

**TOWN OF NEW DURHAM
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
February 21, 2023, 7:00PM
New Durham Town Hall, New Durham, NH 03855**

PRESENT

Jeff Allard, Planning Board Chair
Bob Craycraft, Planning Board Vice Chair
David Bickford, Planning Board Member
Scott Drummey, Planning Board Member
Marc DeCoff, Board of Selectmen Representative

ALSO PRESENT

Nicole Zoltko, Town Administrator
Ellen Scruton, resident
Robert Scruton, resident
Scott Lacroix, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer
Peter Varney, Fire Chief
Courtney Grugnale, Housing Navigator

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Allard called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

AGENDA REVIEW

No changes were made.

PUBLIC INPUT

Ellen Scruton, resident, asked if the new sign at the Fish and Game Club meets zoning requirements. Ms. Scruton quoted the sign Ordinance and noted several issues that seem contradictory to the Ordinance, particularly how it maintains rural character.

Mr. Lacroix explained it is not a neon lit sign, which are not permitted, and referenced Article XX.

Chair Allard explained the Planning Board is responsible for managing the regulations, however the Board does not have any enforcement authority; that lies with the Code Enforcement Officer, Mr. Lacroix, and referred Ms. Scruton to talk to Mr. Lacroix.

Vice Chair Craycraft noted there are not to be any internally lit signs, as well as hours of operation, per the ordinance. There was discussion about whether that could be applied to the Club as it is not a commercial business.

Town Administrator Zoltko stated a written complaint was received but there was no name or signature; she advised that proper procedure be followed, with complaints being directed to Mr. Lacroix.

New/Old/Other Business

Master Plan Update

The Board reviewed recommendations presented by Ms. Grugnale. Chair Allard stated there are many items that need to be addressed and suggested they do not attempt to review the entire Master Plan. He stated he does not want to jump into a deep rewrite of the Master Plan this year. He prefers to focus on wetland Buffers that were held off the past year. Secondly, he wants to work on business development greater than Minor Development. Thirdly, residential development pressure exists and is growing.

Fire Chief Varney explained the impacts that commercial development can have on the community and outlined some suggestions for uses that can increase tax revenue, including recreational use areas. Chair Allard stated they will need a lot of public input in looking at ways the Town can capitalize on the unique resources of the area. It was noted that Charlie French at UNH Extension has offered services to capitalize on recreational development in town.

Vice Chair Craycraft suggested there also be discussion about directing development toward certain areas in Town, particularly away from residential areas. Chair Allard referenced the town of Littleton, NH, which has a very prosperous Main Street area, where 'small town' businesses exist and further away is a more commercial zone where car dealers, banks, large businesses, etc. exist.

Ms. Grugnale stated she will be looking to get approval from the Board of Selectmen for a \$25,000 grant that could go towards hiring a third-party contractor to come in and help make edits to the Master Plan. She stated the process will involve taking goals of the Town and matching those with the Master Plan. Town Administrator Zoltko explained a Master Plan committee would have a representative from the Planning Board; this committee would help facilitate discussions and working on revisions specific aspects of the Plan. She explained the benefits of having a third party is to have a fresh look at the current Master Plan. The Board discussed the importance of having a Master Plan, which starts with a vision by the Town of how they want things to develop in the future.

Town Infrastructure Update- Presented by Peter Varney, Fire Chief, and Nicole Zoltko Town Administrator

Fire Chief Varney explained the Space Needs Study Done was done a few years ago and it was determined that the highest need in that report was a new Police/Fire building. He explained the scenarios considered as well as the review process the Space Needs Committee went through to consider all the options. Fire Chief Varney didn't like any of the resulting plans. He redesigned the older plan from 2004 to incorporate Police and Fire. His plan's primary benefit is that it uses the existing lot. Fire Chief Varney is advocating an active role of the Planning Board in Planning Town Infrastructure funding.

The Public Safety Complex needs more developed plans before voters will agree to go forward including details for the following: cost; parking; community room; and aesthetics are among issues to resolve.

Impact Fee Ordinance- Presented by Scott LaCroix, Building Inspector/CEO

Mr. Lacroix stated he started looking into the ordinance in 2021 and looked at where the funds were going. There was discussion of the uses for which these funds could be used, which is regulated by State RSA. Numerous members of the Board stated they would like to see documentation for where the funds have been used in recent years. Town Administrator Zoltko explained the funds are overseen by the Board of Selectmen and handled by the Finance Manager; she stated documentation is required by law but the Town has not been able to find that documentation and are looking to see if the school district has documentation for past years. She stated the funds have to be specifically allocated for a project; she stated funds are to be used for infrastructure. It was noted the funds in the past, have gone to the school district. Chair Allard suggested the funds should be staying in New Durham and be used to subsidize the infrastructure within Town. Vice Chair Craycraft suggested having a fee structure developed and reviewed by a professional if they want to use it for a project such as the Public Safety Facility.

There was discussion about looking to spend Impact Fee funds on projects other than school infrastructure. It was also agreed to ask the Board of Selectmen to look at the Ordinance and regulations, it isn't clear that funds have to be paid only for school infrastructure .

It was agreed to seek legal counsel to determine limitations on what the funds can be spent on. Also seek advice on changing or adding a new Impact fee for another municipal use.

2022 and 2023 Goal Review and Planning- Discussion By Planning Board

The Board discussed forming a Committee made up of Board members, citizens, business owners to discuss development in general. Some areas of discussion should include: kind of development; housing and municipal planning. The Board agreed to request the Board of Selectmen pursue applying for the Master Plan review grant discussed earlier in the meeting.

Other- Subdivision Plot Review

The Board reviewed the plots presented for Map 206, Lot 017. It was confirmed the subdivision proposal was reviewed and approved at the last meeting.

Mr. DeCoff motioned to approve the plots for Map 270, Lot 017, Berry Road and Merrymeeting Road, and authorize the Chair and Secretary to sign. Mr. Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 5-0-0.

Vice Chair Craycraft noted he requested the topography multiple times at the last meeting but this information presented on these plots, is not data collected for this project, and come from a state database which is low resolution and is not site specific quality.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Meeting of February 7, 2023- Edits were made. **Mr. DeCoff motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

NEXT MEETING

March 7, 2023, 7:00PM, New Durham Town Hall

ADJOURN

Mr. DeCoff motioned to adjourn. Vice Chair Craycraft seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary