

FINAL

**LEBANON PLANNING BOARD
Work Session
Monday, January 24, 2022, 6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall
or Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bruce Garland (Chair), Matthew Hall (Vice-Chair), Kim Chewning, Jeremy Rutter, Kathie Romano, Laurel Stavis, Cori Hirai (Alternate)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Zook (Council Representative), Tom Martz, Gregorio Amaro

STAFF PRESENT: David Brooks (Planning Director), Tim Corwin (Senior Planner)

1. Call to Order

Chair Garland called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. Committee Reports

Mr. Brooks updated the Board members on the status of current vacancies and the related committees.

A. City Council Subcommittees:

- Class VI Roads Advisory Committee (Vacant)
- Lebanon Energy Advisory Committee (Vacant)

B. Planning Board Subcommittees:

- Planning Board Capital Improvement Program (B. Garland/L. Stavis/M. Hall/K. Chewning)
- Planning Board Development Regulations Update (M. Hall/K. Romano/J. Rutter/ Vacant)

C. Other Subcommittees:

- City Council Representative (D. Whittlesey/K. Zook)
- Heritage Commission (J. Rutter)
The new posting on the kiosks will detail the Lebanon ski jumps with the hope that one of the jumps would receive historic status.
- Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee (G. Amaro)
- Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (B. Garland)
- UV SubCommittee of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions (B. Garland)
- Upper Valley Transportation Management Association (VACANT)
- Mascoma River Local Advisory Committee (K. Romano)
The Glen Road dam is up for renewal.
- Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Master Plan (B. Garland/K. Chewning /Vacant/Vacant)
- West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee (L. Stavis)
The last meeting was held in December, and a report was given to the City Council on January 19th. A restructuring of the committee was recommended to continue the progress already made.

--Planning & Development Department – Task Status (D. Brooks/ M. Goodwin/T. Corwin/R. Owens)

Chair Garland reported on the document recognizing Joan Monroe's contributions to the City.

Ms. Romano noted that the Board's recommendation regarding the rezoning of two properties in West Lebanon was not voted on. Mr. Brooks stated that the City Council did review the proposed amendment, but it could not be voted on with the other amendments due to the City's self-imposed procedural requirements and would have required a special hearing. A separate memo was prepared and discussed by the Council on January 5th regarding the rezoning and the Purpose Statement of the West Lebanon CBD. Mr. Brooks encouraged the Board members to listen to the recording of the January 5th City Council meeting. Mr. Brooks reminded the Board that the City Council controls the zoning ordinance, not the Planning Board.

3. Other Business

A. Fee schedule for Minor Site Plan

Mr. Brooks introduced the new fee schedule for the Minor Site Plan process. The proposal is to charge \$150 plus the cost of certified notices. Mr. Hall commented that similar fees in other communities are low, and the fee should be lower than the full site plan review. Ms. Romano inquired about the trigger for the need to advertise. Mr. Brooks and Mr. Corwin explained the statutory need for the postings and notices. There are specific criteria for determining the level of review needed. Any decision of the Minor Site Plan Committee is appealable to the Planning Board within 30 days, and the Planning Board will be updated monthly on the applications reviewed.

A MOTION by Matthew Hall that the Lebanon Planning Board approves of and incorporates a fee for Minor Site Plan Review applications within the Lebanon Planning Board Fee Schedule, last adopted November 12, 2019, as proposed and presented in the packet for the Planning Board meeting of January 24, 2022.

The motion was seconded by Kim Chewning.

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

B. Minor Site Plan Committee update

Mr. Corwin stated that the first meeting on November 17, 2021, reviewed an application for 7 Slayton Hill Road, the former veterinary office, to be converted to a mixed-use three-unit building. The meeting was recorded.

The second meeting was held on January 13, 2022, to review two applications. One was for 7 Slayton Hill Road to convert a three-unit, mixed-use property to a six-unit property. The second was to add three units to 7 Bank Street behind AVA Gallery. A fourth application is expected soon.

Mr. Hall noted that other communities with minor site plan committees rarely use them. He suggested that it would be good to have feedback from the applicants for making future adjustments. Ms. Stavis stated that the law was intended to separate the minor site plan review process from the Planning Board. Ms. Romano suggested that a review of the new committee after six or twelve months would be useful. Chair Garland noted that a monthly report at the work session meeting would be best.

