

**TOWN OF WEBSTER  
PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 16, 2020**

At **6:30 pm** Chairperson Rauth convened the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Board and took attendance. Members present: Paul King and Craig Fournier; Alternate Members present: Kathy Bacon and David Hemenway. Chairperson Rauth appointed Ms. Bacon to serve as a voting member for this meeting due to Member Lehmann's absence.

Webster Conservation Commission Members present: Susan Roman, Chairperson, Linda Clark, Mary Jo MacGowan, Isabel Brintnall and Sally Embley.

At this time Chairperson Rauth recognized the members of the Webster Conservation Commission (WCC) in attendance. Chairperson Rauth stated the reason for this joint meeting was for both groups to discuss the proposed Surface Water and Wetlands Ordinance. She reminded everyone that after their joint meeting of the Planning Board and the WCC in November, a decision had been made to continue to work to finalize the ordinance in 2020 in order to have it on the March 2021 ballot. At that joint meeting they also agreed to carry out a public information program. Chairperson Rauth informed both boards that Chris Schadler had stepped down from being the Chairperson of the WCC due to a conflict of her now being the Chairperson of the Select Board. Sue Roman had agreed to serve as the new Chairperson of the WCC. Chairperson Rauth stated that she and Ms. Roman had discussed how the two boards could work together more closely by establishing a subcommittee comprised of both Planning Board and WCC members. She stated that the WCC would carry out the public information plan with help from the Planning Board and the Planning Board would work on developing the legislative proposals. Both boards would work together to come up with a project plan and a schedule of meetings to help manage the workload over the upcoming year.

At this time Ms. Roman stated she would like to see the Planning Board members develop an understanding of the science of wetlands. She stated the science is very strong and pretty well documented and it does demonstrate how important wetlands are to the environment. Ms. Roman reminded everyone that the WCC did have GZA GeoEnvironmental do a wetlands assessment report of 25 wetland units in the Town of Webster. Ms. Roman foresees forming a subcommittee to look over the science, sharing that task so that each member would look at piece of the science. She stated the WCC narrowed it down to about five or six pieces. Ms. Roman suggested dividing up the documents she had on hand among the members for them to read. Then identify what would be essential for the Town of Webster and then move towards deciding what the overlay district would look like and how it would be defined. Ms. Roman stated another segment they need to address would be the ordinance itself and how it functions. She felt they could stay with the template they have. She stated they would need a legal review. At the same time, the WCC will start a public education program about wetlands and their value. She stated that the Planning Board promulgates the legislation, so they need to feel comfortable with it and be able to defend it. To that end, they need to be familiar with the science. Also, the ordinance will need to be reviewed for conflicts with the Zoning Ordinance and other land use regulations and if necessary, make recommendations for amendments.

Member Fournier, Acting Member Bacon and Member King all volunteered to be on the subcommittee depending on their schedules. A discussion followed regarding the reading materials on wetlands. Ms. Roman suggested everyone read the "Dartmouth Study", "Planner's Guide to Wetland Buffers for Local Governments", GZA "Freshwater Wetlands Assessment Report for the Town of Webster" and the National Wetlands Newsletter – "Setting Buffer Sizes for Wetlands." Chairperson Rauth will send these electronically to the Planning Board members. Member Fournier stated that what would help him if someone could tell him what he is looking for; the subject matter. Ms. Roman stated that what they are looking for is what buffers do we need and why; that's the topic. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to schedule a Planning Board & WCC subcommittee meeting for Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 6:30 pm to begin the process.

At 7:25 pm the WCC left the Planning Board meeting.

The next order of business was review of the Planning Board draft minutes from December 19, 2019. Member Fournier made a motion to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Member King and approved unanimously.

The next order of business was to review the proposed amendment to the Driveway Regulations which was discussed at the December meeting. After a brief discussion, Chairperson Rauth made a motion to amend the Driveway Regulations as follows: ***“Driveways longer than 300 feet should provide a passing zone of an additional 12 feet width, for a distance of 50 feet on the straight portion, at intervals of no more than 300 feet, to allow passage of vehicles travelling in opposite directions.”***; seconded by Member King and approved unanimously. Adoption of this amendment will be done at a public hearing TBD (To Be Determined). At this time Alternate Member Hemenway asked if there were other places in the Driveway Regulations, because of now dealing with longer and wider vehicles, the Board might also need to be looking at minimum curvature radiuses. Chairperson Rauth referred the Board to the “Driveway Geometry” section of the regulations which calculates the radius for different driveway widths. Alternate Hemenway clarified his concern was not with the entrance of the driveway, but with travelling further down a 300 + foot driveway and coming across a tight bend. Member King stated those situations would be determined on a case by case basis. Chairperson Rauth agreed with Alternate Member Hemenway that the Board should study this more. She stated this would be on the agenda for February 20<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting.

The next order of business was to review the proposed changes to the Site Plan Review Regulations, forms, applications and checklist. Chairperson Rauth brought this to the Board because of a question about requiring a licensed survey for a minor site plan review. She stated the Site Plan Review Regulations were patterned after the Subdivision Regulations which require surveys for both major and minor. A major site plan review would be something that would trigger a big change and would require a licensed survey, such as commercial development. Unlike a minor subdivision, which does require a licensed survey, a minor site plan review currently requires a drawing to scale. Chairperson Rauth gave the example of the Board’s site plan review of a beauty shop that was approved as a home business. The property owner was required to submit a hand drawn plan of the lot to scale. No licensed survey was required. Chairperson Rauth stated a subdivision plan changes the property lines via a licensed survey and is recorded at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, whereas a Site Plan Review is a change of use which in most instances does not require a licensed survey. She stated that the newly amended Site Plan Regulations had required licensed surveys for BOTH a major and a minor site plan review; requiring a survey for a minor site plan just didn’t make sense. At this time Chairperson Rauth passed out copies of the amended applications and checklists for site plan reviews and subdivisions. After a lengthy discussion, the Board agreed with making some changes. Chairperson Rauth will make those changes in the regulations and the applications as discussed. At this time, Alternate Member Hemenway referred to the Site Plan Review Regulations page 9, section **VI. Additional Submission Requirements for Major Site Plan Review, letter D. Buffers**. He was concerned about the use of the word “Buffers” which could be confusing to applicants especially with legislation being considered about wetlands buffers. Chairperson Rauth understood his concern and suggested changing that to “Hardscape Buffers”. Acting Member Bacon made a motion to accept the changes just reviewed for the Site Plan Review Regulations as discussed and to accept the changes as discussed for the “Checklist for the Subdivision Application”, the “Checklist for the Site Plan Review Application”, the “Application for Subdivision and Lot Line Adjustments”, and the “Application for Site Plan Review”; seconded by Member King and approved unanimously. Chairperson Rauth will make all the changes and distribute electronically.

There will be a public hearing on February 20, 2020 at 6:30 pm at the regular Planning Board meeting in order to adopt the amendments as discussed.

After a brief discussion, Chairperson Rauth announced that Kathy Bacon and Craig Fournier both agreed to be re-appointed to the Planning Board through March 2023 in their respective roles of Alternate Planning Board Member and Planning Board Member.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

These minutes were approved as written at the February 20, 2020 Planning Board Meeting.

Respectfully,

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Susan Rauth, Chairperson

Approved as Written