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**HUDSON PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
December 7, 2005**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Barnes called this Planning Board meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7, 2005, in the Hudson Community Center building.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Barnes led the assembly in pledging allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

III. ROLL CALL

Chairman Barnes asked Ms. McGrath to call the roll, in the absence of Secretary Quinlan, who had not yet arrived. Those persons present, along with applicants, representatives, and interested citizens (totaling 18 in number), were as follows:

Members

Present: James Barnes, George Hall, Marilyn McGrath, Jeff Rider, Richard Maddox (Selectmen's Representative), and Suellen Quinlan (arrived at 7:10 p.m.). [Selectman Kathleen MacLean was also present, sitting in the audience.]

Members

Absent: Karl Bond (resigned).

Alternates

Present: Thomas Murphy, Vincent Russo, and William Tate (arrived at 7:33 p.m.).

Alternates

Absent: None. (All present.)

Staff

Present: Town Planner John Cashell.

Recorder: J. Bradford Seabury.

IV. SEATING OF ALTERNATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Barnes noted that no alternates needed to be seated, as all regular members were present. He then proceeded directly to the first workshop item.

VII. WORKSHOP PUBLIC HEARING

A. Master Plan Update

Public hearing to present the Town of Hudson (DRAFT) of the Master Plan Update and to receive public comments/concerns.

Chairman Barnes turned the meeting over to Ms. Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director of the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), which had been contracted to help the Planning Board with the update of the 1995 Master Plan. Referring to the multicolored handout brochure that had been provided to all attendees, Ms. Diers opened her PowerPoint presentation with a discussion of the purpose of the Master Plan, noting that one of the main goals was to reevaluate different land uses in the community to accommodate future development. She reviewed the sequence of hearings that had been held with respect to interim drafts of the update, and she encouraged the attending citizens (as well as the television audience) to examine the online draft at the NRPC's site, <http://www.nashuarpc.org/>.

Ms. Diers listed some of the recommended goals from the introductory chapter, and she then referenced the *Population and Housing* chapter, noting that one of the goals was to continue the Auxiliary Living Unit concept to accommodate expanded families.

She then addressed the *Natural Resources* chapter, discussing details about water resources issues and other resources concerns, noting that there was an active partnership with other communities to achieve some of the recommended goals.

Addressing the *Economic Development* chapter, Ms. Diers noted the amount of land available for industrial and commercial use, noting that the chapter identified what types of employers were located in Hudson, as well as the land use, noting that some of the recommendations included reassessment of the zoning and opportunities to redevelop some of the commercial land, with the recommendations encouraging a diverse business and industrial base. She noted that 45% of the town's economy was based on manufacturing.

Referring to the *Transportation* chapter, Ms. Diers noted that a lot of time had been spent in describing what sorts of transportation existed today, the condition of the bridges, and travel time involved both for residents and people passing through the community, with a lot of focus on bicycle and pedestrian networks in the town, as well as sidewalk connections and techniques for preserving the roadways.

Addressing the *Existing Land Use* chapter, she displayed a copy of the Town's Zoning map and then a map showing how the land currently was used, stating that these two maps really formed the basis of everything that would be recommended in the future.

Referring to the *Historic Resources* chapter, Ms. Diers stated that the few historic resources that remained needed to be protected, suggesting that one possibility might be to create a Historic District Commission to look out for these things, complete an inventory, and use different tools to protect them.

Turning to the *Community Facilities* chapter, Ms. Diers explained that this looked at all of the conditions of the existing facilities with an eye to determining whether the existing facilities met the known needs at this time and also what would have to be done to meet those needs in the future, with solutions being proposed.

Ms. Diers then addressed the final *Future Land Use* chapter, noting the issues mentioned in the handout. She said that lots of different ideas were outlined in the text, together with plans for industrial, commercial, and economic development opportunities, as well as discussion of environmental restrictions.

Ms. Diers stated that copies of the entire text, in addition to being available on the Web at the NRPC site, were available at the Hills Memorial Library and at Town Hall, stating that the Planning Board would hold additional hearings and then adopt the Master Plan—at which time, she added, the really hard work would begin, involving trying to figure out the priorities of the many pages of recommendation.

