

**Pembroke Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Approved April 14, 2020
February 18, 2020**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Seaworth, Chairman; Robert Bourque, Vice Chairman; Kathy Cruson; Clint Hanson (arrived 6:50 p.m.); Ann Bond, Selectman's Rep. (arrived 8:00 p.m.)

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Holli Germain

EXCUSED: Dan Crean, Ian Blakeney

STAFF PRESENT: Carolyn Cronin, Town Planner; David Jodoin (arrived 8:00 p.m.)

Chairman Seaworth called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Appointments

1. Master Plan Discussion with Mike Tardiff and Matt Monahan, Central NH Regional Planning Commission.
 - a. Housing – Matt Monahan
 - b. Economic Development – Mike Tardiff

Matt Monahan and Mike Tardiff, both of Central NH Regional Planning Commission, met with the Planning Board to present the highlights of the Housing chapter and Economic Development chapter of the Master Plan revision. They provided handouts of the most recent version of each chapter. Matt explained that the chapters are interconnected and some of the information overlaps. Matt Monahan explained that the housing chapter includes information that is both regional and Pembroke specific. There is hard data, recommendations, and tools in the chapters. As expected, protecting the rural character of Pembroke rated high. However, the need for more senior housing was the number one concern.

Member Cruson asked how a project qualifies as senior housing. Matt Monahan responded that it could be a cluster development or apartments, but always includes small units, cost effective construction, single story design, walkable, and has proximity to services. This type of housing is desired by seniors and by young families as starter homes. Young people are competing for the same housing as seniors. Families tend to upgrade to larger homes as they have more children.

The strengths were that Pembroke has a mix of housing, economic diversity, and a desired atmosphere. Strategic planning by its officials also rated high. The concerns were more senior housing needed, long-term fiscal impact on town services, traffic on Pembroke Street, keeping the downtown village character, opportunity to have healthy housing development and grow the work force, improve quality of rental housing, and use of tiny houses. Matt Monahan noted an issue came up recently in Boscawen regarding tiny houses and if they are treated the same as mobile homes/campers.

Matt listed the top five housing priorities in Pembroke:

1. Senior housing
2. Ensuring that the housing stock is current and meets needs
3. Towns ability to provide services
4. Variety of housing

5. Rate of growth

Member Cruson stated that Pembroke is not attracting young families with children right now. Matt Monahan said this is a concern, not just about the number of children in the schools, but losing town elementary schools altogether in rural areas due to lack of enrollment. Chairman Seaworth stated there is a conflict between the need for higher density, and increase in elementary school age children. Wetlands regulation and zoning separation are intended to reduce density. Some people favor mixed business and residential use; others oppose it. Member Cruson stated the reality is that development is limited by the quality of the land. She noted that if the land is not capable of supporting well and septic, houses should not be built on half-acre lots sitting on ledge. Matt Monahan said that cluster development in the right place is driven by changes in demographics. Cluster development is a market tool that works.

Member Cruson said a \$410,000 home is a large house. Who in the market is looking for a 3-4 bedroom home. Matt Monahan said many people use extra bedrooms as an office or den. Member Cruson stated that Pembroke has more than its share of workforce housing at this time. Matt Monahan noted that Hooksett was sued for lack of workforce housing about 8-10 years ago. Although Hooksett is in a different regional planning commission, it is in the same county as Pembroke. The law requires each community to provide a reasonable and realistic opportunity for housing that is affordable at a worker's average income. Pembroke meets this requirement because of its balance of housing units at varying costs and ordinances like the ADU and Open Space Development. This concept is based on case law in NH and New Jersey. The average "affordable" housing cost for a family of four should be no more than one-third of their income. Mike Tardiff stated CNHRPC is recommending changes to the cluster or open space regulations to match up the right market and development that will be needed in future housing. Matt Monahan said that the data is taken from the 2010 census, and can be updated once the 2020 census information is available. Population is actually counted on the 10-year marks, and surveys are taken in between. Population trends are noted in the census count year and projected forward using quantitative analysis. For example, 11% less rental units will be needed in 2030. Quality of life must be maintained for the changing demographics. Pembroke has more seniors, and senior housing is the top priority. A way to meet the changing demographics and allow affordable housing is to consider a mix of uses along Route 3, continue using the Accessory Dwelling Unit that is incidental and secondary to the main structure, and require one unit be occupied by the owner. Chairman Seaworth stated that when the State created the ADU regulations, they almost matched what Pembroke already had in its regulations. We were ahead of the curve.