C. Staff review of site plans

Mr. Corwin explained the process required for reviewing applications based upon the Site Plan Regulations and required information for submissions. The Board will be asked to review the submission requirements to be sure that the information desired by the Planning Board is included. Staff makes suggestions to applicants following the review to ensure compliance with the regulations and to improve the quality of the application for the Board. The presentation aspects of the site plans are not specified in the Regulations. Commonly, the engineers for each project create the presentation. Staff makes suggestions to the applicants regarding their presentation, but there are no requirements to make the presentation readable or clear.

The Board members shared their comments and suggestions on the information provided on hearing items. Mr. Hall noted that the Staff Memos and images in the presentations are most helpful. Conforming to the regulations is the most important aspect of the proposals. Mr. Corwin acknowledged that there is some subjectivity involved in applying the regulations, and he suggested that landscaping regulations could be amended. The plan that is presented to the Board should include some clear, concise information for the Board to consider. Ms. Romano stated that she appreciates the details that are included in the presentations, and anything that would make the presentation clearer and more understandable would streamline the process with the Board. Ms. Stavis inquired about the most similar community to Lebanon. Mr. Brooks suggested that Keene is perhaps the most comparable in terms of their position with their region that includes a college. Ms. Stavis noted that comparing the regulations that Keene or Durham use may offer useful information for Lebanon. Mr. Rutter agreed that the Staff Memo is very useful, and the amount of information in some submissions along with determining the abbreviations used can be very time consuming. Ms. Chewning appreciates the Staff comments in areas unfamiliar to her. Ms. Romano noted that there is an absence of a checklist for the basic items necessary for a submission.

Mr. Brooks stated that Staff does their best to provide necessary, clear information for the Board's consideration. He suggested a gradual, systematic review of the regulations to assure that they are as appropriate and focused as possible. Mr. Rutter inquired if there is any historic review of a property to provide context for the Board in its consideration of the development of an area. Mr. Corwin appreciated that the Board confirmed that information regarding context of a project is helpful.

Tom Jasinski, as a potential new member of the Board, commented that getting information from both the applicant and the Staff has always been very important. Having a checklist of items required and those not meeting requirements would be even more useful.

Mr. Brooks noted that on Wednesday, January 26 at 4:00pm, the Economic Development Commission and Downtown TIF Advisory Board are meeting jointly to discuss the parking areas behind City Hall. They are planning to work together to review the Visioning study, Master Plan, and other studies and resources that could impact potential redevelopment in the downtown area. At 6:00 PM that evening, City Council will be discussing the role of the City in housing development in Lebanon. There will be multiple special meetings going forward. The Planning Board will likely be involved in several ways as this process moves forward, and the Board members are encouraged to attend or review the video recording of the meetings.

Chair Garland commented on the City Council's review of the Zoning amendments. A question was posed by attendees regarding the annual changes to Zoning Regulations. Generally, the changes are around wording. Chair Garland asked if there was a way to make the process more transparent and less cumbersome for the public, adding that it would be helpful to share the actual changes that would affect the residents. Mr. Corwin stated that there is a methodology that breaks the amendments down by topic, and only substantial ones are considered individual amendments. Changes in wording are a separate,

lesser issue. There is a lengthy review process unique to Lebanon that includes several attempts to get public input and feedback. Mr. Corwin noted that the Planning Department hopes to incorporate graphics for clarification whenever possible. Mr. Brooks explained the noticing process and the potential improvements for informing the public.

Ms. Stavis noted that zoning changes in cities are easier than in towns, which require town meeting approvals. There was a series of seminars as part of the Citizens' Academy in the past for the public to learn about the workings of the City. Mr. Brooks stated that Staff is trying to do a better job of making sure people have the opportunity learn about and understand the regulations and proposed amendments. Chair Garland suggested that the Board could issue a readable summary of the substantive zoning changes as opposed to only wordsmithing.

Chris Haidari, Ward 3, expressed concern about the amount of development occurring in the City and how the City is changing.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. None

5. Adjournment

***A MOTION by Matthew Hall to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was seconded by Laurel Stavis.***

****The MOTION was approved (6-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Holly Howes
Recording Secretary