

APPROVED 9/1/16

BARNSTEAD PLANNING BOARD

WORK SESSION

Thursday, August 18, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m.

BARNSTEAD TOWN HALL

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Carr called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Those present joined the planning board in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.
3. **ROLL CALL:** N. Carr, Chair, E. Swinford, Vice Chair, K. Schacht, secretary, E. Tasker, Selectboard's representative/alternate, D. Kerr, Alternate, S. Hodgdon, alternate, F. Latawiec, recording secretary.
ZONING ORDINANCE: COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES: K. Schacht opened the discussion by handing out some documents that summarized the efforts of her work group to date. Included is an Outline of Design Guidelines by Topic. Details will be developed for Site Planning, Site Lighting, Building Design (to be reflective of a rural community) and Signage. The issue with the Dollar General proposal was that the Town has no standards or guidelines in place. She wants to make sure that the guidelines will be able to be easily implemented by future boards. She explained that one of her professional colleagues would be giving a presentation to the Board on use of natural, drought resistant plantings for landscaping. Other communities, such as the City of Dover, have developed plant lists for landscaping relative to commercial development. Dover's experience has been that due to the species they selected, most of the plants that were planted for landscaping have died.
4. **CIP SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE:** N. Carr reported that the CIP Subcommittee met last Wednesday. Last night's meeting was cancelled, as department heads were unable to attend. Some members of the Subcommittee were not happy that the Planning Board had slashed the budget that they worked hard to prepare. K. Schacht suggested that members of the Subcommittee attend Planning Board meetings where the CIP is discussed. Chair Carr will invite the CIP Subcommittee to meet with the Planning Board at the September 15, 2016 Work Session. E. Tasker noted that the Planning Board can expect there to be a proposal for a new Police Station, a new fire truck, and a new front end loader.
5. **ZONING ORDINANCE: COMMERCIAL DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES (CONT.):** K. Schacht introduced Susanne Smith Myers to Planning Board members. Ms. Smith Myers is a Licensed Landscape Architect in all of the New England states. She has been a member of the Concord Planning Board for 13 years and has worked professionally with many municipalities in New Hampshire and the Central New Hampshire Planning Commission. She discussed planting requirements for landscaping that can be incorporated into local ordinances and regulations. There are eight communities in the state that currently require that landscaping plans for

commercial projects be prepared by a Licensed Landscape Architect. The advantage to that is that a landscape architect is going to have a better idea of the type of vegetation that would work well for the site than an engineer or a land surveyor. Most local regulations for landscaping require trees to be planted in parking lots, and that there be vegetative buffers between commercial and residential land uses. Concord is very specific in their regulations about the number of trees to be planted. Two approaches to requiring numbers of trees to be planted could be based upon the square footage of parking area or the number of parking spaces. S. Smith Myers emphasized that it is important to specify that plantings be of native, hardy species that are likely to survive with little or no maintenance in the New Hampshire environment. It is also important that there be best management practices on how the trees are to be planted. Concord includes planting and care details for landscaping in their site plan review regulations. She teaches Landscape Architecture at NHTI, and is disappointed that the college does not set an example by landscaping their parking lots. She has used a class to come up with some design ideas for the campus. Also she commented that DES is proud of their biomass program as being good for the environment, yet they are not willing to plant trees to replace those that are taken. D. Kerr asked what type of species are recommended. S. Smith Myers responded that appropriate species would be dependent upon the site. Generally red maple and oaks are good species. They are nice shade trees. Evergreens should be avoided, as they provide shade in the winter months which could lead to icy conditions in parking lots in winter. Ash used to be good until the problem arose with the ash borer. Elms are nice, and horticulturalists are working on disease resistant strains of the species. She referred to the development at Horse Shoe Pond as an example of a well done landscaping plan. They planted in the fall, and only watered then. They had an excellent survival rate with a mixture of maples, ash, sycamore, and lindens. She does not recommend planting the callery pear. The NH Association of Landscape Architects worked with DOT to make improvements in their species requirements and planting details for projects. This was an important change, in that many engineers and surveyors would insert DOT's landscape specifications on all of their site plans. One problem she has found is that burlap is no longer used to hold the root ball of trees. The burlap would biodegrade over time, but the new plastic material used today does not. It is important that the planting details specify that this material must be removed before planting. Chair Carr asked about use of shrubs. The response was that shrubs do not provide much in the way of shade, and are easily damaged by plowing. Trees do provide shade, and have a higher canopy and are less likely to be damaged by plowing. Trees do, however, take a long time to become established, where mature shrubs can be planted. For medium density development, about two shade trees per lot works well. A variety of species is desirable in a buffer between commercial and residential development. This could include shrubs and groundcover. There was discussion of when landscape plans are required by other municipalities. Manchester requires landscape plans for projects that cost greater than \$25,000. Concord requires plans for major vs. minor projects. D. Kerr asked about grassy areas. These require maintenance. In the case of Horseshoe Pond, the owner maintains the landscaping. Manchester requires irrigation. This is a tremendous waste of water resources, and is difficult to monitor. There was discussion about the use of roundabouts in Concord. Concord is talking about constructing a third lane in the center of Loudon Road. They are looking into the possibility of ornamental and "low grow, no mow" grasses that spread by rhizomes. There was discussion about the problems with use of bird's foot trefoil. D. Kerr asked about the cost of having a landscape architect preparing landscape plans. S. Smith Myers replied that this would probably amount to 1/20th of a project's total budget. Use of a Landscape Architect would result in the proper planting of species with a higher survival rate. She referred to a book from Penn