Chairman Barnes opened the meeting for public input, asking if there were any questions or comments with respect to the Master Plan.

Ms. Mary Ellen Davis, 14 Nathaniel Drive, noted that the projected growth would be about 29,000 in the year 2020, representing a growth of only about 6,000 people; she then asked if the growth were expected in the business/commercial area. Ms. Diers said there was not much remaining land available for development in the residential areas, but that Hudson was very well set up for commercial/industrial development.

Mr. Tate arrived at 7:33 p.m. and took his seat at the table at that time.

An unidentified woman in the audience noted that a 14,000 projected growth in traffic, amounting to a 60% increase, was marked for the south end of the town, where she lived. She asked if this projection were made before or after the newly announced Green Meadows development—adding that her area of town would be swamped in traffic. Ms. Diers said the projection was made before the development was announced, but that it had been based on the assumptions of future development, so that some of the growth was captured in the projection.

No other questions or comments being brought forward from the audience, Chairman Barnes asked if there were any questions from members of the Board.

Mr. Rider referenced the meeting that had been held the previous Saturday with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, saying the DOT officials had shown a map designating some of the Hudson roads as being at or above capacity. He suggested that a copy of that map should be added to the draft Master Plan.

Ms. Mary Ellen Davis suggested that Massachusetts traffic coming up Dracut Road also should be considered. She then asked if the Planning Board would be signing up volunteers who wanted to serve on the actual implementation organizations. Chairman Barnes said the Planning Board would continue to have public hearings on the Master Plan to take further input, adding that comments could be brought to the Community Development Department, and adding further that news about various groups that would be formed to try to implement some of the recommendations would be announced in the local newspapers, including the *Hudson Litchfield News*.

No further questions or comment being brought forward, Chairman Barnes asked for a motion to defer further review of the Master Plan Update to the Board's next workshop meeting, to be held on January 4th, 2006. Ms. McGrath so moved; Ms. Quinlan seconded the motion.

VOTE: Chairman Barnes called for a verbal vote on the motion. All members voted in favor, and Chairman Barnes declared the motion to have carried unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Barnes noted that the next item to be addressed would be the conceptual review for the Green Meadows development. Time being required to set up the different projection equipment to be used for that presentation, he then declared a brief break at 7:38 p.m., calling the meeting back to order at 7:44 p.m.

X. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ONLY

A. Green Meadows Golf Club, Inc.

Map 239-001
43 Steele Road

Presentation on proposed multi-use commercial development of the 375-acre Green Meadows Golf Club, Inc., property.

Atty. Thomas Jay Leonard stated that he wished to introduce W/S Development, the intended developer of the Green Meadows property. He said he wanted to give a summary of what had been going on through the past few months and then give an idea of what could be expected as a timetable. He displayed an aerial view of the Green Meadows property, stating that the Friel family had not developed it in the past because they took their obligations to the town seriously and had always required that it be developed with a master plan, and they were now here to take the first steps in that regard. He reported that W/S Development had been focusing on the infrastructure, including traffic connections, based on preliminary studies that had been done by the Friels back in the 1980s, when an earlier plan had been proposed.

Atty. Leonard displayed a master plan use map, noting the proposed limited-access interchange with the Sagamore Bridge, connecting to Lowell Road at the south end of the property, stating that this plan had been discussed with the State Department of Transportation. He said there would be major road modifications and improvements to the existing infrastructure, adding that there would also be major development with respect to the water and sewer systems, which was being discussed with Town Engineer Sommers. He pointed out that this was still very preliminary, with any actual plans still being months away, and with the Planning Board having a lot of input with that regard.

Atty. Leonard then introduced members of the development team, including Mr. Ed Vydra, the project manager; Mr. Bob Fraser, vice-president of construction and development; and Mr. Richard Askin, chief planner and architect.

