



Town of Hopkinton Planning Department

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HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD MINUTES FEBRUARY 14, 2023

Members present: Chair Michael Wilkey, Ex-Officio Thomas Lipoma, Clarke Kidder, and Emily Bouchard. Members absent: Vice Chair Celeste Hemingson, James Fredyma, Greg Sagris, Jane Bradstreet, Rob Dapice, and Rich Steele. Staff present: Planning Director Karen Robertson.

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- I. **Call to Order.** Chair Wilkey called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM in the Hopkinton Town Hall, 330 Main Street, Hopkinton.
 - II. **Roll Call.** Kidder – present, Bouchard – present, Lipoma – present, and Wilkey – present.
 - III. **Conceptual Consultations.** There were no conceptual consultations.
 - IV. **Review and adopt revised Rules of Procedure (RSA 676:1).**

Planning Director Karen Robertson provided a brief overview of the revisions proposed, which includes the authority of the Planning Board to create committees and subcommittees; the Planning Board's ability, for a good cause, to reconsider decisions made to approve or disapprove an application within the statutory appeal period, and standards for site visits.

The Board reviewed NH RSA 673:7 concerning the ability of Planning Board members to serve on other boards and committees. It is understood that "In the case of towns, any two appointed or elected members of the planning board may also serve together on any other municipal board or commission, except that no more than one member of the planning board shall serve on the conservation commission, the local governing body,...."

There was no present wishing to offer public comment.

MOTION by Clarke Kidder, seconded by Thomas Lipoma, to adopt the Rules of Procedure as presented. **MOTION** passed unanimously (Kidder, Bouchard, Lipoma, and Wilkey).

- V. **Review draft Housing Committee Charge proposed by the Economic Development Committee (EDC).**

Chair Wilkey welcomed those present, explaining the purpose of the agenda item was to solicit comments from members of the public and any affected parties concerning the

draft Housing Committee Charge as proposed by the Economic Development Committee. Chair Wilkey then read comments received by email from Vicky Bram, the Hopkinton Village Precinct Clerk and member of the Budget Committee. Ms. Bram suggested revisions incorporating perspectives from "some of the most vulnerable citizens...who may face housing instability." Specifically, revise the Membership section "to include community member(s) who are renters" and to allow the Committee to "conduct citizen focus groups to provide additional recommendations and frames of reference."

Mr. Kidder agreed with Ms. Bram's comments and noted that including stakeholders with different housing needs is important.

Economic Development Director Anna Wells and Board members discussed the "at large" membership of the draft charge and the efforts that will be made to include both homeowners and renters. In addition, Mr. Lipoma agreed to relay Ms. Bram's comments to the Select Board.

Ms. Bouchard also agreed with the recommendations made by Ms. Bram. She then inquired why the number nine was selected when deciding on the size of the Housing Committee. In response, Mrs. Wells explained that nine is an odd number for voting purposes.

EDC member Louise Carr stated that when discussing housing, people tend to misunderstand what is meant by "affordable." Creating workforce (affordable) housing is important as it will allow people to live and work in Hopkinton.

Chair Wilkey opened the meeting for public comment.

Bonnie Christie stated that the EDC had addressed her comments by recognizing that the Housing Committee should include individual(s) with the knowledge or a perspective about open space, natural resources, sustainability, waste management, and energy. With the limit of five at large members, finding one or two individuals with knowledge in all areas may be difficult. Ms. Christie also voiced support for Ms. Bram's recommended revisions.

Katherine Mitchell expressed concern with the ability of nonresident members of the Committee to vote, suggesting membership of the Housing Committee should be limited to residents of Hopkinton.

Lastly, Ms. Mitchell suggested that part of the Committee's charge should include a cost analysis outlining the cost that housing will have on community services. She also noted that the Housing Committee's efforts or process should be data-driven, beginning with housing presently available in Hopkinton.

