

MONT VERNON PLANNING BOARD
Mont Vernon, NH 03057

MEETING MINUTES –Tuesday, March 22, 2016

AGENDA

7:00PM Mail and Announcements
Review of Minutes from 3/8/2016

7:15PM Review Survey Information from Town Meeting

9:00PM Adjournment

Seated: Chris Aiston, Chairman, John Quinlan, Annette Immorlica, Chip Spalding, Bill McKinney
Absent: Andy Brown, Jim Bird

7:06 PM

Aiston called the meeting to order. The AA explained she'd tabulated all the surveys that had been submitted as of last week, and that there were 4 or 5 that had come in over the past week. The AA provided a list of the top vote getting options, as well as which of the 4 areas in town received the most votes. There were 22 surveys returned, out of approximately 80 people in attendance at Town Meeting. McKinney suggested sending the AA's results along with all the surveys to Camille at NRPC to export into a spread sheet and further tabulate. McKinney offered to drive the surveys and the large scale maps down to NRPC. Spalding took out the large maps and counted the stickers on the maps. Immorlica asked what the next step for the board would be. McKinney stated he felt that the results help cement the board's direction for looking at the zoning. Aiston asked the AA to type up all the comments to keep them together on one sheet. Immorlica asked if the board was planning on attending the Easter Egg Hunt to further promote the mixed use zoning idea. The board agreed it would be too hectic to try to discuss the idea at the Egg Hunt. The board discussed the results of the surveys. Immorlica noted there was support for having mixed use out Route 13; but she asked how that would help to make the town a more livable community. Immorlica stated she didn't think people understood that having mixed use in the "downtown" area of Mont Vernon will help make it a more livable community. Spalding stated there were 19 favorable stickers in the Historic Area, and 18 favorable stickers for Route 13; the areas were fairly even. Immorlica stated it seemed like people were more in support of smaller stores in the center of town and larger commercial properties out on Rte. 13, and so asked if the board wanted to consider proposing two-pronged regulations. Spalding stated he still felt the board should start small, within the Historic District. Immorlica asked who would work on overseeing things within the new district. McKinney stated mixed use would be covered at least initially by the site plan review process at the Planning Board, and then typically there is an enforcement officer who takes care of things. Right now that work is covered by the Building Inspector in Mont Vernon. McKinney stated any violations of site plan regulation can result in fines. Immorlica stated she didn't think Mont Vernon had ever enforced with fines before. Immorlica asked what the forward action would be for the NRPC. McKinney stated he would get all the surveys and maps back to NRPC, and ask them to tabulate the results for the next time Camille Pattison attends. Aiston stated it seemed like the greatest amount of support was for social and cultural related uses. Aiston stated once the items are in a spreadsheet it will be easy to look at which items have the most preference. Spalding asked the AA to finish the work she'd been doing on the surveys prior to McKinney bringing the surveys and maps to NRPC. In an unrelated issue, Immorlica asked if it was possible to have 2 related people serving on two land use boards in the same town. Spalding stated he didn't believe that was a conflict of interests. Aiston stated there is mention in the RSAs of conflict of interest. Quinlan stated if it were the same board that could present a problem, but not two different boards. Spalding stated the decision would be up to the selectmen as to who gets appointed to a board. Spalding came back to the mixed use issue and asked if the board wants to create a completely different set of zoning for small businesses, or should the board revise the limited commercial zoning regulations and make it small business with a certain set of uses. McKinney stated he felt that a mixed use area in the center of town needs to be an entirely separate new zoning district with new regulations. McKinney stated that way the current limited commercial zoning could still possibly be applied (at some hypothetical future date) towards a Route 13 business corridor north of