Mike Tardiff stated he was very surprised at the State edict to allow Accessory Dwelling Units in all zoning districts, with certain criteria. The median age in Pembroke is increasing. Families are having less children; while at the same time, household size is becoming larger. This may be because of elderly parents or adult children moving in. Member Cruson said grandparents are raising grandchildren as a function of the drug culture. Member Germain stated that student loan debt is a factor for young families unable to afford housing. Member Cruson added the cost of university in New Hampshire is high.

Matt Monahan said one recommendation is to simplify the density calculation and provide incentives to developers for building the housing that is desired. After taking out the average percent of ledge, slopes and wetlands, divide the remainder by minimum lot size. The incentives could be used for quality open space, or even farmland. Incentives can also be used to encourage development of single-story homes, which are attractive to both seniors and young families. Member Cruson asked if these units should be on Town water and sewer. Ideally, yes, Matt Monahan said the perfect pieces of land with no ledge, good percolation, and half-acre lots could steer this kind of development. A second recommendation is to make sure there are connections between subdivisions. Chairman Seaworth stated that connections are another complication with open space or cluster development. Most often, the developer wants to donate half the land and put everything on the other half of the land. It gets very squishy when the Planning Board says here are the limits, and looks at open space as a whole.

Member Cruson stated that cluster development does not function as you would expect. Chairman Seaworth stated that the open space ordinance was not written up with limitations. It requested that the developer come up with an innovative design. Matt Monahan noted that in every development, a certain amount of land is not usable. If the town could come up with an average number that is taken out for ledge/steep slopes/roads, there would be a clear cut number that you can prescribe, while giving the ability for flexibility. Chairman Seaworth said we may be able to tweak the open space ordinance, or we may need to rework it top to bottom. Member Bourque stated the Planning Board tried to be very liberal with open space, but it is not working as we wanted. Member Cruson said that 50 acres of land on Buck Street is very different from 50 acres of land on 5th Range Road. The open space regulations do not take that into account.

Matt Monahan suggested that the town needs to make it easy for a developer to run calculations. Chichester has successfully used incentives. Member Bourque stated that we need a minimum lot size in our regulations. Chairman Seaworth noted we probably do not want smaller than half-acre lots. Member Cruson said that we see development plans that push the limits to put in maximum number of units. Whatever is written in black and white is helpful to the Planning Board. Matt Monahan stated that a top priority is to protect the rural character of Pembroke. Mike Tardiff said that one way is to make open space regulation simpler and more straight forward. Chairman Seaworth noted that open space is not the only tool we have to manage density. There are other ways to protect from overcrowding. Mike Tardiff asked if the Board members had read the entire housing chapter or if they would like a little more time to read and combine housing with economic development.

Member Cruson asked how the graph could show negative building permits. Matt Monahan explained the results are shown net demolition versus building. Mike Tardiff noted that in Concord we saw a negative number when demolition occurred and larger units were built in their place. Matt Monahan explained that zero bedroom housing would be a studio. Mike Tardiff gave a brief overview of economic development and his meetings with the Pembroke Economic Development Committee. They are a good group of people who see a lot of opportunity, and they have the energy to make changes in Pembroke. To tie back to the village area, the challenges are parking difficulties at certain times of the week. The town could set policies for enforcement and coordinate with the private sector to

address parking issues downtown. Matt Monahan recalled working with Allenstown in the past on village façade improvement. There is money available and programs to revitalize the village and Main Street. Mike Tardiff agreed there are tools that can be used like revitalization incentives in designated economic development zones. Property tax valuation reduction for five years could be an incentive for owners to make investments to properties in the B2 zone. Façade improvement, business expansion and retention, and softer economic development like the rail trail all contribute to quality of life. The village is a unique area and streetscape. Mike Tardiff said it is a lot of work and effort to find and implement programs, and it takes time. It is necessary to allocate additional staff time to working on this effort. Revitalization results are evident in Franklin NH.

Member Cruson stated that quality of schools is important. Mike Tardiff asked if it is worth a callout box. Member Hanson stated that concerning the school capacity issue, it usually takes at least three years for any project to be approved. Mike Tardiff noted that policy wise, the schools are a location decision for young families. Member Germain stated quality schools made us choose Pembroke over Manchester and my child is only three years old. Mike Tardiff stated that tax rates, equalization versus full property value, and sustainable development are all part of economic development. Member Cruson thanked Mike Tardiff and Matt Monahan for their presentation tonight. We appreciate your work. Mike Tardiff stated that the Implementation chapter would be the next master plan topic.

