

APPROVED minutes of the December 22, 2009 Planning Board Master Plan Work Session

Members Present: Tom Cottrill (Chairman), Jeff Hollinger (Vice Chairman), Emma Crane (Conservation Commission Representative), Tina Helm (Board of Selectmen Representative), Deirdre Sheerr-Gross (Alternate), John Tilley (Alternate) – arrived at 7:45pm.

Members Absent: Michael Doheny (Secretary), Karen Ebel

Also Present: Ken McWilliams (Town Planner), Peter Stanley (Zoning Board Administrator), Jerry Gold (New London Resident), Russ Aney (Energy Committee), Jack Harrod (Energy Committee Chair), Mark Vernon (Energy Committee), Mike Meller (Energy Committee), Bob Crane (Energy Committee)

Chair Cottrill called the **MEETING TO ORDER** at 7:05pm and asked Ms. Sheerr-Gross to sit in for Ms. Ebel, who was absent. He welcomed the Energy Committee to the meeting, as the main topic of discussion would be a review of their new Energy Chapter for inclusion in the Master Plan.

Mr. McWilliams commented that he liked the format. Mr. Gold said he liked having the goals listed in the first paragraph. Mr. Stanley remarked that the new chapter was much better and had a cleaner approach than the last version.

Mr. Vernon asked how the workforce improvement plan would tie into the chapter. Mr. Aney said that the economic development poses a challenge here and perhaps they could link back to this information.

Mr. Stanley said that energy conservation should be included in all departments and activities. Suggesting alternative improvement applications that would transform the way energy is consumed should be the goal.

Mr. Crane suggested the removal of carbon from the atmosphere should be mentioned in the first paragraph, and opined that they should find some way to provide education to the Town regarding carbon emissions and their negative effects on the environment.

Mr. Vernon thought they should be careful with the last sentence of the first paragraph, as it may create a need to make further changes in the chapters already approved for the Master Plan.

Chair Cottrill suggested changing some of the wording in the paragraph regarding factual references to carbon emissions causing things such as climate change and global warming. Mr. Aney said that while there are well-documented studies that show that climate change is likely happening due to high carbon emissions, he will re-word the sentence.

Page 2, line 20 - Mr. Aney said he would like to remove the words “in New London” from the text.

Page 2, line 11 - Chair Cottrill said that this sentence could be re-written to say “New London has the opportunity to reduce the effects caused by the combustion of these fuels.” All agreed that this was a good change.

Page 2, line 30 – Mr. Aney asked to remove the word “its”.

Page 3, line 1 – Mr. Aney suggested removing the entire line.

Page 3, line 2 – Mr. Aney suggested capitalizing the “t” in “The” to begin a new sentence.

There was a concern as to whether this chapter on Energy fit the same style as the other chapters in the Master Plan many of which are already approved. After some casual conversation, Chair Cottrill suggested placing a note at the beginning of the chapter to give credit to the Energy Committee for its collaboration with the PB, its research and for writing the rough draft of the chapter. The members of the Energy Committee were happy to receive this recognition in the Master Plan.

Page 3, line 15 & 16 – Mr. Aney suggested taking out “(sometimes measured in)” and leave “lumens” in parenthesis. He also suggested removing the quotation marks from “watts”.

Mark Vernon was surprised at the linkage between the sustainable energy and energy efficiency. Mr. Aney said another paragraph on distributed energy or energy generation could be added. Mr. Vernon felt that was a good idea. Mr. Aney said he’d work on this and would break it down into Energy Conservation, Energy Efficiency, and Energy Distribution. Mr. Gold said distribution was a good example of making things sustainable and efficient and that it follows as a good example. Mr. Aney felt there were always challenges in shedding light on the most important perspectives. Chair Cottrill confirmed that the Energy Committee would re-write the section to include a Sustainable Energy portion and then divide the rest of the information into distribution opportunities. Mr. Aney affirmed this notion.

