

  
**CITY OF CLAREMONT**  
**Planning Board Meeting**  
Monday, April 10, 2006, 7:00 p.m.  
City Council Chambers, City Hall, Claremont, NH

**Minutes**  
*Accepted with Correction 4/24/06*

Meeting called to order by Acting Chair Alan Grigsby at 7:05 pm.

**I. ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Alan Grigsby, Ralph Swift, Frederick Kuriger, Allan Berggren, Russell Fowler, Peter Guillette, Lori Richardson

**Absent:** Chair Anita Engel (excused), Mayor Scott Pope (excused), Jim Hanson (excused), Erwin Caplan (excused), Heather Bopp, Chhouen Prach

**City Representatives:** Jerry Coogan, City Planner; Suzanne Ripka, Boards and Commissions Coordinator

**II. APPOINTMENTS:**

- Peter Guillette appointed for Erwin Caplan in his absence
- Lori Richardson appointed for Chair Anita Engel in her absence

**III. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**Motion:** To accept the minutes of March 27, 2006 as presented.

**Made By:** Mr. Swift    **Second:** Mr. Berggren    **Vote:** Unanimous

Mr. Grigsby updated the board on information that he received during the Spring Planning and Zoning Conference which included housing, environmental and school data material that was available on disc.

Mr. Grigsby attended 3 seminars which included but was not limited to the Wildlife action plan which is due out soon. Some data will be released by June. He goes on to explain state wide outdoor recreation plan. Mr. Grigsby refers to information that was received on traffic studies and the importance of utilizing traffic mitigation plans to aid in smart growth. Mr. Coogan adds that not every case requires a traffic study or traffic mitigation – depends on size of project appropriateness.

Brief discussion on the new storm water regulations due out this fall.

Mr. Coogan responds to request on information regarding the PSNH easement and refers to handouts distributed to answer Mayor Pope's question from the previous meeting. Discussion regarding easements.

Mr. Swift, who also attended the Spring Planning and Zoning Conference, comments on a seminar he attended which stressed the importance of lot configuration and shape in order to minimize impact. Usable space and provide adequate emergency access. The consensus was that square lots are preferable. Mr. Swift updates board on information he received regarding determining best building location based on forestry of land, model, and types of soil and wetland locations. Mr. Swift shared with the board that he also attended a seminar regarding various regional planning associations discussing purposes of regional planning groups and how they work with towns. He purchased a CD on Master Plans and offers to share the information.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Discussion regarding proposed Zoning amendment allowing increased density in areas served by city water and sewer.**

Mr. Coogan states that the City Solicitor is currently reviewing the draft amendment and that it will be available as soon as the review is complete. He goes on to explain that in order for the amendment to be approved after review the next step is recommendation by the Planning Board followed by a majority City Council vote. There is a participatory process to allow for board and public comment.

Background: As discussed at the last Planning Board meeting, there is a need in the City for additional affordable single family attached and detached housing for middle income families. The median for sale price for single family housing in  
Planning Board Meeting 4/10/06

Claremont is about \$180,000. This office has received inquiries from developers regarding a proposed change in the current zoning to allow greater densities for such housing when City water and sewer service is available. The estimated cost of such housing would be in the \$200,000 to \$220,000 range.

Concept for the proposed zoning amendment:

The proposal would allow for the clustering of residential units on a portion of a tract with higher densities in a district than what would normally be allowed when City water and sewer service are provided. Also, a certain portion of the tract shall be designated for the preservation of open space. The intent of this section is to provide an opportunity for affordable middle income housing of all types in a neighborhood setting that is relatively close to the City's downtown and shopping areas and to encourage the preservation of open space in a residential neighborhood. This approach is referred to as a New Neighborhood Development. An applicant seeking approval under this section will prepare a plan that addresses items such as:

- In those agricultural and rural residential districts served by City water and City sewer, uses allowed in the Residential 1 district shall be permitted, including apartment type buildings.
- Higher individual lot densities (10,000 SF / unit) will be allowed because of the availability of City water and City sewer service;
- Phased development program in order to minimize the impact on municipal and educational costs;
- Proposed dimensional requirements may be reduced from what is allowed under Sections 22-169 and 22-209 in order to allow for a creative site design and building style.
- In order to minimize the impact on City municipal and school services, the applicant will prepare a proposed phasing schedule.
- All interior streets and sidewalks shall be constructed in accordance with established City street and sidewalk standards. When possible, street connections should occur and neighborhood sidewalks shall connect with existing City sidewalks.
- The tract shall dedicate 15% of the land as permanent open space. No more than 50% of land with slopes in excess of 25%, identified wetlands and identified wildlife habitats may be included in the permanent open space. A Homeowners Association shall be established to manage the open space.
- In addition to the City's Subdivision Regulations, the proposed new neighborhood development shall meet the following plan requirements:
  - a) A subdivision plan that shows all proposed lots, lighting, streets, sidewalks, trees, signs and landscaping at a scale sufficient to permit a review of the plan;
  - b) Utilities, access, drainage and storm water management plans affecting each proposed development area and areas for possible future expansion;
  - c) A building envelope for each proposed lot showing setbacks from lot lines, stream bank and other limiting natural features;
  - d) All covenants associated with the proposed development, including but not limited to building elevation, minimal square footage, access to open space among others;
  - e) All easements by type and dimension, both existing and proposed. Proposed Homeowners Association documents.
  - f) All undeveloped parcels to be dedicated or reserved for public use or as private common areas.
  - g) Other additional information as may be deemed necessary by the Planning Board, including but not limited to a traffic impact study, fiscal impact study.
  - h) A timetable for completion of the proposed development.
  - i) Internal streets within the development shall conform to design and construction specifications of the Claremont Subdivision Regulations. Such roads shall provide access to each building. Accessory roads and ways within the development may be private roads and shall be the responsibility of the Homeowners Association. The proposed development shall have suitable sidewalks or walking paths to enable residents to easily walk to the downtown area.
  - j) Adequate parking for residents and guests for residential developments and employees and customers for non-residential developments.
  - k) No building, whether condominium or condominium conversion, shall exceed the permitted height in the district in which the development is located.
  - l) Any off-site improvements determined to be necessary for the proposed development, including but not limited to water, sewer, pump stations, street, sidewalk, drainage and the like, shall be borne by the applicant, their successors or assigns.

