

COÖS COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
Berlin, NH
January 14, 2015

Present from the Board: John Scarinza – Chair; Fred King – Vice Chair; Jennifer Fish – Clerk; Ed Mellett, Scott Rineer, Mike Waddell, Rick Tillotson (*arrived after call to order*), Commissioner Thomas Brady (*arrived after call to order*); alternates Mark Frank, Thomas McCue; and Board Secretary Suzanne Collins.

Present from the Public: Tara Bamford, North Country Council; Rep. Wayne Moynihan, Coös County Delegation.

John Scarinza, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6 PM. Chairman Scarinza designated Mark Frank to fill the Rick Tillotson seat until he arrived.

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 24, 2014:

Mark Frank made a motion to approve the minutes of November 24, 2014 as distributed. Ed Mellett seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All members voted in favor of approval.

LETTERS/CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD:

Jennifer Fish reported that no correspondence had been received.

NEW BUSINESS:

John Scarinza and Jennifer Fish reported that there was no new business to come before the Board.

Rick Tillotson joined the meeting.

Representative Moynihan asked if Rep. Leon Rideout normally sits on the Planning Board. Chairman Scarinza explained that he was selected by the Delegation to fill a seat on the Board as a voting member but the by-laws do not recognize an alternate to fill his seat if he does not attend.

Commissioner Tom Brady joined the meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Subdivision Regulations: Review to ensure the subdivision regulations are consistent with current Best Management Practices and are current with State Requirements and changes in the laws of the State of New Hampshire.**

Chairman Scarinza welcomed back Tara Bamford, Planning Director, North Country Council. Tara distributed clean copies of the Land Subdivision Regulations Draft Revisions Dated November 24, 2014; and Jennifer distributed copies of the International Dark Sky Association's "Simple Guidelines for Lighting Regulations for Small Communities, Urban Neighborhoods, and Subdivisions."

Chairman Scarinza stated that the Board is now reviewing its Site Plan Review Regulations in preparation for a Public Hearing on the two documents revisions and updates.

2. Site Plan: Review to ensure consistency and adequacy with goals established in the Master Plan and consistent with the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations.

Tara began the review of revisions stating that she had made substantive changes since the last meeting in November. She also noted that references to the "Board" throughout the document have been changed to the "Planning Board".

She directed the Board members to Pages 7-9 A. 1. Parking Space Requirements. She noted that she had made very few changes to the Table as she could not get really good information about specific parking requirements in some of the categories such as outdoor recreation facilities. The revised language puts the onus on the applicant to demonstrate how many parking spaces they will need. She spoke with officials at various ski areas as well as a few engineers. Based on engineering advice, she added Section f. for Board consideration:

In the event the need for parking exceeds projections, and the excess number, size or type of vehicles leads to unsafe conditions in the judgment of the Planning Board, or to parking on roadsides, the owner shall be required as a condition of approval to submit an application for an amendment to the approved site plan showing how the additional parking will be provided. In some cases, the applicant will be required to show a reserve area on the plan which will be set aside for the construction of additional parking if needed in the future.

Sue Collins noted that Scott Rineer's recommendation at the last meeting to add a parking category for campgrounds was not included in the revision. Commissioner Brady, owner and operator of a campground in Jefferson, stated that the norm is now 2 vehicles per campsite; one vehicle per campsite is becoming inadequate. He recommended that in the case of a site plan for a campground, the applicant be required to designate an area for overflow parking. Rick Tillotson agreed that the Planning Board should take overflow parking area(s) into consideration. Tara Bamford added that it would be up to the campground owner to determine how many spaces would be provided per campsite.

Tara Bamford added that she had also added paragraph d. to the parking standards which reads, "Where a use is not indicated in the table above, the Planning Board

will establish parking standards on an individual basis as the public safety shall require". This language puts the burden of proof on the developer.

Rick Tillotson related that at the former Balsams the parking lots were too small but the resort was able to deal with this shortcoming by providing resort transportation to and from the ski area and golf course. Rick noted that The Balsams had many of the features listed in the table including hotel, theatre, restaurants, manufacturing facilities, retail stores, golf course, ski area and Nordic ski center. He wondered how, using this table, the applicant could comply with the number of parking spaces required. Tara Bamford replied that the Planning Board should ask for a parking study on a case by case basis.

