



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 26, 2017
6:30 PM

PRESENT: Paul Gorman, Janet Kidder, Elizabeth Meller, Jeremy Bonin, Casey Biuso

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joseph Kubit, Michele Holton, Bill Dietrich, Marianne McEnrue

OTHERS PRESENT:

Adam Ricker
Ellen Winkler
Rachel Ensign
Jay Tucker
Bill Clough
Ki Clough
Linda Howes
Margie Weathers
Matt Conway
Karen Conway
Dan O'Halloran
Karen Hogleund
Audrey Martel
Graham McSwiney
Laurie Schive
Michael Morgan

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Review of minutes:**

IT WAS MOVED (Elizabeth Meller) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the minutes of the August 29, 2017 Planning Board meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY with Jeremy Bonin abstaining.

3. **Public Comment: None**

4. **Kenney, William & Susan Tree Cutting Application.** Located at 115 Lamson Lane. Tax Map 049-016-000. Proposal to cut (5) five shrubs. Property located in the following overlay districts: Shoreland Overlay District and Stream Overlay District. Town received August 31, 2017.

The applicants request permission to remove five shrubs that are planted around the foundation of a cottage that is being demolished to build a new house.

Mr. Ricker visited both sites. They are adding plantings to maintain the existing points in each cell and he is not concerned with the trees being removed.

IT WAS MOVED (Elizabeth Meller) AND SECONDED (Janet Kidder) to accept the proposal as presented. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. New London Hospitality Holdings LLC – Site Plan Review. Located at 353 Main Street. Tax Map 084-089-000. 1.02+/- acres. Zoned Commercial (COMM). Applicant is applying to add an addition of approximately 160 square feet to the building to house a walk-in cooler. Town received the application on September 5, 2017

The application was represented by Tami Minich an employee of New London Hospitality, LLC. Prior to Ms. Minich beginning her presentation, Janet Kidder recused herself from participating in the application as she is an abutter to the property in question.

Ms. Minich explained that the New London Inn would like to add a small addition of about 160 square feet to the rear of the Inn to house a walk in cooler. Mr. Gorman asked if the addition would impact the parking and Ms. Minich replied that it would not take the place of any parking spaces. Ms. Meller asked if the outdoor seating would be reduced due to the addition, and Ms. Minich stated that the outdoor seating would remain unchanged.

Mr. Ricker stated that the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Public Works Director did not have any comments regarding the application.

IT WAS MOVED (Jeremy Bonin) AND SECONDED (Elizabeth Meller) to accept the proposal as presented) THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Bonin Architects & Ellen Winkler – Continuation of Site Plan Review. Located at 12 Lovering Lane. Tax Map 084-059-000. .27 +/- acres. Zoned Commercial (COMM). Applicant is applying to change the use of the property to a restaurant/bakery establishment. Town received the application on August 8, 2017 and the hearing is continued from the September 12, 2017 New London Planning Board meeting.

Chair Gorman opened the continued public hearing by explaining that the board had received several letters from abutters within the last 12 hours and that he nor the rest of the board had had sufficient time to read and comprehend the concerns explained in the letters. He requested that going forward, all correspondence regarding applications must be submitted no later than 8:00 AM on the Monday preceding the Planning Board meeting. The letters should be not only submitted to the Planner, but also the office staff downstairs, as the Planner is not in the office on Monday to circulate the letters to the board members. Chair Gorman proceeding by asking the applicant to give a presentation of the updated plans.

Jeremy Bonin, representing the applicant, recused himself from the board to begin his presentation.

Mr. Bonin explained that mixed-use is at the heart of what creates the small town feel that is treasured by the residents of New London and that the bakery would contribute to that mix of uses. He explained that the applicant reduced the number of indoor seats to reduce the amount of required parking. The current plan meets the town's parking regulations and standards for the size of the spaces and widths of the access. Mr. Bonin clarified that the eight outdoor seats would require a waiver of the required parking but that the indoor seats met the current regulation.

Mr. Bonin then addressed a list of concerns that had been raised by abutters:

1. Parking: As proposed, the parking meets the regulations, with the exception of the waiver requested for the outdoor seating
2. The use of a bakery is an allowed use in the commercial zone
3. The dumpster position and screening/fence meets the town regulations.
4. The snow storage area is smaller than the required percentage of the parking lot, but the applicant can have snow removed from the site like many New London businesses do.
5. Deliveries are not anticipated to be in large trucks, however, deliveries for many area businesses require the drivers to park along the street to unload and this establishment would be no different.
6. The width of Lovering Lane is something that could be addressed through the potential widening, as both Mr. McSwiney and the prospective owners of 12 Lovering Lane are willing to provide the needed land for widening the road.
7. The parking space on Main Street closest to Lovering Lane, in front of the Sparrow School, could be eliminated to increase sight lines for motorists exiting Lovering Lane. Additionally, the next space would be requested to designate as handicap as the access to the building is much easier from street level than from the parking lot below.
8. The buffer between the parking lot and the lot line is currently 8' 9" which is shy of the 10' required by the regulations. Mr. Bonin said that the parking spaces adjacent to the property line (spaces 7 & 8) could be reduced in width to "compact car" size, as allowed by the towns parking regulations to achieve a 10' buffer between the property boundary and the parking lot.
9. The town regulation requires that 35% of the property be landscaped open space, Mr. Bonin said that 44% of the site will be vegetated and that the landscape plan is represented on the site plan with all existing plantings labeled.
10. Additional plantings along the end of the parking lot could be added to screen the parking area from the abutting property.

