



TOWN OF HUDSON

Planning Board



Vincent Russo, Chairman

Rick Maddox, Selectmen Liaison

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HUDSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES February 8, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Russo called this Planning Board meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, 2012, in the Community Development's Paul Butler meeting room in the Hudson Town Hall basement.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Russo asked Mr. Della-Monica to lead the assembly in pledging allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

III. ROLL CALL

Chairman Russo asked Secretary van der Veen to call the roll. Those persons present, along with various applicants, representatives, and interested citizens, were as follows:

Members

Present: James Barnes, Glenn Della-Monica, George Hall, Tim Malley, Vincent Russo, Ed van der Veen, and Richard Maddox (Selectmen's Representative).

Members

Absent: None. (All present.)

Alternates

Present: Irene Merrill and Jordan Ulery.

Alternates

Absent: Marilyn McGrath (excused), Roger Coutu (Selectmen's Representative Alternate, excused).

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Staff

Present: Town Planner John Cashell.

Recorder: J. Bradford Seabury.

IV. SEATING OF ALTERNATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Russo noted that all regular members were present and that no alternates needed to be seated at this time.

V. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

Chairman Russo noted that the minutes for the previous week's meeting had been provided in the meeting packet. Finding that no one had had a chance to go through them as yet, he said these would be reviewed at the next meeting.

VI. CASES REQUESTED FOR DEFERRAL

No cases had been requested for deferral for this meeting.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Russo stated that there were no items of correspondence to be discussed this evening.

VIII. PERFORMANCE SURETIES

No **Performance Sureties** items were addressed this evening.

IX. ZBA INPUT ONLY

No **ZBA Input Only** items were addressed this evening.

X. PUBLIC HEARINGS

No **Public Hearings** items were scheduled for this evening.

XI. OLD BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

No **Old Business/Public Hearings** items were addressed this evening.

XII. DESIGN REVIEW PHASE

No **Design Review Phase** items were addressed this evening.

XIII. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ONLY

No **Conceptual Review Only** items were addressed this evening.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Review the 2006 Master Plan Update.

Chairman Russo read aloud the published notice, as repeated above.

Town Planner Cashell discussed the documentation he had provided with his staff report, including experiences in other communities that had recently updated their Master Plans or were planning to do so. He noted that the Master Plan normally did not change much except when whole revisions were desired, recalling the discussions that this Planning Board had gone through when updating the Master Plan in 2006—noting that the question was whether the Board wanted to redo the Master Plan or simply update it.

Mr. Hall asked if Bedford and Portsmouth had actually done an update—also asking who those communities had used as a consultant. Town Planner Cashell said he had not focused on Portsmouth, but he had provided copies of the RFPs (Requests for Proposals) sent out by Merrimack and Bedford. Mr. Barnes said Bedford had finished theirs and had published it, noting that it was on that town's website.

Town Planner Cashell referenced a well-known planner, who had stated that a Planning Board was better off to pay for an outside resource to do the work rather than depending on their own volunteer efforts. He noted that he had included a copy of the article in his staff report.

Mr. Della-Monica noted that Town Planner Cashell had used the word “abridged,” saying there was probably more detail in the Master Plan than was needed—such as the discussion about endangered species. He questioned if this information needed to be in the Master Plan, expressing a belief that a simple statement would be sufficient.

Selectman Maddox said the cost would be up to \$100,000 for just a rehash of the existing information. He said he would like to put into the budget a call for an intern who would work on the project next year. He noted that changes might occur, pointing out that the build-out analysis still showed Green Meadows as a golf course, which could change dramatically in the next few years. He acknowledged that the town had to have a Master Plan, in order to collect moneys from developments, but he contended that spending \$100,000 would be a challenge. He concluded by stating that updating the numbers that had changed, based on the newly available census information giving the numbers that had changed from 2000 to 2010, would be better.

Mr. Barnes said the last time the Planning Board did an update it had worked with NRPC and it did not cost a lot of money, but it took a long time. Selectman Maddox said it was still a cost of \$30,000. Mr. Barnes recalled the excruciating detail that had been required in reviewing the drafts, saying he liked the idea of hiring an intern to work with an update of the existing data, saying he thought that would be sufficient.

