

Town of Dublin



Planning Board Minutes

PO Box 277
Dublin, NH 03444
January 12, 2023

The Planning Board met for a Public Hearing on January 12, 2023 at 7:00 pm. Present were Chairman Bruce Simpson, Steve Baldwin, Katy Wardlaw, Kirsten Colantino, Don Primrose, Neil Sandford, Caleb Niemela, Donna Garner, Todd Bennett, Rick MacMillan and Select Board Representative, Chris Raymond. Many Dublin Residents were in attendance.

Call to Order:

Bruce called the hearing to order at 7:01 pm.

Question of recusal from the proceedings raised

Donna Garner made a motion “In accordance with NH RSA Section 673.14 and the Dublin Planning Board Rules of Procedure, I move that members of the Board either as full members or as alternates who are petitioners representing the subject citizen proposed warrant article not serve during the pendency of this matter. I further move that alternates in attendance be appointed to serve in their stead.” Bruce spoke to the fact that this was not required. While agreeing that it is not required, Donna stated that the trust of the community is critical to the Town. Best practices would suggest that Planning Board members who had endorsed the petition not participate in the hearing. Caleb decided to recuse himself. Kirsten, seconded; the vote was in the affirmative. Alternate, Todd Bennett was appointed to take Caleb’s place.

Petition Warrant Article for reduction of lot size in the rural district

Discuss on the petition article to reduce the minimum lot size in the Rural District from four acres to two acres ensued. Bruce Simpson read the petition aloud.

Presentation from Petition Sponsor

Neil Sandford made a PowerPoint presentation in favor of the two-acre lots.

Responses

Don Primrose, alternate Planning Board member, stated that the two-acre zoning PowerPoint had incorrect figures.

Donna Garner, Planning Board member, spoke on the grant, stating that the Planning Board is in the middle of a grant application that would help in studying all aspects of

building affordable housing in Dublin. Through community engagement, the Town can collectively gather to develop a careful process to move forward with growth. She felt that the petition was premature and that the Town should engage in the grant process.

Paul Clark, town resident, asked if the Open Space Ordinance was still in effect. The Open Space Subdivisions, anymore than 3 new lots, asks that 50% of the lot property be allocated to conservation. Paul mentioned that if this is on the books, how is it interacting in this petition?

John Morris reiterated Bruce's sentiment in regard to calculating the density of acres, taking out steep slopes and wetlands. John mentioned that he did not understand the affordable aspects of the change, focusing on the still high building costs. Homes will still cost the same but be built on smaller lots.

Kirsten Colantino discussed grant consultant, Ivy Vann's, visit with the Board. She was asked if it would be beneficial to move from 4 to 2 acre lots. Vann said it would be destructive to Dublin's younger generation. Kirsten would like to focus on discussing the grant process as so much legwork was done in that process and the petition undermines that.

Paul Michaelson believes that developers will ruin the Town of Dublin and that the process of forming the petition went against the Planning Board as a whole. He read the Ledger's headline, highlighting that the Board did not permit this headline to run in the paper as stated.

Anthony Brooks said that the undeveloped space of Dublin is critical to preserving Dublin's rural character. He mentioned that smaller lots will take away the beautiful nature of Dublin.

Blake Anderson thanked everyone for being in the room tonight. He thanked Neil for all his efforts. He thanked Anthony for his sentiment. Blake then mentioned the Town reports of 1995 and 1996 in regards to affordable housing in Dublin. Local teachers, nurses, and tradesmen need affordable housing. Intentionality matters in this process. The provision to change school apportionment in 1995 seemed to be congruent with losing local families. The cost per student came to \$25,000 a head at ConVal Regional High School. That was an over 148% increase. Blake reiterated how critical it is to cost out and evaluate ordinance changes. He mentioned social changes that would arise. Cluster zoning is an issue to consider. He asked what is the social policy that needs to be adopted? Moving slowly and intentionally is critical on all sides of the matter, specifically to the impact on all aspects of Town life.

Donna suggested that the Planning Board vote on support or nonsupport of the petition warrant article at the hearing. Donna made a "motion for the Planning Board not to recommend the petition." Todd seconded. Vote in the affirmative (4 to 3). The Planning Board will not recommend the petition.

Public hearing was closed at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alyssa A. Vautier, Secretary

Revised by Kate Fuller

Board amendments documented by Pamela J. Celko