

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

February 28, 2024

APPROVED: March 13, 2024

AGENDA: **PLANNING:**

- Site Visit – Lake Street Split Zoned Lots
- Resilience Planning & Design Presentation/Exercise

CASES: None

ATTENDING: John Miller (Chair), David Shirley (Vice Chair), Scott Sanschagrin (Select Board Representative) and Steve Carten (Planning Board Alternate)

ABSENT: Elizabeth Seeler and Don Milbrand

STAFF: **Staff:** Donna Sullivan (Land Use Administrative Assistant) Joanne Bailey (Land Use Manager), and Christina Goodwin (Town Administrator) *via Zoom*

Applicants, Professionals, and Public: Liz Kelly, Resilience Planning and Design

Chair Miller opened the meeting at 7:03 pm. He indicated that Alternate, Steve Carten would be seated as voting member due to Mr. Milbrand's absence.

PLANNING:

Site Visits – Lake Street Split Zoned Lots:

Chair Miller and Mr. Shirley reported on the site visits done to view Lake Street properties that fall in split zones. These properties front on Lake Street which is Village Commercial, and the rear portions of the properties fall in the Village Residential zone.

Mr. Shirley stated that the impressions from the site visits are that these lots should fall in the zone that makes most sense for its use and the map should follow the lot line.

More discussion followed about the process and the steps to take to achieve changing to single zone for these lots. Language will be considered to produce a draft document to identify the lots and explain how these will be delineated to remove the split zone. This will be presented and discussed at the next meeting. A public hearing will be scheduled, and property owners and abutters will be notified.

Height Restrictions in Lake District – Discussion:

Ms. Goodwin updated the Board about an issue that has come up with legal interpretation of the Zoning Ordinance as it applies to height restrictions in the Lake District. She indicated that to date properties that are renovated or improved in the Lake District have been required to get a special exception to increase the height of the building. This language for Non-Conforming Structures was reviewed and interpreted by a property owner's attorney and reviewed by Town Counsel resulting in an opinion that when an existing building is demolished, and a new one is built to replace it, the height restrictions would be the standard 35 feet and would no longer require special exception.

Further discussion followed that included the ordinance intent, the time limit following demolition, a comparison to vacant lot construction restrictions, and the history of actions applied previously for height restrictions. There was some discussion of verbiage and clarifications that may be needed. It was determined that more research and discussion is needed. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

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Presentation -Land Use Chapter Update/Exercise – Liz Kelly, Resilience Planning and Design:

Ms. Kelly from Resilience Planning and Design updated the Board about work they have been doing on the Master Plan – Land Use Chapter. She presented the information with a slide show and indicated this will be followed by an exercise with the Board.

The Board discussed some of its concerns to cover workforce housing, identifying any developable land within the town for such purposes of residential and commercial development and addressing steep slopes impacts to development. It was agreed that these items should be prioritized and be included in the Land Use Chapter of the Master Plan.

Ms. Kelly continued her presentation of the data, maps and information. She highlighted the Commercial areas that included the Downtown, Highway Corridors and what the Town restricts and offers to businesses in the Central Square area. Other areas highlighted included an Industrial area, the Village and Rural Residential areas and Newfound Lake. Each slide included information about town services and other applicable information for these areas. Other slides included Zoning breakdowns and information about Conserved Lands, Current Use, Natural Resources and Developmental Constraints.

Ms. Kelly shared another slide outlining Elevations and Steep Slopes but explained that this will be discussed further at a future meeting with the Board.

Other maps highlighted included Wildlife Habitat Overlay, Productive Farming Soils and Overlaying Development Constraints Map. The Overlaying Constraints Map included constraints such as floodplains, hydric soils, or elevation issues.

Other parts of the presentation included information about population breakdowns, growth and housing trends. Discussion followed about the aging population, seasonal populations and the increase in families moving in from out of state.

The Bristol Master Plan Vision presented included several bulleted items that were discussed briefly.

