



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

PLANNING BOARD
APPROVED MINUTES
April 8, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Cottrill (Chair), Jeff Hollinger (Vice-Chair), Paul Gorman (Secretary), Peter Bianchi (Board of Selectmen's Representative), John Tilley, Michele Holton, Emma Crane (Conservation Commission Representative),

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Doheny (Alternate), Deirdre Sheerr-Gross (Alternate), Bill Helm (Alternate)

STAFF: Lucy St. John (Planning and Zoning Administrator), Kristy Heath (Recording Secretary)

Chair Cottrill called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

Zoning Amendments- Public Hearing

Chair Cottrill explained that this was the second and final public hearing for the proposed zoning amendments. He opened the public hearing for comments.

Amendment # 1 – Boathouses and Docks

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeff Hollinger) AND SECONDED (Paul Gorman) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment # 2 – Definition of Boathouse and Functionally Dependent Use

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeff Hollinger) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment #3 – Temporary Signs

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Paul Gorman) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment #4 – Definition of Retirement Care Community (RCC)

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeff Hollinger) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment #5 – To add Retirement Care Communities (RCC) as a permitted use within the Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay District.

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Peter Bianchi) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment #6 – Clarify the limits of the PUD zone district as shown on the zoning map which include the ARR and Hospital Institutional Districts

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Paul Gorman) AND SECONDED (Jeff Hollinger) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Amendment #7 – Amend the Preamble of the Zoning Ordinance to Refer to the Most Recently Adopted Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan.

There were no comments from the Planning Board. No comments from the public.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeff Hollinger) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to place the amendment on the ballot. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Conceptual Subdivision and Lot Line Adjustment Discussion Tax Map 086-022-000 and 086-021-000.

Located on the corner of Seamans Road, Hall Farm Road and Blueberry Lane. Parcel 086-022-000 owned by Seamans Road Realty Trust, Martha Peyser Trustee. Parcel 086-021-000 owned by Mary and James Steproe. Applicant- Cherry Hill Homes, John Langill. Plans prepared by Jennifer McCourt of McCourt Engineering and Associates. Proposal to subdivide approximately 34 acres into eight (8) residential lots with a lot line adjustment. Zoned ARR.

Overview of the Conceptual Plan Process: Ms. St. John referred to the staff report, which was included on the Town's website. She explained that the applicant is before the Board for a conceptual discussion, which is a non-binding discussion between the Board and the applicant.

Jennifer McCourt, McCourt Engineering Associates and John Langill, President of Cherry Hill Homes presented that conceptual plan for discussion.

Ms. McCourt showed the map of the property, which abuts Seamans Road, Hall Farm Road and Blueberry Lane. She said there had been no survey done as yet. The map showed a 10' wide strip as part of a smaller abutting parcel that was part of the Hall Farm subdivision, now owned by the Steproe's. The strip has a sewer, utility, and view easement and both lots are zoned Agricultural. The 34 acres has over 6,000' of road frontage, mostly on Seamans Road. The applicant is requesting a lot line adjustment between the smaller parcel with the 10' wide strip and the 34 acre lot to gain access to Hall Farm Road from proposed lots on the 34 acre parcel. She referred to the staff report and the provisions regarding the prohibition against reserve strips. She explained that the Steproe's (parcel for the lot line adjustment) have given written authorization to Ms. McCourt to represent them that evening and the letter is on file.

Ms. McCourt said there are several streams and wetlands on the property. Per the Town's Streams and Wetlands Overlay map, there are no streams and wetlands shown for this property. She explained that site-specific wetlands mapping will be conducted. The streams and wetlands will be delineated by a certified NH wetland scientist, once the site is more accessible after the snow melt. They would like to have the driveways on Hall Farm Road and Blueberry Lane. She noted that per their initial research Blueberry Lane ended at the turn-around.

