



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON PLANNING BOARD

May 8, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Whipple Hall

6:30 PM

PRESENT: Paul Gorman (Chair), Janet Kidder, Tim Paradis, Elizabeth Meller, Jeremy Bonin, Bill Dietrich, Maryann McEnrue, Paul Vance, David Royle (Alt)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joseph Kubit

OTHERS PRESENT:

Adam Ricker, Town Planner

Jay Lyon, Fire Chief,

Nicole Gage, Zoning Administrator

Doug Lyon, Chair of New London Hospital Board of Trustees

Wayne Morrill, Jones & Beach Engineering

Michael Black

Jim Callahan

New London Residents: Linda Colby, Trudy Parkhurst, Tom Cooper, Karen Cooper, Chris Major, Marybelle Chapin, Sue Eaton, Phyllis Piotrow, Marilyn Soper, Bruce Soper, Ann Paulson, Ellen Schauff, Hazel Merchant, Deb Langner, Steven Solomon, Peggy Prew, Maureen Dietrich, JL Tonner, Steve Ensign, Suzanne Hammond, Steve Root, Lymon Smith, Barbara Smith

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Gorman called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. All board members introduced themselves.

2. **Review of minutes:** April 24, 2018 meeting.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeremy Bonin) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2018 meeting as presented. ALL WERE IN FAVOR EXCEPT ELIZABETH MELLER AND BILL DIETRICH WHO ABSTAINED AS THEY WAS ABSENT FROM THIS MEETING.

3. **Public Comment-** None

4. **CONCEPTUAL – Continuum Development – Workforce Housing Development.** Located at Newport Road and 166 County Road. Tax Map 59-013-000 (7.03 +/- acres), 059-014-000 (3.1 +/- acres) and 059-018-000(1.35 +/- acres). Zoned Residential (R2). Developer is discussing the proposal to merge the three lots and build a development of multi-family Workforce Housing.

Chair Gorman explained the purpose of tonight's meeting is to present a conceptual that Continuum Development will be giving with regard to workforce housing. The proposal for an Assisted Independent Senior Living Development is a separate proposal.

The availability of workforce housing is enshrined in the laws of the State of New Hampshire. RSA 674:58 defines workforce housing, what affordable means, what multifamily housing means and what reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing means and economic expectations of workforce housing.

The law itself was passed in 2010. It's important to recognize that this is something that all municipalities deal with that includes ordinances to abide by. The zoning ordinances of New London

include workforce ordinances and are up to date through March 13, 2018. The Planning Board has the right to change the density requirements, lot size reduction, change front road reductions and other issues. He encourages everyone to read the ordinances and understand what power the Planning Board has and doesn't have. Chair Gorman stated that sometimes residents have an exaggerated sense of what power the Planning Board has.

This is not the formal presentation tonight, only a conceptual. This is just to talk about what they have in mind and also to give an opportunity for questions, comments and suggestions. In order to build multi-family workforce housing in an R2 zone, the developer will need to get a variance and go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Planning board will not hear the final proposal unless the Zoning Board makes a determination and grants a variance.

Jim Callahan, a lawyer from Peterborough that is representing Continuum read an email on behalf of Doug Lyon. Mr. Lyon is Chair of the New London Hospital Board of Trustees. In summary, Mr. Lyon stated that Continuum asked if there were any other projects in town they could help with and Town officials as well as others, mentioned workforce housing. They also discussed working with the New London Outing Club and the Council on Aging. They are interested in improving the communities they work in because it is part of their mission and is good business as it makes their Senior Living communities more desirable. Workforce housing is part of the Town of New London's master plan and is designed to meet the needs of service workers in the community. There is a very low unemployment rate in New Hampshire and this impacts the ability of every employer to provide good service. A workshop will be set up to help the zoning and planning boards to understand the regulations of workforce housing.

Mr. Callahan reiterated that this is a conceptual plan. Continuum is in the business of owning and operating Senior Living facilities and has a great track record in the state of Maine. They have been working with New London Hospital for about two years on this project to develop a facility to fit the needs of the community and the hospital. He also wanted to reiterate that workforce housing is not subsidized housing. This will be the first workforce housing proposal in New London.

Wayne Morrill, is an Engineer for Jones and Beach Engineering and is working with Mike Black from Continuum. The piece of property they are looking to build workforce housing is off of Newport road. The driveway would be across from Fenwood. They wanted to make sure the workforce housing was set back off the road and maintained buffers. There will be four buildings, with 24 units per building, three stories high. There will be one and two bedroom units. There will be a centrally located parking lot and the buildings would be located around the perimeter of the parking lot for good access.

There is no proposed access to the Hilltop roadway. This project would be hooked up to municipal services and due to the size of the building they will have a sprinkler system installed. The buildings will have one and two bedroom units but Mr. Morrill didn't have the count of how many of each in the buildings.

