

TOWN OF NEW LONDON  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JULY 29, 2006

PRESENT: Peter Bianchi, Barbara Brown, Hugh Chapin, Sue Clough (Selectman), Celeste Cook, David Dunning, Ray Ettenborough, Karen Hoglund, Mark Kaplan (Selectman), Bob Lavoie, D.J. Lavoie, Harmon Lewis, Sue Little, Doug Lyon (Chair, Board of Selectmen), Bob MacMichael, Lois Marshall, Stephanie Wheeler

Doug Lyon opened the meeting at 7:30 a.m. The CAC discussed addressed 12 items of business during this meeting,

1. Sue Clough updated the Committee on the activities of the Planning Board, including review, with Town Planner Ken McWilliams's assistance, of the New London Site Plan Regulations, which have not been updated since 1990. Any amendments that are made to the Site Plan regulations will require a public hearing, whereas changes to the zoning ordinance must be approved at Town Meeting. In addition, work goes forward and will continue—with formation of committees, on the updating of the Town's Master Plan. The Master Plan should be updated every ten years. The work will take a look at what has gone on in Town, and where the Town wishes to be in the future, and assure that zoning, subdivision and site plan regulations fit that plan. CAC members reminded the Selectmen that voters approved the regulations, and no changes should be made that are contrary to the intent of the regulations that were voted on.
2. Sue Clough went on to report that the New London Planning Board is involved in the Jonathan Feins subdivision, *Harborview*. The proposed subdivision of 35 homes will be located on 200 acres in Sutton, though the Sutton Planning Board has not yet seen any plan showing lot configurations. It has been determined that the subdivision will have a regional impact in that one of its two proposed egresses will be via the intersection of Stone House Road and King Hill Road. New London's position is that the Town does have some jurisdiction over issues as sight distances, water issues, slopes, traffic, etc. In addition, there is concern that upgrading that narrow dirt portion of Stone House Road will open a great deal more land to development.
3. Mark Kaplan reported that the Budget Committee has begun its process on Budget 2007, having had two full-Board meetings, and dividing into subcommittees to meet with respective departments. The Budget Committee will be sending three representatives to the CIP Committee meetings. The CIP plans for the Town's "big ticket" items, and is also done with assistance from planner Ken McWilliams.
4. Doug Lyon reported that the Town is now 90-days into the agreement between the Sewer Commission and Town, under which the day to day operations of the Sewer department are taken over by the Highway Department with highway personnel being cross-trained, and expenses relative to the two departments being kept separate. He said they have encountered a number of problems, but those problems have existed for years, and they are now making progress toward resolution. Several CAC members reported hearing concern from New London residents regarding two issues: first, is the sewer department going to be run by qualified personnel; secondly, is this an undue burden to add to Richard Lee's responsibilities in the Highway Department. Doug Lyon said that combining the two into a Public Works department was something that Richard Lee suggested to Selectmen several years ago. Many towns are going this way. Mark Kaplan added that the Selectmen did not take the move lightly. They commissioned a professional study, results of which indicated that several improvements to efficiency could be made. The study pointed out that the Sewer Department does not require two full time employees. Almost all of its equipment runs automatically, unless something goes wrong. In addition to Highway Department staff being cross trained to work in the sewer department if required, the Selectmen are now recruiting one more full time employee who, though he or she will be a Highway Department employee, will concentrate on the Sewer Department operations. Mark Kaplan acknowledged that the CAC seems to be telling Selectmen now that people feel it would be better to keep the two departments separate, even if that costs more, as long as sewer users pay for that. Bob Lavoie said that there are many controversies here. He noted that this summer's heavy rains have raised a question of whether both departments are meeting their responsibilities adequately. Doug Lyon agreed that it hasn't helped that this summer has seen 37-inches of rain. He reminded everyone that the Highway Department is not at full staff now either. Bob Lavoie said many maintenance issues are not being addressed. Doug Lyon said but that has been

the case (in the Sewer Department) for years; they are now dealing with the results of years of neglect. Lois Marshall asked if Selectmen feel that hiring the new full timer will help this. Yes, the Highway Department should have at least seven people, to be fully staffed. Bob MacMichael also referred to the recent heavy rains and the impact on roads, drainage issues, etc. He pointed out that numerous such problems are being created by all the new development, and also expressed concern that the Highway Department already has its hands full. They should be concentrating on the roads. Selectmen agreed that they need to get information about those kinds of issues out to the public, and said that a forthcoming *Link* will be devoted to this.

