**Planning Board**

Town of Greenfield

Approved Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Janice Pack

July 10, 2017

**Members Attending**: Paul Renaud, Ken Paulsen, Kathy Carpenter, Bob Marshall, Andre Wood

**Meeting Opened:** The meeting was called to order by PRenaud at 6:09 PM.

**Minutes**: The Minutes from the meeting of June 26, 2017 were read by PRenaud. KCarpenter motioned to accept the minutes as written. KPaulsen seconded and all were in favor. Motion passed.

**Mail**

The unpaid invoice for $2500 for the Master Plan updates from SWRPC

Summer Newsletter from NH DES

Envelope from Michele Perron containing copies of correspondence relative to her event facility.

**Old Business**

PRenaud spoke about the status of the Master Plan. He met with Aaron Patt two weeks ago, and they went over many of the implementation items. PRenaud is waiting to hear from APatt with further comments. The Master Plan Public Hearing has been pushed out again, with a tentative date of August 14th. PRenaud will be in touch with SWRPC and then perhaps we will approve a partial payment on the outstanding invoice.

**“Alternative Subdivision” Ordinance: Consultation with Steve Whitman**

Steve Whitman of Resilience Planning and Design LLC joined us to discuss the problems we’ve had with open space ordinances. The Board spoke about 2 open space proposals, one of which had been withdrawn after a lengthy discussion, and the concern that the current open space ordinance does not clearly differentiate between open space and common land. PRenaud said that while we required well radii and septic to meet certain requirements, the ordinance didn’t address true clustering. SWhitman mentioned incentivizing and PRenaud said that the ordinance did not currently support that. AWood stated that the current board is not completely comfortable, or in agreement, with the way the ordinance is written, and not completely sure how to change it.

RMarshall detailed what had brought us to an open space ordinance in the first place. The original subdivision that precipitated the ordinance, the Hall subdivision, was brought to us by a developer who wanted to use 3 private roads, and some of the proposed lots were literally pie shaped and did not make good use of the land. Incentivization was intended, but it never came to that. When the ordinance was completely revised, the ability for clustering and incentivizing was lost. The ordinance was silent on whether or not the roads were considered part of the open space. If the ordinance is not specific, it creates too many areas for arguments.

Another point is the language – the terms “development” and “improvement” need to be more clearly defined and not interchangeable. The Board discussed private roads, mentioning Ryans Way and the group who had come before the Planning Board last December with the complaint that they weren’t getting the benefit of a private road, but neither were they getting the benefits afforded public access roads because the Town wasn’t obligated to maintain it.

RMarshall asked if there was something inherent in these kinds of ordinances that prohibit them from succeeding. SWhitman said that in most cases, it was uncertainty. There was a lot of ambiguity. Developers want something predictable. The other challenge is that citizens are afraid of risk. AWood pointed out that this is what happened here when the question on the ballot to repeal the current open space ordinance was voted down by 2 votes. People didn’t clearly understand what was going on. They were afraid to repeal the current ordinance because we didn’t have anything proposed to replace it with. SWhitman said another reason is that these kinds of subdivisions did require additional design work. Again, if there is going to be a bonus such as additional house lots, it makes the extra work worth it.

RMarshall said that the fastest growing population in our community is the elderly. People can’t afford to leave town, but they also can’t afford to stay in their current houses. We want to provide additional housing without increasing density. SWhitman said that a well-crafted ordinance has a really clear requirement of the 4-step design process. It is well thought out and free of ambiguity. Decide what design characteristics are most important, and where you are willing to be more flexible. He asked how he could best help us move forward. PRenaud said that an outline would be most helpful. RMarshall said that a draft of an ordinance would be great. KCarpenter asked if we should start with our current ordinance and revise it, or just throw it out and start over. SWhitman said there are many communities that have some great examples that we should look at. AWood said that our Master Plan is clear in that we are committed to preserving the rural characteristics of the town. SWhitman suggested that we look at the DES handbook regarding lot sizing.

PRenaud said there needs to be a certain part of the land that cannot be developed further. The Homeowners Association needs to work to effectively manage the land. SWhitman said there has to be an arrangement to pay for monitoring. PRenaud asked SWhitman to explain his concept of a secondary conservation easement holder. SWhitman said that there is some self-policing, but it’s important to have clear boundaries and a distinct vision. He said that if we are going to redraft the ordinance, we may want to rename it the Conservation Ordinance rather than Open Space Ordinance.

SWhitman said we are lucky in that we have a conditional use permit because it keeps the applicant and the Planning Board at the table. With the conditional use permit, we can basically take the most important standards and approve it in concept and then work through the rest of the details.

RMarshall asked what the next step was. SWhitman said he could help us draft an outline and steer us in the right direction, or we could wait until we got a little further and then get back in touch with him. The Board was interested in having him draft an outline and provide links to references we could review. SWhitman said he would have this for us next week.

**CIP: Review of proposed capital projects – assign priority and make recommendations**

KPaulsen provided an update on the CIPs and stated that we were going to assign “PB Project Ratings” or priorities, using letters:

C Committed (annual payments) U Urgent (near term project)

N Needed (at some future point) D Deferred (needs more information or investigation)

There were a number of things brought up as the Board went through each slide of KPaulsen’s presentation. This was a good learning process, and the Board agreed with KPaulsen’s priority recommendations for the most part. One unknown cost was the Meeting House, which has quite a few issues (leaking roof, stained glass windows, etc.) that need to be addressed. Recently the town has formed a 501c3 entity who will be looking for grants and ideas to help raise money to pay for these needed repairs.

Suggested Planning Board recommendations were made to replace the Town Office windows, provide a wood boiler to heat the DPW garage, to annually fund Town, Library and Recycling Center CRFs $70,000, and annually fund Fire, Police, and DPW CRFs $155,000. After further discussion, it was decided to explore alternative energy sources to heat the DPW garage, as not everyone was convinced that a wood boiler was the best choice.

PRenaud recapped tonight’s meeting and reviewed the agenda for the upcoming meetings. KCarpenter moved to adjourn this meeting, and PRenaud seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

**The meeting adjourned at 10:33 PM.**