

Minutes

Strafford Planning Board Meeting

November 5, 2020

As Chair of the Planning Board of the Town of Strafford, Charles Moreno opened the meeting by stating that the Chairman had requested that he lead tonight's meeting and that he finds that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

The Chair then summarized the following announcements: Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I (the Chair) am confirming that we (the Planning Board) are:

- a) providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means. We are using the Google Meet platform for this public meeting. All members of the Planning Board are able to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing +1 929-220-3782 and using the assigned meeting code or by clicking on the website address: meet.google.com/pet-uokn-dpo.
- b) providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing this meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing this meeting, including how to access the meeting via Google Meet or telephonically. Instructions were posted on the website of the Town of Strafford at www.trafford.nh.gov.
- c) providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with public access: If anybody has a problem they were directed to call or email eevans.trafford.nh@gmail.com.
- d) adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting: In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:30 PM by taking roll call attendance. Members present were Charles Moreno, Chairman, Phil Auger, Terry Hyland, ex-officio member Brian Monahan, and Don Clifford, Donald Coker, and Susan Arnold, Alternate members. There were several unidentified call-in members of the audience; Scott Whitehouse, Fire Chief, attended the meeting. The closing date for applications to appear on the agenda for the December 2020 regular meeting will be 5 P.M. Tuesday, November 10th, 2020; revised materials for continuing applications must be submitted by Tuesday, November 24th. It was agreed to postpone review of the minutes to the end of the meeting.

There were no items of continuing business. The first item of new business was the application of MARK and JUDITH WHITCHER for 2-lot of their property located on Province Road and Webber Road (Tax Map 1, Lot 20). Chris Berry of Berry Surveying and Engineering presented the application. David and Pamela Perkins, Jessica Grant, and Ken Pitman, abutters, were all present. Mr. Berry advised that they have surveyed out to the large wetlands that bisects the property, noting that most of the front part of the lot is open field. The lot would have approximately 245 feet along Webber Road. The purpose of the plan is to subdivide a 5.0 acre house lot out from the 135± acre total parcel; the new lot is laid out around the new house actively under construction on-site. They have a driveway permit from the town and the driveway has been constructed. Potential septic and well locations are shown for both parcels; state subdivision approval is not required. The Road Agent has provided a letter confirming that this section of Webber Road is maintained by the town. They are requesting waivers to several plan requirements, including the requirement for a full perimeter survey, natural features, wetlands, ledge and topography on the full extent of the larger parcel. They have provided information for the front half of the lot that could be considered for development, and are therefore requesting the waivers typical for a large parcel of remaining land. The Chairman

explained the review procedure to the audience and noted that the Board can review the checklist as the plan is discussed. Phil Auger noted that he had reviewed the plans with the checklist in preparation for the meeting. He asked Mr. Berry how close this property is to the bridge, noting concern about culverts and driveways. Mr. Berry said that it is about 4000 feet to the bridge and said that he would locate the driveway culverts for the final plans. Phil Auger indicated that he had no other questions from the checklist review. It was noted that one regular member was absent and the Chair advised that Donald Coker was designated as a voting member for this evening. Donald Coker moved to accept the plans as complete for consideration as presented. Terry Hyland seconded the motion; there was no further discussion. The Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Chairman then opened discussion of the proposal among Board members. Discussion focused on the wetlands areas, setbacks, and the driveway location, given the wetlands setback question. Overall layout of the lot, conservation options, and the frontage were also discussed. The applicants have designed the lot to meet the 5 acre minimum to avoid state subdivision approval. It was noted that the stone wall to the west does not run all the way to Webber Road. The Chairman then opened the public hearing on the application. Ken Pitman asked if all the proposed lots are off Webber Road and how many lots are proposed. He noted that he needs to use Waldron Road to access his property to the northwest, and asked how close the lots would come to Waldron Road. Phil Auger noted that Waldron Road is a Class VI road, and that the lot is not nearby. Mr. Moreno calculated that the new lot is about 1100 to 1200 feet from Waldron Road, which is a public right of way. There were no other comments at this time. The Chairman advised that he would keep the hearing open and the Board returned to deliberations. It was noted that the new lot has 2.67 acres of uplands and meets requirements. Mr. Moreno said that it would be good to move the driveway as far from the wetlands as possible. He noted that this wetlands is connected to the same wetlands complex that was involved in the neighboring Perkins application. Mr. Moreno noted that the ordinances require a 25 foot no-disturb buffer around the wetlands areas, but asked if the applicants would be willing to agree to a 50 foot buffer in this case. Chris Berry said that yes, they can agree to a 50 foot buffer to the rear, more important, resource. Mr. Moreno noted that this needs to be a no disturbance, no stumping, no lawn, etc. buffer. Chris Berry said that he believes this is a field area, so there should be no problem. Board members looked at the aerial photos; Chris Berry noted that the stone wall does not look as finished as some walls. Mr. Moreno advised that the key issue is to avoid disturbance of the ground. Donald Coker noted several other attendees, but there were no comments.

