



# TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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## PLANNING BOARD APPROVED MEETING MINUTES July 26, 2011

**PRESENT:** Tom Cottrill (Chair), Tina Helm (Selectmen's Representative), Emma Crane (Conservation Commission Representative), Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Paul Gorman, Michael Doheny (alternate), and Deirdre Sheerr-Gross (Alternate)

**NOT PRESENT:** Jeff Hollinger (Vice-Chair), Michele Holton, John Tilley

Chair Cottrill called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. He asked Ms. Sheerr-Gross to sit in for Michele Holton, who was absent.

### 1. Mauli McDonald (Map 073, Lot 049-000) 9 Newport Road

Mr. Stanley explained that this was to request to waive the Site Plan Review to move a "gazebo" (for lack of a better term) from the current Main Street location to the new store location at Newport Road to be used as a "landscape feature." Mr. Stanley said that there is grass growing under the gazebo (there is no floor), flowers are growing on top of it, and he was comfortable considering this to be landscaping. Ms. McDonald indicated that the gazebo could be moved without a problem.

Mr. Stanley explained that this gazebo does not reduce green space and also that exempt from "structure" in the ordinance, is "landscape feature." He explained that this gazebo was previously considered a structure when the Planning Board (PB) approved the original request for the current location. However, upon closer inspection, it could fit the category of a "landscape feature" due to actual use since original approval and that there is no real use for people other than to walk thru. If the gazebo is enhanced in any way, it would need to have a building permit.

Ms. McDonald said she would be placing the gazebo near a group of tall pine trees on the side of the building. Mr. Stanley noted that "landscape features are not subject to the setback requirements. Mr. Doheny said they need to keep in mind others who may consider decorative arches, pergolas, gazebos, etc., as "landscape features."

Mr. Stanley said they didn't need a vote; he just wanted the OK of the PB that his interpretation of the ordinance was the same as that of the PB.

Ms. McDonald noted that Dan Benedict built and owns the gazebo and can move it without a problem.

Ms. Sheerr-Gross wondered about the setback for this landscape feature. She wouldn't want someone else to relocate it as it could become a problem if placed too close to the busy road. Mr. Stanley agreed and suggested he write up a policy letter to submit to the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board to explain the reasoning why this gazebo would be considered a non-structure.

### 2. Brian MacKenzie (Map 036, Lot 002-000, 853) Pleasant Street.

Mr. Stanley indicated that Mr. MacKenzie had installed a variety of landscape features at the Pleasant Lake Inn and wished to waive the requirement for Site Plan Review. The improvements are patios, walkways and stone walls that will not add to the capacity of the Inn or expand the nonconforming use but are improvements of existing walkways and landscaping

Mr. Stanley said that he saw some patios and walkways being created at the site, which had not come before the PB. He said that he was fine with this, as they were not planning to put any tables there; it was just to make it look more attractive. Mr. Stanley said that a building permit was not required, but that a site plan review is necessary. Mr. MacKenzie noted that they also fixed up an area that will provide a better fire exit.

**IT WAS MOVED (Tina Helm) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to waive the requirement for site plan review for site improvements at the Pleasant Lake Inn based on the fact that they did not expand the use in any way, shape or form, or change the direction of the foot traffic. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### 3. Continued review of the Master Plan Implementation Chapter

Mr. Stanley said that when Mr. McCrory put the chapter together, he used the un-changed Land Use chapter wording, so some things that had been changed in that chapter did not appear in this Implementation Chapter. He also said that he pared down the 181 recommendations into just 23. He took out the “feel good” recommendations in addition to the ones that said they would “continue to” do something. He kept things that had any kind of PB generating change that would have an action item for the PB to be involved in.

Chair Cottrill questioned the “Action Matrix” term in the first paragraph. He suggested a re-word of a portion of the paragraph to explain how they came to the recommendations. He suggested that under abbreviations, they should be listed in alphabetical order, or put them in the order of the chapters. Many thought they should be listed in the order of chapters.

It was noted by Chair Cottrill that after paring down the recommendations, it showed the Land Use Chapter had 10 recommendations, which was more than any other chapter. Ms. Sheerr-Gross said that it was hard to tell the importance of the Land Use recommendations as there were so many other recommendations within the first draft of the Implementation Chapter.

Chair Cottrill wondered if it was necessary to rank the priority of categories. He couldn't identify anything that was a high priority. Ms. Helm noted that priority will be determined by the person reading the document. It was determined that all the recommendations included in the chapter were the highest priority. Chair Cottrill asked Mr. McCrory to remove the priority column.

Ms. Sheerr-Gross suggested changing the name of the chapter to “Planning Board Implementation.” “Action matrix” was replaced with “table.”

Mr. Stanley felt that the housing recommendation may lead to changes in things such as zoning districts and implementing mixed use.

