

**ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, August 16, 2023**

Members Present:

Vice Chair Turell
Ted Stewart
John Ottow (Master Plan Committee)

Bill Baldwin– Selectman Ex-Officio
Hannah Rizzo, Alternate

Others Present

Karen Wemmelmann, Recorder
Ken Grant, Master Plan Committee
Karen McFadden, Master Plan Committee

Call to Order:

Vice Chair Turell called the regular meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board to order at 7:30 PM. Vice Chair Turell, Member Ottow, Member Stewart, Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin and Alternate Rizzo are present and voting. Vice Chair Turell informed the audience that Chair Killam is not available.

Minutes: July 19, 2023

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2023 meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board as corrected. Vice Chair Turell seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/0. All in favor. The motion passes.

Alternate Member Appointment

Vice Chair Turell informed the Board that Ms. Sue Coppeta has submitted an application to join the Planning Board as an alternate and requested discussion.

Member Ottow thinks that Ms. Coppeta has both the interest and expertise that would be an addition to the Board. The other members of the Board present agreed.

Vice Chair Turell requested a motion.

Alternate Rizzo made a motion to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Sue Coppeta be appointed to the Atkinson Planning Board as an alternate member. Vice Chair Turell seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/0. All members present voted in favor.

Ms. LaBranche will not be present at the meeting tonight. Vice Chair Turell is scheduling a workshop for Wednesday, September 6, 2023. Ms. LaBranche should have a report. The Board needs to look at incentives that should be applied to elderly housing and if they should be the same as the incentives for affordable housing. An elderly housing section may be needed in the zoning ordinances. There is over 55 housing in Atkinson, but they are builder designated as a development for senior

housing. The Board discussed incentives for elderly housing. Vice Chair Turell stated the incentives for elderly housing should be spelled out, rather than just using incentives for affordable housing. HUD defines elderly housing as over 55 housing. The Board needs to discuss where and in what section of the zoning ordinances a section on elderly housing should be.

Vice Chair Turell is looking for candidates for the CIP from the Planning Board. It is a NH statutory requirement that a member of the Planning Board be on the committee. He has submitted his name, but would step aside if there were another applicant. It is a two year commitment.

Master Plan Committee Request for Funds

Member Stewart asked to discuss the request for additional funds by the Master Plan Committee. Member Ottow explained that the Master Plan Committee wants to conduct more focus groups. There was a focus group August 1, 2023. The other two issues to be discussed, housing and natural resources are controversial. They would like a professional to be a facilitator for those subjects. Ms. Coppeta decided that it should be in the Planning Board budget. There is also \$500 in the Master Plan budget for refreshments in the forum which were not used. Vice Chair Turell asked if the focus groups were in the scope of the contract with Resilience. Member Ottow informed the Board that some of the Resilience money was used up in the forum. During the forum, there were multiple slots, Resilience was at the forum all day, so some of the money for focus groups went to that. Resilience gave Member Ottow a price for doing the focus groups. The hope was to get money from the Planning Board budget to hire Resilience to run the housing and natural resources focus groups.

Vice Chair Turell stated that Resilience got \$75,000 and should be able to do everything in their proposal within the \$75,000. Member Ottow replied that they did some extra work as well. Vice Chair Turell responded that if they need more money, they should have come to the Planning Board. It is a fixed price contract so all services should be include in the \$75,000.

Member Stewart asked if the Master Plan Committee is working directly with them. Vice Chair Turell stated that the Master Plan Committee is supposed to be of assistance to Resilience.

Vice Chair Turell stated that Resilience must come before the Planning Board to request the money. He discussed the issues with Chair Killam and they agreed that there was no money that can be released. They are unclear as to exactly what is needed and why. The Board would need a detailed report on why the money is needed, what is expected from the focus group and why the Master Plan Committee wants to hire Resilience to do the extra work. Member Stewart stated if that \$500 were not spent on food, then it could go to them. Vice Chair Turell stated that Resilience is not getting more money than the \$75,000. Another line would have to be added to the

budget and it would take approval by the Board of Selectmen to transfer more money to the Resilience contract.

Vice Chair Turell stated that Resilience must come before the Board if additional services are requested and explain why it wants additional money.

Member Ottow feels the Master Plan Committee could facilitate the meeting, but natural resources and housing are controversial subjects so the meeting should be facilitated by a professional.

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin requested to table the discussion.

Selectman Ex Officio Baldwin made a motion to go into public hearing Alternate Rizzo seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/0. All members present voted in favor.

Public Hearings:

Vice Chair Turell informed the audience that there will be two public hearings.

- 1. An Application for Site Plan submitted by S.E.C. & Assoc for Palmer Gas & Oil, Charles W. Palmer, owner, to establish a propane bulk storage facility including 4 - 45,000 gallon propane storage tanks, loading and offloading stanchions, 900 sq ft office building and associated parking, loading and landscaping to be located on property at 6 Hall Farm Rd, Map 20 Lot 16 in the CI Zone.**

Discussion:

Vice Chair Turell informed the Board that Palmer Gas will not be present for their hearing and that they requested an extension to the next meeting, September 20, 2023.

