

Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting November 16, 2021

Members present: Scott Young, Chairman, Brian Monahan
In attendance: Building Inspector David Copeland

The business portion of the Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:30. The Selectmen reviewed and approved payroll and payment of bills. An Intent to Cut was reviewed and signed. The General Assessing contract, having been previously discussed and reviewed by the State was signed. Correspondence from a resident regarding cell phone coverage in Town was read and discussed. The information presented at the upcoming Multi-Board/Department Head Meeting may be of interest to him. The Selectmen granted a request from a property owner for a temporary use of his property that doesn't seem to violate a previous court order. Legal counsel will be sought in drawing up a letter of temporary approval, including an "end date" to the use.

At this time a motion was made by Scott Young and seconded by Brian Monahan to enter into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Roll call was taken as follows:

Scott Young – Aye, Brian Monahan – Aye

The Board entered non-public session at 5:40PM.

A motion was made by Scott Young to leave non-public session and seconded by Brian Monahan to return to public session. Roll call was taken as follows:

Scott Young – Aye, Brian Monahan – Aye

Public session reconvened at 5:49PM.

No votes were taken or decisions were made during the non-public session.

A motion was made by Brian Monahan and seconded by Scott Young to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Roll call was taken as follows:

Scott Young - Aye, Brian Monahan – Aye

As decided at the previous meeting construction on the property at 14 Lakeview Drive is on hold. Mr. Copeland reviewed some of the history of the project and particular zoning issues were discussed. He also outlined the steps the property owner had taken in halting construction and preparing the property for winter.

Being no further business to address it was motioned, seconded and voted in the affirmative to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:58PM. Mr. Young and Mr. Monahan proceeded to the Conference Room to attend the Multi-Board/Department Head Meeting.

Multi-Board/Department Head Meeting

November 16, 2021

Selectmen in Attendance: Scott Young, Chairman, Brian Monahan

Also in Attendance:

Representing the Planning Board: Charlie Moreno, Phil Auger, Terry Hyland, Don Coker, Don Clifford

Representing the Zoning Board: Herman Groth, Terry Hyland

Cell Tower Committee: Scott Schroeder, Chris Garcia, Scott Hodgdon, Jim Rousseau

Building Department: David Copeland, Dan Howard

Fire and Rescue: Chief Scott Whitehouse

Police: Chief Mike Richard

Road Agent Greg Messenger

Bob Fletcher, recorder for Planning & Zoning, though not in his official capacity

Selectman Scott Young opened the November 16th Multi-Board/Department Head Meeting at 6:01PM .

The first item on the agenda was a video presentation by Phil Auger of the Planning Board's proposal for the reclassification of five Class VI roads to Class A Trails. This proposal will be presented to the Town on the 2022 Town Warrant. The Planning Board has been studying Class VI roads. There are currently 21 Class VI roads in Strafford extending for a distance of 23.5 miles. 189 parcels of land have frontage on those roads. To explain what the classification of "Class A Trail" would mean to the parcels along them the following information was presented. The following information pertaining to Class A Trails, per RSA 231 A:1, was presented.

- The Class A Trail remains a public right of way
- New buildings or expansion of existing buildings are not allowed
- Access to existing buildings and to land for agriculture or forestry is allowed
- Permission from Selectboard is required to make access improvements
- The Town is not required to maintain - similar to Class VI Roads
- The Town may install and lock gates to prevent unwanted vehicular access
- The Town can apply for Trail Grant \$ and make improvements for recreational uses

There are currently 3 Class A Trails in Strafford - New Bow Lake Road, Little Niagara Road, and Scruton Road going into Farmington. The 5 Class VI roads the Planning Board is proposing to reclassify as Class A Trails are:

- 1st Crown Pt. Rd. –from the northwest corner of lots 17-19 & 20 to the Barnstead Town Line (approx. 5,900 ft.)
- 2nd Crown Pt. Rd. – Barn Door Gap from the SW corner of 14-11-2 to the SE corner of 18-32 (approx. 3,600 ft.)
- Snackerty Rd. –entire length from 2ndCrown Pt. Rd. to Barnstead Town Line (approx. 2,600 ft.)
- Willey Pond Rd. –from immediately beyond the entrance to Beam Camp to the north side of the Little River (approx. 3,800 ft.)
- Pig Lane –from Range Rd. to the southwest boundary line of Lot 12-8 (approx. 4,490 ft.)

