

**Town of Northwood  
Planning Board  
September 24, 2015**

Chairman Robert Strobel calls the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Robert Strobel, Vice-Chair Lucy Edwards, Selectmen Representative Rick Wolf, Richard Bojko, Lee Baldwin, Betty Smith, Town Planner Matthew Sullivan, and Board Administrator Linda Smith.

**ABSENT:** Victoria Parmele, Alternate Joseph McCaffrey, and Alternate Ken Rick.

**VOTING DESIGNATION:** Bob Strobel, Lucy Edwards, Rick Wolf, Rich Bojko, Lee Baldwin, and Betty Smith.

**MINUTES:**

**September 10, 2015**

**Ms. B. Smith makes a motion, second by Mr. Bojko, to approve the minutes of September 10, 2015, with edits that do not alter the content of the wording. Motion passes; 6/0.**

**CASE: 15-06: William Smith, Sunrise Auto, 1064 First NH Turnpike. Map 217/Lot 45.** Applicant seeks a minimal impact site plan to change the use from light manufacturing to operate an automotive repair shop. (Current property owner John Ovadek.)

**Mr. Wolf makes a motion, second by Ms. B. Smith, to accept the application as complete. Motion passes; 6/0.**

Mr. Strobel opens the public hearing at 6:35 p.m. and reads the abutters list. No abutters are present.

Applicants William Smith and Robin Smith are present.

Mr. Smith explains that he has been doing business in Northwood for 25 years and the application is a request to continue to operate in a different location. He stated that the former location was in front of Harding Metals and when they remodeled, the building was torn down. He states that he enjoys having his business in Northwood and would like to stay in Northwood. He states that they are looking forward to having their garage in this new location.

A discussion is held regarding the hours of operation indicated on the plan and in the application. Mr. Smith states that the hours are strictly Mon.-Fri. 8 AM to 5 PM. He adds that they may consider a half day on Saturdays.

Mr. Strobel explains public and private hours. He states that if the owners would like to go in early or stay late it should be noted on the site plan

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application. Ms. Robin Smith states that if they were to go in early, the doors remain locked and they are not open to the public. Mr. Strobel replies that this example would be considered to be part of the business being in operation; if there is someone in the building working then these potential hours should be listed on the application as the hours of operation. Mr. Smith replied that the hours will be 8 AM to 5 PM, Mon. thru Fri. and 8 AM to 12 PM on Saturdays.

Additional discussion is held regarding the amount of parking spaces noted on the plan. Mr. Sullivan asks how many spaces they are proposing. Mr. Smith replies he would like 10 spaces. Mr. Wolf notes that there is no shortage for parking spaces. Mr. Sullivan states that the applicant can adjust the plan with the correct number of spaces along with an updated sheet 2 of the application.

**Ms. Edwards makes a motion, second by Mr. Wolf, to approve Case 15-06 for Sunrise Auto. Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.**

Mr. Smith thanks the town for their support and assistance in getting this application completed and moving through the process swiftly.

**VOLUNTARY MERGERS**

***VM: 15-02: Diane Peterson, 419 Bow Lake Rd. Map 105; Lots 18 & 19.***

The board was previously provided with the information relative to the proposed merger. Mr. Strobel speaks to the value of combining lots. He states that in this circumstance combining these lots will create one lot and that lot will contain both the house and the septic system. He adds that lots get smaller as you get nearer to the lakes. He states that this is one way to avoid problems.

**Ms. Edwards makes a motion, second by Mr. Bojko, to approve and sign the voluntary merger. Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.**

***VM: 15-03: BMT Construction, Ash St. Map 122; Lot 106; Sublots 2 & 3.***

**Ms. Edwards makes a motion, second by Mr. Bojko, to approve and sign the voluntary merger. Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.**

**APPLICATION to BUILD on a PRIVATE ROAD**

***Kovisars, 8 Ash St. Map 122; Lot 106, Sublot 1.***

A discussion is held regarding the location of the lot. Mr. Strobel asks if there is an active association in Harvey Lake Estates. Ms. L. Smith replies that she is not aware of an active association for this area; however, the owner has provided a document noting their responsibility for accessing their property.

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Mr. Strobel speaks at length about the private road concerns in Harvey Lake Estates and the small lots. He adds that this is another area of town that is problematic with access and density.

Ms. L. Smith explains that the town requires property owners on private roads to sign an agreement and release so that they cannot hold the town liable. She states that the agreement is recorded at the registry of deeds before a building permit can be issued.

Additional discussion ensues regarding the condition of the roads and continued development in the area without a viable home owner's association.

Ms. L. Smith states that the role of the planning board with this application is to provide comments to the selectmen, documenting the concerns shows a history of the board's concerns. She adds that with more and more of these lots being approved it shows consistency of what the planning board is looking for, for subdivision approvals.

Mr. Bojko asks how many homes are year-round in Harvey Lake Estates. Ms. L. Smith estimates 90%. Mr. Wolf adds that he feels it is 70%, but the neighborhood is fairly well developed. He adds that the Town owns a few small lots in this area. Ms. B. Smith notes that this lot is close to the main access road.

Further discussion ensues regarding the homes in this area and other similar areas in town that have associations and maintenance agreements.

