



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE
PLANNING BOARD

2 HIGH STREET
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MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING
May 14, 2009

Chairman Rod Cools called the meeting to order at the Town Hall at 7:00 pm. Attendees included:

MEMBERS		ALTERNATES		STAFF	
Rod Cools, Chairman	X	Dave Mankus		Kathy Menici, Town Planner	X
Donna Faucette, Vice-Chairman	X	Jerry O'Connor	X	Donna Beaudoin, Secretary	X
John Blackwood, Selectmen's Rep				Arthur Capello, Bldg. Inspector	
Al Huntoon	X			John Ciardi, Code Enforcement	
Peg Stevenson	X			Richard Sager, Town Counsel	
Kenneth Paul, Selectmen's Rep	X				

Other Attendees as signed in:

Priscilla Colbath Arthur Fulton
Patrick Troy Pam Judge
Relf Fogg Tom Dube
Janet Gagnon

Other Attendees not signed in:

Charlie Edwards

Chairman Cools opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Cools then asked that if anyone wished to be heard, they needed to raise their hand and be recognized by the Chairman before speaking. This applied to the Board members as well as the audience.

Administrative Hearing

1. Town of Wakefield Master Plan Update 2009

Patrick Troy, Principal of Paul School and Priscilla Colbath, Member of School Board to discuss the project for the Paul School

Chairman Cools invited Patrick Troy and Priscilla Colbath to come up to the table.

Mr. Troy opened his statement by informing the group that he had just finished his first year as the Principal of the Paul School. Everyone had worked hard this past year and progress has been made on testing. He felt that now he had time available to build bridges to all sections of the community, not just to the parents of his students. He thought that this would be a good time to initiate an activity that had actually started with the Planning Board. He looked at it as more of an opportunity than a contest for the

4th and 5th grade class. It would involve the students looking at Wakefield past, present and future. This would connect them with the Vision Statement of the Master Plan.

He then went on to invite all members to come to the school to observe the students. He asked that they endorse his efforts and perhaps that he may call upon the Board to come to the school to speak to the students who are interested in pursuing this project.

Member Huntoon questioned Mr. Troy about the writing skills of the children in 4th and 5th grade and if they were able to write an essay. Mr. Troy responded absolutely. He went on to say that the test results validate this.

The discussion continued with Vice Chairperson Faucette commenting that she assumed the Board would be looking at essays, role plays, shadow boxes and art work. Mr. Troy agreed and said that he hoped the art work could be displayed at Town Hall for all to see it. Member Huntoon asked if it would be possible to have video interviews. Mr. Troy said possibly with parental consent. Ms. Faucette suggested that during the summer, the children might be encouraged to attend Planning Board meetings with their parents to share ideas. Member Huntoon stated that this would be a chance to interact with the students well into the fall.

Mr. Troy said that he was anxious to get more of the community into the school so that they could see where their tax dollars are being spent. He thought that the school building should play a role in the Master Plan especially in connection with the last presidential election as the voters came to the school to cast their ballots. This allowed the students to see democracy in action as well as the voters to observe the school still in session without incident.

Planner Menici asked for some idea of how Mr. Troy would like to proceed. She also asked him for a time-line as this would be the first time that there's been a joint effort between the Town Hall and the school.

Mr. Troy asked to return to continue to discuss this project. He was asked to come to the public meeting June 4th because the agenda for that meeting was light. Mr. Troy said that he would come to the meeting with a written plan including a list of student participants. He also said that at the end of the project, he would like to bury a time capsule to see if the future goals set by the student are actually accomplished. Discussion ensued about a time capsule that was buried 14 years prior.

Discuss schedule of meeting dates in E. Wakefield and Union

Chairman Cools asked for discussion of how the Board would like to proceed with scheduling meeting dates in E. Wakefield and Union. He asked if there were any suggestions from the residents of these areas.

Planner Menici stated that we haven't had many people at these meetings yet to get feedback. She said that Mary Richards had offered assistance to organize something in E. Wakefield at the fire station.

Chairman Cools said that in Union there was the Greater Wakefield Resource Center for meetings.

Pam Judge suggested contacting the GWRC Director to schedule a meeting. She also suggested that notices be placed in the church programs.

