



Stratham Planning Board Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2021
Municipal Center, Meeting Room A
10 Bunker Hill Avenue, Stratham, NH
Time: 7:00 PM

Members Present: Tom House, Chair
David Canada, Vice Chair
Pamela Hollasch, Member (by telephone)
Joe Anderson, Alternate Member
Mike Houghton, Selectmen's Representative

Members Absent: Robert Roseen, Member

Staff Present: Carol Ogilvie, Interim Town Planner
David Moore, Town Administrator

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair House called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced Board Members and Staff. He then appointed Mr. Anderson to sit as a voting member.

2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes: December 16, 2020

Mr. House called for a motion on the minutes of December 16, 2020. Motion by Pamela Hollasch/seconded by Joe Anderson, approved with all in favor.

3. Public Hearings:

a. Building Ordinance Amendment

Mr. House asked if staff had any comments on this item. Ms. Ogilvie explained that the two amendments had to do with one simply correcting a statutory reference, and the other with the use of third-party reviews. This had come before the Board at the last meeting to present the concept, and members expressed a wish to have the Code Officer present to answer questions. Therefore, Mr. Shanti Wolph was present this evening to speak to this item.

Mr. House asked if anyone on the Board wished to ask questions, and Mr. Canada replied that he had concerns about more fees for applicants. Mr. Wolph spoke to the proposed amendment

34 regarding third party reviews, and explained why it was important. For one thing, the fees that
35 Stratham charges are far less than those charged by the neighboring towns; for some projects, the
36 Town is actually losing money. For another, he is the only staff person in the code office, and
37 when there is a big project, he needs to use outside peer review anyway, because he is not an
38 engineer. This is a practice that is already in use to some extent; the main purpose of this
39 amendment is to clarify that the Town should not be incurring any of these costs, even
40 temporarily.

41 The Board discussed whether to apply a square-foot minimum to this review, or to exempt one-
42 and two-family homes. Mr. Houghton pointed out that he was not in favor of that, because “you
43 don’t know what you don’t know” and would prefer to have the flexibility. The Board ultimately
44 agreed to leave the amendment as proposed.

45 Mr. House called for a motion to open the public hearing. Motion by Mike Houghton/seconded
46 by Tom House, with all in favor. With there being no further comments, on a motion by David
47 Canada/seconded by Pamela Hollasch, Mr. House closed the public hearing.

48 Mr. House called for a vote on the amendment. Motion by Joe Anderson/seconded by Mike
49 Houghton, the amendment was approved with all in favor.

50 Mr. House then called for a vote on the second amendment regarding the statutory reference.
51 Motion by Dave Canada/seconded by Joe Anderson, the amendment was approved with all in
52 favor.

53 **Out of Order:**

54 **4. Other**

55 **a. Planning Board Annual Report**

56 Mr. Moore stated that he is going to be working with the Planning Board to prepare the Board’s
57 annual report for the Town Report this year. The new Town Planner starts on January 11th, but in
58 the meantime, he will take responsibility for interfacing with the Board for this. If anyone has
59 anything in particular they would like to see highlighted in their report, just let him know.

60 **3. Public Hearings (Continued)**

61 **a. Rt. 33 Legacy Highway District**

62 Mr. House asked if staff had any comments on the proposal. Ms. Ogilvie provided a brief
63 overview of what changes had been made since the last discussion, and pointed out some issues
64 that still had not been addressed, such as signage.

65 Mr. Canada raised a question about the lighting standards and wondered why there was not a
66 number assigned as opposed to the statement regarding light overflow. He believes it is not
67 possible to have no light spill over, and this is unrealistic. In response, the Board agreed to change
68 the word “no” to “minimal”.

69 Ms. Ogilvie also noted that she had not been able to address all of the comments received from

Jeff Hyland on the draft proposals. Some of his comments have been incorporated, but those that had to do with setbacks, heights, distances, etc., she felt were too significant to change without Board discussion; and they have been on a very tight schedule the past few months.

Mr. Moore raised a point that he and Ms. Ogilvie had discussed while they were reviewing this document, and that is that the ordinance is drafted to intentionally encourage re-use of historic properties in this district; at the same time, however, there is no incentive for someone to do that, nor is there any way to stop a demolition of an historic structure.

The Board discussed whether to move ahead with this amendment, considering the outstanding unresolved issues. They agreed to go ahead with a public hearing on January 20th, since that is the last opportunity for public hearing to get on the March ballot.

b. Gateway Commercial Business District

Mr. House asked if staff had any comments on this proposal. Ms. Ogilvie provided a brief overview of the few changes that had been made since the last discussion. Ms. Hollasch provided comment on formatting. With a motion by Dave Canada/seconded by Pamela Hollasch, the amendment was approved, with all in favor.

c. Town Center District

Ms. Ogilvie noted that the only change to this proposal was in the height of accessory structures, from 1.5 stories to 2 stories, and that change was at the request of someone who spoke at the last meeting. With a motion by Mike Houghton/seconded by Dave Canada, the amendment was approved, with all in favor.

d. Table of Uses 3.6

Ms. Ogilvie pointed out the few changes that were made to the Table since the last meeting; they are:

- Change “C. Outdoor/Recreational Uses” and “D. Agricultural/Forestry Uses” in the Gateway from CUP to Permitted.
- Change “F. Commercial Uses, #12 Drive-through Services” from Not Permitted in the Town Center District to CUP, and from CUP to Not Permitted in the Legacy Highway District.
- Add a new #12 for Light Manufacturing Facility to “G. Industrial Uses” and allow it by right in the Industrial District and by CUP in the Town Center, Gateway, Legacy, and Special Commercial Districts.

The Board questioned the S/C designation in the Table. Ms. Ogilvie replied that she had reached out to the previous Town Planner to ask about this, and it relates to whether a project goes to the ZBA for Special Exception or to the Planning Board for a Conditional Use Permit. The Board asked for more clarification for the next meeting. This will be tabled to January 20, 2021.

105 **e. Section 4.3 (d)**

106 Ms. Ogilvie explained that she had found reference to this change in an earlier agenda, and there
107 is a note from Tavis seeming to suggest that this provision is a holdover from a previous zoning
108 change and should be deleted. The Board was uncertain about this and suggested that staff do
109 more research before a decision is made to delete.

110 **4. Other**

111 **a. Source Water Protection Plan**

112 Mr. Moore reported that the Rockingham Planning Commission is going to be preparing a Source
113 Water Protection Plan for the Town and are looking for participation from the Town to serve on
114 the Steering Committee. The Board members present felt that Mr. Roseen would be an excellent
115 choice for this, considering his engineering background.

116 **Adjournment**

117 Mr. Anderson made a motion to adjourn at 9:34 P.M., seconded by Mr. Canada, with all in
118 favor.

119

120 Note(s):

121 1. Materials related to the above meeting are available for review at the Municipal Center
122 during normal business hours. For more information, contact the Stratham Planning Office
123 at 603-772-7391 ext. 147.

124 2. The Planning Board reserves the right to take items out of order and to discuss and/or vote on
125 items that are not listed on the agenda.