion – yes; J. McDevitt; C. Medeiros – yes, D. Moore – yes; S. Smith – yes; S. Gerome – yes; S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Approval of Invoices

MOTION: S. Gerome moved to approve payment of the invoice from Fougere Planning & Development in the amount of \$1,360 from the Planning Board Town Budget and \$125 from the Planning Board Escrow Account. Second – B. Dion; roll call vote: B. Dion – yes; J. McDevitt; C. Medeiros – yes, D. Moore – yes; S. Smith – yes; S. Gerome – yes; S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

3. Topics for Public Hearing: Thursday, June 17, 2021

- 177 Winnicut Road: M. Fougere has not reviewed the status with Eric Weinrieb, Altus Engineering. The engineer for the project was supposed to meet with E. Weinrieb.
- 410 Portsmouth Avenue: M. Fougere has spoken with the project engineer; she was ready to submit revised plans to E. Weinrieb.
- 624 Post Road: This was part of the old Sanderson farm.
- 4 Tower Place: Has submitted an improved plan. It is more expansive and the whole property is shown. There is also another exit shown. Referring to the 50 units, S. Gerome commented that just because it fits the Ordinance does not mean it fits 'the other stuff'.

4. Other Business

- J. McDevitt would like to discuss the number of age-restricted developments that should be allowed in Town.
- Wetland Crossings: S. Gerrato wanted wetland crossings to go to the State first. He did not think the Planning Board had the authority to put roads over wetlands. He showed the Board an example of a plan that would go to the State for approval and included approvals from the Wetlands Bureau and the Pollution and Control Division. When it came back, the Planning Board would take their recommendations for the subdivision, but not first. S. Gerrato would like to see that added to the Wetlands Ordinance.

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- Zoom Meetings: M. Fougere noted the State was moving away from Zoom meetings. F. Catapano preferred comments be made in person, not through Zoom. Zoom will be offered as an option; however, a quorum of Board members must attend in person and principal engineers must appear before the Board in person.
- Subdivision Regulations: M. Fougere stated that in the current Subdivision Regulations, any subdivision submitted to the Board requires a Design Review. The policy has been that a minor subdivision does not require a Design Review; the letter of the law is any subdivision, no matter the number of lots, requires a Design Review. It should be clarified that major subdivisions of four or more lots would require a Design Review. Less than four lots would not go through the Design Review process. Site Plan and Subdivisions Regulations are amended at the Planning Board; Zoning Ordinance amendments must be voted on at Town Meeting.

5. Adjournment

MOTION: S. Gerome moved to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. Second – D. Moore; roll call vote: B. Dion – yes; J. McDevitt; C. Medeiros – yes, D. Moore – yes; S. Smith – yes; S. Gerome – yes; S. Gerrato – yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, June 17, 2021 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant