

July 7, 2021 Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members: Chair Lori Langlois, Vice Chair Tom McCue, Suzanne Wasileski, Ex-Officio Members: Lucie Remillard (6:07) and Lise Barrette; Alternate Members: Theodore Bosen and Dan Whittet.

Excused were: Regular Members: Anthony Valliere, Lane Strahan and Brian Valerino; Alternate Members: Richard Cassidy and Jennifer Lazzaro.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Liz Kelly, Resilience Planning and Design; William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

Chair Langlois appointed Alternate Members, Dan Whittet and Theodore Bosen as voting members.

Public Comments

None

Approval of May & June 2021 minutes

Mr. McCue made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 2021 meeting with the corrections on page 1 to change 'Chair McCue read the following statement' to 'Chair Langlois'; and also on page 3 to remove Mr. McCue's vote for the CCFHS Site plan; and also to approve the June 2021 minutes. Ms. Wasileski seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion carried.

Site Plan Review – Timberland Adventures Inc., Tax Map 407 Lot 15 (continued from June 1, 2021 meeting)

The Site Plan Review is not ready at this time and is being tabled. This is the official Public Notice for a continuance until the August 3, 2021 meeting at 6:30pm. No notice will be mailed or published, this is an official notice of record.

Lot Mergers – Tax Map 138 Lots 24 & 25; Tax Map 117 Lots 25 & 26

The lot merger for Map 138 Lots 24 & 25 was requested by Danielle Rioux on Howard Street. Both lots will be merged to form Lot 24. Mr. McCue made a motion to approve the lot merger for lots 24 & 25. Mr. Whittet seconded it. All in favor, the motion carried.

The lot merger for Map 117 Lots 25 & 26 was requested by Mia Roberge who needs to merge her lots in order to get a building permit for an accessory building. Both lots will be merged to form Lot 25. Mr. McCue made a motion to approve the lot merger for lots 25 & 26 with the condition that Ms. Roberge submits a signed lot merger form with the accompanying fee to the Registry of Deeds. Ms. Barrette seconded it. All in favor, the motion carried.

Master Plan Meeting- Economic Development Chapter Review & Discussion; August 10th Community Forum Planning

Ms. Kelly of Resilience Planning and Design gave an update on recent activities. The online survey has been finalized and will soon be shared on the website and paper surveys will soon be available at City Hall and the Public Library. The flyer with the new August Community Forum date has not been officially published yet.

The Community Forum has been scheduled for August 10th. Ms. Laflamme has been able to reserve the Bistro at the White Mountains Community College. There was some discussion about the noise caused by the vending and ice machines at the back of the room. The ice machine will have to be shut off to help with the noise level. We will be required to have tables socially distanced with only close family members sharing a table. Masks will not be required but encouraged for unvaccinated individuals. Anyone, including non-residents, can attend and there will be a sign-up sheet for all attendees which will include their contact information.

Breakouts sessions will be set up so that people can travel around within the same groups they are sitting with. We can use the area outside of the Bistro, called the Wellness Center, if we need more space. Depending on the weather, we might be able to use the outdoor space.

Ms. Kelly reviewed the draft agenda. Committee members are expected to participate and be present among other community members. There isn't any need to have facilitators at each table. Stations will have instructions, notecards, boxes, and/or post its.

The Economic Development Profile was discussed. Ms. Kelly began by asking what major economic development or redevelopment plan occurred in the past five to ten years or is occurring now? Ms. Langlois brought up the plan to install heated streets downtown using waste heat from the Biomass Plant. This project has been submitted for grant funding. Mr. Whittet asked if electric vehicle charging stations were added to the project since he is aware of extra monies available for such incentives. Ms. Laflamme said it has been.

There was some discussion on the reuse of old buildings to meet modern building codes. Other communities have dealt with similar issues.