Vice Chair Turell requested a motion to extend the public hearing to September 20, 2023.

Member Stewart made a motion to extend the Application for Site Plan submitted by S.E.C. & Assoc for Palmer Gas & Oil, Charles W. Palmer, owner, to establish a propane bulk storage facility including 4 - 45,000 gallon propane storage tanks, loading and offloading stanchions, 900 sq ft office building and associated parking, loading and landscaping to be located on property at 6 Hall Farm Rd, Map 20 Lot 16 in the CI Zone to September 20, 2023. Alternate Rizzo seconded the motion. Vote: 3/0/1 with Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin abstaining. The motion passes.

Vice Chair Turell informed Palmer Gas that when the wash was cut back, the buffer zone was cut into. It needs to be replanted. It was not staked, so the contractor could

not see it. Palmer Gas will have to put in their plans to replant that section of the buffer zone.

Vice Chair Turell closed the public hearing for Palmer Gas and went to the second public hearing.

2. An Application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by George Nammour to establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, Article IV, Section 460 at property located at 39 Providence Hill Rd, Atkinson NH, Map 7 Lot 31-5, RR2/SCRR-2 Zone.

Selectman Ex-Officio asked if a motion should be made when the Planning Board opens and closes a public hearing. Vice Chair Turell responded yes, but there was no one here from Palmer Gas.

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin made a motion to open the second public hearing. There was no second and no vote.

Vice Chair Turell read the abutters list.

Abutters:

Michael and Diane Cestrone, George Nammour (present), Thomas N. and Susanne J. Uzdavinis, Richard S. and Ann Marie Mezquita, Cresenzo, Annette M. McClellen, Robert Trust 50%, Cresenzo Cresenzo, Erica Trust 50% Robert and Erica Cresenzo TTEEs.

Discussion:

Mr. George Nammour appeared before the Board to present the application. He explained that he has lived at that address since 1986. His wife passed away last year and his son, his son's wife and their dog have moved into the main house. The Alternate Dwelling Unit ("ADU") will be for him.

He has an approved sewer plan submitted to the State. He is an architect, practicing in Massachusetts.

Vice Chair Turell informed him that he will need to obtain all necessary permits. There can be only one ADU, it can be rented, but he has to remain the owner.

Mr. Nammour explained that there will be a garage under the addition so he can have his own parking space.

There will be access to the main house from the garage and the two decks will be connected so there will be two means of access to the main house, one from the garage and one from the deck.

The main issue for the design was the location of the septic and leach field on the north side of the house. Mr. Nammour located all the plumbing close to the wall of the main house to get his line to go out. The bathroom and kitchen of the ADU and the bathroom for the main house are all on one wall.

It is 739 square feet.

There is more than enough parking.

Mr. Nammour informed the Board that pushing the garage 8 feet from the main house allowed him to keep the roof lower and create the possibility for additional space.

There is septic approval.

Vice Chair Turell requested comment from the Board.

Member Ottow asked about access to the main house through the garage and if it were considered direct access. Vice Chair Turell stated it was within the house. Mr. Nammour explained that it would not be any different, he would have to access the garage to go upstairs. Vice Chair Turell stated that he believes it qualifies because it is an entry directly into the house.

Member Stewart feels that it is a split level, it fits the neighborhood and it is a nice plan, the split level will fit in with the neighborhood.

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin asked why he did not use the maximum square footage and Mr. Nammour explained that he did not want to spend the money.

Vice Chair Turell asked if there was more discussion. There was none. He stated that the application is complete and signed with all the requirements. He requested a motion.

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin made a motion to approve the application for Conditional Use Permit submitted by George Nammour to establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit as defined in the Zoning Ordinance, Article IV, Section 460 at property located at 39 Providence Hill Rd, Atkinson NH, Map 7 Lot 31-5, RR2/SCRR-2 Zone. Member Stewart seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Vote: 4/0/0. All members present voted in favor.

Vice Chair Turell informed the applicant that there is a 30 day appeal period. Any work within that period is at his own risk.

Member Stewart asked about the procedure for ADU applications and why they cannot be approved by the Building Inspector. He does not understand why it is not a part of the building permit process. Vice Chair Turell stated that it is a request for a special use permit and this is the process for it. Vice Chair Turell stated other changes need to be made to procedures as well.

Selectman Ex-Officio Baldwin made a motion to close the public hearing.

The Board continued the discussion. Vice Chair Turell stated that Member Stewart is correct, in some towns it is done by the Building Inspector and in other towns it goes to the zoning board of adjustment. Member Stewart stated that most of the review is technical. As soon as the permit is signed, the applicant must follow the rules. Vice Chair Turell agreed and stated that the Board also needs to discuss the procedure for detached units. They bring up other issues such as should they have an impact fee. It is now a second residence on the lot. A detached unit could be on the second floor of a detached garage or it could be a tiny house.