Mr. Robert Fraser noted that Mr. David Friel and Atty. Gerald Prunier were also present. He then presented the same video show that had previously been shown to the Hudson Board of Selectmen, describing the nature of the "life-style centers" his firm developed by showing a video of such a center that his firm had developed on a golf course in Canton, Connecticut, as well as the redevelopment of an older-style center in Hingham, Massachusetts. He described the centers as using a new open-air approach, designed to give the look and feel of a New England village setting, with the buildings predominantly being one-story structures and with the stores being a mix of national chains and local shops. He noted the use of sidewalks, walkways, the provision of local music performance, and the statements by interviewed people testifying to the cooperativeness of W/S Development.

Atty. Leonard said the Friels had chosen W/S Development because of that firm's track record and its experience with open air centers. He declared that this would be "the signature project" for the Town of Hudson and would not be an ordinary retail complex, with a requirement that it be master-planned, and that the first phase have an infrastructure that answered all the questions that the citizens might have for the entire site. He said it would be an exciting project, but that he could not stress enough that the plans were preliminary at this time, and he promised that answers would be provided for questions concerning the whole 375-acre tract of land.

Mr. Fraser commented on the location with respect to both Hudson and Nashua, saying the major feature of the infrastructure would be a bypass road coming off from the Sagamore Bridge roadway. He reported that the team had had conversations with the Department of Transportation with the assistance of Senator Clegg to find out whether the State personnel would entertain the idea of a private developer working with them to design, engineer, and construct this improvement—adding that the firm had received favorable results. He then reported that they had also met with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to talk about other aspects of development with respect to the proximity to the river

Mr. Richard Askins, the architect, referenced his 30 years of experience in designing centers, noting that the design of the Pheasant Lane Mall placed a lot of emphasis on the vehicle, to make things comfortable for the driver, whereas the life-style center format appealed to people who liked to be outside—adding that master planning was largely defined by the uses and the users. He said this would be more than just retail, with the intent being to have other uses integrated with the plan, saying that there could be residential, some offices, a hotel, and other uses. He said a lot of time was being spent on thinking of how to take advantage of the fact that one side of the property fronted on the river, giving value not only to the development of the property but to the people who come to visit and spend time on the property. Noting that the team was working with other planning firms to get other expertise, he discussed what he called a "charrette" brainstorming approach, involving experts from other regions.

Mr. Askins then displayed what he called a "bubble diagram" to explain the intended uses that would be placed on the property, and he discussed details of those uses in different locations on the property—pointing out that there was no final scheme as yet, but there was general agreement on a scheme to put a specialty life-style center near the bypass roadway, with a "ceremonial" loop road running around it to organize the

transient population. He outlined the retail uses, noting that a theater and fine dining could be included, as well as fashion aspects. He said this was an impressive site, as it sat on the river with different types of elevations and vegetation, saying the idea was to be sensitive to whatever was given. He said the "arc" shape of the center would be an undulating design to fit the shape of the land, with more natural terrain spilling down to the riverfront. He suggested that there could be walking paths, bicycle paths, and boating opportunities on the riverfront, along with an amphitheater to allow concerts on the river. Referring to the shopping center, he said that he expected better-quality tenants, noting that the sidewalk would be better designed than necessary, using better quality materials, as shown in the pictures of the Hingham site—saying the idea was to make it an interesting place to visit. He named various types of tenants that might be coming to this area, pointing out that there were no actual contract commitments, as yet, and he reiterated that the center would be designed for convenience and to fit in New England. He then concluded by saying that the idea was to create a stage on which things could happen, adding that W/S Development would have on-site managers to make sure that things did happen.

Mr. Fraser noted that water resources were critical for this development, commenting on how impressed the team was with the expertise of Town Engineer Sommers. He stated that the development team was working with Hayner/Swanson, Inc., a local firm, adding that the team would come forward in the future with definitive plans for each phase of the development, with the life-style center to be the first phase, but the entire 375-acre parcel would have a long-term master plan, with all of the issues being identified and with the team working toward resolution of those issues, phase by phase. He said the development would supply a very positive tax flow to offset the residential development, adding that it was very important to the team to be able to work with the community in order to create something that all would be proud of.