Mr. Cools suggested that in order to get people interested, the Board needed to get out there and work at it. The meetings should be rotated monthly between locations- especially during the summer months.

Discussion followed regarding when and where to start the rotation. Due to a site plan review application scheduled on the June Administrative agendas, it was decided that the rotation would start in July. The meeting on July 9th falls during the 4th of July holiday week. Selectmen's Representative Paul suggested that we might get more attendance if this meeting were held in Union as it is a smaller niche of people to get together and the holiday week would not be a huge issue. He suggested that the meeting in E Wakefield, which could attract a larger group, be scheduled for August.

Relf Fogg suggested that Tom Dube could assist with the use of the GWRC building. He went on to say that the PEG channel could put the schedule on their site.

Planner Menici said that she would start calling the GWRC and the E. Wakefield Fire Station to verify availability.

Vice Chairperson Faucette suggested that we place a notice in all the church bulletins. Ms. Menici said that she would work on this.

Member Huntoon asked whether this could also be posted in the Chamber of Commerce newsletter. Ms. Menici replied that she had planned on discussing this in relation to outreach techniques.

Discuss outreach techniques

Planner Menici stated that she had email contact lists that she had developed that included Conservation Commissions, Selectmen, Capital Improvement Committee; she also had a list of approximately 50 people that the Planning Board Minutes are emailed to as well as the Chamber of Commerce members. She had developed a notice that could be sent to all of these individuals along with a schedule of dates and an invitation to attend these meetings and to participate.

Vice Chairperson Faucette suggested that the president of the Pine River Pond Association be added to the list so that he could place the information on their website. Ms. Menici replied that she had an email group of all the lake association presidents.

The Board agreed that this was appropriate.

Ms. Menici stated that the focus over the next four meetings would be the vision statement. She also said that she would email the information to the school and ask Mr. Troy to forward it to all of the parents. Chairman Cools said that she should also ask him to use the email addresses for the high school students.

UNH Cooperative Extension Community Capacity Assessment Survey

Planner Menici informed the group that in her effort to provide additional guidance on the Vision Statement, she discovered that the Cooperative Extension website had a Community Capacity Assessment Survey. The site offers a series of online surveys, the results of which are analyzed and a report is sent back to you. This would identify any weaknesses when dealing with a specific issue. She offered to email the link for the website to each member so that they could take the survey or she could photocopy the survey and the Board could take the survey as a group.

Vice Chairperson Faucette asked about the types of questions on the survey.

Ms. Menici replied that there are a series of questions that are used to measure capacity for maintaining community attributes such as cultural and historic heritage, health and well being, economic opportunities, sustainable environment, community services and infrastructure, social networks and civic engagement.

Vice Chairperson Faucette asked if we might want to develop our own questionnaire from these and have them filled out at our various meetings. Then we could see what the community feels about where we are and where we are going.

Member Huntoon asked if we planned on redoing the Town survey.

Ms. Menici replied that we had talked about this but it was very expensive and was not put in the budget for this year.

Chairman Cools questioned the age of the last survey. It was tens years old. He felt that we should do another survey because the values in the Town have changed in that time frame and we have had a lot of population turnover during these years.

The Planner said that she would speak with the Town Administrator about redirecting costs to provide funding for this. Mr. Cools suggested that he be at that meeting.

Mr. Huntoon asked if the survey 10 years ago was professionally done. Mr. Cools answered no and said that he had questions on the compilation of the data at that time.

Ms. Menici suggested that to get a good comparison of the data you shouldn't vary the questions greatly. She would locate a blank copy of the previous survey for review.

Chairman Cools stated that he would like to see the comparison but would also want to see visions of the people that are here now. Ten years ago, there were a lot of statements about keeping Wakefield as it was. A lot of people wanted to keep Wakefield as a rural community. Today, this is true but a lot of people also realize that we have to be able to provide jobs and business. He didn't feel that the compilation of the data from the last survey was not done accurately.

Planner Menici stated that she would look at what was in the file for a starting point and she would come to next month's meeting with recommendations.

She informed the Board that she would email the link for the Community Capacity Assessment Survey to all members.

Chairman Cools recognized Pam Judge who asked for clarification of the work being done now. She thought that the intention was not to redo the entire Master Plan but rather to do just four chapters some of which is not in the Master Plan now and some to make more complete.

