



PLANNING BOARD
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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, March 21, 2019 – 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

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

Members Absent: Rich Winsor

Staff: Mark Fougere – Consultant; Matt Scruton – Town Administrator

Chair Gerome opened the Planning Board meeting at 7:00 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Reorganization of the Board

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to appoint R. Winsor as Chairman. Second – F. Catapano; all in favor.
MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: F. Catapano moved to appoint J. McDevitt as Vice Chairman. Second – S. Gerrato; six in favor, one abstain (J. McDevitt). MOTION CARRIED

2. Appointment of Alternate

J. McDevitt stated that Vaughan Morgan had expressed an interest in being an alternate on the Planning Board. He recommended K. Medeiros as the first alternate and V. Morgan as the second due his wealth of experience and being well-versed in community issues. Bob Dion also submitted a letter of interest for alternate.

MOTION: J. McDevitt nominated Vaughan Morgan as the second alternate. Second – S. Gerrato

J. McDevitt, addressing B. Dion, stated that he would be the third alternate on the Planning Board but recommended that B. Dion be an alternate on the ZBA, which had none. S. Gerrato added that the ZBA would be a good place to start as an alternate and were desperately needed. He would get a feel for the Town and it would prepare him for the Planning Board. J. McDevitt stated that he would support B. Dion as an alternate on the Planning Board; however, he would get his feet wet on the ZBA immediately. S. Gerome added that he would be welcome on either Board. S. Gerome and J. McDevitt thanked B. Dion for stepping forward.

B. Dion responded that he wanted to stay with the Planning Board. J. McDevitt reiterated that K. Medeiros would be the first alternate, V. Morgan the second alternate, and B. Dion the third alternate.

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AMENDED MOTION: J. McDevitt nominated Vaughan Morgan as the second alternate and Bob Dion as the third alternate to the Planning Board. Second – S. Gerome; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

S. Gerrato stated that he would no longer like to be the RPC representative, adding that S. Smith would like to assume that role. S. Smith graciously declined; he is on several other organizations and boards and unable to be the representative. S. Gerrato explained the RPC meetings to B. Dion.

3. Planning Board Letter to Board of Selectmen: Weeks Library

J. McDevitt reviewed the revisions to the letter written by M. Fougere to the Selectmen regarding Weeks Library. He suggested including some of Chief Laurent's comments from her letter dated February 11, 2019. D. Moore questioned why parking was still allowed in front of the Library; some members felt it was due to habit. Several suggestions were made to eliminate the parking now.

J. McDevitt stated he read the minutes from the Selectmen's meeting on Monday, March 04, 2019. He had an issue with one Selectman who was willing to ignore the Police Chief's concerns. He questioned the status of parking in front of the Library; it hasn't been used as a fire lane for quite some time. A Selectman also commented that it needed to be there for the elderly. S. Smith responded that was for parking in front of the Parish Hall and not necessarily the Library. The Church came to the Planning Board many years ago; they were concerned with parking in front of the Parish Hall because of the same problems: cars parked partially in the road, elderly access, and steps coming down to the sidewalk, blocking the front of the building. The Board recommended, at the time, that parking in front of the Parish Hall be a fire lane. S. Smith responded that he doesn't remember the year, but the section in front of the Parish Hall was striped and marked as a fire lane. It hasn't been maintained since that time; it was repaved, but not remarked.

J. McDevitt has spoken to the engineer at District 6. They have no documentation giving approval or requesting permission from the Town for the asphalt apron. District 6 has stated that if deemed a hazard by the Chief of Police and she wants it removed, they would have no problem removing it. S. Smith added that the right-of-way is from the fog line 8' in; the apron is DOT right-of-way.

J. McDevitt was concerned because at least one Selectman had no intention of removing the parking. It's been identified, not just by the Planning Board but also the Police Chief; the parking has to go. If there's no parking there, it's a problem for the Library, Parish Hall and School to resolve. There is a huge safety issue in front of the Library. S. Gerome noted that the Planning Board was in agreement with him.

S. Smith explained the title research for the Library: Caroline Avery Weeks purchased the land from the Clough family to build a Library. It was gifted to the Town and voted on by the Town at Town Meeting in 1898 as a Library. The record of deed, transferred from C. Weeks to the Trustees of the Library through her lawyer, was never recorded as Town-owned property. It was never in her will or estate as a separate piece of property. Between the Town and her estate, nothing was recorded. The Attorney General's office is now trying to determine if it's legal to do a quiet title. They are accessing all the records they can find and the heirs.

On the Parish Hall side, there were two churches at the time. When the Methodist Church (Parish Hall) abdicated the Church to the Congregational Church, nothing was deeded and recorded for the property or the building.

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J. McDevitt suggested that in addition to Chief Laurent's concerns, some of the Planning Board Engineer's points be added to the letter. Drainage was still an issue as was lighting, landscaping and easements. D. Moore noted that the Town couldn't do any improvements on the Parish Hall lot. S. Smith added that the Library is the Library and the Church is the Church; there was a definite separation between the lot lines. The access driveway is on Library property.