Ms. Kelley asked what Economic Development Incentive Programs are offered? Ms. Laflamme said that we do have the Downtown Tax Incentive program and the Commercial and Industrial New Construction Tax Incentive program. She will forward a list of our programs to her in the future.

Ms. Kelly asked what is being implemented from the 2019 Economic Development Action Plan? Ms. Laflamme said the city is moving forward with the Route 110 TIF which has a focus recreation and hospitality. There is also a project involving lodging.

Mr. McCue shared that he likes to see the Health of the Community as one of the focuses in the Economic Development Profile. He also shared his concern on focusing on only one

development area and not looking at others, as an example: Route 110 and Downtown. There was some followed discussion about our downtown storefronts and other communities who have dealt with façade redevelopment.

Also discussed was the section on page five concerning Marketing and Planning. There have been some past efforts amongst the city departments to form a smoother process for residents who are interested in creating new development in our city. The website is currently being worked on to be more user friendly.

Ms. Kelly said the profile for Community Facilities and Services Existing Conditions draft is complete. They have interviewed Department Heads and looked at annual reports. They have found that the facility deficiencies that we have now are the same ones that were listed in 2010. We still have an aging infrastructure and multiple departments need asset management and maintenance planning. The Master Plan should help drive the Capital Improvements for facilities in the future.

Ms. Kelly ended by giving an outline of future activities. Our Community Forum will be on August 10th, 6:00pm at the White Mountain Community College.

Ms. Kelly will not be present for the Master Plan Committee Meeting on August 24th. She is asking that we give feedback through email on the Community Facilities and Services Profile. We will also be reviewing the Energy and Community Resiliency Profile.

In September we will be discussing Existing Land Uses and Historic & Cultural Resources.

Discussion – Proposed Zoning Changes – setbacks/minimum lot size/manufactured housing

Ms. Laflamme went over the proposed zoning changes for discussion. The first proposal is to change the minimum lot size back to 50' x 100' which was the old minimum lot size. It would apply to the Residential Single Family, Two Family and General zones. This would in turn change the minimum frontage requirement to 50' to match the smaller lot size.

The second proposed change is to reduce the minimum setbacks for the Residential Single Family, Two Family and General zones to a 5 foot front setback and a 3 foot setback for both rear and sides. The current setbacks are: 25 feet in front and rear with 10 feet on the side for primary buildings and 25 feet in front, 10 feet in the rear and side for accessory buildings.

The third proposed change is to allow manufactured housing wherever residential homes are allowed. Currently they are only allowed in Manufactured Housing Parks and Manufactured Housing Subdivisions, which we have one of each. The two types of homes being discussed are modular and manufactured. One of the main differences is that a modular home is on a foundation and a manufactured home is on a slab. Mobile Homes fall under the manufactured housing definition. The city has had many inquiries over the years to place newer models of manufactured homes on regular house lots. This housing option

would open up opportunities for those who are looking for alternative styles of housing and do not want to live in the park or subdivision.

There was some discussion around the city's current definition of manufactured housing in the zoning ordinance which will need to be re-worded.

There was lots of discussion around the need for this change with manufactured housing and if it was an economic financial benefit or a change for convenience. There were concerns about people wanting to park their mobile homes or trailers on a regular lot to live in and that this could be a negative impact for our community. We can put restrictions on the rules and regulations for manufactured housing but we cannot discriminate against anyone either.

Ms. Laflamme re-affirmed that a decision doesn't have to be made at this time, this was just to get the conversation started. These changes must go through the Planning Board, the City Council and a Public Hearing before they are finalized.

Other

None

Public Comments

None

Member Comments

Mr. McCue brought up how during the last Master Plan update we were on the shadow of the mill closing, deciding if the Biomass would be up and running and we were moving away from the old mill mentality. It will be interesting to see the shifts of thinking throughout the community.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the board, Ms. Wasileski made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McCue. All in favor, the motion carried.

The meeting ended at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lise Barrette

* Note: These minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the Planning Board by motion.