State with listing of recommended street trees. The Board thanked S. Smith Myers for her informative presentation. She left at 8:02 p.m. E. Tasker expressed that the regulations should encourage leaving the original vegetation in place, to the extent possible. He cited Drolet's former property and Towle's pallet business of examples of how this has worked very well.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:** D. Kerr brought up the issue of applicants coming before the board with applications for major subdivisions, when they actually are actually proposing subdivisions that meet the definition of minor. These applications are being approved as major subdivisions without being required to comply with the conditions detailed on pages 20 through 26 of the zoning ordinance. This includes requirements for cisterns, roads and drainage plans. It was discussed that the applicants are applying for major subdivisions so that they would not be bound by the requirement that the property of a minor subdivision could not be re-subdivided within 20 years. N. Carr refereed to the definitions of major and minor subdivision. A minor subdivision is divided into three or fewer lots. A number of the recently approved major subdivisions were for three or fewer lots. This issue will be discussed further in the future. D. Kerr will bring up the issue if another subdivision application for three or fewer lots comes in for consideration as a major subdivision. E. Tasker noted that the Board needs to check on the subdivision that was approved on the corner of Province and Gray Roads. He has observed driveways being constructed, but no cisterns going in. There should be two cisterns for the project. The Code Enforcement Officer will be asked to follow up on this. N. Carr noted that a complaint has been made about a commercial kennel on New Road. It is located in a residential/agricultural zone. It is a registered business where dogs are bred and raised for sale. Such a business must be licensed by the state. The Board discussed the issues in question as noise, waste, and that animals will get out. There was discussion about the difference between breeding and raising farm animals versus domestic animals. N. Carr noted that it would not be appropriate for a kennel to be located in the village district, but that it may probably be located in the residential/agricultural district. There was discussion as to whether the kennel would be considered a cottage industry or a service business. Maybe a kennel should be added to the definition of service business. The complaint about noise from the kennel could be a civil matter. However, the owners of the business, Rise and Shine, will be requested in writing to come before the Planning Board to discuss their business. E. Tasker brought up the issue of rental properties also be considered as a business for tax purposes. They are not looking at the impact on the schools. He suggested cutting the Assistant Principal's salary out of the budget.
7. **OLD BUSINESS: SENIOR HOUSING UPDATE:** E. Swinford handed out senior housing regulations from the towns of Alton, Pittsfield and Hooksett. Alton's is pretty cut and dry, Pittsfield's is nine pages, and Hooksett's is six pages. She does not want to get involved with a federal program, because that would require inclusion of people with disabilities and people under the age of 55. K. Schacht stated that she felt that the housing should be affordable housing, and not age restricted. She is interested in seeing what Meredith has for regulations. They have an on-going committee that meets to work on changes to their ordinances and regulations. She asked if we know what the need is in Barnstead for elderly/affordable housing. N. Carr stated that a lot of elderly people in town may have to move because they cannot afford the taxes. It could be that elderly housing might be more expensive than remaining in their homes. Also, if older people sold their homes they would have money that would affect their eligibility for low income programs. There was discussion of home equity and reverse mortgages. E. Tasker noted that those who were born and raised in Barnstead would not want to move into elderly housing.

LRPC has done some work on “aging in place”. S. Hodsdon asked if there were any data on natives vs. people who moved into town. The Board could do a survey, but only one out of five people answered the master plan survey. D. Kerr suggested a town employee be hired to provide elderly services, like they do in Pittsfield. E. Swinford believes that this is supported through medicare.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

9. ADJOURNMENT:E. Swinford made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by E. Tasker. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Francesca Latawicz, Recording Secretary