Ms. McCourt wondered if the Wildlife Habitat Report requirement could be waived. She indicated that the lot had been clear-cut mostly, except for some trees around the streams. With regard to High Intensity Soil Survey (HISS), she didn't see it as a useful standard in this instance. She would prefer to do site specific soil survey mapping which is required per the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), for the location of the proposed on-site septic systems. Her reasoning is the zoning requires a minimum of 4 acres per lot, which is 1.5 times larger than the largest lot required for a HISS. She asked the Board if they would entertain a waiver, to allow the lot size based on the NHDES requirement, not the HISS mapping requirements. She preferred a site specific soil survey over HIS mapping because it gives better information than HISS does and can be used across the board.

Ms. McCourt said the homes would have private septic systems and wells. She was confident that they had sufficient radius to put wells on these lots.

Ms. McCourt said she spoke with Chief Lyon regarding fire protection. The ordinance requires at least one cistern within 1500' of the homes. She wondered about using sprinklers in the houses rather than putting in a cistern. Chief Lyon had said he was open to this but they would need approval from the Planning Board. Sprinklers would run off of storage tanks of approximately 400 gallons and serve as fire suppression. Mr. Langill said he was currently building three homes in another community that have sprinkler systems within them and found they add about \$9,000 to the cost of the home. He said they send building plans to a company called "Life Safety" which sizes the needs of the tank to the size of the house. Ms. McCourt said it is the preference of Chief Lyon to have sprinkler systems put in, which are dependent on approval from the Planning Board. If they were not allowed to put in the sprinkler systems, the location of a cistern is not known but could be located along Seamans Road.

Ms. McCourt said she had spoken with Richard Lee and referred to his comments, particularly his request for the driveways to come off of Hall Farm Road. Ms. McCourt said she understood the consideration for this but will have to look at the wetlands impact.

Larry Ballin, an abutter, commented that his property is accessed from Blueberry Lane. He stated there is some misunderstanding on where Blueberry Lane officially ends and it does not end at the turnaround. He explained the "Town Turnaround" area is on private property (Jim Bolger's land) and there is no deed or formal agreement with the Town to use this as a turn-around area. He believes the boundary is probably 30'-40' to the south or west of the turn-around area.

Ms. McCourt conveyed that they have done some initial review of the deeds, but certainly do not have all the details at this point in time. She explained there is language in some deeds, stating they have rights to access the portion of the land that is not on Blueberry Lane.

Mr. Ballin said he spoke with Richard Lee today, and that Richard Lee has commented that a developer would be required to upgrade the road to 80% of the standards required for town roads for access to the two proposed lots. Mr. Ballin conveyed that the owner of the first lot (James Bolger property) has suggested the town turnaround may disappear, and that the Town would have to come up with a newer plan for a safe turn-around for town vehicles.

Mr. Langill said Mr. Bolger owned the land over which the right of way passes. The parcel they are purchasing abuts Mr. Bolger's parcel. They have the right to use that frontage to access the land they are purchasing, per details in the deed. Chair Cottrill asked Mr. Langill if he had spoken with Mr. Bolger. Mr. Langill said he talked with him briefly that day and would speak with him more the following day.

Ms. McCourt said depending on how long the turnaround has been there, the Town may have rights to it.

Ms. St. John reminded those at the meeting that this was a conceptual discussion. She explained that the engineer and applicant would be conducting more detail deed research with regard to rights-of-way and easements and would provide additional details about the property when an application is submitted. Ms. McCourt said if they decide to come back for a preliminary review, abutters would be noticed and they would be ready with full plans with the wetlands delineated, a survey done, driveway and test-pit location, etc.

Tom LeBlanc, abutter at 55 Blueberry Lane said he has concerns about drainage and wetlands. He asked what the plan was to address the drainage issues in the area. Mr. LeBlanc said he now often has water in his basement due to the clear cut of trees. He noted the site includes streams and wetlands. Mr. LeBlanc asked the developer if they would they walk away from the project if they couldn't get as many lots as they wanted? Mr. Langill said if they couldn't get the amount of lots they need to make it financially feasible, he would walk away.