town. The board discussed the current limited commercial land on Rte. 13 south, and other lands on Rte. 13 south, some of which might go into conservation in the future. Aiston asked if the board created a mixed use zone and someone decided to buy land in the zone and put it into conservation, was there anything the board could do? McKinney stated no, because that's up to an individual property owner's rights. The board discussed surrounding towns such as Hollis and Amherst, and how the towns have worked out a balance of commercial vs. residential areas. Aiston asked if the board had made a decision regarding doing a new zoning area vs. an overlay. Immorlica stated she thought she remembered Camille Pattison saying she recommended staying away from an overlay. Spalding stated he'd like to hear back from NRPC on what they think for a strategy moving forward. McKinney stated he felt that it should be a new zone rather than an overlay, and suggested Residential/Limited Business District as a name, with the zone defined by lots to avoid split zoning. Spalding stated an option would be for the board to take the current limited commercial, rename it, and revise it to fit what the board wants for the new mixed use zone. Spalding stated that there is essentially no more limited commercial in Mont Vernon because all the land in the limited commercial district is currently under conservation. Immorlica asked why the board isn't just starting small in the Historic District and laying out a small number of allowed business uses. McKinney stated the board wouldn't be able to revise limited commercial, it would have to be repealed, and then a whole new set of zoning regulations would need to be written. McKinney stated he felt adding the limited business zoning regulations would be filling a hole in the zoning regulations and creating a step in between residential and limited commercial zoning. McKinney stated in future years there would be time to tweak the zoning regulations further. Immorlica asked about a new zone vs. overlay again. Aiston read a comment from Camille Pattison describing the difference between the two: "if there is considerable political support for expanding business uses in the town, then creating a new zone would be a very clean approach. If the consensus is to keep things generally the same, and allow some limited business uses, then the concept of an overlay may be more attractive." McKinney stated this is why it's important to have NRPC's summary of the survey results. Aiston also read another comment from Pattison which mentioned that multiple overlay districts can be confusing for land owners when it comes to determining what can be done with their land. Quinlan offered the suggestion of redefining both the Historic District Boundaries, and then make the new mixed use zone the same boundaries of the Historic District. Quinlan stated he felt the Historic District needs to be expanded and that the boundaries need to be made more logical to follow lot boundary lines. Both Spalding and McKinney agreed. Quinlan stated another overlay would be too confusing. The board discussed possible areas where the Historic District could be expanded, including the intersection of Francetown Tpke and Beech Hill Road. Aiston asked about the residential district. Spalding stated the original suggestion for mixed use was to use the boundaries of the residential district. Spalding recommended making the residential district the same as the Historic District. Aiston stated there is very little difference between the rural residential and residential difference. Spalding stated the only real difference is there are non-conforming lots in the residential district. Aiston expressed concern over people being newly included in the Historic District, who perhaps do not have older homes. Aiston asked how the boundaries would be drawn, and suggested the board walk around town to see in person where the new lines would fall. McKinney stated in summary that the board would redefine the boundaries of the Historic District overlay, make that the same as the mixed use zone, and eliminate the residential area. Quinlan stated that would make things much easier. Spalding agreed with the simplification. McKinney stated it is a clean solution. Quinlan also mentioned enforcement will be much easier. McKinney suggested pulling out an old tax map at an upcoming meeting and drawing on it to figure out what boundaries will work. The board looked at lots in the residential area and discussed possible new lines for the Historic District overlay/ Mixed Use Zone. Quinlan brought up the question of how does the Town of Mont Vernon protect open spaces through zoning? Spalding stated a solution would be to eliminate grid subdivisions and to only allow open space subdivisions. Quinlan stated he would like to make it very difficult to develop old farmland for houses, because that's what is going to kill the town in the long run. Immorlica asked for a summary of what the board had discussed. McKinney stated they would be asking NRPC to chart the results of the survey. McKinney stated the results from the survey will give the board direction as to what uses are most desirable. Also, the board will work with NRPC to define the area of the new Residential/Limited Business mixed use zone, and redefine the Historic District overlay. Then the board will also need to write the new regulations for the new zone. Immorlica pointed out the board will also need to repeal the residential district. Immorlica pointed out there are more allowed uses in rural residential than in the residential district. McKinney stated there may only be a few lots affected since most of the current residential district is going to become the mixed use area. Immorlica asked when Camille Pattison would next be attending a Planning Board meeting The

AA stated that she remembered the board leaving it as Pattison planning on attending one of the April meetings. Aiston stated it would make more sense to have her attend the second meeting, since the Brett Vaughn subdivision application will be addressed at the April 12 meeting. Quinlan asked if they were still on the agenda. Aiston and the AA confirmed the hearing for acceptance of the subdivision has been continued to the April 12 meeting. McKinney asked what might happen if Vaughn arrives on the 12th with a different plan, since the board would not have had 20 days to review the new plan. McKinney asked if it would be appropriate for the board to reach out to Chad Branon, the engineer from Fieldstone, to inquire about the state of the plans. Aiston stated that if Vaughn makes changes to the plans he needs to submit an itemized list of changes to the plans; so if they arrive on April 12th with new plans and a list of changes, technically they have met their requirements. Immorlica suggested that it should be Aiston who contacts Branon to inquire about the state of the plans. The board agreed it would be helpful to connect with Branon to see what he says, that way the board can be prepared to have useful and meaningful discussion over any new plans. McKinney mentioned he may not be able to attend the meeting on the 12th.

8:28PM

The AA discussed mail and announcements. The AA stated there was no mail in the PO Box. The AA stated she'd received reply emails from Sandford and Keach Nordstrom concerning an engineering review. Sandford is not able to take on more work right now, and Keach Nordstrom stated their quote for the work would be \$2500. McKinney stated he felt that \$2500 was a good price. Spalding stated Keach Nordstrom has a decent reputation, and he felt they would do a good job. There were no further announcements. Quinlan discussed the organization of the Planning Board, confirming that Aiston is still resigning from the board as of April 26th. Quinlan asked if Aiston was still willing to be an alternate, and Aiston agreed. Quinlan asked if Spalding was willing to sign on for another term on the board, and Spalding agreed. Quinlan asked about Andy Brown, since he has not attended a meeting in quite some time. Aiston stated that Brown is currently working 12 hour shifts and is not available to make the Planning Board meetings. Quinlan stated Brown would be taken off the board. Quinlan asked about Jim Bird, and asked if he was still the Conservation Commission rep to the Planning Board. Immorlica stated she is interested in being the Planning Board rep to the Conservation Commission. Quinlan confirmed with Immorlica that she was interested in being a full member of the Planning Board, rather than the temporary status she'd had. Quinlan stated he will inform Bird that he is no longer the Conservation Commission rep to the Planning Board, but that he is still listed as an alternate to the Planning Board. Quinlan stated the board will need to elect a new Chair once Aiston steps down at the end of the month. Quinlan asked if anyone knew of people who may be interested in joining the Planning Board. McKinney stated he would reconnect with a few people who had expressed interest. McKinney suggested posting something on Facebook stating the Planning Board is seeking new members, asking interested persons in contacting the AA by email.

8:42PM

The board reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. While reviewing the minutes, the board had a brief discussion concerning the Building Use Committee's study of the Town Buildings. The board also discussed the safe in the meeting room, and pondered the possible contents. Aiston motioned to approve the minutes of March 8th. McKinney seconded. All were in favor the motion passed.

8:58 PM

Aiston motioned to adjourn the meeting. McKinney seconded. All were in favor, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Wyman
Planning Board Administrative Assistant