

## **APPROVED**

Master Plan Work Session  
Planning Board  
June 9, 2009

**Members Present:** Tom Cottrill (Chair), Jeff Hollinger (Vice-Chair), Tina Helm (Selectmen's Representative), Emma Crane (Conservation Commission Representative), Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Karen Ebel, Michele Holton, Dierdre Sheerr-Gross (Alternate), John Tilley (Alternate), Ken McWilliams (Town Planner)

**Members Absent:** Michael Doheny (Secretary)

Chair Cottrill called the **MEETING TO ORDER** at **7:05pm**.

John Tilley, alternate, was asked to sit in for Michael Doheny.

Chair Cottrill explained that the meeting would cover the first draft of the Conservation and Open Land Chapter of the Master Plan. He noted that an email from Mr. Gerry Gold, New London resident, had been distributed to the Board and was available to the meeting attendees. The email contained suggestions for revisions to the Conservation and Open Land chapter. Chair Cottrill started the meeting by suggesting that the chapter be reviewed page by page.

Chair Cottrill asked if there were any comments regarding the first page of the chapter, which included bulleted items that describe the benefits of having open spaces in the town. Meeting attendee, Ausbon-Sargent Land Protection Trust (ASLPT) representative and New London resident, Sue Clough noted that trails were not mentioned in the list. Mr. McWilliams, Town Planner, suggested that the words "including trails" could be added at the end of the recreational activity bulleted item.

Chair Cottrill asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the last bullet, which noted that open space "enhanced property values and kept property taxes down." There was some discussion as to whether increased property values cause taxes to increase or if the only increase was in the assessment. Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator) shared some information about some studies that had been done of about 20 towns in order to review the cost for community services in a town. The study focused on the costs attributed to residential properties vs. commercial properties and open space land. Residential properties were lowest in taxes and money paid out for every dollar it brought in revenue, commercial properties brought in the most revenue than was spent out, and open land brought the least amount of taxes and cost the least to service. The results showed that development (commercial properties), in the long run, cause towns to expand their budgets and spend more, and open spaces do not. Mrs. Clough asked if this study could be referenced within the last bullet in the open space benefits list. Board member Dierdre Sheerr-Gross believed that it would be useful to include this information in this section. Mr. McWilliams added that he had seen various studies that showed that open spaces enhance properties surrounding the open space. Due to the fact that there have been several compelling studies conducted to show the benefit of open space vs. commercial space in a town with regards to tax rates, Ms. Ebel suggested adding a section to the chapter called "The Economic Benefits of Open Space and Conservation Land." She opined that open space has an important economic value to the town. Ms. Ebel also suggested that something could be added to this section to show that tourism and recreation go hand-in-hand with open spaces.

### **Page 2**

1<sup>st</sup> paragraph. Ms. Sheerr-Gross noted the text that explained the reasons why New London is abundant in open space. The text mentions conservation-minded citizens, and organizations such as the ASLPT and the Conservation Commission. She opined that one additional factor that has helped the town maintain the open space is that there hasn't been a lot of pressure to develop the land. Mr. Stanley said that there had been pressure in the past and noted the Low Plain that was almost developed. Meeting attendee, Terry Dancy noted that if the town is not responsible and careful, the open spaces that exist today would be

developed. Mr. Stanley suggested that there was another reason that open spaces were plentiful, and that is zoning. He noted that the goal of the zoning in New London has been to concentrate commercial growth in the center of town and have less dense growth on the outskirts where the most undeveloped resources remain. Mr. Stanley and Ms. Ebel opined that the words “careful planning” should be added to the paragraph that lists reasons why New London has abundant open space. Karen Ebel suggested text for another sentence that should be added to the paragraph: “The remaining unprotected open space could be developed quickly depending on economic pressures.” Deb Stanley, ASPLT representative, shared that much of the town’s undeveloped land remains unprotected. 15% of the land in town (apx. 16,000 acres) is protected. Developed land was about half, at 9,000 acres.

Paragraph 2: Sue Clough suggested that “the” should be replaced with “an” to read “an appropriate vehicle to...”

Ms. Ebel believed the full name of ASLPT should be written out in the first and third paragraph, and anywhere else should appear as ASLPT.

Paragraph 3: Chair Cottrill suggested in the third line to remove a coma and add a space within the dates represented. He also asked Mr. Stanley if the 2500 feet referenced in the paragraph were all in New London. Mr. Stanley answered in the affirmative.