Page 3, line 24-25 – Mr. McWilliams asked if “geothermal” should be included. Mr. Aney said he would add it to the list. Mr. Crane commented that geothermal was very expensive to install in this area. Ms. Sheerr-Gross noted that there are people in Town who have the money to install geothermal, and that systems have been put in.

Page 4: Chair Cottrill noted the long paragraph on this page regarding New London helping and supporting the town and citizens to pursue a more effective energy strategy. He asked for a subheading for the paragraph, as it would help lead the reader into the section. Mr. Aney felt this may also be a good place to insert information about outreach and education.

Page 4, line 5 - Mr. Crane explained the idea of a smart grid. He said it allows connections to be made where there is an excess of energy and move it to where it is needed. Mr. Aney said he would add a mention this type of technology. He noted that the application of the smart grid was not under the control of New London or any of its citizens. New London has the ability to approve the installation of the grids, but have no control over PSNH’s decision to invest in smart grid technology.

Page 5, line 12 - Mr. McWilliams suggested taking the “s” off of the word “sources.”

Mr. Aney noted that he would give a subheading to the closing paragraph on that page.

Page 5, line 20 – Mr. Aney suggested the addition of “conducted in 2008.” Chair Cottrill suggested adding “by the New London Planning Board”

Page 5, line 21 – Mr. Aney suggested replacing the word “provided” with “showed.”

Page 6, line 1 – Mr. Aney suggested replacing the word “significantly” with the word “very.”

Page 6, line 2 – Mr. Aney suggested changing the text to read “as does support for scenic areas and open spaces...”

Mr. Vernon noted the Berlin, NH Master Plan Energy chapter had much emphasis on Green Jobs. Mr. Aney thought that Green Jobs were being highlighted recently. He explained that while it wasn’t a consistent growth opportunity noted in the town survey, he felt this would be a good place to add Green Job information. He said he had included some of the types of businesses they’d like to attract in the Town. He would insert a paragraph regarding Green Jobs that could be created that would be consistent with the types of businesses New London would like to see in Town.

((Mr. Tilley arrived at 7:45 and was asked by Chair Cottrill to sit in for Michael Doheny, who was absent from the meeting.))

Page 7, lines 1-3 Mr. Aney thought the text should be changed to read, “New London citizens want an easier and safer alternative to using their petroleum-fueled cars.”

Mr. Aney added that there was some support in the Town Survey for more bike paths and corridors.

Page 7, line 8 – Chair Cottrill suggested changing the text to read “Recently as fuel and energy costs have escalated, and as New London’s understanding of...”

Page 7, line 13 – Ms. Sheerr-Gross suggested exchanging the word “local” to The New London Energy Committee.”

To the list of recent energy efficiency upgrades in the Town, Mr. Stanley asked them to add the fact that they doubled the size of fire station, insulated the entire building with foam insulation. They also added a heating plant. Mr. Harrod suggested adding the fire station's name in the first bullet to incorporate this worthy addition.

Mr. Aney suggested adding on to the end of the list "Installation of Natural Areas" (designated town-owned land that is not mowed or fertilized in Town).

Page 7, line 28 – Mr. Aney noted that since bike racks were not added in 2009, that date should be removed.

Page 8: Chair Cottrill said that the bullets should be put in bold after the bullet for "Purchasing." He suggested doing this with all the other paragraphs to help the reader understand what would be covered in each section of the text.

Page 9: Mr. Harrod suggested submitting a warrant article at Town Meeting to give rebates or tax breaks for those who install alternative energy systems in their homes. He asked Ms. Helm how the select board would feel about the idea, as the current policy is to not give rebates, but instead to not increase their assessment even though an improvement had been made to the structure. Mr. Harrod indicated that he added solar paneling to his home and was the first person to submit a request for a tax exemption. Instead, they did not increase his assessment. Mr. Harrod said that the State law allows for a reduction of taxes for implementing alternative energy systems in homes. Ms. Helm said she would speak with her colleagues about the issue.