The Chairman then turned to the waiver request letter. The waivers fall into three categories: natural features, physical features, and the requirement for a full perimeter survey and monumentation. In each case, the applicants are requesting a waiver to showing details on the rear of the large lot of remaining land; the front part of the lot has been detailed as part of this application. The Chairman said that he would address each request in turn. Regarding natural features, the Chairman advised that he would take a motion. Donald Coker moved to approve a waiver to the requirement that natural features be shown for the whole large lot. Phil Auger seconded the motion; there was no further comment, and the Chairman called the vote. The vote went as follows: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Next the Chairman advised that he would take a motion regarding physical features. Noting that physical features are also shown for the front, Phil Auger moved to approve a waiver to the request that physical features be shown for the entirety of the large lot. Donald Coker seconded the motion; there was no further discussion, and the Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Finally the Chairman noted the request for a waiver to the requirement to survey the entire perimeter of the large parcel and monument all corners. Ken Pitman asked if this meant the whole 135 acre parcel; the Chairman noted that they have done an intensive survey on about 30 acres toward the front of the lot and the whole new 5 acre lot. Phil Auger moved to approve a waiver for the full perimeter survey and monumentation. Brian Monahan seconded the motion; there was no further discussion. The Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Summarizing the discussion, the Chairman advised that they have done a very complete job with the application, and noted that it seems like they are looking at a couple of conditions of approval; 1) move the driveway away from the wetlands to increase the buffer, and 2) adding a 50 foot no disturbance buffer along the back wetlands as shown on the plan. Board members agreed. Chris Berry said that there should be no problem with the no disturbance buffer to the back and that he thinks the applicants would be okay to move the driveway between 5 and 10 feet where it runs closest to the wetlands buffer. He said that it is hard to know without being on-site, and said he

knows that 10 feet would be better. Donald Coker noted that they already have enough road frontage, but if they can move it 5 to 10 feet, that would be good. Brian Monahan called on Michaela Cote. She noted that she lives at 34 Webber Road and just wanted to see what is being proposed and asked about the old tote road up the mountain. Chris Berry noted that this proposal does not include the adjacent lot nearer to her. Jessica Grant, also an abutter, also noted that she just was listening and had no questions or concerns. There were no additional comments, and the Chairman closed the hearing. The Chairman turned to the Board for any final thoughts. Donald Coker moved to approve the plans for 2-lot subdivision as presented with two conditions: 1) the applicant will move the driveway away from the wetlands 5 to 10 feet towards the property line, and 2) they will leave a 50 foot no disturbance buffer along the back property line/wetlands area. Phil Auger seconded the motion, there was no further discussion, and the Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Mr. Berry was directed to bring the corrected and completed plans to the office for signatures, accompanied by checks for recording fees.

The first item of informal discussion was to meet with Ray Bisson/Stonewall Surveying regarding possible subdivision of Map 4, Lot 83-1-5, located on Back Canaan Road. The Chairman noted that there was an early 2000s attempt to resubdivide this lot and that there were inconsistencies with wetlands and concern with surface flow and in the end the subdivision was retracted. The current owner purchased the 17 acre lot in 2016 and hopes to subdivide off a 3-acre lot by the road for his mother. Mr. Bisson noted that the land was logged in 2011 and the St. Germain's built using a 2013 septic disposal plan. Board members agreed that the main issue is whether they can meet upland requirements for a new lot. Flowage in the area around Spruce Ponds was discussed, noting that there are lots of hydric soils in the area.

Board members then turned to minutes of the October meeting and work sessions. Phil Auger moved to approve the minutes of the October 1st regular meeting. Brian Monahan seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Next, Phil Auger moved to approve the minutes of the October 29th work session. Donald Coker seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the Chairman called the vote: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The motion passed by unanimous vote. Donald Coker then moved to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:14 PM. Brian Monahan seconded the motion, there was no further discussion, and the vote went as follows: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye.

The Chairman then opened a work session for Board members to continue working on updates to the ordinances and regulations for 2021. Susan Arnold, noting the previous informal discussion, suggested that it might help to clarify the Board's role in making sure that surface water flow is not changed, etc. This opened into a more general conversation about how to handle conceptual consultation discussions. Charles Moreno noted that there are guiding principles such as protecting wetlands and natural resource features, lessening the footprint of development instead of sprawl, etc. in order to insure consistency with the master plan vision. Terry Hyland suggested that the Board might look at wetlands buffers. Board members then turned to the proposed Class VI Road Policy updates and worked through the new proposed language. After extensive discussion, it was agreed that a separate policy should be drafted for Private Roads because road rights of way will be privately owned rather than public. It was agreed to postpone scheduling another work session until after the November holidays. There being no further business before the Board, a motion to adjourn the work session was made and seconded. There was no further discussion and the vote was as follows: Phil Auger--aye, Terry Hyland--aye, Brian Monahan--aye, Donald Coker--aye, and Charles Moreno--aye. The work session adjourned at 9:40 PM.