Paragraph 4: Chair Cottrill suggested removing the word “also.” He also noted that a period should be added at the end of the paragraph. Ms. Sheerr-Gross mentioned the food resource reference in the last paragraph on page 2. After some discussion, it was decided that “food resource” should be changed to “food and agriculture resource.”

### **Page 3**

Mr. McWilliams noted that this page is where Mr. Gold’s comments start to come into play. Mr. Dancy observed that Mr. Gold’s goals covered the same scope but were more literary. Andy Deegan, Chair of the Conservation Commission noted that the goals that exist are used in their easement deeds to show public support for them. He said that he has seen master plans from 12 towns and that the goals are most helpful to their cause when they are well-written and not vague. After reviewing Mr. Gold’s suggested text, it was the decision of the Planning Board (PB) to replace the existing comments with his. Ms. Sheerr-Gross felt that a majority of the goals could fit under more than one list. She stressed that the PB should make sure that all the elements from the old list were included and that none had been duplicated. Mr. Stanley said that he would check the list and attempt to re-organize it to verify that all bases were covered.

### **Page 4**

Mr. Tilley asked if the text could clarify what part of Main Street was being referenced. Mr. Stanley remarked that it encompasses all of Main Street, and referred to no one specific part.

Karen Ebel asked that in the last sentence of paragraph the word “only” should be removed when it appeared before the percentages.

### **Inventory**

Chair Cottrill commented on the second paragraph. He wanted to know if “fresh water” referred to closed lakes for drinking only or if referred to recreation? After some discussion, it was agreed to change “fresh water” to “sources of fresh water.” Also, it was suggested that it should read “The Town is fortunate to have “a” number of...”

### **Page 5**

Chair Cottrill opined that it would be helpful to put the address/location of each piece of land mentioned in the beginning of the paragraphs. The PB agreed that this was a good idea. Sue Clough asked what a “900-foot stand of junipers” was. The text was changed to: “a 900 square foot area of junipers.”

Mr. Tilley commented that the reference to WW Two within the Spofford Easement information should be represented as “WWII.”

Chair Cottrill asked about including the parcels of land that had been acquired before 1998 within the first part of the page. Deb Stanley (ASLPT) noted that a listing of all land acquisitions started on page 8. There was much discussion as to how the parcels of land could be represented or displayed within this section. It was noted that terms such as “protected,” “unprotected” or targeted for protection” could be confusing to the average reader of the document. Chair Cottrill suggested adding a summary list of the parcels at the top of page 5, with copy that would tell the reader that later on in the document each parcel would be described with more information.

Mr. Tilley said that the parcels should be organized within three lists: Partially Protected, Protected, and Unprotected. Bob Lavoie, New London resident, said that there should be an explanation of each term so the reader would be educated. There was further discussion regarding unprotected properties that are targeted for protection and the point of having a list of these properties in the Master Plan. Mr. Dancy stressed that having a “wish list” of these properties that could one day be protected, was the whole point of having a Master Plan. Mr. Tilley commented that the list should be called “Desirable Properties Not Currently Protected” instead of “Targeted Properties for Protection.” It was decided that Mr. McWilliams would reorganize the information within this section to reflect the PB’s suggestions.

Chair Cottrill felt that a lot of the descriptions of each land parcel were too long. Many on the board agreed.

#### **Page 6**

Chair Cottrill commented that the abbreviation “NLCC” should be represented as “New London Conservation Commission.” Also, SooNippi should be written as: Soo-Nipi. And, the word “lodge” should be removed with regard to Soo-Nipi Park.

#### **Page 8**

Clark Lookout is referenced for a second time on this page. It was decided by the PB to put a reference to the previous description of this parcel in this description area. Mr. Dancy noted that the map for this section is currently being re-done by Laura Alexander.

Mr. Gold wanted to know whether the properties described were private or public. Karen Ebel suggested including information on people, as was done for Syd Crook.

#### **Page 9**

Glacial Pot Hole – Sue Clough felt it would be inappropriate to give the site of this Pot Hole because the owners of the property would not want a lot of traffic there. Stanley noted that that is why the location is not given.

Chair Cottrill asked Mr. McWilliams to define “CORE” in the text.

#### **Page 10**

Emma Crane, Conservation Commission, remarked that “partridge berry” should be one word and not two. Deb Stanley noted that if the Master Plan was going to be considered a historical document, it should include information regarding the very first land parcel that was granted (part of Morgan Pastures) to the town by Dick Webb in 1967. She noted that this information was not on their website. Mr. Lavoie said he was concerned with the elimination of some of the descriptions of the land parcels and suggested maybe the Conservation Commission could come up with a pamphlet of some sort that could describe each parcel and go into more detail. Sue Clough said that the idea was currently being thought about. Mr. Stanley indicated that the information should be included in the Master Plan itself, because it is a historical document. He opined that some lines of copy about each parcel could be included after their name and then a reference could be made to the appendix, where more detailed information could be found.