With no further comments, the Planning Board noted that the lack of housing is a statewide issue, not just in Hopkinton. While recognizing the time and commitment in

identifying, analyzing, and developing recommendations, the Planning Board unanimously agreed to support the creation of a Housing Committee.

Chair Wilkey informed the public that Ms. Wells would meet with the Select Board on Tuesday, February 21, where it is anticipated that the Select Board would endorse the Housing Committee's creation.

VI. Review of Minutes and Notice of Decision of December 13, 2022, January 10, and January 24, 2023.

The Board deferred review to the March 21, 2023, meeting.

VII. Other Business.

a) Master Plan update, zoning amendments, and planning goals and objectives for 2023 and beyond.

Mrs. Robertson provided a list of potential goals and objectives extending beyond 2023, recommending that the Board prioritize the projects while considering the time and expenses. She noted that the Planning Board's professional service budget for 2023 is \$4,000.

Goals and projects (potential):

	Section	Cost
Master Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Facilities/Public Utilities - Natural Resources - Implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CNHRPC dues/NHOPD Target Block Grant - CNHRPC \$3,000 - InvestNH Grant
Zoning Ordinance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wetlands Conservation Overlay - Definition/Table of Uses "Recreation Facilities" - "Front Lot Line" - Board of Adjustment - Outdoor Lighting - Affordable Housing - Parking - Noise - Manufactured Housing - Architectural Design Review - Phasing Standards - Certain Prohibitions - Violations and Penalties 	
Site Plan Review Reg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phasing Standards 	
Subdivision Reg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To Be Determined 	

Mrs. Robertson recommended that the Planning Board contact the Conservation Commission to complete the Natural Resource chapter with the Central NH Regional

Planning Commission's (CNHRPC) assistance. Board members suggested inquiring with the Conservation Commission to help fund the chapter. Mrs. Robertson anticipated that the InvestNH grant would cover the cost of working with CNHRPC in writing the Implementation chapter.

Mrs. Robertson and Chair Wilkey, along with Bonnie Christie, briefly mentioned the efforts of the Wetlands Committee to rewrite or update the Wetlands Conservation Overlay Ordinance. Currently, the Committee is awaiting the update of the Natural Resource Inventory. It is anticipated to be completed in late March or early April. After completion, the Wetlands Committee will reconvene in drafting language for Planning Board review.

Mrs. Robertson noted that in 2022, the Planning Board briefly discussed the definition of "Recreation Facilities" and where the use/structures are currently permitted. At that previous meeting, the Board suggested that the use be reviewed in 2023 for potential amendments in 2024. Besides reviewing "Recreation Facilities," Mrs. Robertson recommended a review of the definition of "Front Lot Line." She noted a conflict in the Ordinance when determining the front setback. In addition, other sections of the Ordinance should be reviewed for possible conflict with enabling legislation and to ensure the provisions are consistent with current industry standards and/or best management practices. Furthermore, it was suggested that the Planning Board review the Site Plan Review and Subdivision regulations for the same reasons.

Following discussion, the Planning Board requested that Mrs. Robertson come back to the Board with a prioritized list of the planning and zoning goals and objectives.

- b) Technical Review Advisory Committee: Mrs. Robertson explained a process by which she has engaged a Technical Review Advisory Committee as solely an advisory group to provide advisory comments to the Planning Board. It allows staff, representatives, and applicants to identify issues of concern early in the planning process. The participants include Town staff and representatives from various boards and committees. Reviews ensure that all Town departments are aware of upcoming projects so that they may assess and plan for potential impacts. The Committee has no authority and makes no decisions on development applications. The group meets on an ad hoc basis, usually at Town Hall.

Following a brief discussion about the benefits of the Committee, the Planning Board unanimously supported the efforts of Mrs. Robertson and others and agreed that the Technical Review Advisory Committee should continue its work.

VIII. Adjournment. Chair Wilkey declared the meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM. The next meeting scheduled meeting is at 5:30 PM on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

Karen Robertson
Planning Director