



Planning Board Meeting
Monday, September 14, 2015
Council Chambers, City Hall at 7:00 PM

MINUTES
Approved 10/12/2015

Vice-chair Kolenda called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

I. Roll Call

Present: Jim Neilsen, David Putnam, James Short, Bruce Kolenda, Neil Ward, William Greenrose

Absent: Victor Bergeron, Richard Wahrlich, Marilyn Harris, Chris Belvin,

City Staff: Michael McCrory, Interim City Planner

Vice-Chair Kolenda appointed Mr. Ward to sit in for Ms. Harris; and Mr. Putnam to sit in for Mr. Wahrlich.

II. Review of Minutes – August 24, 2015

Motion: To accept the minutes (as written).

Made by: Mr. Short

Second: Mayor Neilsen

Vote: Unanimous in favor

III. Old Business

None.

IV. New Business

a. Public Forum to review and hear comment on proposed plans to provide additional parking at the Maple Avenue School

The Planning Board provided a public forum in which the School District could share their plans to increase parking at the Maple Avenue School. The neighbors in the immediate area had been invited to participate in this forum.

Michael O'Neill, Director of Business and Finance for SAU 6, presented the plan to provide 13 spaces on Canterbury Way and 10 spaces adjacent to the school building. The fence along Canterbury Way will be moved inward (onto the athletic field) to create the 13 spaces. The trees at the end of the fence will be retained to continue providing a visual buffer and to provide room for snow storage. A walkway will be provided along the Barton Street end of the new parking space. Ten feet of asphalt will be removed from the opposite side (of the athletic field) and replaced with green space so the same amount of green space will be retained.

The parking lot on the Kenyon Street side of the building will be reconfigured to provide ten additional spaces along the building.

Mr. Putnam stated that according to information provided to the Board, there are 80-90 employees needing parking at the school. He asked how much parking is available now. Dan Cherry, principal at the Maple Avenue School, stepped to the podium to address the question. He said there are approximately 40 spaces in the Kenyon Street lot and 10 spaces near the food service entry. Even with the 23 new spaces, he said they will probably need 4-6 on-street spaces (Beacon and Spaulding Streets). He said the school would encourage use of these by part-time employees. The school is also encouraging employees to use only one side of the street for parking.

Karen Leahy, property owner at the end of Canterbury Way stepped to the podium. She said she didn't want the trees cut down because the trees provide a valuable windbreak in the winter. She said she has difficulty getting into and out of her property because of the cars parked on Barton Street. She said she is also concerned about drainage from the new parking area and parents waiting on Canterbury Way for children to come out the back gate.

Jean Howe, 14 Kenyon Street, stepped to podium. She said their lawn was ruined last year due to people parking on it. People park on both sides of their driveway, making it difficult to get their van out of their driveway. She said she is very happy that the school is doing something about the parking on Kenyon Street and thanked Mr. Cherry and Mr. O'Neill.

James Feleen, former school board member, stepped to the podium. He expressed concern about losing playground space. He said perhaps the distribution of special needs students between the three elementary schools might need to be re-examined. He suggested approaching the Baptist Church to see if the church parking area could be utilized with a shuttle system back and forth to the school.

Mr. Greenrose asked (1) if some of the special programs at the Maple Avenue School could be moved to other locations, and (2) what is the likelihood of more special programs needing space at this school in the future? Mr. Cherry said that room utilization of the three elementary schools is "maxed". While the schools may be able to absorb more students, there is no more instructional space available.

Mr. Cherry said they will continue to encourage carpooling amongst the staff to further reduce the number of vehicles that need parking at the school.

Mr. O'Neill offered to be the point of contact on this project. He can be reached at 603- 543-4200 ext. 6016. He is located at the SAU office on Broad Street.

b. Review of Regional Plan

Mr. McCrory stated that the Regional Plan was updated and adopted in June 2015. It is available on line at the Regional Planning Commission website at

(www.UVLSRPC.org). Mr. McCrory summarized some of the key themes from the plan and related some of them to updating the local Master Plan:

- UVLSRPC serves 27 municipalities in 3 counties (Grafton, Sullivan, Merrimack);
- The commission provides a range of planning & technical assistance that is advisory by nature;
- The regional plan is done every 5 years;
- The plan generally follows the same structure as the Master Plan;
- The plan is based on a great deal of public input;
- Key themes in the plan include slower population growth; serving an aging population; deteriorating infrastructure; affordable and accessible housing; non-residential development pressure; preserving natural resources;
- Healthcare is one of the strongest performing industries in the region, followed by manufacturing;
- Economic “headwinds” include broadband access (challenging in the eastern portion of the region); brownfields; housing affordability; work force training and deteriorating infrastructure;
- Commercial development pressure and its effects on the landscape;
- For many living in this area, the quality of life is linked to the natural resources in the area;
- The importance of the development character of close-knit villages surrounded by undeveloped land; (Claremont has a lot of arable land)
- Adapting the built environment for severe weather
- Enhancing our ability to recover from changing climate – resiliency in all areas of the City

Members discussed the importance of recognizing Claremont’s role in surrounding communities and vice versa. Board members were encouraged to look at the plans of surrounding communities as part of the updating process.

Mr. McCrory asked members of the Board to assist in soliciting members for the Master Plan Steering Committee.

Mr. McCrory said he will be offering small training sessions to the Board for those meeting dates when there are no applications to review.

V. Reports from Boards and Commissions

Mayor Neilsen said the City will be putting in ADA-compliant doors.

VI. Other

VII. Correspondence

NH Department of Transportation is proposing a safety improvement and access management project is project at the Washington Street/Bowen Street intersection. Smart Associates, Environmental consultants for the project, is soliciting comments from the Board. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

VIII. **Adjournment**

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Putnam

Second: Mr. Greenrose

Vote: Unanimous in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse
Resource Coordinator