m) The City will require the applicant to place sufficient funds in an escrow account so that the City's independent engineer can review the proposed subdivision plan, road network, utility extensions and connections, drainage and other items for technical adequacy and to inspect the proposed development during construction.

Schedule:

After the staff receives the Board's comments, we will prepare a draft proposal for a review and discussion at the April 24<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting. Then, we would like to present this to the City Council at its May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Grigsby expresses concerns regarding current residents who purchased land in RR and AR zones specifically because of open area and states that it may become a significant problem in protecting those that have already invested. Mr. Coogan responds that adding an amendment is a public process and there could be provisions made such as 150 ft buffers.

The board discusses limited availability of housing and the impact on development. Mr. Coogan explains that the amendment would compliment the city's economic and development efforts because Claremont does not currently have available new housing. Mr. Berggren adds that there is energy in promoting growth while concentrating on preserving open areas. Mr. Guillette expresses his support due to the need for new housing in the community in order to draw families. Mr. Grigsby states that he finds it interesting that previous master plans expressed that citizens want to maintain quality of life and he currently does not know where to draw the line. Mr. Coogan responds that Claremont's population has declined. A once thriving community has been affected by previous negative economic changes and as a result a majority of the middle class has left. The City is currently attempting to bring middle income families back to Claremont. Mr. Swift states that he has lived in developments such as the type being proposed and has found the quality of life as being positive but does need more information. Board discussion regarding type of open space that would be most advantageous. Mr. Coogan states that open spaces can be connected in order to create a wildlife corridor that would be maintained.

Mr. Kuriger speaks in support of housing growth in Claremont and adds that water and sewer is one thing but consideration of school capacity impact is also important.

Mr. Fowler expresses concern with item (j) "Adequate parking for residents and guests for residential developments and employees and customers for non-residential developments." and requests clarification. Mr. Coogan refers to convenience store or ATM would save on trips or be a convenience. Mr. Fowler does not see the necessity due to close proximity to City of Claremont.

Mr. Berggren thanks Mr. Coogan for the work he is doing.

Mr. Coogan distributes information on Zone I3 to the board and explains it was adopted in 2000 for light and high tech industry. The 3<sup>rd</sup> page which includes 1990 allowed uses is contrary to the intent of I3. It appears to be an administrative error where when adopted in 2000 someone forgot to delete a portion. The city would like to eliminate Part 2 in its entirety. The City Solicitor will review prior to the request being brought to the board.

Paul LaCasse, Ward 2, Planning Board member during I3 approval process states that he is in favor of eliminating part 2 and that the intention of I3 was to be similar to Hanover's Centerra Park.

**Master Plan**

Mr. Coogan is waiting on proposal from Tara Bamford.

**IV. OTHER:**

Mr. Grigsby requests update on Lowe's. Mr. Coogan responds that there will be a TRC review tomorrow and all indications are that light is green to move forward.

Mr. Grigsby requests clarification on Sears moving into Kmart. Mr. Coogan responds that a sign permit has been issued and confirms that Sears will be moving into Kmart.

Mr. Kuriger questions when mill development will kick off. Mr. Coogan responds that developers cannot begin until closing occurs which should be within the next 2 weeks.

Mr. Fowler requests that Mr. Coogan look into the reason behind the Quiznos building coming to a halt.

Board discussion regarding Old Goddard construction on Maple Avenue coming to a halt due to the need for hazardous waste remediation.

**Public Comment Regarding Proposed Zoning Amendment:**

Mr. LaCasse speaks against amendment due to lot density and education costs.

Robert Pinard, Ward 1, speaks against amendment due to school and city tax rate increases that could result from development. Mr. Pinard states that the City needs more jobs that will pay. Mr. Swift comments on need for adequate employment by giving an example of advertisements he has posted for various engineer and manager positions each with a salary in excess of \$50,000 annually. Not one application was received from a Claremont resident. Mr. Swift stresses the need to increase education level in Claremont.

**V. REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:**

Allan Berggren states that he has Shoreland Protection Act information from the Connecticut River Joint Commissions and would like the board to consider the content during the Master Plan process. A copy of the material will be in the Planning and Development Office.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion:** To adjourn

**Made By:** Mr. Swift

**Second:** Mr. Fowler

**Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Suzanne Ripka  
Boards and Commissions Coordinator