

**January 10, 2017**  
**Planning Board**

**Present were:** Regular Members Tom McCue, Lori Langlois, ex-officio member Lucie Remillard, Alternate Naomi Levesque

Greg Estrella, Aline Boucher, Martha Creegan and Alternates Richard Cassidy and Helene Rayborn were excused for the evening.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Jen Myers, Code Administrative Clerk

**Public Comments** – no public in attendance

Mr. McCue appointed Ms. Levesque as a voting member for the evening, seconded by Ms. Langlois.

Ms. Laflamme stated that Ms. Myers had been officially appointed by the City Manager as an ex-officio member of the Planning Board and would complete the quorum for voting this evening.

**Approval of December 2016 Minutes** – Ms. Levesque noted that under Member Comments ‘grand’ funds should be corrected to grant. Mr. McCue added that on page 1 ‘aide’ should be ‘aid’.

Ms. Laflamme reminded the committee that corrections should be noted if the error changes or effects the outcome of a vote or a motion, and that simple grammatical errors (spelling) do not need to be recorded.

**Ms. Remillard motioned with a second from Ms. Langlois to approve the December 2016 minutes as amended. So moved, the motion carried.**

**Lot Mergers - Map 138 Lots 50 & 56**

Barry Kelley gave the city an easement over his property to Water Works to extend a line across the river to the east side. In exchange, the City gave Mr. Kelley a piece of property. Part of the sales agreement was to merge his parcel with the City’s parcel. This is a simple merger of parcels per the sales agreement.

**Ms. Langlois motioned to approve the lot merger; seconded by Ms. Myers. All in favor, the motion carried.**

### **Map 128 Lots 163 & 164**

About 5 years ago, Lucie Remillard bought a piece of property from the City, as a condition of sale she was supposed to merge it with her property. Ms. Remillard has been waiting for her discharge papers to do so. The previous owner was hard to track down and get the discharge in hand. These are being merged to satisfy the condition and so that the properties can be sold.

**Ms. Remillard recused herself from the vote. The merger is conditional on Lucie Remillard providing the City proof that the lots are in the same form of ownership.**

**Ms. Langlois made a motion to approve the lot merger, seconded by Ms. Levesque. So moved, the motion carried.**

### **North Country Council/NHDOT Ten Year Plan Discussion**

The City was awarded the planning grant in the amount of \$12,000 from North Country Council/NHDOT. However, this is not enough for the feasibility study for the snow melt/heated sidewalks project which was submitted. They will also be applying for funds from the USDA.

The City included the Route 110 Project as part of their 30 year plan. Now that the project is complete, a new project could theoretically be put in the queue as part of the 10 year plan, however the City does not have any pending projects ready for submittal at this time. The other option is to support projects that are currently underway. There is a bridge project on Hillside Avenue that could be supported at this time. The bridge is red listed and in need of replacement.

The next big project that the City would move forward on is Route 16 south in conjunction with the heated sidewalks downtown. This project is not ready to be submitted and it could be submitted to the 10 year plan for funds if needed at that time. However, if a TIGER grant is awarded, that money should cover the whole project.

There was discussion about other downtown projects that could be implemented and funded, including drainage and structural repairs.

### **Signage Committee Discussion & Update**

The Committee has made great progress. They have been going through the City's Sign Ordinance regarding speech and sign content. They have consulted a model ordinance from a town which has already implemented these ordinances and members are deciding what they would like to implement for Berlin. They will have something written up to be submitted to the Board soon, with approval of the building inspector prior to submitting.

The have some thoughts regarding feather flags. They would like the building inspector to take some measurements before moving forward. There is concern that these flags could compete for driver attention if requirements aren't specific.

The consensus is to allow 200 square feet of signage for free standing and billboard signs. The goal is to allow property owners to have the signage the way they want it without off-property signage effecting it. One free standing structure would be allowed per lot off premise, provided the lot has 100 feet of frontage. If the sign is double sided they could have only 200 square feet per face. They are still working on clarification of wording. These signs would be allowed in non-residential zones; Downtown, Jericho Gateway, Business General, Industrial/Business.

They are also working on adjustments regarding content issues with Electronic Signage in the ordinance.

### **Project Updates**

On Friday, the City was awarded the money from DOT for the proposed river walk. There will be a little over a million dollars including the money from Northern Borders Regional Commission and the City's match of funds to build out all three phases of the river walk, start to finish. Advertising for an engineer will happen as soon as they are given the go ahead from DOT. It is hoped that the City will be able to get a little of the pre-work done this fall and finish up the project next summer.

This particular grant was reviewed and scored by North County Council, NHDOT, and then scored by a software program that allowed them to choose projects that most closely fit their objective. They funded about a third of the projects that were submitted. The City was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of those chosen.

Ms. Laflamme is finishing up work on the current grant she is writing for USDA money, which is due February 15 which would be used toward the feasibility study for the snow melt system downtown.

The City is also making a list of items that need to be addressed here in City Hall. These include handicap accessibility including the current chair lift and drainage on the north side of the building which has caused problems on the stairs. There are some substantial things that need to get done. There are also thoughts of what might need to be done in balcony level of auditorium for it to be useable space (offices, storage, meeting rooms, etc.). There is CDBG and Rural Development money available to be used for these types of projects.

### **Board Membership**

Ms. Laflamme addressed the need to re-organize membership. As Mr. Allain has been unable to attend meetings for quite some time, it is not practical that he continue to hold the chair position. There will always be a seat for him if he is able to return to meetings regularly. Mr. McCue is willing to move into the Chair position permanently. Ms. Langlois has agreed to fill the Vice Chair position. Ms. Myers has been appointed by the City Manager as the official ex-officio voting member from his office. Mr. Cassidy has been on the board since 1999, making him next in line to move up to a regular voting position. Ms. Rayborn is also eligible move into a regular member position. Ms. Levesque will be our one alternate. In the past there have been two and the allowance is up to five. Ms. Laflamme will contact Dave Morin to see if he has interest in being a member.

**Ms. Remillard motioned for Mr. McCue to move to Chair and Ms. Langlois to move to Vice Chair; seconded by Ms. Levesque. So moved, the motion carried.**

Upcoming reappointments: Ms. Langlois and Mr. Estrella in April.

### **Other**

There will be a project coming to the Planning Board in March. It has been in the works for a while and is finally ready for submittal.

**Public Comments** – No public in attendance

**Member Comments** – None

**Planner Comments** – None

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 7, 2017.

**Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Board Ms. Langlois moved to adjourn; Ms. Remillard seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:31pm

Jen Myers  
Administrative Clerk