Chairman Russo expressed agreement, asking what date would be expected. Selectman Maddox noted that the citizens would be voting on next year's budget in March for FY'13, so getting an intern would be at least another year and a half away.

Town Planner Cashell said an update approach would truly be just a matter of updating, and the Board would not have to reinvent the wheel. He suggested that the Board could use NRPC personnel instead, since they had worked on the existing Master Plan. Selectman Maddox stated he had priced it in accordance with the NRPC schedule, and the cost would be \$90,000 plus.

Mr. Della-Monica said an entire document had to be produced every time the Master Plan was done, saying a lot of this material could be put in a separate document—estimating that half of it could be put aside as permanent information that could be referenced, thereby saving a ton of money.

Mr. Barnes questioned how many copies needed to be printed, since it would be online. Selectman Maddox recalled that much of the pain last time was that the Board had to keep going back to already reviewed chapters because of changes that were discovered. He suggested taking a year to review the existing document to determine what could be removed, saying he thought that could be done for less than \$10,000.

Mr. Della-Monica said Sections 3-14 through 3-38 probably would not change, saying this represented nearly half the document. He said surface water resource was not going to change, saying it was mostly definitions. Selectman Maddox suggested Mr. Della-Monica could be chairman of the editing committee; Mr. Della-Monica said he would be happy to do so.

Chairman Russo discussed the idea of reviewing one chapter at a time at successive workshops. Town Planner Cashell said the Board should look at this current "slump" time as a real opportunity to do some planning.

Chairman Russo asked Mr. Cashell to look at the next workshop agenda and to consider putting some chapter of the Master Plan on the agenda for review.

Mr. Della-Monica said he had gone through this process with other documents throughout his career, and he suggested that people should use differently colored highlighters to mark up sections that could be moved or changed.

Mr. van der Veen asked if Mr. Della-Monica were suggesting a Master Plan index that would remain constant. Mr. Della-Monica agreed, saying things that were static could go into another document, such as a Master Plan Research document—pointing out that the historical data describing what had happened between 1700 and 1900 would not change.

Mr. Hall said this discussion was talking about a radical change to the Master Plan, noting that there were statutory requirements. He said he could not see how that would work, but

he agreed that the Board could go through the existing document to see what needed to be updated. If the separation approach were to be taken, he suggested, the Board should decide ahead of time how that would work.

Selectman Maddox suggested that for the next open workshop everyone should bring in their copy and go over the different chapters, saying he agreed with Mr. Hall.

Chairman Russo said he did not want to put the burden of going through the whole plan on the members of the Board and that he did not want to tie up a meeting with that. Selectman Maddox said he was looking for the answers to such questions as whether some chapters could be combined or removed.

Chairman Russo asked if this worked for Town Planner Cashell. Mr. Cashell answered in the affirmative.

Chairman Russo asked what was scheduled for the next workshop. Town Planner Cashell answered that the agenda would include the low-impact development guidebook and model ordinance, which had been deferred from the February 9, 2011, meeting. He said the agenda would also include exterior lighting, adding that the Board also would receive information from Selectman Maddox on the CIP; Selectman Maddox responded that he could do that this evening.

Mr. Hall again expressed his concern, noting the items listed for the RFP (Request For Proposal) in the Bedford plan were covered in the Master Plan today, so he had doubts about taking chapters out of the existing document. Mr. Ulery said review of the statutes should be part of the overview. Mr. Della-Monica noted that NH RSAs 674-1 through -4 were the applicable statutes.

Chairman Russo expressed agreement, saying the Board would review the statutes and look at what should be changed at the next workshop.

B. Review the NRPC 2007 Build-Out Analysis for Hudson.

Chairman Russo read aloud the published notice, as repeated above.