Atty. Leonard said a master plan would be presented to the Planning Board in a more formal way within the next three or four months, with details about road locations, sewer, water, etc. He noted that there would be phases, because this could not be built all at once, but the community would know what the plans were for each phase, with specific site plans for each phase and each building in the phase to cover parking spaces, etc. He said the team was present tonight looking for guidance and would like to propose that the development have a schedule of somewhat regular work sessions with the Planning Board—ending by expressing his belief that this was a tremendous opportunity for the Town of Hudson.

The W/S Development presentation being concluded, Chairman Barnes said he would open the meeting to the public at this time.

Ms. Connie Owen, 3 Bruce Street, expressed concern that the Friels had said ten months ago that the property was not for sale. She said she was completely concerned and shocked to find out that there had been confidential (which she equated with "secret") negotiations going on in the town regarding this property for over a year, saying she felt she had been lied to, as this clearly had been presented as a "done deal," rather than a proposal. She said she was not necessarily opposed but had concerns about the ethics of the way this had been handled, when representatives of the town government were involved in confidential negotiations without any notice to

abutters of the property. She said the abutters had a number of questions they would like to present to the Planning Board and to the Selectmen, which they would like to have answered.

Atty. Leonard expressed a belief that there was a lot of misinformation going around. He said the Friel family had had many developers asking about the property for the past 20 years. As that became more of a reality, he said, the Friels had to make a decision on how to go about the whole process, saying it was very difficult to have rumors going on year in and year out about how the ongoing business was going to close. He said the Friels had asked the Town if they could simply start gathering the information on a preliminary basis, saying there was no way to get the information except to go talk with staff. He said the golf course would not be closed for at least a year or two, insisting that there had been no negotiation whatsoever, but solely meetings to get information about sewer, water, etc.

Ms. McGrath clarified that the Friels had not met with the Planning Board or any member of the Planning Board during that time. Atty. Leonard said it was primarily staff, although one person who sat on the Planning Board had sat in on some meetings.

Ms. Owen stated that Selectman Maddox had identified himself at a public meeting as having met regarding this, adding that other people had also been identified as participating, which had led to going to the State, so this was beyond just gathering a little information. She said she had never been witness to anything happening in Hudson where major changes to property had been planned without at least the courtesy of notifying abutters, noting that there were 24 homes abutting this property, which would be impacted by construction, by noise, by dust, by wetland interruption. She then stated that she would be happy to send a list of the abutters' concerns by E-mail.

Chairman Barnes said there was no plan before the Planning Board at this time, with no application having been submitted, adding that the first time he had learned about these details was when he attended the end-of-November Board of Selectmen meeting at which the initial presentation was made. When the plan was submitted to the Planning Board for consideration, he added, all the abutters would be notified, adding that this was just the beginning of the process and there was no "done deal."

Ms. Owen stated that Atty. Leonard had acknowledged it was a done deal when she talked to him after the Selectmen's meeting. Atty. Leonard said there was a real misunderstanding going on, saying there was no plan currently before the Planning Board and that there would be a one- or two-year process to go through in which the abutters and the public would have an opportunity to participate. He said that what he had meant by saying "Yes" when Ms. Owen asked him if it were a done deal was that the Friels had committed to go forward with a developer. He said the only thing that was "done" was that the Friels had committed to the process of going forward.

Chairman Barnes asked if Ms. Owen wished to present her questions now or forward them to Town Planner Cashell. She responded that she would prefer to forward them.

Mr. Fraser reiterated that his firm had been in a due diligence period to analyze the development potential of the property, but did not have a plan at this time—adding that it had not been the Friel family but W/S Development that had initiated communications with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation at the highest level, meeting with the Commissioner at the State House in order to find out if it would be feasible to construct a bypass within the required timeframe, as well as initiating discussions with the Department of Environmental Services. He declared that there had been no “secret” meetings, adding that his firm had not bought the property and the Friels had not sold it, but that his firm had a binding agreement with the Friels to proceed. He added that they were just coming out of the due diligence process and were here tonight to introduce themselves, but were not submitting plans for a specific project at this time, and they would be meeting with abutters in the future.