**Ms. B. Smith makes a motion, second by Mr. Wolf, to sign the Application to Build on a Private Road for Kovichs, 8 Ash St. Map 122; Lot 106, Sublot 1, and recommend that it would be in the best interest of the property owners in the area to form a neighborhood association, although it is understood that this cannot be required.**

**Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.**

***BMT Construction, Ash St. Map 122; Lot 106; Sublots 2 & 3.***

**Ms. B. Smith makes a motion, second by Ms. Edwards, to sign the Application to Build on a Private Road for BMT Construction, Ash St. Map 122; Lot 106; Sublots 2 & 3, and recommend that it would be in the best interest of the property owners in the area to form a neighborhood association, although it is understood that this cannot be required.**

**Motion passes unanimously; 6/0.**

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**INTERNAL BUSINESS**

**Staff Items**

***Master Plan***

Mr. Sullivan states that he has meetings scheduled with Ms. Parmele and the economic development committee for the Master Plan. He adds that the EDC is moving forward editing their comments as a group and are trying to create an actual document. He adds that he and Mr. Strobel need to meet relative to the housing chapter.

***2016 Proposed Budget and Planning Services Contract***

Ms. L. Smith states that the planning board's budget has been presented to the selectmen. She notes some board members were in attendance at that meeting. She states that the only item that was not approved was the contracted services for the planner. The selectmen postponed discussion further on this one item as one selectman was not in attendance. They requested that the same people attend the October 6 meeting for further discussion. She states that the planning board has recommended renewing the contract with Strafford Regional Planning Commissions (SRPC) for planner services. She suggested that members attend the meeting.

Ms. L. Smith explains the budget process. She states that the selectmen may recommend an amount for the contracted services line, either it be what the department recommends or a different amount. She states that it is the selectmen's jurisdiction to make the final determination of what the funds are in their budget line. The next step is the budget is presented to the budget committee who sees both the department's request as well as the selectmen's recommended amount. She states that the selectmen also have the sole authority of signing the contract for planning services. She explains that regardless of how the budget committee votes, whatever funds are in this line become part of the budget. When the budget is voted on in March, the selectmen then decide how much is placed into each line and how they want to proceed.

Ms. L. Smith states that she believes that the selectmen have given a tremendous amount of consideration to the departments and what they recommended. Should the budget committee and voters agree, then they generally agree to stay in line with the proposal. She states that if the board wants to see the planner position remain as is, then the board will need to support the proposal at the selectmen's meetings and at the budget committee level.

In addition, Ms. L. Smith asks if the board members feel it would be appropriate to invite Cynthia Copeland, SRPC Executive Director, to attend the

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selectmen's meeting regarding the contract. Mr. Wolf states that he feels that it would be better to have Ms. Copeland attend.

Mr. Strobel states that concern was expressed at the selectmen's meeting that the increase in the billing rate combined with the promotion of the current planner constituted a 33% fee increase in one year. He states that there was discussion held relative to that being a reasonable cost. He adds that he advocated for the position. He states that he explained the rates of billable hours that were obtained when the board was researching changing from an employee to contracted services, which ranged from \$45 to \$70 per hour. He states that the one selectman was concerned with the fact that the hours are decreasing; however, the cost is increasing. He adds that the amount of work as also decreased.

Ms. Edwards notes that with an employee there are benefit hours but with a contract these items are handled by the agency contracted with. She adds that we have a person who knows the town now and has substantially improved how the board operates. She feels that the additional \$5,040 is an investment in the town's future.

Ms. B. Smith states that if there is an alternative chosen, either hired or as a contract, there will be a learning curve, which could cost more.

Mr. Bojko asks if members of the EDC could also be in attendance at the selectmen's meeting October 6 to support the SRPC contract. Ms. L. Smith explains that the recommendation is that should the town stay with the contract for SRPC, the contract with SRPC would change to be expanded to include working for the EDC. She adds that the scope of the contract would be broadened to offer additional services.

Ms. L. Smith states that the work has decreased and the planner has not been working 10 hours per week. She explains that in the past there was a town employee working 20 hours per week, every week. Now, the planning services are provided as needed, it fluctuates. She states that should the contract be changed it will allow for more flexibility and the planner would be able to work on other land use items.

Town Administrator Joe Gunter states that the EDC budget is on the agenda for October 6 as well, so members of that committee will be in attendance. Mr. Bojko feels that it would be beneficial for the members of the EDC to be present and participate.

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Ms. L. Smith states that should there be a need for additional work for a large project; the services of the planner can be handled within an escrow account and charged back to the applicant.

Mr. Strobel asks about the terms of the contract. Ms. L. Smith replies that she believes it would be a one year contract.

Ms. Edwards adds that SRPC has knowledgeable planners on staff. She states that SRPC knows about the issues on a regional basis. She explains that she likes a planner who has expertise in other areas that are a concern for the town, including economic development, transportation, etc. She states that the board needs to continue to work with SRPC and it is a good opportunity for the town. She adds that the town has not used SRPC to the full extent in the past.

Mr. Wolf states that he believes you get what you pay for and starting over with someone else would be time consuming and costly. He adds that this contract proposal is not including any benefits and that is important. He hopes that an agreement can be met and Mr. Sullivan can remain on staff.

**OTHER**

***Upper Lamprey River Scenic Byway***

Ms. Edwards states that she attended the Upper Lamprey River Scenic Byway meeting. She distributes maps for viewing and explains that the next step will be to include business locations once NHDOT approves this portion of it. She notes that this is a draft at this point; therefore, it is not yet online. She states that the next meeting is being planned to be in Northwood; however, a date has not yet been selected. She states that the goal is to use the maps and the Scenic Byway status as a marketing tool to get people to come to Northwood; having a reason to stop on Rte. 4, rather than just driving through. Ms. Edwards will update the board as to the progress of the meeting specifics.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. B. Smith makes a motion, second by Mr. Bojko, to adjourn. Motion passes unanimously at 7:53 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Fellows-Weaver  
Board Secretary