Town Planner Cashell said this item also was involved with updating the Master Plan, noting that he had made reference to past projections made earlier in this decade, as a maximum buildout, but changes in the economic situation had lengthened the number of years before Hudson would approach buildout. He said this snapshot view he had provided was based on present zoning and planning, noting that tables at the end of his staff report went through these on a zoning basis. He pointed out that some concepts were hard to nail down, as it was like predicting the future, but short-term projections were easier—noting, however, that no one had anticipated the economic tailspin that started in 2007.

Mr. Barnes asked if Town Planner Cashell had any information as to how these numbers had been calculated—referring as a point of interest to Table 4-7, pertaining to industrial lots, which had about doubled in quantity, whereas he had thought the town was at about a peak with respect to industrial lots. Town Planner Cashell said the information had come from NRPC from its own research. Mr. Hall said a lot of the G zone could become Industrial. Mr. Ulery said he could not see how a buildout could be projected, as there were so many

variables, such as variances. Town Planner Cashell noted the effect that might occur if the Town decided to allow 4-story or 5-story buildings, noting that people wanted development during down-economy times. He pointed out that development of housing on the Green Meadows property might also occur, which would make a big difference.

Selectman Maddox noted that employees had been projected as going from the current value of 10,000 to a buildout of 23,000—questioning how anyone could develop such a figure. He said it came down to whatever was put in the Master Plan, which might not be what builders wanted to build. He recalled how there had been a flood of elderly housing projects, which currently were not being planned. Mr. Ulery said this was a constant problem, saying one could really not project how specific roads would be used in the future. Town Planner Cashell said the voters decided what they wanted the town to be, saying advantages could be taken by changing the Zoning Ordinance, for example, to encourage assisted-living or other health resorts. He said the whole idea was to keep nimble and open-minded, saying this would provide for those situations that could not be foreseen.

Mr. Ulery noted that housing had a 41% increase, students had a 41% increase, and crime had a 41% increase, asking if there were any correlations.

Mr. Barnes noted that the number of persons per household had not been changed.

Chairman Russo asked if the recent revelation of the increase in population not having occurred had been taken into consideration. Mr. Cashell said this data had been compiled before that trend was determined. Mr. Ulery noted that demographers had stated that the population of New Hampshire was not getting younger, because of the post-war birth pill, so the population rate would decrease at any rate, saying it had either leveled or gone down. He said 2.8 persons per household had been changed to 1.4 or 1.5. Selectman Maddox noted that the figure given in the table was 2.3. Town Planner Cashell said the largest growing element of the population was the single element. He said the older people had stopped having children but still had their houses, although they might move to Florida or Arizona after finally reaching retirement.

Mr. Barnes noted that the average household size was given as 2.7 on the fourth page.

C. Review 2010 Census Data for Hudson and the Region.

Town Planner Cashell reviewed some of the census data, noting that finalized figures would be published in the near future.

Mr. Ulery said the changes were leading to increased maintenance of the elderly but less of a tax burden on the remaining population to meet those needs, but this should only last for about 20 years or so. Town Planner Cashell said he really wanted to emphasize that Hudson had good location, close proximity to highways, and a great commercial base with great housing stock to create new housing, with a form of government that provided good services at good value. He noted that Hudson's housing had really held up well, with retail value only going down 16% as opposed to the up to 30% drop in other communities.

Chairman Russo asked if this were the latest build-out analysis; Town Planner Cashell answered in the affirmative. Chairman Russo said these were great numbers; he then

asked Mr. Cashell what he as a planner felt the Planning Board should be preparing the town for. Mr. Cashell said he had posed that question to his audience when he spoke the previous week, noting that Hudson had experienced four decades of incredible growth leading up to 2000, but now there was a very substantial reduction in growth. He expressed a belief that slow but steady growth would continue, and the community thus would have an opportunity to plan for much more stable growth. Chairman Russo asked what had caused the extreme growth back in the 60s; Mr. Cashell expressed a belief that this was the result of the baby boom. Chairman Russo noted that the technology boom had brought a lot of people up into this area in the 80s and 90s. Town Planner Cashell said businesses were still migrating up to New Hampshire from Massachusetts—noting that Salem had just attracted Entesis, which was planning for 500 new jobs, because companies could make more money here than in Massachusetts. He said whatever attracted businesses made for a stronger economy. He said one of the growth engines for New England was the number of universities in Massachusetts, which had more than 200,000 students each year, with many of them deciding to stay in New England after graduation.