Ms. Jean Serino, 118 Robinson Road, commended Ms. Owen for her concerns, expressed objections to not having been allowed to speak at the time of the presentation of this plan to the Board of Selectmen, and said she was so saddened by how people were impressed by money. She spoke of the need for farms and asked if the Friels had considered selling the property to the Town of Hudson or giving the town some open space. She said the proposed construction looked like a city, and she questioned if the citizens wanted to live in a city, and she questioned if this were what the young men in Iraq were dying for. She said she hoped the Planning Board would deny the plan—or, if they did not deny, asked for half of it as open space.

Ms. Kathleen Leary, 8 Power Lane, asked if any thought have been given to keeping one of the two golf courses, saying it would be a shame to lose both at the same time. With respect to the traffic and bypass roads, she protested that this would mean years of construction, and she asked how the developers would get into the property initially. Atty. Leonard responded that the highway interchange would be done first, which was why they had asked for a master plan. Ms. Leary said the property south along Route 3-A from the Sagamore Bridge access road already had the greatest projected increase in traffic in the town, on a two-lane road, and she questioned where all the traffic from this project feeding into that road would be going. She noted that getting in and out from her neighborhood already was a problem. She said she thought a lot more people would have been here if the meeting had been more adequately noticed, saying she had only seen the date of this meeting in one editorial.

Ms. Audry [indecipherable], 23 Fairway Drive, said she abutted both the river front and the golf course; she asked how big the buffer would be for herself and her neighbors. Atty. Leonard said the buffer was in the process and her concerns would be addressed specifically when her concerns were specific, but the developers recognized those concerns and would answer those questions when the time came.

Ms. Mary Beth Testagrossa, 15 Fairway Drive, directly abutting the golf course, said she had concerns about the buffer, noting that she had spent premium dollars just to get into her neighborhood and she felt that her vested interest would be decreased by changing the zoning to get the mall in. She asked who would control the buffer zone and what type of language would be put in to protect the abutters’ interests, and she also asked what the access to the proposed residential area would be, questioning if the inhabitants of that proposed housing would be going through the existing

neighborhood or going through the mall. Finally, she asked if there had been any question of leaving some part of the golf course, perhaps as a nine-hole golf course, for service to the abutters or perhaps donating it to the Town so that the Town could keep the green space. Atty. Leonard responded that these were all good comments and that he truly believed the development team would be able to satisfy all of these questions, but he could not answer them now because that was all part of the process.

Ms. Jane Bowles, 57 Hazelwood Road, asked what the golf course of the Connecticut golf course mentioned in the video presentation had been, adding that she would like to know how many specialty stores would be in the proposed center, as compared to how many were in Hingham and the other places mentioned. Atty. Leonard said this proposed project would be larger, saying he believed the Canton golf course had been about 150 acres. He then reiterated that the developers would be able to address these issues more specifically as they went forward. Ms. Bowles noted that several large parcels had slipped through the Town's hands, saying this might be a chance to get some of the things that had been missed out on—commenting that Hudson had no auditorium, no performing arts center, and no movie theater. She suggested that these things be considered for the proposed entertainment area by the river. She then asked if any athletic fields were being considered, or a skating rink or a swimming pool. Referring to the river as one of the Town's greatest assets, she said river walks and bike trails were nice but it would be nice to do something more than just walk beside the river and look at it, so she was interested to hear that something along the lines of a marina was being considered, to provide public access to the river. She said she had noticed in her travels that some other cities made much more use of the river, and she hoped this valuable resource would not turn out to be all residential or private.

Mr. Jim Wilks, 25 Chalifoux Road, noted that a projected 14,000 additional cars would be going up and down River Road, saying he would not want to see that road turned into a four-lane road, like the Daniel Webster Highway.

Ms. [indecipherable], Bruce Street, said the proposed bypass road would result in her having traffic to her back yard. Noting that Mr. Askins had said this would be an interesting place to visit, she pointed out that she and her neighbors would be living there, living next to the mall and the parking lots, and she questioned if this would feel like a "village." Atty. Leonard said he thought this question would be answered in the process—adding that there would also be some residential development and the people would like to live there, and adding further that he thought it would be a very nice place to live. The citizen said her neighborhood would be bombarded by the traffic now routed around Sam's Club; she then questioned if this development would save taxes for the residents, saying she just could not see it, at all, and she could not see how the developers were being sensitive to her neighborhood.

