

Planning Board Work Session & Public Hearing

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: January 5, 2022 6:00PM

Board Members Present:

Charlie Moreno – Chairman

Donald Coker – Alternate

Phil Auger – Vice Chairman

Don Clifford – Alternate

Terry Hyland

Tim Reed

Lynn Sweet – Selectman Representative

Others Present:

Natalie Moles, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Economic Recovery Coordinator

Jen Czysz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Executive Director

Robert Fletcher, Minutes Recorder

The Chairman, Charlie Moreno, called the Work Session to order at 6:00PM and recognized board members Phil Auger, Terry Hyland, Lynn Sweet, Donald Coker, and Don Clifford as present. He also recognized as present Natalie Moles, Jen Czysz and Robert Fletcher. He asked the Board members to review previous Work Session and Meeting minutes in preparation for their acceptance at the regular Planning Board meeting on January 6, 2022. The Chairman indicated the Planning Board would conduct a Work Session until the Public Hearing at 7:00PM.

Work Session – Master Plan Review and Update

The Chairman stated the purpose of the Work Session was to begin review of the Town Master Plan which in 2022 would be 20 years old. He indicated he had spoken with Jen Czysz regarding the services the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) could offer the Town to update the Master Plan. SRPC worked closely with the Town in 2002 to develop the current plan. It is necessary to develop a scope of services to present the Selectmen for inclusion in the Town Warrants for the March Town meeting. For reference during discussion, the Chairman provided the Board with a brief synopsis of the current Master Plan contents in a bullet format.

The Chairman asked Jen Czysz to provide an overview of the services offered by the SRPC. She indicated that SRPC involvement and cost of services for a Master Plan update depends on the amount of change to each plan section, addition of new sections or material, and the scope of public outreach to establish community expectations for future Town development. She provided some examples of what SRPC had done for other municipalities to assist in their Master Plan development. These examples included budget projections for SRPC services and various plan formats.

The Chairman indicated that the current Town Master Plan need to be made more user friendly with improved format, visuals and charts for enhanced website viewing. He also suggested the need for community input to determine the vision and goals for the Town to be incorporated into the Master Plan. The Board discussed steps needed to implement the process for Master Plan review to include SRPC budget projection, community outreach, and sub-committee review of Master Plan sections to

determine updates. Various Board members indicated the importance of updating or adding sections to address economic development, renewable energy, utility, public service, roads and communication infrastructure, and use of natural resources. The Board also acknowledged the importance of using the Master Plan to reinforce ordinance compliance or address the need for additional ordinances to achieve stated goals. Lynn Sweet suggested the need for the Master Plan to be digitally interactive and to engage more Town residents in Board/Town activities thru the use technology. This might include video of Board meetings through Town website link to youtube or similar platform.

Jen Czysz provided an example of another municipality's interactive Master Plan which the Board found to be an exceptable format. She suggested the following steps to implement the Master Plan review:

- Develop separate tasks for the Board and SRPC.
- Develop a time line for completion of tasks,
- Develop a scope of work for SRPC.
- Develop SRPC preliminary budget.

The Chairman asked Jen to put together a proposal that would outline the above for a typical Master Plan review in order to provide the Board with a viable starting point.

The Chairman indicated the need to adjourn the work session in order to open the meeting for the 7:00PM Public Hearing. The work session was adjourned at 6:53PM.

Planning Board Public Hearing

The Chairman called the Public Hearing to order at 7:01PM and indicated this to be the second Public Hearing to address proposed amendments to the Town of Strafford Zoning and Land Use Ordinances. He also indicated the hearing was conducted both in-person and via Zoom internet link. Each amendment would be addressed separately.