Mr. Cools acknowledged that she was correct. He said that the intention was to make it more complete and up to date. He said several years ago, the plan was to take one chapter at a time and continue until complete. He said that never happened.

Ms. Menici said that she suggested the chapters being worked on this year to the Board because there were things in process already that would assist the Board in completion.

Ms. Judge asked again if we were working on just the four chapters or the entire Master Plan.

The Chairman answered that over time it would be the entire plan.

Vice Chairperson Faucette suggested that the questionnaire with a comment section be put on the Town of Wakefield website. Let them know via the PEG channel that it is there. Encourage people to complete the questionnaire and email it back. The cost is minimal and most people have email today. This would provide additional feedback.

Discussion followed regarding the responses to the last survey. Mr. Cools recalled that the 1999 survey resulted in between 300-500 responses. The last survey resulted in a little over 200 responses. He said that groups with an agenda will encourage the responses.

Alternate Member O'Connor commented that maybe Ms. Judge was suggesting that the survey could be narrowed down to the four main points instead of a huge survey that could create confusion. Ms. Judge agreed and if all we were working on was the four main chapters that we originally started with, why did we need a broader survey.

Chairman Cools stated that the Master Plan has not been updated in ten years and it is a requirement to do so. Even though we are only looking at four chapters, he said that it was important to do the survey so that the whole plan falls into what we find from the Town responses.

Ms. Menici will verify how the survey was done the last time and bring a blank copy to the next meeting so that the survey discussion can be more focused.

Public Forum

The Planning Board will facilitate a discussion to solicit public input for the Town of Wakefield Master Plan Update 2009 - *Vision Statement*. (Note: The *Philosophy* chapter of the 2001 Master Plan has been posted on the Town's website

Planner Menici asked that the group look at the summary of comments from April 9th discussion. She noted that the most predominant issue raised was economic development. She stated that this was not

one of the chapters proposed to address initially, but given the results of the last meeting it might be something the Board should address sooner.

Mr. Cools agreed that economic development in Wakefield has been a major issue over the past years especially related to Route 16.

Ms. Menici suggested that for the purposes of the Master Plan, a general discussion regarding economic development needs to take place.

Chairman Cools recognized Arthur Fulton. He suggested that the Town needs to offer some types of incentives to bring businesses to the Town, for example tax abatements, erect a building, etc.

Mr. Cools said that the Board had not even thought about that. Mr. Fulton went onto say that he had operated a business for years and other communities had offered incentives. He said that if the Town wants to bring businesses in, they needed to consider this.

The Planner said that this would be part of the discussion that is a part of the Master Plan update.

Discussion followed regarding the article about an individual in Barnstead that went to their Planning Board to propose a Pellet mill. The Town applied to New Hampshire Community Development Fund Authority and received \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to support the development and expansion of that business. The Town is responsible for applying for this funding. The funds are then administered by the regional economical development commission, which for Wakefield would be WEDCO. Planner Menici stated that this was a policy discussion that the Town needs to have to consider if they want to play that role.

Pam Judge brought up that there are minimum employment requirements that need to be met to be eligible for these grants and they could not qualify when they applied for funding with the Garvin Building due to less than 15 jobs. She went on to say that there are lots of historical/culture sites in Town that tie into economic development.

Chairman Cools stated that the Town used to have WERC -Wakefield Economic Resource Committee that would try to bring new businesses to Town. The problem was finding an appropriate location for the business. The public would say that they didn't want that business here and how should we deal with this as a committee. This is part of the survey that we need to explore – are the minds of the public interested in change or interested in staying rural community with no change.

Ms. Judge commented that the community didn't state 'no change'. They stated that they liked the rural character. They want a lot of services without sacrificing rural character. There needs to be a balance.

Arthur Fulton stated that the only way to attract business is to set up an organization within the community. The Town needs to know what the people want first. He didn't think that bringing in people for the historical society made money.

Ms. Judge replied that it can make money. For example, utilizing the historic sites such as the old mill in Union for business purposes. She stated that a lot of businesses have utilized the resources of WEDCO.

Chairman Cools stated that maybe the WERC committee should be reestablished if we were able to find individuals willing to participate.

