

# PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

December 13, 2023

**APPROVED:** January 10, 2024

**AGENDA:** Liz Kelly, Resilience Planning & Design – Follow up - Steep Slopes & Master Plan Land Use Chapter

**ATTENDING:** John Miller (Chair), David Shirley (Vice Chair), Elizabeth Seeler, Don Millbrand , Scott Sanschagrín and Steve Carten (Alternate) **via Zoom**

**OTHER:** **Staff:** Joanne Bailey (Land Use Manager), Donna Sullivan (Land Use Administrative Assistant) and Christina Goodwin (Town Administrator) **via Zoom**

**Applicants, Professionals, and Public:** Liz Kelly, Resilience Planning & Design (Resilience)

Chair Miller opened the meeting at 7 pm. He indicated that there was a full Board present in the room and the Alternate, Steve Carten was present via Zoom.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### *Resilience Planning & Design Follow Up – Steep Slopes and Land Use Chapter Assistance*

Chair Miller stated that he felt the Master Plan was an important part of the duties for the Planning Board and then asked Liz Kelly of Resilience to speak about work to date on the Land Use Chapter and Steep Slopes and Ridgelines.

Liz Kelly stated that she was present to further understand the Board's goal and scope of work necessary regarding the Steep Slopes and Land Use Chapter.

Mr. Shirley spoke about the Steep Slopes and Ridgelines information, definitions and mapping that may be required to move forward. Discussion followed about definitions and the need to understand and communicate these. He cited the need to identify ridgelines with reference to views that should be protected. He clarified that his concern was for clearing steep slopes and resulting impacts as well as the need to identify all the areas in town that have steep slopes and ridgelines to help with planning and development and protection of important views and the historic district.

Ms. Kelly talked about definitions and viewshed protections used by other Towns that could be reviewed and applied to what the Board has as goals for Bristol.

Discussion followed with Ms. Kelly identifying different ways to define and protect steep slopes and ridgelines. Chair Miller shared that his concern with steep slopes is more about down slope impacts such as erosion and runoff. The protection of the ridgelines and hills for views was also important to him. Mr. Shirley indicated that there were forestry practices that would automatically be allowed on steep slopes by NH RSAs, and these too would need to be considered.

Additional discussion followed about different zone impacts in the Historical District and Lake District. The Board members talked about lands that may already be protected by Conservation Easements, organizations and the State by either ownership or missions of the organization.

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### Resilience Planning & Design Follow Up – Steep Slopes and Land Use Chapter Assistance - continued

Chair Miller stated that the restrictions to be enacted should be reasonable and make sense with measurements and mapping to assist with protection and development.

For next steps, the Board highlighted that the following information should be reviewed and prepared for next discussion on Steep Slopes and Ridgelines.

- Review Steep Slopes and Ridgeline definitions – Board and Resilience
- Provide mapping information for Bristol – Resilience
- Identify and list hills with steep slopes around Bristol - Board

Ms. Kelly addressed and reviewed the scope of work provided by Resilience to date and meeting schedules for coming back before the Board. Chair Miller clarified what has been done to date for data collection and other assistance to date in each area to determine what is Land Use Chapter and what is Steep Slopes. He stressed that based on the Community Survey he wanted to be sure to address keeping the small-town feel, the housing needs indicated, and other survey response indicators for future planning. He referred to the Lakes Region Planning Board Commission document and its comparisons to other towns.

Ms. Kelly stated that they did review the Lakes Region Planning Commission document and that Resilience would like to provide more mapping and more data, so that the Board is equipped with more resources for discussion at the next workshop session.

Mr. Shirley stated that his interest with the overlay maps was in using the maps to possibly determine if there were areas that may currently be zoned for commercial/industrial but have steep slopes prohibiting development for commercial use but might support residential development instead. Ms. Kelly indicated that the overlay map would be helpful for this.

Chair Miller stated that he would like to have the mapping help with determining how much of the town is developable for commercial, industrial, and residential growth.

Ms. Kelly reviewed the Resilience Project and Timeline outline and what conversations should be had with the Board regarding Bristol development to date, future development goals and existing regulations, constraints, and challenges.

Ms. Kelly asked if there were any known issues that have been coming up regularly for the Board that might need to be addressed.

