

September 12, 2017

Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members Tom McCue, Helene Rayborn, Aline Boucher, Richard Cassidy Ex-Officio Members Lucie Remillard and Jen Myers, Naomi Levesque

Greg Estella was absent for the evening

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Sun

Public Comments – No one spoke

Approval of August Minutes

Mr. McCue noted that on page 3 paragraph 1, Mr. Bouthillier should be quoted as saying “They could probably find a way in, but I don’t want them in there.” Page 6 paragraph 2, Mr. Salek commented that it isn’t buildable, striking “it is”. Ms. Levesque asked that page 5 paragraph regarding Map 126 Lot 65 should state blow downs, not low downs.

Ms. Remillard moved to accept the August minutes with the corrections above with a second from Ms. Rayborn. So moved, the motion carried.

Mr. Estrella arrived at 6:37pm

Zoning Discussions

Solar: When Ms. Laflamme went to City Council they had concern about allowing the commercial application of solar panels in the Jericho Gateway zone. Mayor Grenier asked if a joint committee of Planning Board and Council members could be formed to look at the map and go over pros and cons of what things could be put in Jericho Gateway. Council members Mayor Grenier, Peter Higbee, and Lucie Remillard will be part of the committee. Mr. McCue, Ms. Langlois, and Ms. Levesque volunteered from the Planning Board. Ms. Laflamme will email suggested dates and times to set a meeting.

Proposed Use in Business General: Ms. Laflamme continued the discussion from last month’s meeting. To recap, a request was made by a gentleman who is interested in purchasing property to use for what essentially is an open air market out on Route 110. Currently, there is nothing in the City’s Ordinance that covers this. The property owner plans to have this use active from May through October. He plans to keep it very tidy. A potential problem arises when someone else wanting to do it does not keep up their property and it doesn’t look presentable. Ms. Laflamme and others have been researching this use and it keeps coming back as a flea market. She will be looking at places outside of New Hampshire to see if there is something that exists like this somewhere else. It may

have its own list of special exceptions. Ms. Remillard asked if it could perhaps be handled with Hawkers and Peddler's permits. Ms. Laflamme stated that the board may want to consider doing something a little more formal, with the number of people that could be involved. If there are several food vendors set up seven days a week this is a lot more intense than vendors at events.

The board discussed various topics including whether or not vendors would be limited to operating a certain number of days and if they would be subject to health code inspections. Also, whether or not the property owner would be subject to health and safety inspections in addition to the vendors. While individual vendors are regulated, how would they be regulated as a whole group? Members discussed similar applications they were familiar with that could be used as a guide. There were also concerns regarding the effects on area businesses.

Ms. Laflamme asked the Board to consider if they want to allow it. If so, do they just want to allow it or try to put some framework on it, making sure property owners are following health and sanitary rules. They should also think about how an open air market like this may affect brick and wall mortar owners and what would need to be put in place to make the property aesthetically pleasing. A Site Plan could be required.

Members discussed if the use was allowed how they could control what would happen if the property changed hands or the use changed. Should a special exception be required or a conditional permit or put conditions should anything change. Should the Board require annual updates from property owners? Would the permit include signage and lighting? Also, what amenities would the property owner be offering vendors to provide adequate facilities and things like drainage, how far would they need to go towards making it a permanent site.

Ms. Laflamme encouraged members to continue thinking about this proposed use and to resume the discussion at the October meeting.

Project Updates

Saturday, September 23rd the Municipal Law Lecture Series will be offered at the Medallion Opera House in Gorham from 9:00am – 4:30pm. The series has been condensed into a one day event. Lunch will be provided. Please let Ms. Laflamme know if you would like to attend. The City will pay for your attendance. The one day class will be offered again on Saturday, October 14th in Concord at the New Hampshire Municipal Association.

Tuesday, September 19th at 2:00pm Councilor Kenney will be in the City Hall Auditorium with the Department of Transportation to review the 10 year plan.

Tuesday, September 19th at 6:30pm at the City Hall Auditorium, EPA is doing an update on the Chlor-alkali site. Georgia Pacific will have representatives there. It is open to the public if anyone would like to attend.

Ms. Laflamme has hired someone to help her with the Berlin Welcome sign. He will put together all of the bid documents and get the sign moving forward.

Ms. Laflamme will put out a RFQ for the heated streets. Mr. Wheeler, the City Manager will sign the grant paperwork on Friday. Once this is complete, the City can start soliciting to do the feasibility study for heated streets.

The landscaping on Route 16 has started. Trees have been planted, there are pavers on the sidewalks. All driveways will be matched with the road, but that will be at the end. The whole thing gets a final course of pavement at the very end. Ms. Laflamme was mistaken and there will not be a light at Eighth Street. The solar light that is on the northerly approach near the school is there. She thought there was supposed to be one on the southerly approach, however has not seen one yet. Ms. Rayborn stated that they need to have something on Eighth Street due to traffic. Ms. Laflamme replied that it won't be on Eighth, but it will be near.

There was discussion about the traffic from Finland Hill. It was noted that it is more than normal right now due to the construction on Main Street. Ms. Rayborn commented that "everyone flies down that street and from the feeder streets as well." Once the construction settles we'll see what happens.

Mr. Estrella inquired about the budget for the Route 16 project. Ms. Laflamme replied that it is coming in under budget. Mr. Estrella wanted to know if there was left over money, could it be used to put the road over the rail road crossings. Ms. Laflamme responded that the City Council has already decided to put the money somewhere else; for projects like straightening out the corner at Bridge Street. Mr. Estrella also asked whether the City was changing out all light posts to LED lighting. Ms. Laflamme replied that yes, they would changing out 935 poles. This will cut the City's light bill in half. There is also rebate in the savings, in addition to a rebate up front for doing the lights were just done on Main Street.

Other – No one spoke

Public Comments – No one spoke

Member Comments

Ms. Rayborn inquired about the old fire alarms. She heard they were being taken down to sell online and wanted to know if that money will go into the City general fund. Ms. Remillard replied that she assumed it would be for the fireman and their own funds. Ms.

Rayborn said that it would be nice to use that money to make it look nice somewhere around Main Street.

Mr. Cassidy asked when the new digital system would be activated. Ms. Laflamme responded that he could check with the City Manager on Wednesday. He wanted to know when the activation of the digital system would go into effect. Ms. Laflamme said she would check first thing Thursday.

Ms. Langlois commented on the grass on Route 110. She stated that they had removed the mulch and planted grass. Ms. Laflamme replied that the mulch was not working out. Public Works decided to have it hydro-seeded. Parks and Rec will mow it.

Mr. Estella wanted to know if watering of the trees that were planted on Route 16 were included in the contract. Ms. Laflamme told him they were for one year.

Ms. Levesque asked if now would be the time to look at the money from the dog park fund. Ms. Laflamme commented that they had talked about it before. She would put it on her list. There was thoughtful discussion about regarding placement of a dog waste station at the entrance to the PSNH Park.

It was noted that with the savings from the current Route 16 project, the project can do more rehabilitation and will do so from Twelfth Street up to Williamson Avenue.

Ms. Langlois inquired about the lights on Hutchins Street. Ms. Laflamme replied that the lights are something Council did not decide to do. At \$225,000, it is not a priority at this time. There was also discussion about the lack of mowing on the newly redone portion of Hutchins Street.

Planner Comments

Given with Project Updates

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Remillard moved to adjourn; Ms. Rayborn seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:39pm

Jen Myers
Administrative Clerk