#### **Page 11**

Ms. Crane commented that the flower “sun dew” should be written as “sundew.” “Rattlesnake plant” should also be written instead of “Rattlesnake plantain.”

Mr. Tilley commented that in the third paragraph, the word “duck” should be removed, as later on in the list several types of duck are listed.

4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph. Mrs. Stanley indicated that it should be indicated that the land was “gifted by Bessie Phillips to the town.”

#### **Page 12**

Ms. Crane commented that “leather leaf” should be written as “leatherleaf.”

#### **Page 13**

Ms. Ebel opined that this section seemed disorganized and did not read easily. She agreed to rearrange the text and send a revised copy to Mr. McWilliams for the next revision. She commented that the amount of text would remain, but it would be changed around.

Sue Clough indicated that with regard to Burpee Hill, there was no sweet corn being planted.

#### **Page 15**

Mr. Stanley shared that the Conservation Commission collectively decided on the list of desirable properties. Mr. Tilley asked if it was appropriate or necessary to list the owner’s names for each parcel. Mr. Stanley said that it has been done in the past and it helps to specify the parcel. Ms. Sheerr-Gross asked if there would be a map for this info. Mr. Stanley answered in the negative. He shared that there is a map on the web. It was decided that a reference to the map online should be referenced within this section of the Master Plan.

#### **Page 16**

Mr. Tilley asked if the heading on this page could read “Other Desirable Properties Not Currently Protected Contiguous With Already Conserved Land.”

Mrs. Stanley noted that the parcel that was described as “Carr, Robert” should be changed to “Carr Landholdings, LLC.”

Ms. Ebel asked if a section on wetlands should be included in this area. Mr. McWilliams noted that wetlands would be a subcategory in the water resources chapter. Ms. Ebel suggested there could be a cross-reference to that chapter in this section. It was suggested to put a heading before “lands with significant attributes” regarding wetlands. Mr. McWilliams said that he would work with the text to fit in a wetlands heading.

#### **Page 17**

Scenic Views. Ms. Ebel said it should read “when *one* crosses into town...” and “Town” should remain capitalized throughout the document.

#### **Page 19**

Mrs. Stanley indicated that “Stevens” should be removed in the list and replaced with ASLPT.

Hiking Trails: There is a mention of “extensions and adopters.” Many were confused as to what these words meant. Sue Clough said that she would speak with the author of this section to see if he could clarify what was referring to.

#### **Page 20**

2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph. The word “Solomon” should be replaced with “Solomon’s.”

Ms. Crane indicated that “Partridge berry” should be one word.

Mrs. Stanley indicated that “Cordingly Preserve” is not maintained by the NLCC. She also asked that the table on this page be renamed to read “trails maintained in New London.”

Mrs. Stanley also asked that “Howard” be taken out and replaced with “Big Hilltop, LLC.”

#### **Page 21**

Ms. Ebel noted that the heading contained a colon and it should be removed.

#### **Page 22**

Mr. Tilley suggested the removal of the word “recently” and replacing it with “has requested.”

Mrs. Stanley noted that the name “Robert Stevens” should be replaced with “ASLPT” in the table.

Ms. Ebel noted that the term “town-owned” should be hyphenated throughout document.

**Page 23**

Ms. Ebel noted that the colon following the Management Plan heading should be removed.

Mr. Stanley opined that it should read: “the Conservation Commission *intends* to develop a management plan.”

Chair Cottrill suggested to remove “approximately” from “town of New London owns *approximately* 792.9 acres...”

**Page 25**

Mrs. Stanley noted that on the top of the page, “New Hampshire’s Forests” needs to have the “s” removed.

Page 24. Ms. Clough asked that the definition of “easement” be moved to the top of the page. Chair

Cottrill asked Mr. McWilliams to look at the text and find where best the definition should go.

**Page 25**

The colon after “Zoning Ordinance” should be removed.

Ms. Ebel suggested some text such as be added: “Following the recommendations off the 1998 Master Plan, the town has met significant goals...” Mr. McWilliams agreed to add something to convey this idea.

Ms. Ebel also noted that the capital “I” in “Include” should be lower-case.

