

Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and Economic Development Committee
Meeting Minutes
DRAFT- November 14, 2017

Planning Members or alternates present: Chair Kathy Barnard, Peter Goodwin, Paul O'Brien, Vaune Dugan, Mike Hodder, and John Thurston.

Members or alternates present: Chair Kathy Eaton, Mary DeVries, Cindy Patten, BOS liaison alternate Linda Murray (6:05 PM), Steve Durgan, Peter Cooke alternate, Alan Harding and Denise Roy-Palmer.

Staff present: Development Matt Sullivan and Recording Secretary Amelia Capone-Muccio

Guests: Maggie Stier of the Heritage Commission

1. **Call to order:** Chairman Barnard called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
2. **Introduction of Planning Board and Economic Development Committee members.**
3. **Joint meeting with the EDC**
 - o *Definition of Hotel, Motel, Inns*
 - o *Architectural Design Standards*

K Barnard explained the purpose of the Planning Board according to RSA and its mission to promote economic stability and to work with the Economic Development Committee to ensure the changes are beneficial to Wolfeboro's economics. She stated the purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss the proposed definition change of Hotels, Motels, & Inns as provided, which in summary is combining the language into one paragraph and the Architectural Design Standards, changing from "guidelines" as they have always been to "standards". She explained the Board proposed the change from "guidelines" to "standards" to allow the Planning Board to review them in the site plan review process which will allow the ability of a waiver, rather than the Zoning Board of Adjustment review that would be more complicated to provide leniency.

M Sullivan provided a brief overview of the proposed changes and explained that the language change for hotels, motels and inns was proposed in 2015, but was determined then not to change. The purpose of this revision is to consolidate the language, there is no change to the permitted use. He stated this revision has been recommend by the Planning Board and will move to the Public Hearing process.

V Dugan provided a brief over of the recommended changes to the Architectural Design Standards and the thought and determination to change them from "guidelines" which is what they have always been, and make them "standards" to be considered in the site plan review process, which allows the Planning Board to review applications and approve waivers vs. a ordinance change that would need Zoning Board. She stated the purpose of the proposed draft was to provide the framework without being too cumbersome of promoting Wolfeboro's character on future development to continue as a tourist attraction. She noted that the example is missing photo examples, but such will be included in the final draft.

A Harding questioned how they would define "character".

V Dugan replied such as indigenous materials, wood, stone, roof pitches, etc.

C Patten read statements from Kathy Eaton (who apologized but would be late in attendance) regarding the architectural standards and that in looking at Wolfeboro it is hard to determine what the architectural standards are, noting the oldest building in Wolfeboro, the Clark House, is across the street from one of the newest buildings, the hospital. She questioned the comments regarding how buildings are aligned and asked clarity on that statement. She also questioned Solar panels, will they be included?

V Dugan replied like the business downtown, Blacks Paper Store aligns with the street, vs a zig zag pattern of businesses. She stated the standards are open to being green.

M Stier stated that Wolfeboro is made of many different style buildings from their time period and are significant to Wolfeboro in that time such as the Citizen Bank building and feels these proposed guidelines are flexible to allow good architecture.

J Thurston agreed, the standards are flexible but allow to keep the character of Wolfeboro and would only really be addressed in extreme circumstances.

M Hodder added the purpose of putting it in site plan review vs the ordinance is to provide a more relaxed process.

D Roy-Palmer questioned what if they are not passed.

M Sullivan explained that currently these have been guidelines in places since the 1990's and they are proposing to add them to the site plan review process which requires a public hearing and would take place before the town vote.

M DeVries noted that in reading the draft, the tone of the document sounds very different than what is being discussed tonight and expressed her concerns a potential business would read these standards, find them not to be business friendly and move their proposed business to another community.

P Cooke disagreed and that he feels that these only pertain to those proposed businesses going through site plan review and he doesn't see these as a lot of risk for potential businesses. He referred to business such as Dollar General (which a generic block building) going next to a building with historical character.

C Patten noted that regardless of the building standards, there is nothing to prevent a Dollar General from putting their business in an architecturally approved building in Wolfeboro.

S Durgan stated than if we have already been doing this, why change it. He thinks it make the process more cumbersome and provided an example of the process and expense the town and the property owner went through to put up the Dunkin Donuts in town. He explained that the owner at the time had the money to fight that and get it put in, but someone else may not and then another business goes to another community that is more business friendly. He would hate to see them go back to the time when the Historic District was in place.