Selectman Maddox said one of the things that drove the growth was the highways, recalling how the completion of Route 3 had made it easier to get here in timely fashion. He said people who did not have much money or who wanted a yard bigger than two postage stamps were coming north. Town Planner Cashell expressed agreement, pointing out that New England was competing with the rest of the country.

Mr. Della-Monica noted the discussion about predicting, saying that talking ten years out was great, but what had been predicted ten years ago often turned out to be something else. Town Planner Cashell expressed agreement, saying what had been predicted was what could happen based on concurrent trends.

Chairman Russo said the Town needed to prepare, noting the possible effects on school systems. Town Planner Cashell said these decisions were being worked out in the State House, in municipalities, etc. He said his best advice was that the Town probably did not need to worry about building new schools, but there might be a real need for traffic improvements as the driving populations became older. He said planning up until now had been based on exponential growth, but that situation was not here anymore, as proven by the just-released census data. He noted that data collection was so much easier nowadays that the census probably could be done every year. He said census takers did their best to try to find all the people.

Selectman Maddox said he did not think the Planning Board could do much with the front part of the document, but the traffic issues could be looked at. He suggested that copies of this data should be sent to the School Board and to the Board of Selectmen. He said things that the Planning Board did today, such as the improvements on Bush Hill Road, would have great effect in the future.

Town Planner Cashell said that in all likelihood the growth rate would be slower but the town would continue to grow. He noted that the people sitting at this table had been in Hudson for a long time and realized how much work had gone into all these improvements with respect to traffic, etc.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

Selectman Maddox said he had asked the Board of Selectmen if department heads could come before the CIP without going to the Board of Selectmen first, and that suggestion had been denied. He said the Planning Board now had to decide whether it wanted just to do an update or to do the whole CIP program—saying the Selectmen would go either way, but the presentations would be reviewed ahead of time by the Selectmen.

Mr. Ulery said what was needed was to find out what was essential and what needed to be done.

Mr. Hall pointed out that the CIP covered six years and did not cover everything in one year.

Selectman Maddox said he felt the update was the way to go, but if the Planning Board felt a full CIP program was needed, the Selectmen would go that way—but the Selectmen had to be concerned about cost.

Mr. Ulery asked if it would be possible, if the Planning Board found something that was not on the CIP but was needed, could the Board provide input to the Selectmen to address that issue—asking if this could be done as part of the update. Chairman Russo said he did not see why that could not be done. Town Planner Cashell said an example was the proposed senior center, which was not on the CIP but had “bubbled up to the top.” Chairman Russo said the Planning Board would have to mull this over until the March 7th workshop and make a decision at that time.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

All scheduled items having been addressed, Mr. Barnes moved to adjourn; Mr. Hall seconded the motion.

VOTE: Chairman Russo called for a verbal vote on the motion. All members voted in favor.

Chairman Russo then declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Date: May 9, 2012

Vincent Russo, Chairman

J. Bradford Seabury, Recorder

Edward van der Veen, Secretary

These minutes were accepted as amended following review at the 04-04-12 Planning Board meeting.

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**HUDSON PLANNING BOARD Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2012**

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The following changes were made to the draft copy in accordance with review comments at the Planning Board meeting of 04-04-12:

Page 4, 6th paragraph, xx line -- changed "surface recreation" to "Surface Water Resource" so that the text now reads "He said "Surface Water Resource" was not going to change."

Page 5, 3rd full paragraph, 1st line – removed redundant "if" so that the sentence now reads "Chairman Russo asked if this worked"

Page 5, 5th full paragraph, 1st line -- changed "RSVP" to "RFP)(Request For Proposal)."

Page 7, 2nd paragraph from bottom, 2nd line -- changed "family" to "document," so that the text now reads "he did not think the Planning Board could do much with the front part of the document"