Mr. Vernon said he'd like to have the "What More Can New London Do" section put at the front of the chapter. Chair Cottrill said that having this sort of paragraph at the end was how the other chapters were formatted. Mr. Harrod opined that logically, the section should go at the end.

Page 9, line 22 – Peter Stanley said that the reference to New London adopting a building code should be eliminated. If they decide to adopt and enforce a code, it would cost a fortune as many people with much expertise would need to be hired. He said they should focus on educating townspeople about state requirements and not try to add another governmental infrastructure to the process. Ms. Sheerr-Gross suggested using "to encourage compliance" instead of "adopt and enforce."

Mr. Gold asked Mr. Stanley what "code" becomes effective on April 1, 2010. Mr. Stanley said that it is a building code which the State chooses to adopt. The towns that adopt the code will have to follow the minimum requirements if they have an inspector and a building code. Mr. Stanley said that New London is reluctant to adopt a building code. He remarked that carrying out Zoning ordinances and regulations correctly is already an overwhelming task. To take on building codes would require an entirely new staff. He added that the Town is however, required to follow the State commercial code.

Mr. Aney felt an educational role rather than a police role would be best.

Mr. Aney added that with regard to Economic Development and job creation, that it should be its own category. He said he would insert that subject wherever it flows best within the document. Mr. Stanley suggested calling it "Economic Opportunities."

Chair Cottrill asked if the State follows up on new/modified commercial buildings with regard to commercial codes. Mr. Stanley said that there are other certifications that require building inspections. The State usually hires a third party to verify compliance with the codes. The Town does not do it. The Town follows safety items through the Fire Department, and the Public Works Director reviews roads and access to things. Code enforcement, which may become part of site plan reviews, may require oversight for commercial properties. That way they are not having to buy into the infrastructure issue but can comply.

Mr. Tilley suggested on Page 11 to add a link where people can get more information on residential energy. Mr. Stanley said that the Energy Committee should provide library information and resource guides. Mr. Tilley thought that perhaps there should be something available for the reader to be able to go out and gather more information for their own personal use. Mr. Aney said he tried to capture something like this in the first paragraph and he had tried to put links in there for appropriate websites. He said he would try to make it more "customer-centric" and be a little more clear on where people could go to further their energy conservation knowledge. Chair Cottrill said that

there seems to be plenty of information available, but as it applies to an individual property, a person really must become an “expert” to know what steps are best for their needs. Mr. Aney said that a DVD which Mr. Harrod had referenced earlier, which was available at the library, was a summary of a program that was conducted at the library called “Button-Up NH.”

Chair Cottrill suggested keeping the information short and to the point. Mr. Aney said he appreciated the input and would be working on a new Energy website that would be linked to the existing Energy website, which was part of the nl-nh.com site.

Mr. Aney noted that there were some additional comments from an Energy Committee member who was not able to attend the meeting. He said that they were in regard to community involvement.

1. Connecting with the Forest Society. It was suggested to have additional speakers come in to talk about conservation, tree planting and forest conservation. They may be able to highlight continuing education for citizens and professionals, and collaborate with other associations or affiliated groups.
2. Highlight some local cases of energy conservation or efficiency and wrap some marketing around them to promote the same practices in the Town.

Chair Cottrill suggested adding a paragraph of the importance of improving traffic flow in New London so as to reduce inefficient driving/idling and unnecessary stops.

Mr. McWilliams said that he had an organizational comment about the chapter. In other chapters they have put the community survey results after the introduction and the goals. He asked if they were to be consistent, the results of the survey should go before the Historical Perspective on Page 1. Mr. Aney said that since this is the first chapter of the Energy Committee, it may be OK to put the Historical information up front. He felt it was harder to introduce the results from the survey without some of the context and framing from the historical standpoint. After some discussion, Chair Cottrill suggested the Energy Committee propose where the town survey information should be placed and the PB will review it.