Mr. Fulton spoke of an experience he had in 1995 that he was denied approval to establish a business in Wakefield; he went to Rochester and was instantly approved. He went on to say that requests are denied too often due to historical site restrictions and the fact that the Town is not willing to make concessions regarding incentives.

Ms. Judge stated that the Greater Wakefield Chamber of Commerce needs to be more involved with business and less with social issues. The discussion continued with comments regarding the bleakness of other town centers with store closings, etc. and the fact that Sanbornville is not experiencing that problem.

Ms. Judge went on to suggest the need for outreach techniques and the importance of isolating individual topics within the Master Plan in order to draw people's interest especially within the economic development need. Planner Menici pointed out that the starting point was the Vision Statement as a means of general discussion and from there it is narrowed down to more specific topics. Ms. Judge commented that we probably wouldn't have more public involvement until the topics are clearly defined. Ms. Menici suggested that in conjunction with the Master Plan Brochure, we could do a single sheet that talks specifically about the Vision Statement and how that guides the rest of the Master Plan.

Charlie Edwards commented that it was more difficult for individuals to come before the Planning Board because of the many obstacles. He said if the process were simplified, more businesses might be willing to come to town. Planner Menici stated that the Board has made many simplifications for example home occupation applications. Mr. Cools stated that the Board has to be open to both sides of the issues. For example, they are willing to discuss new businesses; however, if the public doesn't want that business they have to listen to them as well. Discussion continued with the suggestion that maybe the word needs to get out to the public that this is a better Board and the public perception of the Board needs to be changed. The Planner suggested a packet of materials be distributed to potential applicants to simplify how they need to proceed. If the Town had an economic development committee, this would be their role.

Relf Fogg stated that Family Oil had started to establish their business in Ring's building but left due to restrictive issues. Vice Chairperson Faucette informed him that Family Oil was approved in one meeting and wasn't aware of any issues. Planner Menici said that she would look into the reason for their leaving. Ms. Faucette stated that in her experience with the Planning Board, she could not recall denying one business.

Mr. Fogg asked if it was possible for the Planner to act as an economic advisor. She informed him that in some towns, the planner could handle this role. Mr. Cools suggested that maybe it was time to reorganize the WERC committee. Ms. Menici went on to say that economic development can occur in a manner compatible with rural character and talked of a historic farm in Conway that was preserved to be what is now Tech Village comprised of small businesses. This could also work in Wakefield.

Discussion continued with the need to work on the perception of the Town and the Board. This took into account the zoning of the Town and the limited space available zoned commercial or light industrial.

Relf Fogg mentioned that subdivisions when well done are a good source of business. Mr. Cools stated that this was a good way for the developers to make money; however, when the building was complete the homeowners would then be looking for local work and at the Town for services. He said that this was an issue when the Town discussed implementing impact fees.

Alternate Member O'Connor restated Mr. Fulton's comment that the Town needed industry not businesses. He equated industry to factories and businesses to large box stores. He said the impact on the Town and its services is greater with businesses than it would be with industries. Chairman Cools said that in most cases this is true; however, if the industry hires 150 people, these people want to live near their place of employment. There would then be a need to create businesses to accommodate their needs, etc. He said it would be a domino effect.

Mr. Edwards pointed out that there is a large percentage of the Town's population that works in the building industry. When building is down, other businesses in town suffer as well. Vice Chairperson Faucette agreed but stated that one reason there is a lot of building right now is that the Town's tax rate is low and individuals are looking to retire here.

Ms. Judge suggested that this meeting was going in the same direction as the previous one in that there was a lot of discussion regarding economic development. The Board of Selectman should be encouraged to develop a group such as WERC. This needs to be a Town committee to qualify for CDBG funds, etc. and must be appointed by the Selectmen.

Mr. Fulton asked that a survey be done that included a question about anyone in Town that works in a factory. He said that the Board should act quickly so that industries can be encouraged by this fact to come to this area. Mr. Fulton said that there needs to be a building to accommodate the business as well as figures for their workforce.

The Planner stated that there needs to be a very serious discussion regarding economic development as well as a separate community group to address the need such as WERC.

Mr. Cools said that the individuals on the original WERC committee lacked experience and training. Another issue was that there was no Town funding to work with and this resulted in not getting anything done. Ms. Judge continued to say that there was never funding but the committee was able to work because there was an overlap with the Town, WERC, Chamber and Heritage Commission. There was a united effort.