The floor was opened up for comment. A question was raised about ATV use on Class A Trails. The answer from several individuals was that permission for the use of ATVs on Class A Trail must be granted by the Selectmen; snowmobiles need no special permissions. Mr. Monahan recommended that each of these classification considerations be presented in its own warrant article. With regard to public safety, Chief Whitehouse and Chief Richard indicated that their departments frequently provide emergency assistance to

people who have difficulty navigating in these areas. Fire Chief Whitehouse suggested that if the trails are gated, that the locking system be uniform so that they are accessible with a single key for emergency services. Mr. Moreno pointed out the uniqueness of Strafford with its conservation land and the likelihood of the attempted development because of the inevitable growth of neighboring Rochester.

Next, Scott Schroeder on behalf of the Cell Tower Committee made a presentation detailing the work they have done and their subsequent recommendations. Mr. Schroeder explained that the Cell Tower Committee had been established to formulate a well thought out plan for the positioning of cell towers in Strafford so that as close to 100% coverage as possible is achieved. Background about the recent Planning and Zoning Boards' approval of a cell tower was briefly explained. While that tower has the approval and a willing landowner, its coverage is limited. In conjunction with this approval the Planning Board established the Cell Tower Committee to make a thoughtful, well researched plan for the location of the tower to offer the best coverage while limiting their number. Mr. Schroeder explained that the goal of the committee's work was to develop, the best plan possible "technology-wise" and to optimize service. Hiding the towers was not part of the scope; though they were sensitive to mountain tops. Towers may be visible, but with their plan, they will be fewer. The Planning Board will establish an overlay district to accommodate the towers. Our Town attorney has experience with cell tower experience and will be helpful in this process.

Mr. Schroeder explained the methodology of the committee. Rather than considering different areas of Town, they looked at the Town as a whole. Very accurate propagation maps were used to examine the existing coverage and 4 distinct areas were identified for the location of towers. They calculated that tower locations would provide very good coverage, but added the disclaimer that it is the wireless carriers who define the ultimate antenna models and their direction. The ZBA has already granted approval for a 145' foot tower. At the moment we have about 10% good coverage in Town; they believe this plan could achieve 90%+ coverage.

- A tower in "Strafford North" in the barn Door Gap area offers 4 land owners with whom carriers could negotiate. Much of the land in that area has conservation restrictions. A 160' tower placed within 50' elevation of the summit is being recommended.
- A tower placed in "Strafford South" would be located on Leonard Caverly Road offers 2 landowners with whom carriers could negotiate. A 160' tower placed within 50' elevation of the summit is being recommended.
- A tower in "Strafford East" on the ridge along Parker Mountain Road offers 10+ landowners with whom carriers could negotiate. A 160' tower placed within 50' elevation of the summit is being recommended.
- A tower placed in "Strafford West" close to the summit of Evans Mountain offers 1 landowner with whom carriers could negotiate. A 120' tower placed within 50' elevation of the summit is being recommended to limited visibility from the Bow Lake area. If the 120' tower does not support all interested wireless carriers the committee would favor two 120' towers being placed in close proximity as it would be less visible than a single large 160' tower.

Some discussion followed. The committee believes this plan, if it receives the approval, will interest local tower builders. The committee has done the "leg work" for them; using the committee's proposal for 4 towers will save them time and procedural fees. It was agreed that cell coverage is needed and inevitable; this plan will provide the necessary coverage and protect the rural nature of the Town as much as possible. Chief Whitehouse spoke in support. As he provides emergency services in homes, he finds fewer land lines, so good cell coverage is essential from a safety standpoint. He hopes that the Town reserve room at the top of the tower for emergency communication. The committee members had already taken that into consideration.

Chairman Young and others thanked the committee for the thorough survey and presentation of their proposal. Cell Tower Committee member Scott Hodgdon would like to see other cooperative efforts in Town to look ahead and make plans that will best serve Strafford for these inevitable changes.

The last item on the agenda was put forward by Building Inspector David Copeland. He would like to see more definition and some guidelines placed on "temporary" structures used for all manner of things; in particular he was addressing shipping containers and plastic hoop structures that are sold as temporary. He would like to see some limit on the "temporary" usage (perhaps 2 years as is noted in the ordinances). Additionally, these structures often don't meet setbacks. The mechanism for addressing the "temporary" needs to be addressed.

The date for the next Multi –Board/Department Head Meeting was set for February 22, 2022.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:29PM.