

Town of Newington, NH

PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes, January 11, 2011

- Call to Order:** Chair Denis Hebert called the January 11, 2011 meeting at 6:31 PM.
- Present:** Mike Marconi, Vice Chair; Patty Borkland; Chris Cross (arrived at 7:58 p.m.); Jack Pare; Rick Stern; Jane Kendall, Recorder; and Thomas Morgan, Town Planner
- Absent:** Cosmos Iocavazzi; Alternate Members, Clifford Abbott and Peggy Lamson
- Public Guests:** Newington Fire Department Chief, Dale Sylvia; Bob Clarke with Allen Major Associates for Riverside Properties; Ron Bal, Dave Klepper & Jose Valdez with GP Gypsum; Roger Rivers and Tony Fallon, Architect for Family Fun Center

1) Public Hearings:

A) Proposal to adopt a new Section 12 in the Building Code to require amplification systems in buildings of 50,000 square feet or larger.

Newington Fire Department Chief, Dale Sylvia came before the board with a safety concern regarding communication reception problems which don't always get from the Rockingham County Dispatch Center in Brentwood to the firefighters' portable repeater radios. Chief Sylvia said this is a serious safety concern that is shared with many other communities around the country. Having done some research, Chief Sylvia presented a proposal similar to that used in the City of Dover, which requires amplification systems for large buildings when it is determined it is needed after testing.

Planning Board Chair, Denis Hebert expressed concern with the costs to businesses, which may range from \$35,000 to \$70,000 according to Sylvia. Chief Sylvia said there would be room for flexibility, taking each business' facility, resources and needs into account, doing preliminary tests on buildings so that it may not be mandatory based solely on square footage.

Board member, Jack Pare asked what building materials cause the communications signals to degrade, and Chief Sylvia said it may not just be materials, but also building structure, giving an example of store walls within the external walls of malls.

Board member, Rick Stern asked if the Fire Department could do an upgrade to their existing equipment. Chief Sylvia said he is looking into grants with Homeland Security for upgrades to the Schiller Station, but the upgrade wouldn't help solitary firefighters trapped in buildings when their radio signals go to the fire truck first and then to Brentwood before being sent to the station.

Chief Sylvia said currently 911 calls sometimes get toned out, so the department uses an additional page as a backup.

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Chair Hebert opened the discussion up for the Public Hearing. Public Guest, Ron Bal with GP Gypsum commented that \$70,000 would be a lot of money for a business with small revenue to spend.

Chair Hebert asked what the cost for testing and annual maintenance would be, and Chief Sylvia said ongoing testing could just involve the Fire Department going into the building themselves to test without paying an outside company.

Jack Pare asked the Chief about using boosters, and Sylvia said he wasn't sure, but would be concerned about firefighters hauling additional cable and wires along with their hoses.

The Board then discussed concerns with accepting the proposal at this time without more information. Chief Sylvia said Town attorneys, LGC advised that the plan would carry more weight with businesses as a Planning Board initiative, but that he would be willing to implement the requirement as a Fire Code Regulation for one year. Town Planner, Tom Morgan recommended that Chief Sylvia contact the Town attorneys for clarification on whether the Fire Department would need to go before a Town vote to change an ordinance. Chair Hebert suggested the Board go on record that they provide a vote of confidence to support the initiative for one year, and re-address the issue again next year after additional details have been ironed out. Hebert also said that although the board is already referring applicants to the Fire Department Chief for his approval, should the board become aware of any building proposal that would be a safety issue, the board would consider it very seriously.

Public discussion closed and Jack Pare motioned to take no further public hearing action on the matter, except to ask Board Chair Hebert to write a letter of support to Chief Sylvia. Mike Marconi seconded, and all board members present voted in favor.

B) Proposal by **Riverside Properties** to add six parking spaces to former Tweeter property at 2001 Woodbury Avenue, Tax Map 34, Lot 1.

Bob Clarke with Allen Major Associates presented the amended parking lot plan for Riverside Properties at the former Tweeter property on Woodbury Avenue. Mr. Clarke said he had spoken with Town consultant, Altus Engineering and confirmed that a WB50 tractor-trailer could make the radius turn around the back, and he has a letter from Newington Fire Department as well. Mr. Clarke also confirmed that trucks would leave the parking lot via adjoining property onto Gosling Road. Town Planner, Tom Morgan said he still hasn't received the easement agreement files, and requested they be submitted.

Board Chair, Denis Hebert opened discussion to the Public.

Chair Hebert expressed concern with such a tight turn in the lot for tractor trailer trucks, and said he will approve on the condition that Riverside would need to return to the board if any problems or accidents occur.

Board member, Patty Borkland moved to accept the changes made for six additional parking spaces, fencing and review of truck turn, with the condition that the board will call the applicant back for adjustments if any problems or accidents occur in the future. Rick Stern seconded and all members voted in favor.

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C) Proposal by **GP Gypsum** to erect a temporary 90' by 100' storage facility at 170 Shattuck Way, Tax Map 20, Lot 2.

