

City of Rochester Planning Board
Monday June 18, 2018
City Council Chambers
31 Wakefield Street, Rochester, NH 03867
(These minutes were approved on July 9, 2018)

Members Present

Nel Sylvain, *Chair*
Dave Walker, *Vice Chair*
Terry Dwyer
Tim Fontneau
Robert May
Kyle Starkweather

Members Absent

Matthew Kozinski, excused
Mark Collopy, excused
Mark Sullivan, excused
Joyce Bruckner, absent

Alternate Members Present

James Gray
Donald Hamann

Staff: James Campbell, *Planning Director*
Crystal Galloway, *Planning Secretary*

(These are the legal minutes of the meeting and are in the format of an overview of the meeting. A recording of the meeting will be on file in the City clerk's office for reference purposes. It may be copied for a fee.)

Mr. Sylvain called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Planning Secretary conducted the roll call.

III. Seating of Alternates

Mr. Hamann voted in place of Mr. Kozinski.

IV. Communications from the Chair

There were no communications from the Chair.

V. Opening Discussion/Comments

A. Public Comment

There was no one from the public present to speak.

B. Discussion of general planning issues

There were no issues to be discussed.

VI. Approval of minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. Hamann to approve the June 4, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. Review of May 2018 Surety and Inspections

Mr. Campbell told the Board that all surety is up to date with the exception of Heritage Street. He explained even though the surety expired the bank is holding \$40,000 for a Letter of Credit towards the development of Heritage Street. Mr. Campbell said the developer has asked that a letter be written to the bank to release the money. Mr. Walker asked if there are still outstanding items for the development. Mr. Campbell explained they want the City to accept the road but they will not get support from Staff because there are deficiency's that have not been corrected. He further explained the money from the Letter of Credit wouldn't have been used for those items.

VIII. Discussion on Amendments to the Site Plan & Subdivision Regulations

Mr. Campbell told the Board they received a short list of some of the items Staff felt needed to be addressed in order to give applicants better guidance.

There was brief discussion about the changes that are proposed such as striking "any one member of the Board can request a minor site review go to full Planning Board review".

Mr. Campbell explained any changes that are made will need to have a public hearing. Mr. Fontneau asked if there has been any input from the Engineering firms that work with the City regularly. Mr. Campbell said no, but the changes are in response to questions that have come from the Engineers over time.

IX. Discussion on Downtown Density Suggestions

Chris Bendon of BendonAdams in Aspen Colorado called into the meeting to introduce himself to the Board and explain the City of Rochester applied for and received a grant for analysis in order to get additional investment and more enthusiasm in the downtown. He said they are also working on the design guidelines for the Historic District.

Mr. Bendon told the Board he has put together a report that they have a copy of that focuses on regulatory barriers and obstacles to downtown density. He said parking shows an obstacle for anything over two stories; saying anything over that would need a variance to get around the limitations. Mr. Bendon said the regulated maximum density of one unit per 500 square feet of lot area is fairly liberal and workable but start to see it as an obstacle for anything above three stories. He went on to say there are some process obstacles such as a ping pong effect between the HDC and Planning Board; a call up effect for one Board member to call up a project if they feel it is too intensive or interesting.

Mr. Bendon said they have heard there are buildings that have a hard time meeting life safety codes; they would suggest a more aggressive approach and possibly take it to the State level. He went on to say they heard about speed, wayfinding, and parking for special events downtown.

Mr. Campbell suggested the Board look over the recommendations but to keep in mind there is a September deadline to show there has been progress.

There was some discussion regarding the recommendation for the Historic District Commission and the Planning Board having the same review of a project when more than one is required. Mr. Campbell said having clear guidelines would be helpful for the applicant.

Mr. Campbell suggesting having a joint meeting with the Historic District Commission. Ms. Dwyer said they have to be mindful of what each board does and suggested they outline what each board is responsible for and try it for one project to see how it works.

Mr. Fontneau suggested writing guidelines and specify the Planning Board has authority over land use and the HDC has authority over architecture.

X. Discussion on Economic Development Strategic Plan/Economic Development Chapter of the City's Master Plan

Mr. Campbell informed the Board there was a public hearing held and no one came forward to speak on the matter.

Economic Development Manager Karen Pollard addressed the Board telling them they have many goals they are working on and for each goal they break it down from ten years ago to current day.

Mr. Sylvain asked is there has been any discussion about widening route 11. Ms. Pollard said the State is very aware of the development plans Rochester has but they do not have any plans at this time to widen route 11.

Mr. Walker asked if there is any plan to combine residential and commercial along route 11. Ms. Pollard said no, there is not.

There was some discussion of expansion of the industrial land within the City.

Ms. Pollard told the Board in 2010 her office met with 30 at risk businesses and they were able to save all of them during the recession.

She said her office has developed a Developers Guide in order to help Rochester businesses.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Mr. May to accept the Economic Development Master Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

XI. Other Business

Mr. Campbell the Board received an email from the Assistant City Engineer Owen Friend-Gray regarding Rochester being selected as one of three locations nation wide for a design charrette paid for by the US EPA to beautify a section of the City. He is looking the Union Street parking lot and section between North Main Street and Strafford Square. Mr. Campbell said there will be a series of meetings from July 10th thru the 12th, and if any Board member wants to attend to RSVP Mr. Friend-Gray.

XII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Walker and seconded by Ms. Dwyer to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Galloway,
Planning Secretary