

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Location: Strafford Town Hall Conference Room

Date & Time: February 2, 2023 6:30PM

Voting Members Present:

Charlie Moreno – Chairman
Phil Auger – Vice Chairman
Terry Hyland
Tim Reed
Lynn Sweet – Selectmen Representative

Non-Voting Members Present:

Don Clifford – Alternate
Donald Coker – Alternate
Susan Arnold – Alternate

Others Present:

Blair Haney, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Regional Planner
Autumn Scott, Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Regional Planner
Robert Fletcher, Minutes Recorder

The Chairman, Charlie Moreno, called the meeting to order at 6:33PM, recognized Board members Phil Auger, Terry Hyland, Tim Reed, Lynn Sweet, Donald Coker, Don Clifford and Susan Arnold as present. He also recognized as present Blair Haney, Autumn Scott and Robert Fletcher.

The Chairman announced that the closing date for new applications to be filed for the agenda for the regular March 2, 2023 meeting is 5:00PM Tuesday, February 7, 2023. Revised applications for projects already under review must be submitted by Tuesday, February 21, 2023, for the March meeting.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the January 12, 2023 Planning Board Work Session. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Tim Reed and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members present who attended the January 12th Work Session.

New Business

Lot Line Adjustment – Bruce M. Hartley and Lynda L. Hartley Revocable Trust, 929 Parker Mountain Road (Tax Map 10, Lot 27) and Sandra L. Pierce and Wayne G. Pierce, access easement off Parker Mountain Road (Tax Map 11, Lot 25)

The Chairman asked Ashley Rowe of Norway Plains Associates, representing the Hartley's and the Pierce's, to present details on the lot line adjustment. Mr. Rowe indicated that Lot 27 is approximately 59.4 acres and includes a large wetland area, upland areas, and an existing single-family home. Lot 25 is approximately 62 acres in area with access by a 50-foot easement through Lot 27. The owner of Lot 27 would like to transfer approximately 47.4 acres of Lot 27 to the owners of Lot 25 through this lot line adjustment prior to selling their property (Lot 27) upon retirement. The adjusted Lot 27 would be approximately 12 acres in area. The applicant is requesting the following waivers from Town of Strafford Subdivision Regulations:

- To waive the requirement that wetlands on both parcels be delineated by a NH Certified Wetland Scientist and be graphically depicted on the plans. The wetland boundaries depicted on the plans with dash-dot-dot linetypes were delineated by a wetland scientist and wetland boundaries depicted with solid linetypes are based on information from the National Wetland Inventory. This information demonstrates satisfaction of minimum buildable area requirements for both lots. Delineating all wetlands onsite would pose an undue financial cost for the applicant.
- To waive the requirement to graphically depict all rock ledge outcrops on the plans. Lot 27 contains numerous exposed ledge outcrops, which have been field located. The surveyed areas of the outcrops include calculations to determine the lot buildable area. Graphically depicting these areas on the plan would be messy and make the plan difficult to read.
- To waive the requirement that soil and groundwater test pits and percolation test data be indicated on the plans. Test pit and percolation data for the buildable area of Lot 27 is provided. Lot 25 is a 62-acre vacant lot of record, and the current upland area of the lot meets the thresholds for buildable area without considering the additional 47 acres gained through the lot line adjustment.

Mr. Rowe also addressed the following two concerns identified in the Strafford Regional Planning Commission staff report:

- The inclusion of 100-year flood elevation data on subdivision proposals for lots greater than 5 acres. Large portions of the lots in question are located within Zone A; however, the 100-year flood line shown on the flood insurance rate map (FIRM) is in the middle of the wetland area, which does not make sense. Mr. Rowe indicated that FEMA has not set a 100-year flood elevation in this area, and without accurate flood elevations, the 100-year flood zone cannot be depicted on the plans with any degree of certainty.
- The current description of the 50-foot access easement does not describe it correctly, and at 50 feet, the easement encroaches on the Lot 27 septic system setback. As proposed, the 35-foot-wide access easement corrects the description error and does not encroach of the septic system setback.

The Board discussed the merits of the above. The Chairman confirmed the lot acreage of each lot after the revision. Phil Auger questioned the layout of the proposed boundary for Lot 27, pointing out that the northwest corner is well within the wetland area where it will be difficult to monument accurately. It was concluded that the lot lines would be determined by distance and direction from established lot line markers. Tim Reed questioned verbal reference to the access easement width being 30 feet, when it is depicted as 35 feet on the plan. 35 feet was determined to be correct. The Chairman requested a note be incorporated in the plan to indicate that a portion of the property is in the FEMA flood zone.

