



Town of Hopkinton

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HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD MINUTES May 12, 2015

Chairman Bruce Ellsworth opened the Hopkinton Planning Board meeting of Tuesday, May 12, 2015, beginning at 7:00 PM in the Hopkinton Town Hall. Members present: Vice Chairman Michael Wilkey, Cettie Connolly, Timothy Britain, Jane Bradstreet, Celeste Hemingson, and Alternate Rich Steele. Members absent: Ex-Officio James O'Brien and Alternates Clarke Kidder and James Fredyma. Staff present: Planning Director Karen Robertson.

On behalf of the Planning Board, Chairman Ellsworth welcomed students that were in attendance to observe the meeting as a requirement of their civics class at the high school.

I. Conceptual Consultations. There were no conceptual consultations.

II. Other Business.

a) Solar Energy Systems Ordinance.

As a result of previous meeting discussions concerning large-scale solar and wind operations, the Planning Board was in receipt of a draft Solar Energy Systems Ordinance (copy attached), prepared by Mrs. Robertson, for discussion. Mrs. Robertson advised of her research in finding other communities that addressed these types of facilities.

It was noted that while it is the Planning Board's primary objective to address the installation and operation of large-scale solar energy operations, the Board will also consider effects of residential accessory solar systems on neighboring properties. Potential impacts may include solar glare and lack of screening/buffers.

Chairman Ellsworth discussed how the design and installation of solar energy is constantly changing. He suggested that the Planning Board reach out to Jack Ruderman, a resident of Hopkinton and former Director of the Sustainable Energy Division at NH Public Utilities Commission, asking if he would be willing to meet to explain the various types of solar designs and installations used, whether for an accessory solar system or for a principal, large-scale operation. Members concurred.

Following discussion concerning solar energy, Mrs. Robertson asked whether the Board was still interested in her providing a draft Wind Energy Systems Ordinance in an effort to address installations of large-scale wind operations. Brief discussion ensued with members of the Board agreeing that it is more likely that a large-scale solar facility would be proposed. The Board agreed to address the issue of solar before moving forward in developing an ordinance that would address wind energy.

b) Master Plan Update.

The Planning Board was in receipt of a memorandum from Mrs. Robertson in which she had recommended that the Board consider the following in updating the Master Plan for 2015/2016:

1. Support the Conservation Commission’s willingness to update the **Conservation, Preservation and Open Space Chapter**. The data would be updated; however, text revisions and adoption will be the responsibility of the Planning Board.
2. Reach out to Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) for assistance in updating the **Population and Economics Chapter**. Revisions to include:
 - ❖ Chapter introduction;
 - ❖ Key findings;
 - ❖ Population characteristics (historic and regional trends, projections, density and characteristics);
 - ❖ Employment, education, and commuting characteristics of residents (labor force, employment, and unemployment, occupations, education levels and commuting patterns);
 - ❖ Income characteristics (per capita income, median household and family income and poverty);
 - ❖ Hopkinton employers, include wage comparisons;
 - ❖ Tax characteristics;
 - ❖ Land availability and zoning;
 - ❖ Infrastructure characteristics (roads, highways, railroads, bus transit, airports, electrical power, communication, waste water treatment, water, emergency services, schools, and library);
 - ❖ Home businesses (trends and whether ordinance revisions should be considered);
 - ❖ Strategies to promote economic development goals;
 - ❖ Summary
3. Planning Board to update the **Community Facilities Chapter**.
 - ❖ Chapter introduction;
 - ❖ Key findings;
 - ❖ Population trends (assistance of CNHRPC)
 - ❖ Public Works (Highway, Wastewater, solid waste, building/grounds)
 - ❖ Sewer District
 - ❖ Water Precinct
 - ❖ Fire
 - ❖ Rescue Squad
 - ❖ Police
 - ❖ Town Hall (Select Board, Administration, Assessing, Finance, Human Services, Planning)
 - ❖ Library
 - ❖ Bates Bldg. (Town Clerk/Tax Collector)
 - ❖ Recreation
 - ❖ School District
 - ❖ Cemeteries

Following brief discussion, the Planning Board unanimously agreed to move forward with Mrs. Robertson’s recommendations. Mrs. Robertson is to provide the Board with a cost for CNHRPC to update the Population and Economics Chapter. Additionally, she will provide a Community Facilities Inventory form for the Board’s review and approval, prior to forwarding the forms for completion to the various municipal departments.

c) **Zoning Amendments for Consideration 2016.**

For consideration at the 2016 Annual Meeting, the Planning Board will consider various definitions for “restaurants”, such as standard and fast-food with or without walk-up, drive-in or drive-thru services. Mrs. Robertson will provide draft definitions for the Board’s review.

As a follow-up to the Board’s 2014 discussions to amend the definition of “Agritourism” to include occasional, daytime, non-commercial recreational events, such as walking, kayaking, sledding, snowshoeing, weddings, retreats, and reunions, the Board agreed to table discussions pending the outcome of the NH Supreme Court’s review of a case involving a farm in the Town of Henniker.

III. Adjournment.

Chairman Ellsworth declared the meeting **ADJOURNED** at 7:50 PM. The next regular scheduled meeting of the Hopkinton Planning Board is at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, June 9, 2015, at the Hopkinton Town Hall.

Karen Robertson
Planning Director

In accordance with RSA 677:15, any person(s) aggrieved by any decision of the Planning Board concerning application(s) may present to the Superior Court a petition, duly verified, setting forth that such a decision is illegal or unreasonable in whole or part and specifying the grounds upon which the same is claimed to be illegal or unreasonable. Such petition shall be presented to the court within thirty (30) days after the Board’s final decision regarding the application in question has been filed and becomes available for public inspection in the Planning Office.