Ms. Sue Whitten, 12 Linda Street, said her neighborhood was the other one, at the entrance to the golf club, where the bypass road would go behind them, and she saw no buffer being planned for that area. She noted that there were wetlands behind there, too, and she wondered if that would be impacted. Chairman Barnes said it was hard to know that without having a detailed plan in front of the Board, but anything having a wetlands impact would have to be reviewed by the New Hampshire

Department of Environmental Services and the Hudson Conservation Commission, and would have to go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment for a special exception.

Ms. Kathleen McLean, 6 Jennifer Street, said the beautiful pictures appeared to have been taken in the summer time in Connecticut, where the weather was better, but she could not see big stores coming to New Hampshire to have shoppers outside in the New Hampshire winter snow and cold. Saying there were only about six good months here, she suggested that the developers should have the potential store officials come to New Hampshire to see what it was like. She acknowledged that she was not a shopper.

Ms. Mary Ellen Davis, 14 Nathaniel Drive, said Hudson was going through some very dramatic changes, and she felt the Planning Board and the developers should apply some change-acceptance principles to this so that people could understand what was going on, which hopefully would alleviate a lot of the fears. She said that what she would like to see a page set up on the Web site, to explain what the phases were, when people could expect them to start and end, and what was going to be affected during that construction phase. She said she lived close to the area and was sure she would be affected by the traffic, as she already had a concern about the traffic in the south end of town. She stated that this project would be a benefit to Massachusetts shoppers, not to Hudson residents, as the Massachusetts shoppers would be using Hudson's roads, utilities, and services, and then going home. She suggested that some customer profiling should be done.

No one else coming forward to provide input, Chairman Barnes reiterated that this was the beginning of the process, which was nowhere near its end. He listed the various board and agencies that would be involved, and he urged all interested citizens to pay attention.

Ms. Connie Owen stated that she had been informed on Monday, when she checked, that this meeting was going to be held in the Community Development Room at the Town Hall, and it had been very disconcerting to show up there and find out that it had been moved over here to the Community Center. If the process were going to be open and transparent, she continued, the citizens needed to know when, where, who, and what the level of input would be, with no last-minute changes. Chairman Barnes said the meetings typically would be in the Community Development Room for the Planning Board, adding that he would make an effort to make sure that word got out.

Chairman Barnes asked for comments or questions from members of the Board.

Ms. Quinlan said it was rare that the Planning Board got the opportunity to appear on television, and oftentimes the public had a very skewed understanding of the Planning Board's powers and authority. She stated that the Friels owned the 375 acres and could do whatever they wanted with them, within reason and within the measures of the Town's ordinances and State statutes. She expressed concern about the conspiracy theory being suggested tonight, saying she felt the Friels and W/S Development officials were being open and forward, and it was obvious that meetings would have to have gone on before they could get to this present stage, and she did not believe they had done anything subversive or secret, but that they had done what they needed to do to get the project moving forward. She expressed a belief that the

Friels were being candid and honest in saying they had not sold the property. She said she was also concerned about people wanting the Planning Board to force the Friels to give some portion of the property to the Town for open space, noting that she also sat on the Conservation Commission, which had worked very hard for several years to put a bond article on the Town Warrant for people to vote to purchase open space, and it had been resoundingly voted down. She said the Planning Board could not force either the Friels or W/S Development to set aside some portion of the property, as the Town did not have the money to purchase the land, because the voters had not backed the concept. She said she was excited about this project, but she would not support something like the Maine Mall or the Pheasant Lane Mall, which was not what she envisioned for Hudson—but she would support what had been shown in the video tonight, as she felt this would be incredibly good for the town and the taxpayers. She said she would be looking for ideas and guidance about the traffic coming up Dracut road and River Road, and also that she was concerned about the buffer for the residents living near the bypass access road.

Ms. Jean Serino took issue with Ms. Quinlan's comment about the voters, saying the vote for the open space was not defeated resoundingly, but was defeated by a very small vote and by many developers.

