

**JOINT MEETING WITH THE
BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND
THE CONWAY PLANNING BOARD**

MINUTES

AUGUST 22, 2002

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AUGUST 22, 2002

A joint meeting between with the Conway Board of Selectmen and the Conway Planning Board was held on Thursday, August 22, 2002 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Conway Town Office in Center Conway, NH. Those present were: Board of Selectmen Chair, Theresa Kennett; Gary Webster; David Weathers; and Karen Umberger; Planning Board Chair, Sheila Duane; Robert Drinkhall; Conrad Briggs; Brian Glynn; Martha Tobin; David Robinson; Town Manager, Earl Sires; Planning Director, Thomas Irving; and Recording Secretary, Holly Meserve.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Sires stated that the New Hampshire Municipal Association adopts a set of policies and each Town appoints a representative to vote at the policy meeting. Mr. Sires stated the appointed representative needs to have an official position prior to September 13, 2002. Ms. Duane stated that she has read the recommendations and she doesn't see a problem with them.

Mr. Irving stated that there appears to be a conflict between paragraphs B and C under affordable housing. Mr. Irving stated they might want to look at a density break. Ms. Kennett stated that there is a financial impact on a community and she can understand why the costs are important. Ms. Kennett stated that it is discriminating to say we don't want affordable housing.

Mr. Irving stated that it could be more appealing by offering relief on our development regulations and allow a higher density. Mr. Irving stated that we need to find a way to reduce taxes for affordable housing as well as not burdening the other taxpayers. Ms. Duane stated under workforce housing we are looking at a financial incentive to allow more units per acre so the developer has the opportunity to reduce the mortgage on his property and allow affordable rent.

Ms. Duane asked who is our representative. Mr. Sires answered he is the representative. Ms. Kennett stated that affordable housing is such an issue in the State that the State needs to be involved with solving this problem.

FEE SCHEDULE

Mr. Sires stated that he has been charged with looking at the fees of Town Services. Mr. Sires stated that they are looking at shifting payment of some of the services to those who

are taking advantage of the service rather than all the taxpayers. Mr. Irving stated that he has prepared a proposal for the Planning Department. Mr. Irving reviewed his report.

Ms. Umberger stated that the analysis/report is very good. Ms. Umberger asked why are the applicants having so much trouble with the applications prior to coming in. Mr. Irving stated that we would have to ask the professionals they are hiring that question. Ms. Umberger asked if there is a problem with us communicating with those preparing the application. Ms. Umberger stated that changing the fees will not change that and there might be something wrong with the first step.

Ms. Kennett stated that the increase in fees would help the burden on the taxpayers. Mr. Irving stated in many cases we find that the applicants rely on Town Staff to do the final check of their application. Ms. Duane stated that the fees are paid by the applicant and by increasing them is not going to change the quality of work.

Mr. Irving stated there would be a standard fee and if the application were perfect the standard fee would be all they pay. Mr. Irving stated if there are errors or omissions or changes not requested there would be a supplemental review fee. Ms. Kennett asked if the minor review fee is taking too big of a step. Mr. Sires suggested researching other communities. Mr. Irving stated that all of the other Town's fees are too low. Mr. Irving stated that those Town's who contract out the reviews has the applicant pay the fees to the contractor. Ms. Duane stated that she would like to review it a little further.

Ms. Kennett stated that we have to get it to the point where we are covering the costs. Mr. Irving stated once the Master Plan is adopted and the zoning ordinance is revised we might find ways to reduce town staff time. Ms. Kennett stated that development provides jobs in our communities and this is a small amount of cost for the developers to incur.

Mr. Irving stated that the Board has made changes to the threshold of when a review is necessary. Ms. Umberger stated that she sees no problem looking longer at this, but she doesn't think the increases are that significant. Ms. Umberger stated that it is important that the Town cover the cost. Ms. Umberger stated that she does not think the increases are unreasonable. Mr. Irving stated that the suggested costs are probably low, as it does not include engineering.

Mr. Webster stated that we should raise our threshold and if there not ready then don't accept them. Mr. Weathers stated that the Town is trying to do too much in the review process. Mr. Irving stated that staff does not have the authority to approve or disapprove an application.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

Ms. Duane stated that the Planning Board met with the New Hampshire Historic Preservation Director, Linda Wilson. Mr. Irving stated under Chapter 21 the Town does have an enabling Statute. Ms. Duane stated that the charm and character of our Town

should be preserved. Mr. Briggs stated that RKG has said what the mandates should be and we should wait for that.

Ms. Kennett stated before we ask people to give their time we need to establish exactly what the mandate would be and how they would go about achieving it. Ms. Duane stated unless we step up it will never get done. Ms. Kennett asked about the Master Plan. Ms. Duane stated that we need to determine what we want to do or remove it from the books. Mr. Briggs stated that he thinks RKG has come up with some specific ideas.

Mr. Robinson stated that we have two commissions here in Town already, one for the Abenaki Land and one for Norcross Place. Mr. Robinson suggested contacting them and see how they operate.

Ms. Duane stated that people have a misconception that you're saying that nothing old can be torn down or changed instead of that we're trying to preserve what we have. Ms. Duane stated that this has gone by the wayside and people have mentioned it to her. Ms. Duane stated that people have taken a stand in not wanting to see chains. Ms. Duane stated that she doesn't want to look like Route 1. Ms. Duane stated that we should think about how we are going to set up the perimeters.

Ms. Kennett stated that she agrees they will need to be educated on what they are going to be charged with and asked if RKG has made any final recommendations. Mr. Irving answered in the negative. Mr. Kennett suggested waiting for that and then making a recommendation. Mr. Webster stated that you also have to have good representation in the neighborhood your proposing and your looking at a lot of work to get it right.

Ms. Duane stated that there are balances between not having anything to having too much. Mr. Glynn stated that he thinks changes to the zoning ordinance can help with the preservation rather than making another layer. Mr. Irving stated that we have to have a lot of local support and the neighborhood affected has to be on Board.

SIGNS

Ms. Kennett stated that she has had a lot of people speak to her regarding signs. Ms. Kennett stated anyone currently with a grandfathered sign would not want to give up that sign for our current sign ordinance. Ms. Kennett stated that we should be dealing with our own sign ordinance to make it more responsive. Ms. Duane agreed and stated that the recent events regarding signs is not the Planning Board's fault, as we did not draft the sign ordinance.

Mr. Irving stated that a redraft of the zoning ordinance is planned after the adoption of the Master Plan. Ms. Duane stated that the people who have the signs should be a part of the process. Mr. Glynn stated you are not going to change what is there, but change what is going to be there in the future. Ms. Kennett stated that the first job is to tackle the sign ordinance.

PARKING IN THE VILLAGE

Mr. Glynn stated that there is a way to gain approximately 50 more parking spaces with some restriping in North Conway Village and making Norcross Circle a one-way street. The Board of Selectmen agreed it was something that should be looked into.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly L. Meserve
Recording Secretary