

TOWN OF WEBSTER

PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY APRIL 20, 2023

The Planning Board held a meeting on Thursday, April 20, 2023. The meeting was held at the Town Hall in the Grange Hall; 945 Battle Street, Webster, NH 03303.

Planning Board Members present: Craig Fournier, Paul King, Marlo Herrick, Susan Youngs, Adam Mock, and Therese Finnemore.

Also, present: Land Use Coordinator Russell Tatro, Mark Kimball.

Chairperson Fournier opened the April 20, 2023, meeting at 6:30pm and took attendance. All the Planning Board members were present. He then moved to the first item on the agenda, reorganization of the Board. He explained that every year the Board needed to choose a new Chairperson. The Board briefly discussed who to appoint as Chairperson and agreed to re-appoint Craig Fournier.

MOTION: Member Youngs

To designate Member Craig Fournier as Chairperson of the Planning Board.

SECOND: Member Herrick

CRAIG FOURNIER – ABSTAIN

ADAM MOCK – YES

MARLO HERRICK – YES

PAUL KING – YES

SUSAN YOUNGS – YES

The motion passed 4 to 0

Chairperson Fournier moved to the next item on the agenda, the appointment with Mark Kimball regarding new Scenic Road Bylaws.

Mr. Kimball thanked the Board for and wanted to begin the discussion by going of the Goals and Recommendations in the 2018 Master Plan. In 2018 the Board had done a survey of residents that had identified keeping the Town's unique rural and historical nature intact. Historical in this context did not just mean historical structure but also included historical streetscapes and the Town had long history of planting sugar maple. He then informed the Board that he had met with Unutil last week and had gone over the trees that they intended to be cut. During his conversation with Unutil he had asked if it was possible to have them plant new trees to replace the ones that had been cut. The representative from Unutil had informed him that he could order up 5 trees from the Arbor Day Foundation. Unutil had also suggested not planting the new trees under the lines unless he was planting a short variety like crabapple trees. He wanted to plant the trees on the opposite side of the road if they were not in the traveled way. He wanted the Planning Board to help him figure out a way to ensure that the trees he planted were protected from regular road maintenance.

Mr. Kimball then brought to the Boards attention the publication from NHMA called "A Hard Road to Travel." The Book went over the rules of how public highways were created which included the designation of scenic roads. He reminded the Board that the Town had a right-of-way (ROW) easement to cross the land and the landowner still owned the center line of the road. The landowner also had the right to grow and cut trees within the ROW. He added that owners had the right plant shade and fruit trees provided they were marked and provided they were a proper distance from the highway. He pointed out that many municipalities were implementing programs to encourage the planting and maintenance of trees near roads. He then brought up the city of Lebanon's scenic road bylaws and pointed out that Lebanon allowed trees to up to 3 feet from the road. He had a conversation with Coordinator Tatro, and he had him

1 informed him of the process and he felt that was not necessary at the moment. He hoped the Planning
2 Board could help him come up with a way to make his plan successful.

3
4 Member Mock commented that it was a good idea to plant new trees. However, trees need light and space
5 to grow. He felt that the current tree canopy hanging over Mutton Road would prevent any newly planted
6 tree from being able to grow. Mr. Kimball responded that he respected Member Mock's opinion, but he
7 could cut trees to ensure the newly planted saplings could grow. He continued that trees and brush on
8 scenic roads could only be trimmed if they were interfering with the traveling way. Member Mock also
9 pointed out that dirt roads required sunlight in the early spring to dry out from the winter and excessive
10 tree canopy meant the roads would have to be posted for longer. He suggested removing the "Junk Trees"
11 to give the bigger trees space to grow and it would also improve the overall aesthetics of the road.

12
13 Member Finnemore asked about plowing and the storage of snow in the event of back-to-back winter
14 storms. Mr. Kimball responded that he felt the Road Agent did a great job maintaining the road and he
15 felt there would still be enough space to store the snow. Member Finnemore clarified that her concern was
16 the three-foot distance in regard to pushing the snow back when clearing the road. She then added that
17 roots had a habit of rising and interfering with the road when the tree was close to the road.

18
19 Member Youngs asked what Mr. Kimball's exact concerns were regarding planting his new trees. Mr.
20 Kimball responded that he was concerned with that the new saplings would be killed during regular road
21 maintenance. Chairperson Fournier stated that he did not have any issues with him planting trees. His
22 only concern was that the Road Agent knew about it and approved the location. He also felt that the Road
23 Agent needed to know so that the information could be passed to future Road Agents. Mr. Kimball asked
24 if there was any law requiring him to get permission to plant the trees from the Road Agent. Chairperson
25 Fournier responded that as far as he was aware there weren't any. Member Herrick felt they were all
26 trying to help Mr. Kimball be successful and she felt that working with the Road Agent would increase
27 his chance of success.

28
29 Member Youngs asked if his primary concern was the saplings being cut during the roadside mowing.
30 Mr. Kimball responded that roadside maintenance was one of his concerns. Chairperson Fournier pointed
31 out that this was why he should have the discussion with the Road Agent and likely with Unitil. Mr.
32 Kimball asked if there was a way that he could mark the saplings so the Road Agent would be aware of
33 them. Chairperson Fournier suggested putting stakes there and/or flagging them. Member Finnemore
34 asked why Mr. Kimball wanted to plant the trees close to the road. Mr. Kimball responded that he had not
35 decided where to plant the trees and there were many factors that he was still considering. Chairperson
36 Fournier emphasized this was way he should contact the Road Agent and discuss the planning with him.
37 Member Mock felt that if he planted them beyond the ditch line that they would likely not cause any
38 problems. Mr. Kimball stated that he would reach out to the Road agent and hoped the Board would as
39 well.

40
41 Chairperson Fournier moved to the next item on the agenda, future zoning.

42
43 Coordinator Tatro informed the Board that he wanted to suggest the Board put forward a warrant article
44 next year to allow the Board to adjust the table of contents in the Zoning Ordinance. This was needed
45 because with recent amendments the table of contents was inaccurate. The Board agreed this was a good
46 idea.

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48 Chairperson Fournier also reminded the Board that they should address the language in the impact fee
49 ordinance. Previously the Board had discussed adding a 3-year limitation if the property was lost due to a
50 fire. The Board agreed this would also be a good idea.

1 **MOTION:** Member Youngs
2 *To accept the minutes from 3/16/23 as amended.*

3 **SECOND:** Member Herrick
4 **CRAIG FOURNIER – YES**
5 **MARLO HERRICK – YES**
6 **PAUL KING – YES**
7 **ADAM MOCK – ABSTAIN**
8 **SUSAN YOUNGS – YES**
9 **The motion passed 4 to 0**

10
11 **MOTION:** Chairperson Fournier
12 *To adjourn the meeting 7:25*
13 **SECOND:** Member Youngs
14 **CRAIG FOURNIER – YES**
15 **MARLO HERRICK – YES**
16 **PAUL KING – YES**
17 **ADAM MOCK – YES**
18 **SUSAN YOUNGS – YES**
19 **The motion passed 5 to 0**

20
21 Respectfully,
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27 *Minutes taken by Russell Tatro*
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