Mr. Gold asked if each town would be reinventing the wheel on the energy chapters or if there was something the Town could do to encourage the other towns to co-sponsor. Mr. McWilliams said that Newbury wasn't able to put their Energy chapter into their master plan because they weren't quite ready. Mr. Gold said that before they do this Master Plan again, they need to recognize that there are costs that are needed (audits) and perhaps they could share those costs with other towns. He felt they should build into the document that they should encourage working with other towns.

Mr. Aney said he would have a revised draft by the end of the following week, before the New Year.

John & Donna Ferries

Review of Stormwater Management Plan to mitigate an increase in impervious coverage in the Shore Land Overlay District at 147 South Cove Road (Tax Map 45, Lot 28)

Ms. Sheerr-Gross recused herself from this review, as she is the architect for the plan.

Mr. McWilliams said the applicant is requesting an increase the impervious surface area of their property by a small percent in the Shore Land overlay district. In the zoning ordinance, a 30% impervious surface area is allowed if there is an approved stormwater management program. He indicated the applicant proposes to create such a program using rain gardens. Mr. McWilliams said that they need approval of their plan to move forward with a building permit. They also need a planting plan.

Tim Schad, builder, appeared at the meeting to represent the Ferries. He explained that they would like to create a new garage and would create an office and library from the old garage. In order to create the new garage, they will have to work within the 150-250 foot setback from the lake. Currently, the paving for the driveway and turnaround is exceeding the permissible amount. When they create the new garage this will increase the impervious area. The new garage would be replaced in front of the current garage. They plan to increase the driveway size to be able to turn their car around. In total, they will be reducing the pervious area by about 600 sq. feet. Mr. Schad noted that

they have designed a rain garden, which is a small wetlands area they create to allow water to run from the driveway into the rain garden and allow water to percolate into the ground rather than running towards the lake. This would meet all the requirements for this work to be done.

Mr. Stanley said that all segments of land near the shore must meet a minimum of a 50 point requirement. One segment on the Ferries' parcel does not currently meet this requirement. They are proposing to add enough vegetation to bring a 40 point segment to a 50 point segment. He summarized that the two things they are asking for are the approval of a planting plan, and approval of a stormwater management plan to increase total impervious area by 600 sq feet.

Ms. Sheerr-Gross said that this lot has been changing and evolving at the State and local level. She reminded them that they do allow the 30% and that it has already been approved by the State. Ms. Sheerr-Gross said that the parcel may be harder for some to look at because it has been changing so much. She indicated that it is all leveled out currently. It was once controversial but it is much more balanced with having the stormwater runoff to the rain garden.

Mr. Stanley showed several slides illustrating the proposal, including a cross-section of the rain garden.

Chair Cottrill asked if the driveway pitched toward the rain gardens. Mr. Schad said that it did. Mr. Stanley said he has recommended adding a stone diaphragm to the end of the driveway as an additional buffer. The builder said that they had planned to do this anyway, to further allow water to penetrate into the ground. Mr. Stanley said that the requirements seemed to fit. He also noted that Peter Blakeman, engineer, had done a water runoff analysis to show that the measures proposed would work. Ms. Sheerr-Gross noted that the Ferries are nice people who have done a lot of planning on this land and who also own the lot next to their home. They do not plan to do anything with this undeveloped lot.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeff Hollinger) AND SECONDED (Emma Crane) to approve the stormwater management and planting plans for John and Donna Ferries of 147 South Cove Road. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ms. Sheerr-Gross returned to her place within the Planning Board at 8:36pm.

Chair Cottrill asked to review the minutes from the November 24, 2009 Planning Board meeting. There were no comments or amendments.

IT WAS MOVED (Emma Crane) AND SECONDED (John Tilley) to approve the minutes of the November 24, 2009 Planning Board meeting, as circulated. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

There was no other business and so the **MEETING WAS ADJOURNED** at 8:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London

Approved on: _____

Chairman: _____