There was discussion of solar arrays as an issue to be tackled and some recent issues with restrictions for multiple dwellings on one parcel having to be attached. Discussion followed about the challenges faced with these issues.

More discussion followed about the items in the Resilience Outline that would be included in the Master Planning Land Use Chapter development and correlations to the Survey, Vision, and other Chapters of the Master Plan. This discussion included the goal to support the workforce housing needs and to attract

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### Resilience Planning & Design Follow Up – Steep Slopes and Land Use Chapter Assistance - continued

families while achieving balance with the tourism and retirement community. Some tools and State priorities and incentives were discussed to assist with this.

Next steps were discussed. Ms. Kelly stated they would like to be at the Board's February 28<sup>th</sup> workshop session. She indicated that they would bring in maps and hold a participation exercise. The Board discussed whether other Committees should be invited to participate in this session. Chair Miller stated it would help to achieve buy in and ownership of the plan. It was determined that invitations would be made to the Conservation Committee and possibly others.

### **MINUTES:**

The minutes of November 8, 2023, were reviewed. Ms. Seeler motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Milbrand seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1.

### **COMMUNICATIONS: None**

### **REPORTS:**

*HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION (HDC)* – No meeting until Feb 2024 and no report

*CIP COMMITTEE* – Mr. Milbrand stated that the CIP Annual Report was presented to the Select Board and a few adjustments were made and it was accepted. Next year the Committee will work to get it all done earlier.

*CONSERVATION COMMISSION* – No meeting in December and meeting next on January 3, 2024

*LAND USE* – Ms. Sullivan updated the Board about active applications and permits. Ms. Bailey reported that Ms. Sullivan has completed updating the Board Member Binders and these would be ready for distribution soon.

She stated she had discussions with Chair Miller and suggested he update the Board about the Split Zoning issues discussed. Chair Miller stated he had been concerned about the split zoning issues that were presented in 2023 but thought addressing these might cause spot zoning. He stated that after discussing this with staff, it would be appropriate to review all the split-zone lots in town and take these into consideration section by section, lot by lot, or by zoning district. Mr. Shirley stated that some work was started on this in the past, and asked about the more restrictive zoning restrictions that apply to split zoned lots and how this might be addressed with review. He stated he felt it was a bigger issue for the smaller lots than for larger lots. Chair Miller stated that he wished to address this issue to help the Land Use Office and applicants with small lots where the stricter restrictions apply. Lake Street lots were the main concern discussed and may be tackled first.

Chair Miller stated that there were many issues that could be worked on to help departments and residents.

Ms. Bailey brought up the Short-term rental process. She shared that she reviewed what other Town's do and found that some allow for these by special exception, but permits are valid for only a two-year

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### *LAND USE – continued*

term. Mr. Milbrand cited Laconia's well thought out Short-term Rental ordinance. Some discussion followed about the ramifications of a two-year term for the process, for those permits already issued and for future consideration.

**SELECT BOARD** - Mr. Sanschagrin reported that a date of February 11, 2024, at 6 pm was set for the All-Committee Meeting. He updated the Board about the Public Safety Building progress with a tour scheduled for Thursday December 21<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Goodwin stated that a Select Board member had concerns about the split zoning and overlay district zoning and she would report back about the discussion had about split zoning. She also reported some information about 2023 Budget adjustments made by the Select Board.

### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Mr. Shirley reported that he attended the Newfound Lake Region Association 2023 Watershed Workshop. He stated it was an interesting event with NLRA presenting updated data about the Newfound Lake Watershed. He shared that some of the community attendees shared information that Towns in the Watershed were doing to help protect the Lake and Watershed. These included Solar Array restrictions work and Forestry Best Practices. He added that he shared information about the Planning Board work on Steep Slopes.

**STAFF COMMENTS:** Ms. Sullivan reported that some Board member terms were expiring. She listed these and asked members to let her know if they were interested in remaining on the Board so re-appointments could be processed when necessary.

### **NEXT MEETING: January 10, 2024**

**ADJOURNMENT:** With no other business before the Board, Ms. Seeler motioned to adjourn. Mr. Milbrand seconded. The motion carried 5-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Cote  
Land Use Associate