DISCUSSION/EXERCISE

Ms. Kelly talked with the Board about the development of a Future Land Use Strategy. She shared some examples of maps and other information from other towns that could assist the Board in the development of Bristol's strategy and ways to articulate it.

Ms. Kelly asked the Board to participate in an exercise to determine some specific information about the specific Land Use Areas to help guide future development information for Bristol. She explained she would take notes to help develop this part of the Land Use Chapter.

There was some discussion by Board members to help them understand the outcome for the exercise. Some possible strategies for the Downtown area included looking at it as a walkable village area with businesses, restaurants, sidewalks, and access that would support that. More discussion followed about other towns with river walks and other offerings. Parking was of concern for access by others outside downtown as well.

The Board discussed the Route 3A corridor from Aubuchon Hardware to Downtown, existing multi-housing, bike path, sewer extension, and current and potential business and residential development.

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DISCUSSION/EXERCISE - continued

Ms. Kelly asked if the sewer extension was a contentious plan or a supported plan and if it was a go if the funding was found. It was shared that the current sewer lines stop around Mill Stream Park but will be extended to Aubuchon if funding is achieved. Other items discussed were potential open lands along the highway corridors and near Industry areas.

Chair Miller talked about the fiber optic infrastructure which was engaged to help improve internet access for those who work from home, area education needs and business users. He suggested that factors for future planning may address possible situations such as should an industry leave, would Bristol become a retirement community. He added that with Economic Development, a link may be needed to help families remain in the area while attracting businesses to support tourism and seasonal growth as well.

Ms. Kelly stated that quality of life and the supporting businesses and infrastructure necessary to help remain a village style town should be acknowledged. Chair Miller asked if the location in Central New Hampshire should be considered as well as other surrounding towns supported by the businesses in Bristol.

Mr. Shirley suggested that there is a concern to allow Bristol to remain rural in nature but still support growth for housing and commercial development that would support the population of the area. He addressed the constraints of steep slopes, adjusting zoning and providing infrastructure to meet the vision. Chair Miller added that a commercial corridor may be indicated as beginning at LaValley Lumber and extending to Aubuchon.

Ms. Kelly asked about the Route 104 corridor out to New Hampton. Discussion followed indicating this is along the Pemigewasset River and its rural nature. Mr. Shirley stated that there was concern for the Route 104 corridor and whether zoning should be addressed to keep this gateway to Bristol rural.

More discussion followed about the rivers, slopes, and the lake in reference to land development constraints.

Ms. Kelly asked if the Town has a vision for the Lake area. Discussion indicated that substantial development in the Lake area would depend on sewer extension. Other concerns might be for free standing solar arrays where other towns around the lake only allow these by special exception and require that they cannot be seen from public area. Ms. Kelly noted that redevelopment is happening in the Lake District and the caution may be to preserve the scenic component and water quality of the Lake with any redevelopment or new development.

Ms. Kelly thanked the Board and stated that the discussion and her notes will help to guide the next steps as they continue with drafting the Land Use Chapter.

CASES: None

OPERATIONAL:

MINUTES:

A typo was noted on page two of the minutes with a duplicate "Mr". Approval of Minutes was postponed to the next meeting in March.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

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REPORTS:

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC) - No Report

CIP COMMITTEE – No Report

CONSERVATION COMMISSION – No Report

LAND USE – Mr. Sanschagrín asked if there were any permit applications from LinCross since they have announced moving to the former Pizza Bene location. Ms. Bailey indicated that no applications have been submitted yet, but she has been in contact with the LinCross owners and they are aware that permits would be needed for any interior renovations made.

SELECT BOARD - Mr. Sanschagrín stated the Board is getting ready for Town meeting. He stated that there was an issue of runoff at the Foot of the Lake. He stated that the Newfound Lake Region Association (NLRA) does a good job of keeping track of and alerting the Town about any water quality issues.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: None

STAFF COMMENTS: None

NEXT MEETING: March 13, 2024

ADJOURNMENT: With no other business before the Board, Mr. Sanschagrín motioned to adjourn. Mr. Carten seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Cote
Land Use Associate