

Town of Albany, New Hampshire
Planning Board Work Session Minutes - DRAFT
Monday, June 23, 2014 7:00 P.M.

These minutes were prepared by the recording secretary as a reasonable summary of the essential content of the meeting, not as a transcription. These minutes have not yet been approved by the members of the Planning Board and should be read at your own risk for misinterpretation.

Next Monthly Meeting Monday, July 14, 2014 7:00 P.M.

The Planning Board Work Session was held at the Albany Town Hall.

Present: Chairperson Mike Helmers, Vice Chairperson Josephine Howland, Selectmen Representative Rob Nadler, Theresa Ann Gallagher, Recording Secretary

Absent: Tara Taylor, Adrian Simons, Joe Ferris, Alternate; Matt Parker, Alternate; Peter Carboni, Alternate; David Maudsley, Technical Advisor

Also Attending: Steve Knox, Sara Young Knox

Chairperson Mike Helmers called the Planning Board Work Session to order at 7:00 P.M.

Approval of the Agenda: Chairperson Mike Helmers asked for a motion to bypass the agenda and go into a work session to focus on the Master Plan; Selectmen Representative Rob Nadler made the motion; seconded by Vice Chairperson Josephine Howland. Mike Helmers asked all those in favor of accepting the agenda as amended signify it by saying "Aye". All in favor.

Approval of the Minutes: Chairperson Mike Helmers announced that the minutes from the June 9th Public Hearing will not be put on the table for approval since there are five Board members absent. He would like the Planning Board to focus on the completion of the Master Plan. All agreed it would be a good idea to postpone approval of the minutes.

Mike Helmers reviewed Tara Bamford's critique of the Albany Master Plan. She stated that the vision was clear but there was no plan how to reach that vision. It needs ideas of what Albany is going to do to reach that vision. Mike Helmers reported that he and Steve Knox went through the Master Plan and made changes according to Tara Bamford's suggestions; he made changes with the spelling and punctuation as suggested.

Mike Helmers went through the statement of planning, regarding the protection of natural resources such as water, and promoting agriculture. The plan to make this happen is to engage people in the town to work inside the Boards and outside the Boards, which is part of the implementation.

The Economic Base discusses average weekly salary for the service industry, which is very low and creates a struggle for the employed people of these service industries who live in Albany. The plan is to help people in the town by permitting home occupations, creating an energy Co-op, which offers energy at reduced rates. The plan also includes creating another entity, a food Co-op, using the Albany Town Forest for agriculture.

The Housing section was updated, especially the data listed. Albany is listed as 221 out of 254 communities in the state, making it one of the poorest in New Hampshire. Half of the housing in Albany is for seasonal residents. Affordable housing includes the trailer parks already established. The plan to include accessory apartments and in-law apartments is discussed in the Master Plan.

The plan for the town and the national parks is to develop relationships with them in order to gain more opportunities for the town to have access to natural resources. An example is to allow the residents of Albany to discard the slash from the logging businesses, using it for firewood. The logging companies are required to remove the slash by the Federal Government, at their own cost. The plan is to communicate with the Federal Government and the Town Forest to explore ways to make this happen. Rob Nadler presented his section of the Albany Town Forest which he reviewed and made changes to. In the plan is the possibility of using the aquifer for a water source in the future by putting in a two mile pipeline. .

The nonprofits are encouraged because they bring in intellectual vitality and diversity of ideas. Two sections to be abbreviated are the NH Nature Conservancy and NH Audubon.

The Excavation section was rewritten by Mike Helmers. Tara Bamford pointed out that the active excavation pits in Albany are not bonded. The inactive pits can be approached for reclamation. By law the other permits cannot be renewed, the owners have to go for new permits when the old ones expire. Also, if a part of a pit is no longer in use, by law they have to be reclaimed. The plan going forward is to have new permits for the excavation pits bonded. The second part of the plan is to consider a pit that has gone through reclamation as a change in use.

Transportation was discussed regarding the roads and damage done to them. The plan is to have contractors who are building houses for profit to bond the roads for damage from heavy equipment.

The section on Town Government included discussion on ways the Town of Albany can help the residents. The plan is to have the Cemetery Committee and other committees present an annual report for the Planning Board can oversee land needs in the future.

Utilities were discussed focusing on the fact that Albany doesn't have many cell phone towers. By law Albany can establish for profit businesses or Co-ops and partner with other companies to bring in needed services, such as utilities or anything else. This part of the Master Plan will be re-written to include a plan for Albany to engage in such opportunities.

Joe Ferris will be re-writing the Tax Base. Then at the July Meeting the final draft of the MP will be distributed to the Planning Board for final comments, and then will be sent to Tara Bamford for review. Sara Young Knox offered to do the final edit. The plan is to have the final copy for a public hearing in September.

Steve Knox and Mike Helmers wrote a new section that includes the theme "Moving Forward and Changing Times in the next 10 Years". It includes a plan for land use and connecting with water resources. Two sentences will include ground water protection and water conservation. Regarding energy, buying into a Co-op and using hydropower from the nearby rivers will also be mentioned as future planned opportunities in the Master Plan. Nothing will be binding, but will be mentioned in the Master Plan as possible actions to take.

Amendments to the Master Plan are on-going. Changes can be made at any time. All the Boards for the town should review the Master Plan and sign on to agree on the direction the town is going.

Rob Nadler noted that agriculture is a key topic in the Master Plan. He reported that the Conservation Commission is working with NRCS to come up with a plan to improve the drainage on Route 16 and also they are trying to get a grant to do the work. There is good farm land in that area if it can be drained. They are trying to get all the swales cleaned out.

Natural Resources will be added into the Master Plan.

Chairperson Mike Helmers asked the Planning Board to raise their hands if they all agree to use the updated Master Plan as a template and complete it; all agreed. He also said he will work with Theresa to gather Tara Taylor's and Joe Ferris' sections and complete the Master Plan.

Adjournment: Chairperson Mike Helmers asked for a motion to adjourn the Planning Board Work Session at 8:32 P.M. A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Josephine Howland; seconded by Selectmen Representative Rob Nadler. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa Ann Gallagher

Recording Secretary

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