Mr. Tate expressed concurrence with what Ms. Quinlan had said, saying the people of Hudson had property rights, and pointing out that where the concerned residents now lived had formerly been farm land. He said his thoughts were to look for what would benefit the town, adding that people could not expect property owners to give away their open space. He argued that people would have to participate, to influence the developers to participate with them. Stating that there was very little property in the town available for commercial development, he said he agreed there were hardly any farms left, and he did not know any other areas in the town where the use would be more practical.

Mr. Murphy said he had heard grumbling of the Planning Board being involved in clandestine meetings, saying this was the first time he had seen anything of this project, other than watching the televised presentation at the recent Board of Selectmen meeting. He said he understood that this meeting was scheduled for this location more than two weeks ago and had been made public at that time, not changed at the last minute. Town Planner Cashell said it had been planned for this location over a month ago, because of the Master Plan Update.

Mr. Murphy said property owners had rights, and the Planning Board could not prevent development but could hold the owners accountable to zoning issues. Mr. Murphy then asked if the golf driving range would be outside the development or part of it. Atty. Leonard said the driving range was not part of this proposal but that the access road ran across it, adding that the driving range would be staying longer than the golf course.

Mr. Murphy asked if the red dotted lines on the plan represented a road connection to Sams' Club. Atty. Leonard said the dotted lines were intended as a thought, not a sure thing; he noted that an access to the Friel property had been preserved from the Sam's Club access road when the original Sam's Club development had been

processed, for access both to the golf course and to the Vectron site, but it was just a possibility. Atty. Leonard said the same was true of the loop road shown on the site: that was the likely location but there was more work to be done.

Mr. Murphy then asked if the projected increase in traffic was not accounted for by the rezoning last year of the property on the other side of Lowell Road. Town Planner Cashell said the traffic numbers in tonight's handout were long-term projections, based on percentage increases along the corridor roadways; he expressed a belief that this sort of development had not been considered, meaning that the projections would have to be looked at and modified. Mr. Cashell said everyone would have to work together to make sure that the roadway system would adequately handle the added traffic growth, saying a project of this size could not just be introduced, creating a big bottleneck for the town, and he said this would not work for the developer or for the State's interests. He said this big project would help the economic outlook of the State, saying the overall effect would be an improvement for Hudson, and the Planning Board's job would be to make sure that it was adequately accommodated. He then added that this was the largest economic development proposal in New England right now.

Ms. McGrath asked if regional impact of the increased traffic on Nashua and Tyngsboro had been considered. Atty. Leonard said that was definitely in process, saying the Friel family had done a regional traffic study about eight months ago and had handed that over to W/S Development, which had since then done their own traffic study, looking as far out as it goes, and the State would require more traffic studies. He predicted that the Planning Board would become sick of the traffic studies it would receive on this project, noting that the only way to get an interchange would be if the State decided that it was a regional impact and important for the benefit of the Town. He said the traffic was known to be a big issue and it would be taken care of.

Ms. McGrath asked if the access road and the improvements to the roadways would have any cost to the Town or would be borne by the developer. Atty. Leonard said those were part of the development costs, adding that this was why it was so important to have a large tract of land and a master plan, as a road like that could not be built unless hundreds of acres were involved. Ms. McGrath asked for clarification as to when the access off from Exit 2 of the turnpike would be built. Atty. Leonard said it would be part of the first phase, adding that this would be part of the discussion with the Planning Board: timing for all of this, extra improvements for the first store as opposed to the tenth store, etc., and adding further that the development team knew the Planning Board had to be convinced.

Ms. McGrath reported that she had gone down to look at the Hingham facility during the past weekend, saying that she was a shopper and that she had been impressed by the firm's development in Hingham, which had been done very nicely. With that said, she continued, she lived south of this development, on River Road, and she had a difficult time getting out of her driveway currently, on a good day, and the additional traffic going by her door from and to Massachusetts for this development would be horrendous. She said she would be very cognizant of that while reviewing the forthcoming plans, adding that she took her responsibility very seriously. She then conclude by stating that most of the members of the Planning Board, including herself,

had not seen this plan before tonight other than on the televised presentation of the Board of Selectmen meeting, and she assured the audience that this development would get the type of scrutiny that it deserved and that what ultimately went into that area would probably benefit the Town in the long term.