Elizabeth Meller asked if they would consider constructing the buildings so they are LEED certified. Mr. Morrill stated LEED certified (Leadership, Energy and Environmental Design) has a lot of different categories but the design group could look at it to make sure it is eco-friendly.

Jeremy Bonin asked what the front setback from the main road is going to be. They are set back beyond a power line so it is 40 feet from the power line easement so the first building is setback more than 75 feet. There is a natural buffer of trees in front of the power line so the buildings won't be seen from the road.

Selectman Kidder asked if there would be a rotary or a four way stop near Fenwood. Mr. Morrill stated they will be doing a traffic analysis but at this point they are planning a four way stop. She also asked if the parcel on County Road would be used. Mr. Morrill replied that the plan at this time is for it to remain open space.

Adam Ricker asked if the buffer on the front of the property on Newport Road would consist of the existing vegetation and be left at full growth or would it be removed and new vegetation planted. Mr. Morrill replied that they would only alter the driveway entrance. Up along the driveway would remain as existing vegetation. They would identify any areas along the power line easement that don't have enough

or low vegetation and incorporate some Evergreens to create a multi-level vegetative buffer. Mr. Ricker inquired as to whether they had mapped the wetlands at this point. Mr. Morrill stated that yes, they have mapped them and crews will be going out in the next week or so. He noted there are significant wetlands at the front of the property but as you go past the power lines, not as much.

Selectman Kidder asked about light pollution. Mr. Morrill will make sure the lighting falls within town regulations. Typically they do a 20 foot high shoe box style light and most of the lights turn down to 50%. If they want something else, they have different options. They will be LED lights and want to make sure it's bright within the parking lot but not casting light over tree buffers.

Adam Ricker asked if they would be extending the sidewalk to connect to the existing network. Mr. Morrill stated pedestrian access is important thing for them and they will extend it so they have pedestrian access into the center.

Paul Vance asked if there was a breakdown yet for number of children, couples, etc. and Mr. Morrill replied they do not have numbers at this time.

David Royle asked if a study had been done to see how many people would make use of workforce housing. Mr. Morrill stated they don't have this information at this time.

Maryann McEnrue noted they would be interested in that information because of the pressure of the municipal services as well as the schools.

Selectman Kidder asked how many parking spaces would be planned for this project. Mr. Morrill stated there would be 120 parking spaces.

Doug Lyon noted that aren't sure yet if this is a financially viable plan. Continuum is working with the hospital on the Senior Living project and that is the main priority. They have an excellent reputation and the fact that they are willing to look at other needs of the town is important. We are losing too many of our residents that are looking for the kind of senior living services that aren't offered in New London.

Marilyn Soper wanted to commend everyone for looking into this issue. Many people can't afford to live here and have to travel to work. Workforce housing is defined as property for sale at 100% of the median income for the county or for rent at 60%. She asked if these would be marketed for sale or rent. Mr. Black stated they are still looking into this. No firm decisions have been made but most likely these will be rentals.

Steve Solomon commented that the traffic seems to be unsafe as many cars would be coming out into the intersection in the morning and making a left hand turn. He would like the Planning Board to look very carefully at the traffic created. The site distance is tricky so when it's overloaded it may be difficult.

Suzanne Hammond noted that this winter at Hilltop they had a lot of snow and it took up several parking spaces. She suggested making sure they have a plan for where they will have space to put snow.

JL Tonner wanted to know what the buffer was to Hilltop road. Mr. Morrill replied there is a 20 foot setback to Hilltop Road. After clarification, the total distance from the Hilltop driveway to the very first building will be 50 feet.

Colin Beasley wanted to encourage them when they do a demographic analysis to look at what it means for car usage. The current math states there will be about 180 cars versus the proposed 120 cars and where will they park.

Maureen Dietrich asked that people not make assumptions about the healthcare population and what they want in housing. Some live rurally and value that. It isn't a one stop solution for affordable housing. She asks that they do a good survey of the population.

Nancy Rollins asked if there were balconies or patios. Mr. Morrill stated according to the rendering they have shown, they do not. He said this is something they could discuss.

Ms. Rollins asked if having only one means of egress and ingress is sufficient if there is an emergency. Jay Lyon, Fire chief, responded that whenever they look at gaining access, they like to have multiple means of accessibility. Having a fully sprinklered building makes it safer for the occupants as well as the

firefighters. They tend to have fewer issues with structures like this due to having adequate fire suppression systems inside the building.

Lymon Smith lives at the first cul de sac at Hilltop and hasn't seen any markers to see how close new structures would be. He thinks this would be helpful.