Board Business

1. Second Discussion – Amendment to Rules of Procedure

Chairman Cools asked for discussion of the Amendment of Rules of Procedure.

Member Huntoon wanted to talk about the recommendation made by Member Stevenson at the last meeting to remove all but the first sentence of the second paragraph. He suggested that the Rules should allow for some discretion. Instead of deleting this language, he suggested replacing it with the following statement:

Once designated, an alternate member shall participate in a case as a full Board member. When replacing a disqualified full Board member, an alternate member shall sit for the entire duration of a case. When replacing an absent full Board member, depending on the length or complexity of the case and the full member's participation to date, the Board shall have discretion to either ask the alternate member to sit for the entire case or only for the time the full member is absent.

Member Stevenson stated that her intention in suggesting the removal of the sentences was in reference to absent members, not disqualified members. She said that Member Huntoon's statement basically distinguished between the two categories and that both members had the same intention.

Member Stevenson stated that according to the Rules of Procedure, there is no mention of the placement of seating. There would therefore not be a need to vote on that portion. Planner Menici informed the group that the rules are being amended in order to incorporate that and therefore did need a vote.

Members of the public attempted to comment on this discussion but Chairman Cools informed them that this was Board Business and not open to the public for comment.

MOTION: To adopt the language as presented by Member Huntoon

Made by: Al Huntoon

Discussion: Alternate Member O'Connor suggested that the minutes should reflect where individual are seated at the meetings. Vice Chairperson Faucette replied that this was just a record of attendance.

Seconded by: Peg Stevenson

Discussion: Selectmen's Representative Ken Paul questioned whether the motion gave the Chairman the option to replace the alternate at the next meeting. Member Huntoon stated that his intention was to give the Board the discretion. Mr. Paul went on to say that if a member missed one meeting, he could get caught up quickly. If a member missed multiple meetings, however, it would not be that simple. Chairman Cools agreed; however, he said that if the member was aware of the case, he should be allowed to sit in on the remainder of the case. He stated that the Board Member was elected by the Town to do the job whereas the Alternate Member was nominated by the Board and then approved by the Selectmen. He felt that it would be an injustice to the public. In the past, if an applicant insisted on meeting with the full board (not including alternates) the Board had to accommodate this request. Mr. Paul suggested that the Planning Board follow the procedure established by the Zoning Board and make use of 'non-voting' signage. He said that the alternates should be allowed to sit at the side table so that there is no need to use multiple chairs to spread out their paperwork.

Vote: Unanimous

Relf Fogg questioned why this would not be open for discussion. He was informed that this was Board Business.

Mr. Cools asked for any additional discussion on this topic. Alternate Member O'Connor requested that the Rules of Procedure be read for the public. He said that the Rules required the reading twice before being voted on. Member Stevenson stated that according to the Rules of Procedure, once the changes are

elected the Rules must be read at two meetings before the Board has the final vote. The Board was still in the process of recommending changes.

Tom Dube asked if the public would be allowed to comment on this once it is read officially. Planner Menici stated that it was up to the Board whether to allow public comment on Board Business.

Relf Fogg asked that if the Rules have worked before and if it's not broken then why fix it. He asked that the Board site history.

Chairman Cools answered that in the past nine years, Board discretion has determined when an alternate continued on a case. He said that it's not a case of something being broken, it's a matter of making it legal.

Correspondence

1. Staff Memo re: Official Map of Municipality

Planner Menici explained that this memo was in response to Mr. Fournier's comments about the official map of the Town. At the last meeting, Mr. Fournier referenced statutory obligation. Ms. Menici included in this memo information from the relevant state statute that states if the Planning Board adopts a street plan as part of its master plan, then the local legislative body being the voters in town can authorize the Planning Board to undertake a survey to delineate the exterior lines of those roads. It does not obligate the Planning Board or the local legislative body to do so. The official map of the municipality is not a map of the boundaries of the community but rather a map of the specific streets within the community. This was provided for informational purposes only.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: To approve the minutes as amended for May 7, 2009
Made by: Donna Faucette
Seconded by: Peg Stephenson
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:55 pm
Made by: Donna Faucette
Seconded by: Al Huntoon
Discussion: None
Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Beaudoin
Planning Board Secretary