1). *To amend the definitions in Section 1.14, Definitions, of the Zoning Ordinance to clarify the definitions of Accessory Buildings, Structures, and Uses; Structures; Buildings; and to correct citations of these terms throughout the Zoning Ordinance.* The Chairman noted the elimination of the proposed change to the definition for temporary structures. He asked for comments from the Board, and there being none, opened the hearing for public comments at 7:03PM. There being no in-person nor on-line virtual comments, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:05PM, recognized the arrival of Board member Tim Reed, and asked for a motion to accept the amendment and move it to a ballot question. Phil Auger moved to accept the proposed amendment to Section 1.14 and Sub-Sections 1.14.12, 1.14.13 and 1.14.15 as provided for Board and public review, which was seconded by Terry Hyland, and voted upon verbally by all Board members in the affirmative. The motion carried.

2). *To amend Article 1.14.5—Frontage, the definition of Frontage, and Article 1.4.1 D Minimum Land Area provisions. The proposed amendments to the frontage definition clarify the road type on which a lot must border, that the same provisions apply to both private and public roads, and that the frontage does not need to be fully within the Town of Strafford. The amendments to the Minimum Land Area provisions clarify the requirements for building on lots that do not meet Strafford's minimum land area specifications.* The Chairman read the above for the record and stated that each Article Amendment would be addressed separately.

Article 1.14.5 – Frontage:

The Chairman noted no significant changes since the previous Public Hearing except a change to Section 1.14.5A which now reads, “Additions to Class VI roads such as private road spurs or driveway segments, even if built to town specifications, do not count towards the minimum frontage requirement in Article 1.4.1.” He asked for comments from the Board, and there being none, opened the hearing for public comments at 7:10PM. There were no in-person nor on-line virtual comments.

Article 1.4.1 D – Minimum Land Area:

The Chairman indicated there were no significant changes since the previous Public Hearing. He asked for comments from the Board and the public, and there being none, closed the hearing for public comments at 7:12PM and asked for a motion to accept the amendment and move it to a ballot question. It was so moved by Tim Reed, seconded by Phil Auger, and voted upon verbally by all Board members in the affirmative. The motion carried.

3). *To amend Article 1.7.1—Non-Conforming Use to clarify when Special Exceptions or Variances are required, or when neither is needed. Also, it specifies the duration of permits, allowance to rebuild destroyed non-conforming structures, and that permitted non-conforming construction must comply with state laws and town ordinances.* The Chairman, having read the proposed amendment, noted no significant changes since the previous Public Hearing. He asked for comments from the Board, and there being none, opened the hearing for public comments at 7:16PM. Since no in-person nor on-line virtual comments were forthcoming, he closed the Public Hearing at 7:16PM. He noted that Board member Susan Arnold was present virtually and asked for a motion to accept the amendment and move it to a ballot question. Phil Auger moved the motion, which was seconded by Tim Reed, and voted upon verbally by all Board members in the affirmative. The motion carried.

There being no further business to be addressed at the Public Hearing, the Chairman moved to close the Public Hearing at 7:18PM, which was seconded by Phil Auger, and voted upon verbally by all Board members in the affirmative.

Work Session – Continuation

Upon acceptance of Lynn Sweet’s proposal to limit the continuation to one-half hour, the Chairman resumed the Work Session at 7:20PM and asked Jen Czysz to once again presented the Master Plan example from the Goffstown municipality. The Board agreed to use this example, which uses a “storybook” format, to develop the update for the Strafford Master Plan. Lynn Sweet noted the need to enhance communication with Town residents, and all Board members agreed that Town social media postings would be done by the Town Clerk.

The Chairman asked Jen Czysz to summarize a time-line for a Master Plan update. She indicated the following:

- Kick-off meeting to review Master Plan and determine topics to be addressed.
- Determine public outreach sessions.
- Conduct public survey for potential vision and goals for the community using a “Youtube” type format.
- Incorporate comments into Master Plan.
- Finalize Master Plan in storybook format in addition hard copy PDF.

Jen Czysz agreed to provide an outline of tasks necessary to accomplish a Master Plan update. She also agreed to provide an a la carte menu budget proposal for anticipated SRPC tasks early next week for the Board and Town Selectmen to review.

There being no further business before the board, the Chairman made a motion to adjourn the Work Session, which was seconded by Tim Reed. The board voted unanimously in favor, and the Work Session adjourned at 7:53PM.