Phyllis Piotrow had a number of concerns about this proposal. Continuum is a "for profit" corporation and there is no indication that they are working with local contractors or architects on this project. As far as traffic, it isn't only vehicle traffic but pedestrian traffic. Many of Hilltop residents are walking to Hannaford and cannot have a crosswalk. After upcoming paving, the existing crosswalk will cease to exist. The post office across the street at the end of the day is very busy. The wetlands are an issue. It's not just the issue of not building on a wetland, it's a matter of a buffer between a wetland and other construction. This area has a lot of wetlands. She's also concerned that the Town of New London has no building inspector. At Hilltop place there were several things done wrong that created fire hazards, frozen pipes and other issues due to no building inspector. She wonders if bringing in a large, out of state, "for profit" corporation to build a building in a town that has no building inspector is a source of considerable concern. She is familiar with the workforce act which states reasonable and realistic opportunities for workforce housing be provided and agrees it is needed. She thought the original proposal at Parkside made more sense. Rentals need to be in the area of \$1,100 per month. She wonders if it is realistic to build anything in this area that can be rented for that amount in this area. She would like all of these thoughts to be considered and if that location is the best place for it.

Jay Lyon responded that he and Richard Lee have been working to put up flashing lights. If those are installed prior to the paving project scheduled for the July timeframe, then the State will allow the crosswalk to remain.

Bruce Hudson wanted to make people aware of infrastructure tied into Newport road and goes into the Buley property. This is the main water line that comes in and into the Great Pines development. He also wanted to address the wetlands. The concern during building at Great Pines was runoff that went into the wetlands and into a holding pond and then into Little Lake Sunapee. They are required to take water samples to have them tested.

Steve Root wanted to comment that looking at the three parcels, there isn't a division of the water shed. On the parcel that isn't being developed the water is flowing towards pleasant lake but the parcel that is being developed intensively, is flowing toward little Lake Sunapee. There is significant run off and the water testing shows this area has a lot of salt. His concern is that if the open land is to accommodate or offset the more intensive development of the other parcel, he asked that we keep in mind which way the water is flowing.

Brian Stolz hasn't heard any clear definition of what the open space is going to look like. Will there be any development? There is a lot impact studies that need to be done. Mike Black responded that the other two parcels will stay uncut and in their natural state.

Peggy Prew asked what the point was in merging the three lots. Is it for density or acreage? If the other pieces aren't going to be used for the project, why are the three pieces needed? Mike Black stated that the three pieces were being sold together. There was no alternative but to buy all three together. They wanted to do the most intense development on the largest piece. They are not needed for density.

Mike Williams noted that there is no doubt that affordable housing is needed in New London. He doesn't see anything in the plan that encourages families to live in town. Chair Gorman states that the law talks about what you can't do and who you can't exclude. Adam Ricker read from the ordinance that stated "Housing developments that exclude minor children from more than 20% of the units or in which more than 50% of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms shall not constitute workforce housing for the purposes of this subdivision."

Chair Gorman noted there will be training held on May 29, 2018 to learn about workforce housing and will be looking to people who have expertise in this area for help.

Jay Lyon stressed that we do need workforce housing. He gave an example of a fire fighter that was unable to find affordable housing locally. He was able to find a place in Sunapee but as a lieutenant,

when he is on call, he will have to stay at the station when he is on call because the response distance is too great from Sunapee to New London.

Jim Callahan stated that they have gone through several iterations of plans and there are many variables. These are complex projects that require multiple disciplines. This is the first pass on workforce housing and this concept evolved out of conversations regarding the needs of the town.

There hasn't been a deep dive of all the needs because it is costly to do professional studies. They start with the conceptual plan and will each pass if will be refined. The first step is to get zoning approval. Money won't be spent on professional studies and market studies unless they can get through zoning.

5. Other Business

Chair Gorman addressed the Capital Improvement Program and would like to get that initiated again. One of the issues that will be started will be the study of Whipple Hall. They will also talk with the Fire Chief, Police chief and the Department of Public Works to discuss issues. A proposal will presented to the Board of Selectmen by early fall. If you would like to be a part of the Capital Improvement project, please let Chair Gorman know.

6. Master Plan Update

Jeremy Bonin reported that they last met on May 8, 2018. They have gone through all of the questions from the previous New London survey and the questionnaire that Wilmot used for their survey. Over the next few weeks they will review it and come up with a final revision. Mr. Ricker will format it in the style of a survey and there will be a paper survey and also an online survey.

The goal is to utilize hospital day's activities as an opportunity to engage people to complete the survey. It could also be available at the transfer station. They will use the data to provide information during a charrette to get feedback to assist with drafting a master plan.

7. Correspondence Received - Adam Ricker stated that they received a letter from DOT notifying them of the work they will be doing around the region this summer. Mr. Ricker will scan it and email it out to members.

8. Future Meeting Dates: The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at Whipple Hall. There will be a training session on May 29, 2018 also in Whipple Hall.

9. Motion to Adjourn

**IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Jeremy Bonin) to adjourn.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson
Recording Secretary
Town of New London