Mr. Langill said he has agreed to meet with the abutters' one-on-one to talk about minimizing the impact to their lots. He said their plan is to add eight houses with significant amount of landscaping which could take four years before being established. Lawn and trees will handle the water to minimize runoff from going into other people's basements. He said he sells high-end houses and needs to do a lot of work on the property in order to be able to sell them.

Mr. Bianchi opined that the water problem could be significant and solving that problem to make sure it doesn't affect down-stream homes was key.

Mr. Ballin thought it important to not give a waiver on the HISS; the area is an old sheep pasture from the 1920's that has been deforested again and there are serious soil issues there. He felt there should be no relief from the Wildlife Habitat Inventory due to there being a large deer population, rabbits, fisher cats, bears and moose. It is part of a major wildlife corner and animals move through there to get where they bed down for the winter. Ms. McCourt said they are planning four-acre lots allowing a large area for the animals to continue to live.

Ms. McCourt said Cherry Hill hired her, a civil engineer, to work on the drainage issues. She has worked closely with DES and ways to deal with water, such as adding rain gardens and maintaining drip edges. She is clear as to where the problems are. She is familiar with the area and wants to give the town a good product. She felt Mr. Langill was putting together a team of professionals who know what they were doing.

Mr. Ballin didn't think lots shaped in triangles and bow-ties were examples of good planning. He opined that it didn't make any sense. There was no way for the homeowner to access their property unless they are coming off of Seaman's Road. He understood they were trying to maximize the density but New London has been trying to avoid this kind of planning for the last 30 years.

Mr. Langill stated that the conceptual plan before the Board this evening was not the first plan layout they had considered. In their earlier discussion they had laid long narrow lots with access from Seaman's Road. Mr. Langill stated that Mr. Lee had asked that they minimize driveways on Seaman's Road. Ms. McCourt said it wouldn't matter how they shaped the lots; they had 200' of frontage either way. Configuring the lots in bow-tie shapes were done to get the driveways off of Blueberry Lane and had nothing to do with density.

Chair Cottrill thanked the applicant for the presentation of the conceptual plan. Mr. Langill assured those at the meeting that he does good work and they are on the same team. Everyone will be happy when he is done.

Review of Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (Michele Holton) to approve the minutes of March 25, 2014, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Seamans Road Sidewalk – Colby- Sawyer College (Kelsey Athletic Fields). Tax Map 086-001-000.

Ms. St. John referred to the discussion of the Kelsey Athletic Fields Site Plan and Notice of Decision of May 14, 2013. One of the conditions of approval (# 4) was the College ("CSC") will facilitate a collaborative dialogue with the Town before September 30, 2013 about sidewalks/crosswalks along Seaman's Road. By April 1, 2014 CSC and the Town will collaboratively present a joint implementation plan to the Planning Board.

She explained that in August 2013 Town staff met with representatives of CSC, and an update was provided to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) at the Sept 3, 2013 BOS meeting. Recently the Town received an estimate of the cost for a portion of the sidewalk area along Seaman's Road. A meeting was held on April 8, 2014 with Doug Atkins and Todd Emmons (CSC) and the Town Administrator, Fire Chief, Public Works, Planning and Zoning Administrator and Tina Helm, BOS.

Ms. St. John explained that she was providing an update, and that discussions will continue with the College. At this point in time, it is clearly understood this is a safety issue and the Town and College agree to work cooperatively to implement a plan for sidewalks/crosswalks along Seamans Road. An initial plan may be to install sidewalks from Gould Road to Cottage Lane, and later extending the sidewalks from Cottage Lane to Kelsey Field. More discussion will follow, the purpose herein was to provide an update to the Planning Board.

Next Planning Board Meeting

Ms. St. John noted that at the March meeting the Board had revised their 2014 meeting schedule. The revised schedule has been posted. The next regular meeting will be May 20. The April 22nd and May 13th meetings were cancelled.

Other Business

Ms. St. John referred to the agenda attachment list. She noted that the NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) Spring Planning and Zoning Conference is Saturday, May 3rd. Board members interested in attending should complete the registration form. She will not be able to attend.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London