The Board returned to the report on the Master Plan Committee.

Master Plan Update – Team Report

Member Ottow informed the Board that there have been 3 Master Plan Committee meetings. On July 20, they went over the outreach and engagement group and focus groups discussions. They went over the Vision statement again. Different goals for the master plan were gone over. A lot of time was spent on the vision statement. Most residents want to retain the rural character of Atkinson. The vision statement will be discussed again at the next meeting which will be August 17, 2023. There was a practice focus group about the rural character of Atkinson a couple of days later.

The recreation focus group was on August 1, 2023 at the Library with members of the committee. Selectman Worden was there as well as many members of the community. The purpose of the meeting was to get feedback from residents and identify areas for improvement. The biggest issue in recreation for residents was the buildings and the community center. The importance of one time events was discussed as well as parks and ball fields. The senior programming events and kids program events were discussed. Residents are generally satisfied with Recreation. Member Ottow stated that the Recreation Department is limited by because there is only one employee and recommended an additional part time employee be added so the capacity can be expanded. There was a call for youth programming. Selectman Worden reported that grant money may be available to improve the Community Center. The Committee learned that many of the programs are run by outside agencies. Recommendations included improving the community center, more one time events, improving parks and fields and courts, expanding senior programming and making recreation facilities more

accessible for people with disabilities. Member Ottow stated that there were many new people at the meetings who wanted to be active in town government.

Member Stewart remarked that the Recreation Department touches a lot of people and asking people to speak is empowering.

Member Ottow stated that there are two upcoming focus groups which will take place in September, housing and natural resources. He feels that housing is a controversial topic and affordable housing even more so. He is hoping that a focus group will be put on by Ms. LaBranche or the Planning Board regarding affordable housing because issues like senior housing, multifamily housing and ADUs should have their discussion outside of affordable housing.

Member Ottow feels that a focus group is a good vehicle to educate people as to the difference between elderly housing and affordable housing. He feels it is important to have two focus groups on housing because most people do not understand the complexity of housing issues.

Member Stewart stated that when it comes to managing a meeting that might be contentious, he recommends Mr. Garrity because as Town Moderator he is very good at handling Town meetings. Ms. McFadden stated that he is not a subject matter expert.

Ms. McFadden stated that some of the focus group discussions have been a little contentious and thought that it would be a good idea to have Resilience run them. They are knowledgeable and practiced. Member Stewart stated that he suggested an alternative in case the money is not available to hire Resilience. The Board agreed that someone who is knowledgeable on the subject and experienced at controlling meetings will be needed.

Vice Chair Turell stated that the Planning Board has to make the request to the Selectmen to move the money. Ms. McFadden informed him that there is \$500 for food that will not be used and which can be used to have Resilience run the focus groups.

Vice Chair Turell stated that first, Resilience needs to ask for the money and second, they need to do everything in their proposal. The cost of running the focus groups should be part of the \$75,000.

Ms. McFadden explained that there is no more money in their budget for the focus groups. They gave it up to have two sessions at the forum. The goal of the master plan committee is to gather more information so that the vision statement and recommendations are crafted with support from the community. They got 450 responses from the survey but would like to reach out again to the community.

Vice Chair Turell requested that Ms. McFadden put together an email explaining why the money is necessary. The Planning Board will have to make a presentation to the Board of Selectmen to request the funds. According to Chair Killam during the discussion Vice Chair Turell had with her, there is no money. It is a want of the Master Plan Committee to expend funds outside of the \$75,000. The reasons need to be

enumerated. Ms. McFadden stated that the focus groups will be held anyway but they were hoping they would be more professionally run.

Vice Chair Turell requested a detailed explanation of what the money is for, exactly how it will be spent and what will be gained. Member Stewart explained that it should not take a vote from the Planning Board to spend the money. The request will go from Vice Chair Turell to Chair Killam. The delay will be the time to go before the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Ex Officio Baldwin informed Ms. McFadden that Vice Chair Turell is correct, the Planning Board will have to submit a detailed explanation to the Board of Selectmen as to why the money is needed, how it will be spent, what they are planning to do, and which accounts it will be transferred from and to. Also, what additional money is needed and which line in the Planning Board budget the money will come from. This will make it easier for the Board of Selectmen to make a decision.

Vice Chair Turell agreed that she must state exactly what line in the Planning Board budget the funds will come from and which line it will be transferred to. Either Chair Killam or Vice Chair Turell will appear before the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Ex Officio Baldwin informed Ms. McFadden that she needs to get the information to Vice Chair Turell and Chair Killam by tomorrow if they want to get on the agenda for the meeting Monday.

Member Ottow informed the Board that he had a text from Ms. Coppeta and she has volunteered for the Capital Improvement Committee. The appointment will go to the Board of Selectmen.

Adjournment:

Member Ottow made a motion to adjourn. Alternate Rizzo seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/0. All members of the Atkinson Planning Board present voted in favor.

Vice Chair Turell adjourned the July 19, 2023 meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board at 8:30 PM.