#4 Mr. Stanley said this was a general support statement and they could expand it to say the “Planning Board to grant flexibility for things such as farm stands and the like.” While the Town does this already, it was noted that it would be good to have it written somewhere. He said they allow agriculture everywhere and require a certain lot size for animals. It was decided to remove this recommendation and mention something about this in #9 which dealt with conservation. #4 did not have an action item for the PB so it didn't belong on the list.

After some discussion, it was determined to keep #4 and add “through enactment of innovative land use techniques...” More work would be done to the wording to make this clear.

Mr. Stanley said there is an approach to conservation called Lot Size Averaging to allow smaller parcels to meet the zoning requirements when surrounded by larger parcels. Mr. McCrory said the incentive is to maintain the functionality of the farm and there are also density bonuses. He said the scenic aspect is covered in number 1 of the table. Mr. Stanley said that they go over this aspect over and over in the document.

Mr. Doheny left the meeting at 8:03pm.

Mr. McCrory cautioned against being too prescriptive of how people should work with their land. They should envision how it can be codified in an ordinance rather than by someone's desire to do something.

#5. Fire Protection Water Supply – Mr. Stanley said that this is part of the Capital Improvements Program. It should say “should” instead of “encouraged to.”

#6. Include Town Bridge – left alone.

#7. Land Use Policies – expand on what zones Mr. McCrory was talking about. Take “all” out.

#8. Conservation – replace “fragile” with “important.”

#9. Conservation – left alone.

#10. Water – added “apparent” projected increased... Mr. McCrory wanted to work on the wording in this section.

#11. Water – Remove this and add the water quality portion in with #10.

#12. History – remove “needs” with “should.”

#13. Energy – re-worded by Chair Cottrill and everyone thought his changes were good. Mr. Stanley said they could encourage certain methods of subdivision (through the regulations) to promote southern-facing homes and other ways to save energy.

#14. Land Use –

Mr. Stanley indicated that the remaining Land Use sections needed to be updated with the language as changed in the May meeting. These would be reviewed at the meeting on August 9.

#### Minutes of June 28, 2011

**IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Paul Gorman) to approve the minutes of June 28, 2011, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### Other Business

Tom Little – Mr. Stanley explained that Mr. Little had an approved subdivision and wants to completely change his drainage plans, due to a change in state regulations, to bring the drainage back to the west side of the lot and down the back side. This was a system they didn't plan on changing, but though he doesn't need a permit from the State, he still needs to amend the final subdivision approval to reflect the new drainage system. It must be designed appropriately to make sure the drainage will work and is done correctly. Mr. Stanley said that he can legally do this, and added that both he and Mr. Lee and feel it is a good idea, but they need to make sure it is designed by someone who knows what they are doing and that the culverts they want to install will be appropriate. They also need amended the final minor subdivision plan that shows the new features. He doesn't have to change the location of the lots, but has to amend the easements. Mr. Stanley said that he would write a letter on behalf of the PB to have Mr. Little come in and do this.

Mr. McCrory said that in a standard subdivision, they'd require the drainage plans. It will be on the Mylar and recorded with pipe sizes, etc. This is changing the easements so he thought it would be re-heard. It could be waived, provided they come up with plans and easements. If it is to be a formal hearing, it would need to be re-noticed and the applicant would need to pay for that. Mr. Stanley said that Mr. Little is

hiring Bob Bell to do the work. He also noted that the water would go down into Lyon Brook, which is the natural place for it to go through the wetland complex that is there.

Mr. Stanley said that he will indicate to Mr. Little that he would need to come back to the PB and he will need to come in to the September meeting to allow for time to get a design in place.

CIP (Capital Improvement Program) Committee

Cottrill asked Tina Helm (Selectmen's Representative) how much the new Town Administrator, Kimberly Hallquist should be involved in the CIP process, as the former Town Administrator, Ms. Levine, was very much involved in the last couple years. Ms. Helm said she didn't think it necessary to have Ms. Hallquist as directly involved as was Ms Levine but that she should attend the meetings. Mr. Stanley agreed and said she should participate just to be on top of things. Mr. Stanley said the statute ties the Master Plan to the CIP. The Master Plan should be complete and ready for the final public hearing in November/December. Use of the Master Plan will help the department heads to prioritize various needs. It should serve as a planning tool.

Cottrill suggested that the CIP process begin in mid-late September with the department heads. He also explained to all that this is a PB driven initiative by statute and that the PB has traditionally invited two members of the Budget Committee, as a courtesy, however, this action is not necessary. Once all department heads have been interviewed, the CIP formalizes the CIP action plan by vote of the Planning Board, then passes the plan to the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Helm thought the PB could put their CIP committee together but not meet until October.

Helm was concerned with various mandates handed down from the state and felt the CIP process should be carried out according to the "book."

Master Plan public meetings will be in the Nov/Dec timeframe.

**IT WAS MOVED (Paul Gorman) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to adjourn the meeting.  
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary  
Town of New London