5. Sue Clough reported that Selectmen have hired a new superintendent of the transfer station: John Early. Celeste Cook asked how many times a week the trash is hauled out. Normally three times, though in the summer that number may be increased to four. Mark Kaplan reminded everyone that the Town has less than a year now on its contract with Claremont, and they are looking at options for transferring trash.
6. Doug Lyon said plans for the roundabout at Newport/County Road intersection are going forward. The ultimate design will go to Town Meeting, but there will be public meetings on the subject before that. D.J. Lavoie asked if this is going to alleviate current difficulties in pulling out onto Newport Road. Selectmen said that neither the roundabout nor a traffic light at that intersection would help much with that problem. The roundabout will serve to slow people down for some distance both as they approach and leave the roundabout. Mark Kaplan added that traffic and parking are among the issues that the Master Plan must address, for example how many curb cuts will be allowed on a main road. CAC members pointed out that the curb cuts are already there on Newport Road and Main Street. Selectmen agreed that not much can be done about the difficulty in pulling out from a side street onto Newport Road or Main Street, particularly if one wishes to turn left. Several CAC members said it would be helpful if the 30 mph speed limit were more strictly enforced, and if speed limit signage were improved. Harmon Lewis suggested placement of blinking lights in places such as in front of the post office.
7. Doug Lyon reported that the Town is continuing to look into the formation, along with several other towns, of a regional fiber infrastructure. Within the next few weeks, they expect to see a preliminary feasibility report. Hugh Chapin asked if this will include wireless communication. Doug Lyon said they are looking into that, but he reminded everyone that a fiber infrastructure is required to create a wireless system. Wireless is great for laptops users, and others, but it does not have the same power as cable. Mark Kaplan said that some areas as West Virginia, have found that the wireless system interferes with the ham radio operators. Also, he noted that there is an increase in cost commensurate with increasing speed---megabytes per second. The system Jessie Levine is looking at now will be five to ten MB/second, at reasonable cost. David Dunning asked if this is for tv only. Doug Lyon explained that a regional fiber infrastructure would be open to anyone. Right now, the infrastructure is owned by Adelphia, and that company determines what services will be provided. If the Town owns its own infrastructure, it can invite other participants. Doug Lyon said the Selectmen are trying to think ten years down the road. It is possible that every house will have fiber optic to it one day.
8. Selectmen reported that they have had one non-resident meeting this summer, and will have another. Attendees received an update from Bruce King regarding the hospital.
9. Peter Bianchi asked about the status of the mosquito control program that was approved at Town meeting. Selectmen said that the heavy rains have reduced the number of mosquitoes, though a second crop is expected, and those will be tested. Larviciding was done in the storm drains, culverts and some maple swamps. They assured everyone that any portion of that appropriation that is not spent this year can be encumbered.
10. David Dunning asked about the new cistern at the college. Doug Lyon said that has been completed, though they have not worked out all the bugs in testing and running it. Mark Kaplan reminded everyone that this came about as the result of a recommendation made by the engineers to the water district, to avoid a catastrophe should the Morgan Hill system fail, and a fire break out at the same time. Doug Lyon said the college granted this easement behind the library to the water district. The cistern provides a half-million gallon back up for emergencies—about a day's worth of water for the Town, should the main system fail. The swimming pool at Hogan also is available as back up—for fire, not for drinking.

11. Barbara Brown updated the Committee on the middle school progress. They have completed the archeological studies, but are still getting all permits in place. They hope to break ground at the end of this summer, and have it completed within two years. The School Board is considering options for the current middle school, and trying to look at where the growth will go in the future.
12. Harmon Lewis said he had recent opportunity to use Bucklin Beach, and has suggested to Chad Denning that one or two handicapped parking spaces would be good there. Also, he suggested creating another egress from the parking lot, so that traffic can move in a circular pattern.

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Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S.A. Denz  
Recording Secretary