**Page 26**

Ms. Ebel noted that “Shore Land” should be replaced with “Shoreland.” Also, Mr. Tilley opined that the word “completely” was not necessary in the first sentence of the Shoreland Overlay District paragraph.

Mr. Tilley also suggested that the colon should be removed following the heading “Subdivision Regulations.”

Ms. Ebel suggested that another heading in this area be added to show that the PB is looking towards the future.

Ms. Ebel asked if the words: “These changes were incorporated by reference...” should be added. Mr. McWilliams agreed to work on this to get the right wording.

Mr. Lavoie noted that the word “feet” should follow the number 250 instead of an apostrophe.

**Page 27**

Ms. Ebel suggested including the wetlands and streams mapping that has been completed by the Town. She said that the wording in this section should be more specific due to the extensive work that had been done by the PB. The idea was that the map should be updated. Mr. McWilliams agreed to would work more with this section to incorporate the wetlands and streams mapping.

#4. Ms. Ebel suggested the text “The Planning Board should *continue* to explore...” instead of “The Planning Board should explore...”

Mr. Dancy shared that the middle paragraph in the Water Resources section should be removed. He noted that the cooperative initiative never came to anything and does not currently exist.

**P. 28**

Mr. Tilley asked if the title could be expanded to read: “Open Spaces and Landscaping Treatments in Town.”

Bill Clough felt that there were several references to dwindling agricultural resources in New London. He felt that the plan should be more aggressive in coming up with ways to preserve rural and not just suburban landscape. He wondered if there should be an agricultural commission to help agricultural land owners avoid heavy tax burdens. He found the current text very weak. Mr. Dancy suggested the text try to promote and preserve agricultural lands. Ms. Ebel asked Mr. Clough if he would like to come up with some language that he felt would be appropriate and send it to Mr. McWilliams to incorporate into the document. He agreed. The title would be called “Agricultural Overlay District and Agricultural Commission.”

### Issues

Jerry Gold suggested breaking the existing issues into categories. Ms. Sheerr-Gross noted that several of the issues could be listed under more than one of the suggested headings. It was the consensus of the board that the issues section would be left as-is and would not adopt Mr. Gold's arrangement.

#2 Ms. Ebel asked that the extra "s" be removed from the sentence.

Ms. Ebel said that the town still "needs to inventory" streams and wetlands. She reminded the Board of the wetlands subcommittee that was formed but was too expensive to complete. This inventory remains a goal.

#8 Ms. Ebel asked if there would be a way to strengthen this statement.

She also wanted to add "agriculture" to the statement that would be created to include "rural character preservation..."

### Recommendations

#2 Mr. Tilley suggested: "The town needs a management plan for town-owned land that maintain long term sustainability and may also provide revenue."

Ms. Ebel asked Mrs. Stanley about the shoreland protection and whether there anything that provides guidance on required replanting? She noted that in the past, people who have requested the cutting of trees have been instructed to replant the area on a case-by-case situation. She felt that there had never been an exact science on how to figure out how much needs to be planted to replace a tree. Mr. Stanley explained that the point system is in place to govern replanting. Each cell needs to maintain a minimum of 50 points. Anything below 50 points has to be replanted. This is what the State of NH goes by. He noted that the PB may require additional planting if they deem it necessary. Mr. Stanley didn't think it was an issue at this point. He said that people replant as instructed for the most part. The PB makes sure that no clear-cutting is done by property owners "stacking" points on either side of a space.

Ms. Ebel asked if something should be put into this section noting how important enforcement was to maintain conservation goals. She asked if the PB should continue to maintain their enforcement ability.

Ms. Clough said she thought they PB should continue to enforce. Mr. Dancy commented that some towns with no enforcement have problems with their conservation success, but the ones with enforcement had properties in a much better state. He opined that enforcement was a very important part of any protective measure across towns. Ms. Ebel asked about promoting water shed planning regionally. Mr. McWilliams noted that there is an entire chapter on this issue within the Master Plan.

Mr. McWilliams agreed to add #12 to the list, which will cover enforcement.

#2 Mr. Clough noted that it should read: "...the Commission should continue *"it's"* work."

#3 Mr. Tilley suggested the removal of "New London."

#4 Ms. Ebel suggested adding information on the work in mapping, buffering...etc. Mr. McWilliams agreed to expand this paragraph.

#5 Mr. Clough asked if it was the intention to "preserve" or "enhance"? After some discussion, it was decided to combine this segment with #7. Include "agriculture."

#6 Ms. Ebel suggested the recommendations be re-ordered to make it read like the others in the document.