Board Chair, Denis Hebert asked Ron Bal, Dave Klepper and Jose Valdez with GP Gypsum why they were building a temporary structure. Mr. Bal said they don't know as yet how much warehouse storage will be needed and so they have hired a company to review and advise them before they build a more permanent structure.

Chair Hebert noted the location is currently a parking area and asked what would become of the trucks that park there. Mr. Bal said the area isn't actually used for parking, and Hebert let him know that they would be called back if trucks are seen parking along the road.

Hebert inquired on the status of approval from the Board of Adjustment, and found though the application is in, the project had not received approval for a variance from the Board of Adjustment, but Mr. Bal said they had tentative approval from Fire Department Chief Sylvia who is concerned that there is only 40 feet from abutter's existing structure.

Chair Hebert then closed the Public Hearing.

Town Planner, Tom Morgan said two steps would be necessary to get final approval from the Board: 1) Get final approval from the Fire Chief; and 2) Get approval for a variance from the Board of Adjustment.

Chair Hebert said the Board would put a five-year time limit on the temporary structure. Hebert said the project looks good, but doesn't want to give contingent approval until approved by the ZBA. The applicant was told to come back to the Board's next meeting on Monday, February 14, 2011.

D) Proposal by **Roger River for Family Fun Center** at Star Center, 25 Fox Run Road, Tax Map 19, Lot 2A.

Roger River came before the board, along with architect, Tony Fallon with plans for a 5700 square foot family fun center with laser tag arena as the main activity, heat and serve cafeteria style food service, trampoline basketball, skeet ball and arcade games.

The applicant said they spoke with Fire Chief Sylvia to address concerns regarding sufficient sprinklers, exits, and safety in bathrooms. Architect, Tony Fallon said they would be spraying the ramp with fire retardant paint; adding a door in the back; changing the door in the back electric circuit room, changing the swing direction of the bathroom doors, lowering the sinks, as well as adding grab bars and ramps for ADA approved accessibility.

When asked what volume of customers were estimated, Mr. River said he thought about 120 on weekends and evenings, with half as many the rest of the time. Chair Denis Hebert said he thought the 200 parking spaces were probably sufficient at this time.

Chair Hebert said there is no way to know what might happen, but safety is always a concern when unsupervised children are gathered at a recreation center. Hebert asked if there was a safety plan, and Mr. River said he has a template plan. Mr.

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River commented that they are also concerned for their relationship with their neighboring businesses and they would patrol the front frequently to prevent loitering.

Mike Marconi motioned to approve Roger River's family fun center plan as presented. Jack Pare seconded and all members were in favor.

E) Delete Article X (Parking) from the Zoning Ordinance

F) Adopt a new Section 18 in the Site Plan Review Regulations to regulate parking.

Town Planner, Tom Morgan reviewed the history behind the original parking ordinance first adopted some thirty years ago, which many argued that mandatory parking used their valuable acreage and infringed on their constitutional rights. But today businesses have the opposite view in favor of more parking spaces, except conservation issues require that towns and cities seriously consider the problems with more impervious pavement.

Discussion ensued among Board members what procedures would make most sense to implement the proposals, and it was decided that they would need to delete Article X from the Zoning Ordinance in a Public Hearing, and then Adopting a new Section 18 in the Site Plan Review Regulations would require a town vote.

Board Chair, Denis Hebert closed the Public Hearing.

Mike Marconi made the motion to delete Article X (Parking) from the Zoning Ordinance. Jack Pare seconded the motion and all members present voted in favor.

2) Proposed Amendment to the Subdivision Regulations: Road Standards

Town Planner, Tom Morgan passed out "Construction Specifications for Residential Roadways" as drafted by Altus Engineering. Mr. Morgan asked the board read the recommendations and review during next month's work session on Monday, February 28, 2011. Chair Hebert asked Mr. Morgan to send out a written reminder to all board members to read carefully.

Chair Hebert expressed concern that most standards are good for normal gravel areas, but that this area needs standards that will deal with water.

(Note: Chris Cross arrived at 7:58 p.m. at this point in the meeting).

3) Minutes

Mike Marconi made a motion to accept the **Minutes** of December 13, 2011 with corrections to be updated on page 1, 3, and 5 as discussed. Jack Pare seconded. Patty Borkland and Rick Stern who were not at the last meeting abstained. All other members present voted in favor, including Chair Denis Hebert who completed the quorum.

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4) Pending Business:

A) New Directory Sign on Shattuck Way was discussed. Disappointment that the lettering and arrows recommended by the sign maker are small and of poor visibility from the stop sign at the end of the highway ramp. Though an intention for businesses to purchase additional signs with larger lettering was discussed, problems with inconsistent sizing were noted. Board Chair Hebert suggested Town Planner, Tom Morgan talk with the sign maker requesting that they modify the lettering to the same size as street signs.

Adjournment: Mike Marconi motioned to adjourn, Chris Cross seconded, and all were in favor and meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

Next Meeting: Monday, February 14, 2011

**Respectfully
Submitted by:** Jane K. Kendall, Recording Secretary