



MINUTES

Long Range Planning Committee Meeting

May 10, 2024

8-9:30 am

In person at Public Safety & virtually via Zoom

In attendance: Allen Paul, Portia Hirschman, Peter Freilinger, Robyn Saunders (via Zoom), Rick Shinay, Judy Fischer (via Zoom), Jean-Marie Caterina, Rachel Hendrickson, Karen Martin, Autumn Speer, Eric Sanderson

Members: Allen Paul, Rick Shinay, Peter Freilinger, Robyn Saunders, Portia Hirschman

Alternates: Robert Odlin and Judith Fischer

Planning Board Liaison: Rachel Hendrickson

Council Liaisons: Jean-Marie Caterina and Jon Anderson

I. Roll Call and Identify Voting Members, recognize new members

Allen Paul called the meeting to order at 8:00AM

II. Review Minutes March 8, 2024

Motion made by Peter Freilinger to approve the minutes, seconded by Portia Hirschman. Motion passes 5-0-0.

III. Nominate Transportation Committee liaison

Allen Paul made a motion to nominate Peter Freilinger as liaison to the Transportation Committee. Seconded by Robyn Saunders. Motion passes 5-0-0.

IV. Review Draft Environmental Standards from Conservation Commission

Autumn Speer gave an overview of the standards, which the Committee previously reviewed as a framework in the Fall. Since then the Conservation Commission has refined the standards to include specific numbers for buffer distances. There will be a developer forum to review these that is upcoming. The proposal is for a natural resource setback, some of which must be vegetated (i.e. 25 ft. natural resource setback for buildings, 15 ft. of which must be vegetated). Various setbacks are proposed based on the size of the wetland, with higher buffer from larger wetlands. Peter Freilinger asked about variances to these buffers, which Autumn anticipates will be overseen by the Planning Board as opposed to the Zoning Board of appeals. He requested training to go over the standards with town Boards. Jean-Marie Caterina clarified that existing homes in wetland areas would be subject to Shoreland Zoning, with Rachel adding for a project on Two Rod Road, the Planning Board allowed a vernal pool to be crossed for a trail, which included a wildlife crossing.

Autumn went on to show larger buffers proposed for vernal pools, coastal bluffs, and marsh migration zones, some of which have additional buffers based on highest tide (HAT). The Town has created a map showing areas affected by the proposed setback requirements, which is available

for public viewing on the Town website. Karen Martin requested to add descriptions of the setbacks to the map legend. Rachel asked about erosion and sediment control measures being prohibited in the setbacks. Her concern related to perhaps needing to get into the sensitive areas to control runoff. Robyn responded that we need to ensure construction contractors do not include these areas in their plans as having silt fences etc. in them will be problematic and impact the resources. Rachel added that specific languages should be added to prohibit this activity, short of response to stormwater and erosion emergencies. Autumn responded she would add an “emergency” use, to be overseen by MaineDEP and applicable state agencies.

V. Review and discuss existing Parking Standards

Autumn gave an overview of parking requirements in other municipalities in Maine and nationally, which were included in the agenda packet. Several uses in the existing Zoning Ordinance parking standards (i.e. restaurants) have odd ways to calculate required parking, which may be lower than what is actually needed. She added that change in use for existing buildings should trigger review to ensure required parking for uses that have higher vehicle demand and trip generation can be met. Having parking maximums can reduce impervious area and improve visual appeal of a site. Portia Hirschman noted one issue could be drivers not knowing about parking at the rear of the building, as parking at the front of the building is proposed to be limited for visual appeal purposes as part of this ordinance revision work.

Shared parking was discussed and encouraged (i.e. office parking during the day and restaurant parking at night), which could limit overall parking needed. The public should be made aware of this. Allen suggested signage along main roads to direct the public to parking area, which Peter noted this should be the responsibility of businesses. Rachel noted this can be problematic, especially for developments that initially anticipate being able to share parking, but then as tenant fit up occurs and uses change, parking issues arise. She asked for an analysis of how shared parking be provided during the Planning Board review process. For maximum parking, she would like to have developers provide space turnover data to show how long the average shopper is in a store, including during peak seasons. Change of use is also affected within uses, such as for restaurants which parking demand can change based on the time customers come and sit down, versus a place where they come in and out quickly. Autumn suggested potentially separating coffee house and restaurant uses and requiring shared points of access between development. Peter suggested more dense “in town” areas focus on this. The Committee wants to encourage walkability to limit needed parking and allowing for “pocket” parking so any impervious areas can look nice but also be accessible.

Robyn and Rick agreed that a parking needs analysis should be provided as part of the development review process, incorporating trip generation for the use prepared by a traffic engineer. Requiring agreements between developments proposing to share parking could assist in enforcement, which is the issue.

Autumn updated the committee on a parking analysis by GPCOG, and asked if the town needed to pick one area to further study to improve architecture, design, and parking, what area would be best? The consensus was generally Oak Hill.

VI. Review public request to consider Rural Farming uses

Autumn updated the Committee that a request came in for an existing farm with an ice cream shop to bring in a larger ice cream business. As written, the Ordinance allows farm stands

accessory to farms, but 50% or more of product sold must be grown on the farm. To allow the use to continue, the town would need to revise the Ordinance. This could be done by adding permitted uses to the Rural Farming (RF) district for larger parcels to allow flexibility for additional revenue to be brought in by property owners looking to hold on to their land and keep existing farms running. Jean Marie noted she is in favor of allowing this, and the limitation is nonsensical. Allen stated this feels more of a request for “spot zoning”, which can be problematic. Autumn responded that by not allowing flexibility we may be forcing rural land to be sold which could increase residential development via subdivisions in the RF zone. The Committee was in support of this if size and parking could be limited, and ensuring that if commercial gathering gets large enough in size Planning Board could be included to review needs for lighting, safety, etc. Peter recommended limit of employees, square footage requirements, which the town uses in other smaller residential zones (R2).

VII. Public Comment

Denise Hamilton, of Two Rod Road, commented about the RF zone updates. She has significant concerns with allowing additional development west of the Turnpike, giving an example of this Committee creating a Light Industrial area in the middle of the RF. She encouraged the Committee to take actions to preserve the land in the RF.

VIII. Staff Updates

IX. Committee Member Updates

X. Adjourn – Next Meeting June 14, 2024

Motion to adjourn by Portia Hirschman, seconded by Rick Shinay. Motion passes 4-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:38AM