

Town of Newington, NH

PLANNING BOARD

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, April 30, 2020

- Call to Order:** The 4:30 p.m. meeting was delayed due to technical difficulties with the Zoom online meeting. Chair Denis Hebert called the April 30, 2020 meeting at 4:51 p.m.
- Present:** Chair Denis Hebert; Vice-Chair Erika Mantz; Board Members: Russ Cooke; Christopher Cross; Ben Johnson; and Peter Welch; Alternate Board member, Jim Weiner; Town Planner, John Krebs and Jane Kendall, Recorder
- Absent:** Alternate Board members, Rick Stern and Board of Selectmen's Representative, Mike Marconi
- Public Guests:** Theresa Walker with Rockingham Planning Commission

Chair Hebert announced that the meeting was being conducted online via Zoom at New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu's recommendation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Chair Hebert asked if anyone else besides Board members were present, and Theresa Walker with Rockingham Planning Commission identified herself.

Chair Hebert requested a roll call, of Board members who were in their homes, and asked if anyone else was present. Board member, Ben Johnson stated that his mother was in the room.

Chair Hebert announced that Alternate Board member, Jim Weiner could not vote in place of Board of Selectmen's representative, Mike Marconi, but Mr. Weiner was still welcome to attend the meeting.

1) **Master Plan:** Final review of 2020 update prior to public hearing.

Chair Hebert commented that Theresa Walker the changes that Theresa Walker with Rockingham Planning Commission made looked good.

Chair Hebert stated that the Board had reached their budget for additional changes and would need to move forward with completing the project.

Board members discussed their recommendations changes. Board member, Chris Cross said he would send the changes to Ms. Walker for adoption.

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Town Planner, John Krebs said he thought all members of the Planning Board should be listed as contributors.

Mr. Cross suggested that Roman numerals be added at the back for information that the Historic District Commission would provide a listing of their resources next year. Mr. Weiner said it sounded like he was asking for a holding page. Mr. Cross said the addition would require a lot of work and revisions, so he was only suggesting a line to say it was forthcoming.

Chair Hebert responded that it sounded like it would be an amendment that could be adopted in the next year. Board member, Russ Cooke and Mr. Weiner agreed. Mr. Cooke added that they would be committing to an expense that hadn't been voted on. Mr. Cross replied that he saw their point, and would have no problem adding the section later, but pointed out that it existed in the current Master Plan.

Ms. Walker asked if they wanted to add the current list of Historic District resources to the appendix. Mr. Cross replied that they could delete it, and add it the following year.

Chris Cross moved that the 2020 Master Plan go to public hearing on the first available date upon re-opening of Town Hall. Peter Welch seconded, and Erica Mantz, Ben Johnson, Chris Cross, Russ Cooke, Peter Welch, and Denis Hebert all voted in favor.

Ms. Walker said will make changes, prep thumb drive with pdf and word.

Chair Hebert said no \$ in budget this year so need to be careful, but hope to get done this year. Ms. Walker said could run on town copy machine. Mr. Cross said should only print core, and appendices on req only. Mr. Cooke said thought would publish to town website. Chair Hebert said would make avail electronic.

2) Other Business: Change of Use from Anytime Fitness gym to bicycle shop at 109 Gosling Road

Mr. Krebs said he was not sure if a change of tenant would require a change of use hearing, but he had heard that the building inspector, Kevin Kelly had already issued a certificate of occupancy earlier in the day.

Mr. Cross asked if there were any plans for refurbishing the parking lot, and Mr. Krebs replied that it had no bearing on this use. Chair Hebert added that it was the next building down owned by that had recently appeared before the Board to discuss upgrades to their parking area.

Chair Hebert went on to say that they still needed to know if there be enough parking, and that bicycles would need to be picked up if leased so cars would not be left in the parking lot.

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Mr. Krebs added that they also agreed that they would not have outdoor displays to avoid using up the parking spaces.

Chair Hebert recommended that the Board take no action because the building inspector had already granted the certificate of occupancy permit. Russ Cooke, Chris Cross, Ben Johnson, Erica Mantz, Jim Weiner, and Peter Welch all agreed with Chair Hebert.

3) Additional Discussions

Mr. Krebs stated that it was yet to be determined what the government would decide in regard to opening up public meetings in the near future. Mr. Krebs said he was not a fan of Zoom online meetings, and he would like to continue with Board meetings as soon as the limit was lifted. Vice-Chair Mantz responded that Governor Sununu would be making a statement at the end of the week, and that they should hold off on decisions until then.

Mr. Krebs suggested that they could hold a hybrid meeting with Board members present, and the public attending via Zoom. Board member, Peter Welch commented the Langdon Library trustees met in the parking lot on the previous week. Mr. Cooke stated that he it was difficult to review and comment on plans online, so he wanted to hear from the Governor when public meetings could resume. Mr. Cooke added that attendees could also wear masks.

Mr. Weiner commented that the Governor would most likely announce that he would extend public gathering restrictions for another three to four weeks. Vice-Chair Mantz responded that some activities might be re-opened, however.

Chair Hebert said several larger projects will be coming, and he agreed that going over drawings was a challenge. Mr. Cross said site walks could be done by keeping distance between people.

Chair Hebert went on to say that they could meet outside on a nice evening, except that mosquitoes would be out come June. Recording Secretary, Jane Kendall said she thought that acoustics for recording minutes outside could be challenging.

Mr. Cross wondered if Northeast Credit Union would be willing to meet over Zoom. Mr. Krebs said he didn't know, but he knew there was a medical office proposal that wanted to get going, and that most applicants wanted feedback from board members, and he wasn't sure if Zoom meetings would be effective.

Mr. Weiner said he had been using remote meetings technology for the past 25 years, and although it was not 100%, a lot could still get a lot done this way. He said that the worst-case scenario was that social distancing was going to continue for a while, and so the best approach was to have mtgs with this technology. Mr. Weiner said that Mr. Krebs could prepare information packets for Board members to review a week before meetings.

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Vice-Chair Mantz agreed that the Board needed to wait to see what the Governor recommended.

Minutes: The March 23, 2020 Meeting were not available for the Board's review, and approval was delayed to the next meeting.

Adjournment: *Erika Mantz moved to adjourn the meeting. Peter Welch seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.*

Next Meeting: To be determined

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

These Minutes were approved and adopted at the June 8, 2020 Planning Board Meeting.