J. McDevitt suggested including some comments from the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief and Police Chief were concerned with access to the rear of the building. The Board questioned receiving a report from the consultant working on behalf of the Fire Department; the Fire Chief didn't want to review the plan. The Selectmen questioned who hired the consultant. The Planning Board was very clear they didn't hire the consultant.

MOTION: S. Gerome moved that the Planning Board did not hire the consultant. Second – S. Gerrato; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

S. Smith added that the consultant insinuated that he was representing the Town as a whole: Police, Fire and Building Inspector. M. Fougere stated that the Building Inspector was going to have the consultant write a report.

S. Gerrato questioned if the Selectmen gave permission for the SAU to mark the parking spaces at the School. S. Smith was unaware. J. McDevitt stated that was the School Board and not the Selectmen.

4. Master Plan and Survey

The Master Plan Survey from January 2005 was reviewed; a copy is on file. M. Fougere suggested that many of the questions on the survey didn't deal with planning. Issues to be included, but not limited to: water quality, how often water is tested, traffic concerns, expansion at Pease, roads/intersections in Town (listing the worst three), Town character and land use.

S. Gerrato stated residents should be asked for suggested improvements to Rt. 33 on the survey. Under "Water Quality" residents should be asked if they have ever tested their water for perfluorinated compounds (PFOS and PFOA). Many questions in "Town Services and Facilities" will be eliminated.

The Board felt there was good information in the survey once updated; 40 questions were too many. M. Fougere will put the survey on Survey Monkey; it will also be mailed to residents and include the link to Survey Monkey. A rough draft will be available for the next meeting.

5. Rt. 33/Winnicut Road Roundabout Analysis

M. Fougere contacted Dave Walker, Rockingham Planning Commission, to do an analysis for implementing a roundabout at Rt. 33 and Winnicut Road rather than a traffic light. The analysis was done with both one and two lanes. With one lane, traffic remains basically the same; with two lanes, it becomes an "A". S. Smith noted that a two lane roundabout would require rebuilding the bridge over the Winnicut River and reorganizing the entire intersection at Rt. 33/Winnicut Road/Bayside Road. Members commented that there isn't enough real estate available.

In his analysis, D. Walker indicated that the two lane roundabout works so well the radius could be tightened up, while keeping the two lanes and maintaining an adequate level of service. He felt it might work well here because the two intersections (Winnicut and Bayside) coming in to the roundabout don't

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add much traffic; it wouldn't be four heavy traffic roads. M. Fougere noted that it was the worst intersection and expensive because of the bridge.

6. Other Business

PDA: M. Fougere updated the Board that Attorney Greg Michaels, Bernstein Shur Law Firm, couldn't represent the Town due to a previous litigation with Lonza. M. Fougere has contacted Attorney Biron Bedard of Ransmeier & Spellman, and is recommending the Town retain his services. Attorney Bedard's firm has sued the PDA on several matters. M. Fougere will prepare a memo for the Selectmen to update them. Once approved by the Selectmen, he will contact Attorney Bedard for a contract. M. Fougere added that it may be a year or two before Lonza is ready to occupy the building; they'll need to return to the Portsmouth Planning Board. Attorney Bedard's services will be needed at that time.

CIP: The Planning Board would like to meet with the Board of Selectmen to review the CIP process. Departments are not participating in the CIP. J. McDevitt would like to see a priority chart as a result of the process. Safety would be the first priority, followed by personnel and environmental. A project that is considered a "want" would go down the line a bit. RSA 674:7 states that the CIP is a Planning Board project. The support of the Selectmen is important; department heads need to participate. M. Fougere added that the School Board also has to cooperate.

Roundabouts: S. Gerrato noted that the Town of Windham didn't have roundabouts; they're actually in Pelham. Windham is working on engineering for roundabouts. The Planner thought the roundabouts were "fabulous". The first roundabouts in Pelham were done with a federal "Earmark Grant"; they will be using CMAQ (Congestion/Mitigation and Air Quality) money for another roundabout. S. Gerrato stated there is a lot of "red tape" for CMAQ funds and Greenland didn't have the personnel; Portsmouth would have to submit the grant.

Library and Fire Station: S. Gerrato informed the Board it was time to do the Library. A fire station shouldn't be put on the lot adjacent to the Town Hall; a wooden fire station with a wash bay and the silt right above the ground and no knee wall. The design was disastrous on a wetland lot.

Eminent Domain: S. Gerrato stated that the Town had to take the Church and property next to it by eminent domain. Parking and a place for the fire station in the future needed to be created. To plan for the future, this is what needed to be done.

7. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to approve the minutes of Thursday, March 07, 2019. Second – D. Moore; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

8. Approval of Invoices

There were no invoices to approve.

9. Topics for Work Session: Thursday, April 04, 2019

Topics for the work session on Thursday, April 04, 2019 were included in the Board packet.

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10. Adjournment

MOTION: J. McDevitt moved to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. Second – F. Catapano; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, April 04, 2019 – 7 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: _____