Mr. Bonin concluded his presentation and Chair Gorman opened the floor to the public and abutters.

Rachel Ensign of the Sparrow School, a tenant located on the property of the applicant, explained that her school is a small school that has occupied the space for four years. She thanked the board for considering her students' safety but emphasized that the location has been a safe place for her students thus far and that she does not see the potential for any additional risk arising from the potential change of use from Ellen's to the bakery. Her school is open Monday-Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and follows the Kearsarge School calendar, which is a 10 month school year, with a current enrollment of 6 students and a maximum capacity of 8.

Ms. Meller asked where the students were dropped off? Ms. Ensign said that some of her students are dropped off on foot by their parents and that the others are a mix of either parking on Main Street or using the parking lot. Her students generally arrive between 8:00 and 9:30 AM. She added that the walk way from the parking lot would further improve the safety of the students who were dropped off using the parking lot.

Bill Clough, a neighbor on Lovering Lane, said that he has been impressed by the school and supported their efforts.

Jay Tucker of Old Hampshire Design shared that his clients and colleagues never complain to him about a lack of parking in the area of Lovering Lane. He also mentioned that he watched a garbage truck handle garbage pickup very well on Lovering Lane so he anticipated that delivery trucks would not have any problems even though the current width of the road is narrow. He fully supports the applicants in their bakery endeavor.

Bill Clough, an abutter from Lovering Lane, said that traffic on Lovering Lane and Main Street is concerning to him. The speed of traffic on Main Street, 30 MPH, is too fast for a crowded small town and makes turning out of Lovering Lane difficult. Bad decisions regarding development on Lovering Lane have been made in the past so it is now an overused street.

Linda Howes, owner of Nourishing Wellness, has concerns regarding the 2004 traffic study that the applicant references. Ms. Howes feels the traffic study is too old to be accurate and that Oliver, Wight Associates was not using Lovering Lane for access in 2004 and they are now, which creates a lot of traffic, particularly in the morning, noontime and afternoon. Ms. Howes expressed concern that delivery trucks block the entire road making Lovering Lane unpassable by motorists. Ms. Howes also said that as a renter, she was not notified as an abutter, and if she had been notified, she would have participated sooner.

Ms. Meller asked the applicant about the size of the trucks anticipated for deliveries and Laurie Shive responded that there will not be any 18 wheelers making deliveries.

Rachel Ensign asked if it was possible to make Lovering Lane wide enough for two cars as that might solve the issue? Ms. Martel asked where the land would come from and Mr. Bonin replied that the McSwiney property and 12 Lovering Lane would both lose some land if it were widened.

Margie Weathers, of Sotheby's, expressed concern about the traffic stating that she had seen an increase in traffic this year and that she is concerned about entering Main Street from their office and for the safety of the kids in the proximity of the traffic.

Matt Conway, owner of Grounds, stated that Dunkin Donuts was not there in 2004 and that their establishment has added to the parking concerns. Their parking lot is not safe and he has witnessed two separate accidents in their parking lot. Mr. Conway said that he wanted to express the importance of input from the highway, fire and police departments to ensure that they are being equitable in the requirements that they have held other New London developments to and that the Planning Board needs to be thorough and ask the difficult questions they have asked of previous applicants. Mr. Conway asked who the office tenant would be. Dan O'Halloran answered that he was the Realtor representing the buyers and he was also in discussion with them to rent the office space to house his real estate firm, which consist of three employees, including himself.

Karen Hoglund said that parking on Main Street is not available during the busy summer months. She added that when cars are parked on both sides of the road there is not enough space for traffic to travel and for the occupants of the parked cars to safely enter and exit their cars. Ms. Hoglund said that a successful business would create unsafe conditions.

Ms. Howes said that she was previously in the food industry and that she was never able to dictate the size of the delivery truck that would deliver her supplies.

Audrey Martel, daughter of Mr. Dexter whose home abuts the parking lot, asked where the designated loading and unloading zones would be. She expressed that her main concern was the parking lot. Specifically, she is concerned about runoff from the parking lot, visibility from her father's property, how cars will enter and exit spaces 7&8, handicapped spaces, snow storage and a failing retaining wall. She questioned if there was a landscape plan, Mr. Bonin responded that the existing landscaping was shown on the site plan and that they did not have any plans to change it. Ms. Martel also commented that to meet ADA standards, the handicap spaces should be in the parking lot.

Graham McSwiney, an abutter, expressed a concern about the feasibility of widening the road and that logistically, it may not be possible or practical. Additionally, he is concerned about the increase in traffic.