Old Business

2. Dead End Streets – Planner Cronin has no new information to share. She wanted to put unfinished business back on the agenda after zoning ordinance work was completed. Member Bourque suggested continuing this discussion item until a full board is available.
3. Development of Regional Impact Notification (DRI) – Chairman Seaworth noted that Development of Regional Impact Notification is in State regulations. Planning Boards are required to declare an application as a DRI under certain conditions. Member Cruson noted that impact to water and sewer would be one example. Chairman Seaworth explained that declaring an application as DRI causes a delay, as this decision must be made after the application is accepted. Copies of the plans are provided to the local regional planning commission and potentially impacted communities by certified mail. This results in a delay of a month for the Planning Board, and can push the Board to its limit of time to review the application. Last fall, Chairman Seaworth asked at a conference if there is a way to achieve DRI notification before a Planning Board meeting. I am now of the opinion that we are restricted as to what State law requires us to do, resulting in up to a 60-day delay. Member Cruson asked if the Board needs to act on a DRI at a meeting. Chairman Seaworth said the law seems pretty specific that the Planning Board must accept the application as complete and then decide if it is a DRI. Member Bourque noted that there is no change to the review time line as a result. Planner Cronin said a DRI extends the hearing by about 30 days. Member Bourque suggested that we automatically add 30 days because review time is shortened. Chairman Seaworth noted that if the developer notices everyone affected before a plan is noticed, there would need to be a change in State law. He may discuss the idea further with Matt Monahan of Central NH Regional Planning

Commission and consider proposing a bill. Chairman Seaworth noted that the developer and the audience would rather move on promptly with application review. An automatic extension of time to consider application should make sense. It may be a way to help out other towns with a DRI. A revised State law has to make sure the regional planning commission gets a chance to do their job. If the planning commission could look at the bigger picture a month ahead of application submission, they would have comments ready to send, and towns would have additional information to submit at the submittal of application. Planner Cronin noted that unless the Planning Board declares a plan a Development of Regional Impact, towns that receive the information have no urgency to review the plans sent to them.

Minutes

➤ January 14, 2020

MOTION: MEMBER BOURQUE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2020 AS WRITTEN. SECONDED BY MEMBER HANSON. APPROVED ON 5-0 VOTE.

➤ January 28, 2020

MOTION: MEMBER BOURQUE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2020 AS AMENDED. SECONDED BY MEMBER HANSON. APPROVED ON 4-0-1 ABSTAIN VOTE, WITH MEMBER CRUSON ABSTAINING.

Miscellaneous

1. Correspondence – Planner Cronin reported that a copy of a letter was received from City of Concord, Deputy City Manager, to Nobis Engineering regarding Continental Paving, Inc. City of Concord zoning does not allow the proposed access to an asphalt plant. Chairman Seaworth noted that the Pembroke Planning Board gave conditional approval to the Continental Paving plan, conditioned on approval by Concord Planning Board. It is concerning that City of Concord did not make that comment when they were notified of a Development of Regional Impact before the case was heard in Pembroke. City of Concord also was sent notice of a variance request in summer 2019 on the height of the proposed asphalt plant. Planner Cronin will send a copy of the letter to Board members. The issue is zoning of the Concord property the trucks would drive over for access to the plant. Member Cruson noted that North Pembroke Road has gated access, and is not built to specs for heavy vehicle traffic. Chairman Seaworth noted that Continental Paving would need to return to the Pembroke ZBA with any changes to the plan as approved.

2. Committee Reports

Board of Selectmen (BOS) – Selectmen's Rep Bond reported that the Board of Selectmen discussed public sports betting. Steve Fowler met with the Board regarding the Grange building. He will meet with the School Board and recommend that they put a committee in charge of considering the sale of the building.

PACE – Member Hanson reported that their tenant will be operating by the end of the month, and will be paying taxes to the Town.

3. Other Business- none

4. Planner Items

Planner Cronin reported that Brady Sullivan purchased the China Mill in Allenstown. She will attend the design review by Allenstown Planning Board on February 19, 2020 regarding a proposal for 147 units of housing.

The Board will have its regular meeting on February 25, 2020. The March 10, 2020 work session is cancelled due to local elections. Planner Cronin will send an email reminding members of the schedule changes.

The Rock On Diner has left the village, and a new restaurant has applied for permitting. Madear's (southern Cajun food) would be relocating to Pembroke from Manchester NH.

Planner Cronin will provide handouts of the telecommunications ordinance as marked up, and the proposed wetlands ordinances in full text for voting on Tuesday March 10, 2020. She will give Jim Goff a map of the town zoning districts for display at Town voting.

5. Board Member Items - none

6. Audience Items – David Jodoin, Town Planner, noted that the warrant articles are featured in the Town newsletter that is at the printer right now. Chairman Seaworth noted that was good information because the proposed zoning ordinances this year are complex and need to be read over before heading out to vote.

MOTION: Member Bourque moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Member Hanson. Unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Gifford, Recording Secretary