There being no further discussion, the Chairman confirmed with SRPC that the application checklist was complete. He requested a motion to accept the application, which was made by Phil Auger, seconded by Lynn Sweet, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed. The Board also discussed whether the proposal had a regional impact. Phil Auger made a motion that the lot line adjustment does not have a regional impact, which was seconded by Lynn Sweet and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

The Board considered each of the requested waivers separately:

- Phil Auger made a motion to accept the waiver for required wetland mapping, which was seconded by Charlie Moreno and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The waiver was granted.
- Phil Auger made a motion to accept the waiver for graphically depicting all rock ledge outcrops which was seconded by Lynn Sweet and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The waiver was granted.
- Phil Auger made a motion to accept the waiver for requirement to depict test pit locations for Lot 25 which was seconded by Lynn Sweet and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The waiver was granted.

The Chairmen opened the meeting for public comments at 6:58PM. There being none, he closed the public hearing at 6:59PM.

The Chairman requested a motion to approve the lot line revision as presented which was so moved by Lynn Sweet, seconded by Phil Auger, and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members. The motion passed.

Preliminary Conceptual Consultation – Patricia Fabian, Cross Road (Tax Map 19, Lot 55-4)

Dan O’Lone of Berry Surveying presented an overview of a proposal to subdivide Lot 55-4 into three lots, two of approximately 2.7 acres and a third of approximately 33 acres, all with frontage on Cross Road. Additionally, the large lot has frontage on Second Crown Point Road. Don Clifford questioned the need for the corner lot line on one of the small lots, which juts into the large lot. Mr. O’Lone indicated the position of the lot line was needed to provide minimum contiguous buildable area for the proposed lot; however, he would attempt to reposition the lot line to eliminate the corner projection, if possible. A waiver for complete property boundary delineation may be requested. This would be considered a major subdivision due to previously subdivided lots on the property.

Preliminary Conceptual Consultation – Marcela Fernandes, Collective Stillness, LLC, 123 Sunny Oaks Terrace (Tax Map 19, Lot 55-4)

Marcela Fernandes plans to open a home office for Collective Stillness offering acupuncture and Chinese medicine. The office location, which is attached to the residence, has a separate entrance with access directly from the residence driveway. The Board indicated that home-based business in Strafford is encouraged and supported by the Town’s Master Plan. The Board discussed the following with Marcela:

- Two-way vehicle access to the property and to an adequate parking area.
- Fire Department evaluation of safety and emergency vehicle access to the property.
- The need to revisit the Board should business expansion take place, such as adding employees or office area.
- Approval to post business signage visible from Town roads.

The Board informed Marcela that they would be sending her a letter to formally document her operation of an in-home business and the items discussed above.

Other Business

Lynn Sweet indicated that the Selectmen were requesting the Board's opinion on the Town Road Agent's request to pave a 270-foot-long, hard-pack gravel and Class V section of Jo-al-co Road in conjunction with the scheduled paving of 4,250 feet of the Class V portion of Jo-al-co Road from Province Road. The Board discussed the following:

- Current requirement to frequently grade the small section, if not paved.
- Impact of slight increase of stormwater runoff related to the impervious, paved surface.
- Improvement in snow plowing due to continuous paved surface from Jo-al-co Road to Webber Road.
- Additional cost of paving 270-foot-long section.

The Board offered the opinion to allow the Road Agent to schedule pavement of the additional 270-foot-long section of Jo-al-co Road.

The Chairman asked the Board to review the minutes of the January 5, 2023 Planning Board Meeting. Phil Auger made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was seconded by Tim Reed and voted upon verbally in the affirmative by all voting Board members present who attended the January 5th Meeting.

Phil Auger addressed the need to provide an overview of efforts to update the Town Master Plan at the annual town meeting. He indicated he would do the presentation. Lynn Sweet mentioned there would be a swearing in of the new Police Chief at the annual town meeting. Donald Cocker brought up the need to continue with the removal of unauthorized signage and postings throughout the town and support of the Police Department in this effort.

There being no further business before the Board, Phil Auger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Lynn Sweet. The Board voted unanimously in favor, and the meeting adjourned at 7:46PM.