Ellen Winkler, current property owner of 12 Lovering Lane, said that she has been in business on this site since 2003 and has been a good neighbor. Ms. Winkler is also concerned about what her rights are with her land and property if this application is denied.

Laurie Shive, applicant and owner/operator of the potential bakery, said that her business model for the first two years of operations assumes 1500 customer visits per month which equals 57 customers per day and 6.4 customers per hour. Those customers would equal 38 cars per day or 4.3 cars per hour. Ms. Shive based her calculations on numbers and help from the National Survey of Bakers and the National Bakers Guild for "small artisanal bakery".

Ms. Meller asked Ms. Shive what she intended to offer for baked goods and Ms. Shive answered that she would primarily focus on artisanal breads with some baked goods in the morning and a couple pre-made sandwiches for lunch.

Ms. Martel asked Ms. Shive where her seating would be? Ms. Shive explained that it would be a mix of counter/bar seating and tables. Egress for the space would be through two doors, one shared with the office tenant and one directly from the bakery outside.

Karen Hoglund said that the business traffic for a bakery would mirror other area businesses, being busy at morning, noontime and afternoon.

Ellen Winkler shared that her current traffic is similar to the projections by the bakery. She has 7 employees and has a combined total of 112 entrances and exits per day.

Ms. Shive clarified that her total of 57 was based on round trips and Ms. Winkler's numbers are based on one-way trips, thus doubling the number. Ms. Shive passed out a report of traffic accidents and violations from the town report and noted that both had gone down or remained steady since 2008.

Ms. Martel said that the snow banks on Lovering Lane further reduce the width of the road. She asked if the waiver for outdoor seating was denied, would they just not have outdoor seating, Mr Bonin, said that was correct.

Mike Morgan, potential buyer of 12 Lovering Lane with wife Laurie Shive, said that they truly value the New London community and that they want to build a business that has a positive impact on New London and contributes to the community atmosphere.

Mr. Conway said that prior to opening Grounds, he was required to have multiple different safety inspections completed and that the town should hold the applicant to similar standards.

Ms. Martel asked if the applicant had considered moving the school house? The applicant said that they had considered it, but that they do not want to have to remove the school house.

Mr. Conway asked about the storm water management and Mr. Bonin answered that he had been discussing it with Richard Lee and he was reviewing it.

Following the public comment, Mr. Ricker asked Mr. Bonin to add several things to the application:

1. The buffer of 10' should be observed and reducing the parking spots to compact size would help accommodate the buffer and smaller cars would have easier access to the tight parking space #7&8.
2. The vegetative buffer between the parking lot and abutter should be pursued to shield the abutters view.
3. The lack of adequate snow storage would require the snow be moved off site, which is allowed by the town regulations. However, the applicant will need to provide the proof and information as to where the snow will be taken.

Chair Gorman explained that he did not feel like he or the board was at a position to yet vote on the application as they needed time to further consider and review the information.

IT WAS MOVED (Janet Kidder) AND SECONDED (Elizabeth Meller) to continue the discussion with regards to the Lovering Lane property to the meeting on October 10, 2017. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Subcommittee- update

Chair Gorman reported that they met last week and talked with the president of Colby-Sawyer College, Susan Stuebner, to discuss future plans for the college. Ms. Stuebner explained that the college will be focusing efforts on updating the residence halls. Additionally, she noted that Colby-Sawyer will be pursuing the topic of increasing the number of students who are allowed to live in the apartments on Cottage Lane. The current zoning ordinance allows for five students to live in a single unit, but the units are built to accommodate eight. The College sees the apartments as a popular option for senior students who are required to live on campus.

Chair Gorman added that Ken Jacques from the Water Precinct also came to discuss the future of the water supply in New London. Mr. Jacques explained that the water usage in New London has not changed significantly since the start of the water system in 1995. He attributed the plateau in usage to increased water conservation efforts by users, especially New London Hospital and Colby-Sawyer College. He also noted that the closing of the Middle School significantly reduced water consumption. Mr. Jacques offered to be an active participant in the Master Plan process, as further development has impacts on the water supply.

8. Master Plan Update discussion

Mr. Bonin reported that the Master Plan Steering Committee had not met again since the last Planning Board Meeting but that they planned to meet next on 10/3 at 12:00.

9. Planning Board Alternative Energy Subcommittee- upcoming meeting and update

Mr. Bonin reported that the committee has been working on both solar and wind ordinance drafts. He noted that they had used the NH OEP model for the wind ordinance and a model from a community in Massachusetts for the solar ordinance. He explained that they intend to interpret solar structures as accessory structures like a shed or fence. The board agreed that that was a fair interpretation.

Mr. Bonin explained that the committee members were in the process of reviewing the ordinance and that they intend to share the drafts with the Planning Board for the October 24, 2017 meeting.

10. Other Business

11. Future Meeting Dates: Refer to the Planning Board Meeting Schedule and the Town's website for updated meeting information. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 10, 2017.

12. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Ricker
Planner
Town of New London