#8 Chair Cottrill asked to expand this segment regarding agricultural issues. He suggested including "Food/locally grown food."

#9 Chair Cottrill was unsure of what was meant by this segment regarding tax incentives. He suggested the text "The Town would provide incentives for property owners to maintain or create open space." Mr.

Dancy said that the incentive already exists; if there are two lots and they are combined, they are taxed less.

#11 Ms. Ebel suggested it read: "...that *are* the responsibility of the Conservation Committee."

#12 Ms. Ebel suggested that a fee structure for inspections should be added.

Mr. McWilliams said that he would find an appropriate place to put the Economic Development section within this chapter.

Mrs. Stanley asked that within this section it should be stated that the town should continue to set aside money for the land conservation. Mr. Tilley suggested that this statement should go under #1.

Mr. Lavoie asked if someone could interpret creating open space by clear-cutting. Mr. Stanley didn't think so.

### **P. 32 Appendix A**

The date on this table should be "2008" not "1997."

There was some discussion as to what qualifies as a field. Mr. Stanley stated that a fallow field is not improved, turned over, growing crop but could be bush-hogged once per year, is maintained as a field, and must be of at least one acre in size. .

Mr. Tilley said that the way it is set up, the current definition of open space also defines a field. Mrs. Stanley noted that fields are where the views are and that is what is at risk.

It was suggested to add a definition under the name of the Appendix to give clarity on the differences between field and open space.

### **Page 33**

#59 Sue Clough noted that hay and corn are being grown in this space.

### **Page 34**

Neither Hitchcock nor the Joneses are growing corn and this indication should be removed from the table. #73 This property is no longer the property of "Clough" but is now owned by "Calerin LLC." Also, the name Jacobsen should be spelled "Jacobson."

### **Page 35**

#84. The Littles mentioned are not growing corn or hay, as the table suggested. Field is fallow.

### **Page 36**

#98 and #109 should have a C.E. added in the last column.

### **Page 37**

Tracey road should be spelled "Tracy" and only hay is being grown.

#117 Hansen – no corn is being grown.

#129 Homan – no corn is being grown.

Ms. Ebel noted that "County Road" should be spelled out and not shown as "Co. Rd."

### **Town Owned Lands**

#### **Page 39**

Mr. McWilliams suggested changing the name of the table to: "Conservation Commission Land." Andy Deegan suggested having a chart for each type of land with a definition of the land and how it is/if it is protected. The Conservation Commission will decide who amongst them would take care of the breakdown of the chart to put it into the categories mentioned above.

Mr. Tilley indicated that it would be nice to see if each land parcel was a gift and if it was, if the date of the gift could be added. This was done with "Cleveland Gift 1963."

Mr. McWilliams noted that the revised version of this chapter is due by July 14<sup>th</sup>. He would like any changes or suggested text be submitted to him by next Tuesday, June 15 at the latest to have it available to the public on the website and to the Board.

### **Other Business**

Mr. McWilliams presented a copy of a letter to Kimco (owners of the New London Shopping Center) to request their attendance at an upcoming PB meeting to discuss their plans for the future of the shopping center. He asked if there were any suggested changes.

Mr. Tilley believed if the letter was more open and not directed just at the shopping mall, they may feel that they could say more about economic development of the town. Ms. Ebel suggested asking Kimco to "give the PB any input they may have regarding the economic climate in New London and the region." Also, she felt it would be a good idea to include the chapter on Economic Development for their review.

Chair Cottrill asked if any other property owners should be contacted regarding economic development in the Town. Ms. Ebel mentioned that she would contact Lori Underwood from the hospital, to comment on economic development of the town, as she would also like to ask her about the parking lot. Mr. McWilliams had contacted her in the past and did not get a response.

Ms. Ebel said that Rob Bryant from the Chamber of Commerce is supposed to be working to contact the smaller business owners to ask about their future development/expansion plans. . .

Ms. Helm noted that she didn't feel that the BOS would be ready to send a letter out to Kimko regarding business.

Chair Cottrill asked Mr. McWilliams to insert a paragraph break after the third sentence to help break it up a bit.

**Master Plan Agenda**

Chair Cottrill stressed that several chapters need to be wrapped up as they are taking too much time. Town Planner McWilliams has only been contracted for one revision of each chapter and some are going through to the 3<sup>rd</sup> revision. The Board agreed that they would try to get these chapters wrapped up and moved along.

Meeting was **ADJOURNED** at **10:00pm**

Respectfully Submitted by

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_