

Planning Board  
Town of Hinsdale, NH  
Meeting April 18, 2023

Board Members: Chair, Sean Leary, Secretary Alex Duso, Sandra Golden, Jim Mitchell, Ann Diorio, and Selectman Rep. Bernie Rideout. Todd Horner from SWRPC and Rik Ekstom SWRPC Housing Navigator were present. TA Kathryn Lynch was excused.

6pm Chair Leary called the meeting to order and explained was going to move a few things around on the agenda to help better the flow a little better for a little bit of housekeeping to do.

**Rideout swore Golden into appointment**, it was approved by the selectmen after being approved by Planning Board. With that, there was a continuation of offices. Diorio made a nomination for Sandra Golden to be vice chair of the Planning board, Michell seconded the motion. Golden accepted the nomination, and the motion passes unanimously.

Next discussion, **updated Application for Major Site Plan Development submitted by Arnie Filipi**, tax map 20, lot 79, I/o Plain Rd., in the Rural Agricultural District, applicant proposed a five-lot subdivision, a continuation of previously discussion from last month meeting, for the water portion of the development plan. There is a plan for water lines to be potentially placed. Motion made by Diorio to accept the application, Mitchel seconded, no discussion, voted that the motion accepted unanimously.

Leary noted the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minutes.

Filipi explained that he is looking to subdivide the property he purchased last year (2022) and looking to divide the land into 5 parcels. Each parcel has 200' or more of required frontage and are greater than 5 acres. The solids on the parcels are sustainable for septic systems, with the water for the parcels planning on being town water. The Driveways have been discussed with Tom Forman and are marked on the map. Leary clarified the updated application includes the water lines by the town which lies on the easterly side of the road. Opened for questions by the public, the public asked to observe site plan and made the comment the back area of the parcels were steep but had no question. The board had no questions. Diorio made a motion to approve the plan, Golden seconded the motion, no discussion, motioned passes unanimously. Information will be passed to CDC Kathryn Lynch and any questions; she will reach out to Filipi.

Next discussion, **Vacant seat on the Planning Board**, there were 2 volunteer request forms submitted for application. Justin Theriault (present) and Judy Carrier. The planning board had a discussion about how to handle making the decision. Diorio made a motion to accept Justin Theriault as volunteer, Mitchell seconded the motion. The planning board reviewed the application, with no discussion, the motion was voted on accepting Justin, and was accepted unanimously. Justin was advised that the Planning Board will be sent over to the select board for appointment and once approved, he will be able to vote. He is welcome to question and interact with discussion currently had.

Next discussion, **Master Plan Update**. Introductions were made with Todd Horner from SWRPC with new members of the board. Todd provided update that the planning board has been working on the Masterplan for about 12 months and feels that they have a substantially complete draft of the economic development chapter of the Master plan. A complete draft was provided to Kathryn about a month ago,

with Sean and Kathryn providing edits. Todd feels that the draft is at a point where the board can consider adopting the chapter, this would require public hearing and proper notice. Todd was unsure if a notice was posted about a public meeting for tonight's meeting.

Leary noted that it was on the agenda, and that it was on the hearing notice, but noted that it's not specifically stated as a public hearing about adopting the section of the master plan. Leary did note that it was listed under public hearing with everything else. Todd said as long as it was posted publicly 10 days before the meeting then it could be considered proper notice and we could then have a vote of accepting the plan. The planning board was comfortable moving forward with adopting the economic development chapter of the master plan.

Leary opened the floor to the public for comment, with the public request for an overhead view summary of the chapter. Todd stated the chapter laid out some key priorities for the town for economic development, including action and goals. The first goal is to provide high quality infrastructure to support new development such as water, sewer, etc. Ensuring communication between boards and committees on economic development matters, supporting new local business communities through a variety of engagement activities, marketing promotion of opportunities of local real estate development, rehabilitation of brown fields of environmental contaminations, some policy related goals specific tax relief incentive as mentioned on that goal, some language that is a goal on expanding housing opportunities, and a goal that focuses on supporting local education and work place development. Leary asked the public if there were any further questions to answer, and no further questions were presented. Leary asked for a motion to adopt the update to the master plan to chapter 4. Golden made a motion to accept the adoption of the update, Diorio seconded the motion, with no discussion, the motion was approved unanimously. Todd offered to still be available as a resource as needed in the future.

Rideout presented a question about the old Mill property, and where they had any information involving the brown fields and where they were at. Leary stated that he has a brown field meeting on Friday and will be able to update the select board at their next meeting. Todd mentioned that there was a demolition grant that was submitted but they have not heard a response back if the grant has been awarded yet or not, Leary said he was going to follow up on that.