Mr. Rider said he had half a page of questions and comments, but he would submit them to Town Planner Cashell for forwarding to the developers. He then asked how the answers would get disseminated. Town Planner Cashell suggested that the Planning Board could go over the questions at the January 4th workshop meeting. Mr. Rider suggested that Mr. Cashell should declare a deadline for getting the questions to him, so that the developers could prepare answers in time for the meeting.

Town Planner Cashell said the Town staff had been assigned by the Selectmen to put time aside and to put a lot of thought into this particular project. He suggested that there might need to be a new Economic Development Committee, as other nearby spaces would become more attractive for spillover projects as a result of this project. He warned that the Planning Board would become busier, adding that Hudson might turn into a city as a result, and saying that people would have to start thinking big from here on out.

Chairman Barnes stated that questions and inputs should be submitted within the next two weeks from Mr. Rider, the audience, and the television audience.

Ms. McGrath clarified that the change in zoning last year for the property on the northeast side of Lowell Road, from the Baptist Church down to Pete's Gun Shop, as referenced by Mr. Murphy, had been voted in by the voters.

Mr. Tate asked if this project were being treated differently than conceptual reviews usually were, noting that communication was going back and forth between concerned individuals and the developers, and he asked if this were premature. He said he saw no real reason to have the developers appear before the Board next month, as they had already said they would be a year in the process, and he felt the developers should just work with staff until the plan was developed, which was how other conceptualls were treated. Chairman Barnes said this was an informational meeting, not a conceptual review, to gather some information and to present some questions to the future applicants. Mr. Tate said he felt this project was being handled differently.

Mr. Rider clarified that he had concerns that he felt W/S Development needed to take into consideration as part of its long-term planning, adding that he did not expect them to come back in a month with answers.

Town Planner Cashell said staff's intention, at the directive of the Board of Selectmen, was to make sure that no stone was left unturned in analyzing this project and in making sure that the Town knew what the future needs would be for the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Highway Department, etc., as well as to make sure that the Town knew what the residential impact would be, including school needs. He said the whole infrastructure of the community would have to be addressed, and it would take a very long time.

Ms. Quinlan asked if there would be a conceptual plan at the January 4th meeting. Mr. Bob Fraser said the complexities associated with this plan would take a lot longer,

adding that they needed feedback from other businesses they would be bringing into the community before they could get to a definitive level of planning. He said the Planning Board was the custodian of trust for the community, saying he felt the idea of a Web site was a great idea, but January 4th would be an aggressive time to have a definitive plan.

Chairman Barnes stated that people should get questions and comments to the Town Planner before December 21st, and Mr. Cashell could review these with the Board at the January 4th meeting, with the developers coming in later when they were ready to present a full conceptual plan. Atty. Leonard said they were willing to come to the January 4th meeting and start talking about some of the issues, such as the buffers.

No one else coming forward, Chairman Barnes thanked everyone for attending, and he then asked members of the Board if there were anything else to discuss this evening. Nothing was brought forward.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

All scheduled items having been addressed, Ms. McGrath moved to adjourn; Mr. Tate seconded the motion.

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

Chairman Barnes then declared the meeting to be adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Date: January 16, 2006

James Barnes, Chairman

J. Bradford Seabury, Recorder

Suellen Quinlan, Secretary

-- FILE COPY --

The following changes were made, in accordance with requests made during the Planning Board's review on February 1, 2006:

The heading at the top of the title page gave the year date as 2006, as did the first paragraph and also the heading at the top of each page. All of these year dates were changed to 2005.

On Page 3, last line, the misspelling of the word "Litchfield" in the phrase "Hudson-Litchfield News" was corrected.

On Page 8, 2nd paragraph, 3rd line from the bottom, the word "waned" was replaced by "wanted."

On Page 5, 4th paragraph, the word "diver" was replaced by "driver."