P O'Brien questioned the urgency to get these in place and the legality of enforcement? He recommend a review by counsel.

M Sullivan replied there is not an urgency, there is already a voluntary process in place. He replied that based on other standards he believes they are legal.

A Harding stated he feels they shouldn't be defined as "standards" and remain as suggestions.

S Durgan agreed and provided an example of Goodhue Hawkins expansion and adhering to the character of Wolfeboro, not because they had to, but because they wanted to, its good business practice.

P Cooke stated that someone not from Wolfeboro may not know what the community wants when they come and feels this document enforces good business conscience.

**Secretary's note; Kathy Eaton joined the meeting and Maggie Stier excused herself from the meeting 6:55 PM.*

A Harding referred to RSA 673:1, the duties of the Planning Board which includes updating the Master Plan from time to time and feels now is the time to do that update and this topic should be included in that discussion.

D Roy-Palmer questioned if these rules would apply to any of the Town owned buildings. She noted that such changes would affect the cost of construction.

L Murray replied the Town is not required to go through the Planning Board review, but they ask that they do.

A Harding noted that how does this standard relate to a future with buried electric utility lines?

L Murray replied they had proposed that at one time and it was a large financial project that did not pass the town vote.

K Eaton suggested the proposed changes be delayed until after the Master Plan review.

K Barnard replied that could be a consideration that she would discuss with the Planning Board.

P O'Brien agreed that a Master Plan review provides a fresh look of what the future of the town is. He stated the town needs to invest in itself to be more inviting to businesses. He'd like to see the electric utilities buried underground.

K Eaton agreed it would be nice, but it was a five million dollar project at the time that did not pass, but she stated before that happens, the town needs to invest in other capital improvements such as extending water/sewer out Rt. 28 to Ossipee, since a major business proposal was lost out on that stretch due to the lack of available water and sewer. There needs to be a good look at the town's future.

A Harding provided an email from Bill Petersen, alternate on the EDC, who also has extensive experience in the hospitality business (see attached e-mail) and this pertains to the 50 room limit and that he feels that needs to be eliminated from the definition to enhance economic growth in Wolfeboro. He stated the argument it will hurt the current hotel, motel and inn industry is not valid and that there is a need for more. He stated having a conference center will be good for Wolfeboro and its businesses.

P Cooke stated that that topic goes back to the Master Plan discussion and where you'd would put such a facility in Wolfeboro as where it is located determines what kind a facility it is.

A Harding replied let the market speak to for itself, there are plenty of places to put one; that is not their job to decide.

K Eaton pointed out some concerns in the language such what the criteria is based on and such as the question of more than one building. She noted again, this revision should be delayed until the Master Plan review because there is a whole other market that is not included in this definition such as Air B & B and BRBO's that are unregulated.

L Murry questioned the Planning Board discussion on the Master Plan and if community input will be included in the process as it was last time.

K Barnard replied it would, the Planning Board will be discussing that at their meeting next Tuesday and plan to have community involvement in the review of the Master Plan.

D Roy-Palmer stated they need to address the non-conforming lodging facilities since only one hotel fits within the standard the rest are in preexisting, non-conforming zones.

K Barnard stated she feels they have a clear picture of what the EDC would like to see and questioned if there are any other concerns they would like the Planning Board to address, besides the setback requirements that they have already noted in their last meeting minutes. She plans to share the comments of this meeting to the Planning Board.

M DeVries stated she would like to see the language that refers to "on-site recreation" included back into the definition.

**Secretary's note: V Dugan was excused from the meeting at 7:50 PM.*

K Barnard also noted a reference to the use of Town properties in the EDC meeting minutes and questioned clarity on that.

K Eaton replied yes, such as the former Municipal Electric Power Plant building and potential uses for that property. She also noted the EDC has discussed the continual need for workforce housing as having affordable housing for a work force goes hand in hand with economic growth.

S Durgan replied that problem extends beyond Wolfboro.

K Barnard questioned the proposed adoption of the Draft Economic Development Plan, the status of the Mission statement and the review headwaters demographic report by the EDC.

K Eaton replied the EDC has received copies of them and plans to discuss them as a Committee.

Being no further business before the Committee, Chairman Barnard asked for a motion to adjourn.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 PM. All in favor, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Amelia Capone Muccio