

TOWN OF NORTHUMBERLAND
PLANNING BOARD Minutes
Weds., July 6, 2016
Groveton PD/Ambulance Bldg. - Meeting Room
10 Station Square
Groveton, NH
7:00 P.M.

Board Members present: Addy Hall, Gloria Brisson, Al Rossetto, Jim Weagle,
Others: Elaine Gray, Robin Irving, Don Dawson, Mike Stirling, Rebecca St. Cyr – Recorder

J. Weagle Opened the meeting at 7:05 pm

1. MINUTES of June 1, 2016 Meeting

Motion to approve the June 1, 2016 minutes by: A. Rossetto
2nd by: G. Brisson, All in Favor 4-0

2. Michael Stirling – Update on Former Mill Properties - FIRST.

M. Stirling said they have been working on the scale house, which will be used for a small office. There needs to be power run to it for GNW Wireless; they put a repeater dish on the roof. Stirling said they have contacted Eversource to have it turned on. They are also waiting on Eversource for power to the facility for the 3 companies that are coming in.

J. Weagle addressed the EDA grant process, it has moved on to the second phase, but it hasn't been awarded yet. We could have an answer by mid-July or early August. There are funds available, but there are still things to be done. J. Weagle said he has apologized for having anything coming out before the grant was awarded. This grant is for the W/S along the river, which will tie into the Town line near the bridge. It will complete the loop around the mill site and was approved at Town Meeting. R. Irving has applied for a \$200,000 grant from Northern Borders, which will help cover the Town's portion. We can't break ground until the grant is awarded. M. Stirling further discussed the grant process/rules.

Stirling said the furniture company that's in Berlin will be moving over to Groveton as soon as we have a place for him. He doesn't have to be here for us to get the grant. If there are other companies that want to come in and provide jobs – that would cover the grant. We need to come up with the jobs after we use the grant money to put in the infrastructure on the property. Stirling was counting on some of the Northern Pass money to finish off some of the buildings, it's not coming (as far as he knows). Without moving companies in that can start paying rent, it's hard to come up with funds to finish the buildings.

There is some equipment that's been brought in; Stirling reviewed one of the businesses. A. Hall is skeptical with the business owner and what he has tried in the past. Stirling said this business owner is dealing with a patented product; he further discussed what the patent is for and the technology. He has been working with PFOA issues in southern NH; we are looking at a great opportunity.

J. Weagle asked if they have looked in EB5 as VT had. Stirling addressed the issues with EB5.

Robin Irving discussed the grant process; right now funding is only for infra-structure, there is no funding for construction. The wording (in the grants) was written years ago, it was not written to support a small business. They want to see \$15.00 – \$20.00 per hour jobs with full benefits. The furniture company couldn't meet those requirements; M. Stirling further discussed. That's why he was hoping for the Northern Pass money, which would have helped. To get a company going, there have been a couple of good articles in the papers and he has seen some response with companies calling from all over the country. Stirling's approach is that it will happen, but it will take time. Groveton is not an easy solution.

R. Irving said another shortfall this community has is communication restrictions. We don't have cell service or broad band. These companies want to have this kind of service up and running. Who do we go to if we get this grant and we still don't have cell service? She asked if the Planning Board could write to somebody that can push the issue. Al Rossetto suggested inviting or writing to our Representative or Senator, and others. J. Weagle said they know at the State level, but since it's a private company they won't get involved. They received public money to have a working utility and it's not working. If it's not going to work, they should pay it back. J. Weagle said their argument is that there is service; there is one company up there. R. Irving said they sat down with several representatives and came up with an agreement, but it was never honored.

Because the Planning Board approved the cell tower and will approve any site plan reviews; the two need to be tied together. J. Weagle said he will send a letter if the Board approves.

Motion for the Planning Board to write a letter to representatives at the State and Federal level, which contains wording on the physical infrastructure of the mill site, but we are not able to get broadband and cellular service, which is critical for economic development of the community by: A. Rossetto

2nd by: A. Hall, All in Favor 4-0

The Planning Board would like the Selectmen to approve and sign the letter, as well as all of the Planning Board members. J. Weagle will draft the letter.

3. Don Dawson – Wireless Equipment Discussion

Dawson said Tom Wemyss has verbally agreed to allow us to put something up on Morse Mtn. for a small fee. If Dawson is able to do this, they would put in light duty consumer grade 100' pole, which will be attached to a tree on the perimeter of the land. Dawson reviewed the specs. They have committed \$65,000 to provide the service. We have our fiber and would like to extend it to the Town to add the emergency services. Dawson said they have customers that are quite satisfied with their service and discussed their services. He said its cost us a great deal of money to build off links to get what is needed.

There are 14 sites they are providing service to; in 2015 they put their cable in for a point to point circuit in this area (Colebrook, Canaan and Whitefield). They received some funds from an NBRC grant and put it into equipment. The tower cost is less than \$1,000, but they are being told that he can't get power.

If they were allowed to put this up in a way that isn't painful (financially); it would bring cell service. They have done this in Errol and on Milan Hill.

Dawson said they are asking for approval to put up the low grade tower and they would provide space on the tower, which can be further beneficial. They are not asking for any funds and just want to get the job done.

R. Irving said there is a tele-communication section in the ordinance. By strapping it to a tree – it doesn't change any footprint. The land that the base unit is on would have to be taken out of current use. A. Rossetto said if the equipment isn't on the ground it wouldn't be an issue. Dawson said it wouldn't be on the ground, it will be attached to the tree. Discussion ensued regarding taxation, the assessed value, etc. J. Weagle asked if he could send a picture of what it would look like and then we can send to the assessors for them to come up with an estimate.

Tom Wemyss has verbally agreed to do this and has talked with the Town about it. If there is a significant (cost) effect – he won't want to do it; Dawson doesn't have any connections with GNWW, except that he would provide a link up there to them for other towns. They are ready to go on some other sites that are being worked on. He has been waiting for them to approve putting his equipment on the tower.

GNWW is promoting LTE 4G; and could be putting in CMA/GWA as back up. He believes the LTE piece will work well for Verizon customers.

Al Rossetto asked Dawson what he needs from the Planning Board? Dawson said he needs to know what the fee might be. J. Weagle asked Dawson to attend this meeting to be sure the Planning Board members are all on the same page. The Board reviewed the map and the locations where the poles will be. There doesn't appear to be a current use issue. The Board reviewed the power issue in regards to current use. J. Weagle commented: as a Board the Selectmen are the assessors.

The letter should also be copied to the media. If the Planning Board gives him the running power to do this, he will report back on the progress. There is a benefit if he can get it started. If he can get phase 2 it would really mean something for all his connections in Coos. Discussion ensued about SBA.

The Planning Board will do what they can to facilitate the project. We need to put some pressure on our State Representatives, who are aware of the issue.

4. Any Other Business to Come Before the Board

Received an article regarding - Conservation Committee, wetlands impact from Northern Pass.

Motion to adjourn by: A. Rossetto
2nd by: A. Hall, All in Favor 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.