Leary made a statement for the minutes, that he wanted to express his appreciation to Todd and to SWRP for all their work on this chapter for the plan as it is really good, "So Thank You Todd".

Next, **review Housing Navigation with the introduction of Rik Ekstrom to the new board members.** Rik is the housing navigator and is working with the town on possibly the next chapter of our master plan on housing. Rik is working with SWRP as serving as the housing navigator. The goal of the project is to find opportunities to promote more housing in Hinsdale, and more housing that is appropriate and needed in Hinsdale. Currently the plan is in the beginning stages, trying to do a needs assessment and look at the current conditions are in Hinsdale, trying to speak with people about their views of housing needs in Hinsdale, and developing a housing profile in Hinsdale. Also, reviewing zoning ordinances, land use codes, and regulations to identify if there are any barriers that cause obstruction or hinderance to smart buildings in Hinsdale. Rik is currently working on a grant application for Hinsdale for housing opportunities planning grants that the applications are due by June 30<sup>th</sup>. The funds could be used for technical assistance to review zoning ordinance in detail.

Hinsdale did a review back in 2017 by Lisa Murphy. This report found typos, references that were no longer valid, as well as finding opportunities to apply for and administer housing permits in Hinsdale. Rik stated that it has been a while since the review and is recommending that Hinsdale do another review. He noted that he understands that since the report in 2017, there have been some amendments, including an adoption for a provision for Tiny Housing, and for a rezoning part of Rt 119 to make a roadside commercial A and B. Leary stated that he agreed with that assessment and said a new set of eyes and revisiting the issue would be a good idea.

The way that the Up-grant documentation is show, it showed that there was phase 1 money you could apply for until the 20<sup>th</sup> of January that covered items such as public engagement and master plan work, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (which we are in now) was specifically for zoning review. However, the State has made phase 1 money available to housing navigator communities so Rik is going to be putting an application together to include some phase 1 money that can be used to develop a population housing plan. Rik is also working on taking a deeper review of the master plan to identify any house opportunities that that might be linked to other chapters in the master plan and see how they are linked with those other chapters.

One concern that Rik has, is that how a grant works is in that when a Town is awarded grant money, the town will need to provide the funds up front and the grant will be able to reimburse expenses, so one thing that needs to be discussed is who will be handing the funding activities. Leary stated that Kathryn will be a key person to speak to in that relation. Todd stated that this could be a great opportunity for state funding that does not require town match. Rik stated that currently, Kathryn is identifying key stakeholders in town, and clarified looking for a broad survey to residences in Hinsdale to start talking informally about housing, folks of all walks of life also known as Key Informants. Asking them about their housing experiences in Hinsdale, where they see the need and opportunities for the future. The first set of contacts will occur by phone call and over the next few months, Rik feels they will start to develop a basis of housing issues, opportunities, problems, and potential solutions in Hinsdale as well as better understanding zoning ordinance. Mailing opportunities and forums are also next steps to help contact town individuals.

The floor was opened to the public for any questions, but there were no questions asked. Golden stated that it is very important that the public has chances to provide input to help the public feel involved, as well as stating that it is important to look at existing properties that are not being utilized and making sure those are improved and used, in comparison to just building new. Todd commented on the importance of tying in what Rik said with maintaining and upgrading our sewer system. Todd recommended looking into seeing if they could find funding via Hock housing grant for reviewing our current sewer system with potential needs for the further development would be key to long term viability. Rik said there may be other funding available for technical analysis, feasibility studies, due diligences reporting, and those similar activities that might be more important.

Rideout stated that the town has just reviewed a report from the State about our sewer system, the plant and the state recommendations were that we are needing to update our systems. Rideout is looking into funding opportunities for those needs. There was additional discussion about our sewer systems, and it was discussed that we are almost at maximum compacity. Other discussion included our systems, if we should look to expand and develop a satellite station, expand existing, as well as ability to connect with other local towns to help manage our sewer needs, including Brattleboro. It was

recommended to speak with Walpole also, as they have a similar situation to us, and how they connect with another town. Rik concurred that it would be a good idea to have some sort of plan in place when looking to request money for feasibility studies. Also stated that it would be good to develop more members for the housing committee for additional discussion with a sub-group, not just the planning board.

The final item on the agenda, Leary stated is the minutes for March 21<sup>st</sup>. Diorio made a motion to accept the minutes, Golden seconded the acceptance, there was no discussion. Voting occurred, 5 votes for approval, Rideout abstained, motion carries.

Diorio made a motion to adjourn, Duso seconded the motion. Dismissed at 6:41pm.

Thank you  
Secretary  
Alex Duso

Draft of minutes until approved and signed