

City of Rochester Planning Board
Monday January 27, 2020
Retreat
City Hall Annex, Cocheco Conf. Room
33 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867
(These minutes were approved on February 3, 2020)

Members Present

Robert May, *Vice Chair*
A. Terese Dwyer, *Secretary*
Mark Collopy
Tim Fontneau
Daniel Rines
Mark Sullivan
Dave Walker

Others Present

Seth Creighton, *Chief Planner*
Michelle Mears, *Senior Planner*
Michael Scala, *Economic Development Director*
Gary Boudreau, *Deputy Chief of Police*
Tim Wilder, *Assistant Fire Chief*

Members Absent

Nel Sylvain, *excused*
Donald Hamann, *excused*

Alternate Members Present

Staff: James Campbell, *Director of Planning & Development*
Crystal Galloway, *Planning Secretary*

(These are the legal minutes of the meeting and are in the format of an overview of the meeting). .

Mr. May called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Planning Secretary conducted the roll call.

III. Discussion with Fire Department and Police Department on review of applications

Deputy Chief of Police Gary Boudreau introduced himself to the Board and explained what it is he looks for when reviewing applications that are going before the TRG. He said unlike the other department the police don't have a set of guidelines to refer to so he uses his 23 years of experience when reviewing and commenting on proposed projects.

There was some discussion regarding what is looked at when it comes to commercial developments. Deputy Chief Boudreau said he looks carefully at the layout of the parking lot because on average there are a dozen accidents per month.

Mr. Walker asked when he typically signs off on a project. Deputy Chief Boudreau said he doesn't sign off until after TRG has met and he is able to speak with the applicant. Mr. Sullivan asked if his comments from TRG

are binding. Deputy Chief Boudreau said because there are no regulations they are non-binding, just recommendations.

There was discussion regarding apartment complexes and some of the issues that arise.

Ms. Dwyer thanked Deputy Chief Boudreau for adding his comments from the TRG review saying they really help the Board in making their decisions.

Assistant Fire Chief Tim Wilder explained the NFP and Life Safety codes they have to look at when reviewing project applications and plans. He further explained if there is a discrepancy between codes then the more stringent code would apply.

There was some discussion regarding proposed curbing along roads. Assistant Chief Wilder explained there are chapters in the Fire Code that speaks to fire department access.

IV. Update from the Economic Development Department

Director of Economic Development Michael Scala gave the Board an update on what his department has been working on over the last year. He explained they have spent approximately \$30,000 to \$40,000 cleaning out both the Salinger building and the Scenic Theater. He said a developer has shown interest in both buildings and would put in a number of one bedroom units which is now possible due to the Downtown Commercial Residential Ordinance change. Mr. Scala briefly spoke about phase two of The Ridge which the Board reviewed preliminary plans for in January, and 47-acre parcel located at the Business Park which plans are underway for a 5-lot subdivision.

Mr. Collopy asked if the Economic Development department will be involved with the current site of the Department of Public Works. Mr. Scala said yes, it will be his job to market the parcel once Public Works moves to its new location.

V. Discussion on whether to keep Planning Board Secretary Officer position

Mr. Campbell explained he and Mr. Sylvain discussed whether or not the Secretary Office position is needed as it is an outdated position.

Mr. Walker agreed there isn't a real need for the position.

It was the consensus of the Board to bring the matter to a regular meeting for a formal vote.

VI. Discussion on HB 1629

Mr. Campbell explained the bill which mandates specific training requirements for members of the Zoning Board of Adjustments or Planning Board, modifies the appeals process for zoning decisions, and provides for fee shifting and posting of bond in appeals to superior court from decisions of Boards of Adjustment.

Ms. Dwyer asked if the Board can work to get changes made. Mr. Campbell said the representatives for Rochester met with the City Attorney earlier in the day regarding this.

A motion was made by Ms. Dwyer and seconded by Mr. May for a letter to be drafted on the Planning Boards behalf to Rochester Representatives and Senator Gray not to support this bill. The motion carried unanimously.

There was a brief discussion regarding a bill to repeal the Housing Board of Appeals.

VII. Adoption of Rules of Conduct

Mr. Campbell explained he presented a draft to the Board at an earlier meeting in 2019.

A motion was made by Ms. Dwyer and seconded by Mr. Walker to adopt the Rules of Conduct. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Annual Meeting

A. Election of Officers

Mr. Campbell opened the nominations.

Mr. Walker nominated Mr. Sylvain for Chair, seconded by Mr. May.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. Collopy to cease nominations. The motion carried unanimously.

The vote was taken unanimously in favor of Mr. Sylvain as Chair.

Mr. Collopy nominated Mr. May for Vice Chair, seconded by Ms. Dwyer.

Mr. Walker nominated Mr. Collopy for Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Rines.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. May to cease nominations. The motion carried unanimously.

A ballot vote was taken in favor of Mr. Collopy as Vice Chair.

The officers are as follows:

Nel Sylvain, *Chair*
Mark Collopy, *Vice Chair*

B. Review of 2019

Mr. Campbell reviewed some of the applications, Zoning Ordinance amendments, surety releases/reductions, and other issues that were before them in 2019.

C. Plans for 2020

Mr. Campbell provided the Board with a memo outlining everything that Staff will be working on in 2020.

The Board briefly discussed whether or not it made sense for the Planning Department to have Zoning back.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. Rines to recommend to the City Manager Zoning to be moved back to the Planning Department. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. Other Business

A. Update on Downtown Chapter of the Master Plan

Senior Planner Michelle Mears gave an update to the Board on where Staff is at with the Downtown Master Plan. She said they worked on public outreach from September to November and had a very successful public survey. Ms. Mears went on to explain Staff is reviewing the draft and plan to present it to the City Council soon, and hold a public hearing at the Planning Board.

There was some discussion regarding parking and whether or not there should be head in parking rather than parallel parking.

B. Land Use/Vision Chapter of Master Plan

Mr. Campbell explained this will be the next Master Plan Staff will be working on. He said he will send out the request for proposals, choose a consultant, start a steering committee, and gather public input.

C. Impact Fee update

Mr. Campbell told the Board they may be seeing waiver requests for impact fees under the Consent Agenda as they have now been implemented.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. Fontneau to adjourn at 8:37 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Galloway,
Planning Secretary