Rick added that during the winter months, the parking problems were exacerbated by snow storage. Sue Collins stated that these regulations on page 10, Section E. state that "Provision shall be made for snow storage during the winter months".

Rick referred back to the table and noted that the **Residential** category requires certain parking for single family dwellings and these site plan regulations do not cover single family dwellings. Tara Bamford replied that this category deals with single family residential units that are part of a larger development.

Rick then inquired about a commercial sporting camp that would only be accessible by boat. John Scarinza replied that the Board would waive the parking requirement; however, if the Board was presented with a 20-unit sporting camp development, the applicant would have to show where off-site parking would be provided. Fred King cautioned that the Board cannot write a document that deals with every scenario imaginable and that is why the Board has some flexibility with waivers and requiring further information which it determines is essential to the approval process.

Mark Frank inquired about the category Motels, Hotels, guest houses and manufactured homes. He wondered if this includes mobile home parks. Tara Bamford replied that this category was in the original regulations and this is not her language.

Mark Frank stated that he thought some of the parking requirements for some of the categories should be adjusted. John Scarinza replied that between now and the public hearing a Board member may submit in advance some information for revisions to this table for Board consideration at its next meeting. Mike Waddell stated that there is a good benefit in providing an applicant with the clear standards included in the table. The Board can always make exceptions based upon a reasonable argument by the applicant.

Rick questioned the thought process behind the parking requirements for golf courses. He stated that with 18 holes on the course, there should be 1.5 spaces per green and not 5, as generally golf twosomes and foursomes arrive together. After some discussion it was agreed to change the parking requirement to 2 spaces per green + 1

space per 200 square feet of clubhouse. Tara suggested also adding 1 space per 3 seats of dining space in the clubhouse + 1 space per driving range tee.

Mark Frank said that earlier there was talk about parking along state roads. He asked if there are state regulations about parking along roads. John Scarinza replied that the public cannot park along state roads.

Rick asked why there is a reference to instructional uses in the language on Page 10, #2, Off-Street Loading Facilities. It was agreed that the language should have been institutional facilities and would be corrected.

Tara Bamford noted the language updates to Section D. on Page 10. She stated that no flood plain maps exist for much of the unincorporated territory. If the Board is convinced that a parcel is in the flood plain, the Board can require a site specific study to prove otherwise.

She continued to Page 10, Section G. Lighting where the language was copied and pasted from the Dark Sky Standards distributed earlier in the meeting. Rick Tillotson expressed some concern based on his knowledge of The Balsams, an attraction that relied on lighting that made the resort visible from the highway to attract tourists. Sue Collins, Ed Mellett and Rick all noted that the lighting regulations do not contain an exception for night skiing. Sue Collins expressed concern about holiday lighting being limited to 30 days and the regulation that a decorative yard light cannot be visible outside the property perimeter. Tara replied that she will look at different language to address some of the issues discussed. Discussion followed about sign lighting. Sue Collins referred Board members to the Zoning Ordinance that very clearly defines what is and is not acceptable for signs and lighting of signs. Tara stated that she will modify the language or refer back to the Zoning Ordinances pertaining to this issue.

Rick Tillotson questioned the placement of Section VII. and its definition of Development. He gave an example of someone piling wood chips on a parking lot to be loaded into trucks where there would be a steady pile of chips with trucks in and out. Tara replied that Section II. Purpose on Page 1. states that site plan review is required for new development, for expansion of an existing nonresidential or multifamily use, or for a change from one such use to another. Rick added that the way he understands it, if the prior use did not stop, then it is not an additional use.

Tara agreed that Section VII. Definitions would be incorporated into the language on Page 1. She will also revise Section I. Authority on Page 1. when the definitions from Section VII. are moved to Page 1.

On Page 11. Section VIII. Waiver of Requirements, Sue Collins asked if subsections A and B should be combined. Tara will revisit this section during the rewrite.

On Page 5, Section IV. Performance Guaranty, Rick Tillotson noted a language error where the word “subdivider” should be replaced with “applicant” as these are not subdivision regulations.

Chairman Scarinza inquired if Tara should make updates and revisions for Board to review again. Tara Bamford replied “yes”.

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

It was agreed that the Board would meet again as soon as Tara could suggest available dates and make the revisions to Site Plan Review.

ADJOURNMENT:

Scott Rineer made a motion to adjourn. Fred King seconded the motion and all voted yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne L. Collins, Secretary to the Planning Board