

**ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, September 6, 2023**

Members:

Sue Killam, Chair (not present)
Vice Chair Turell (present)
Ted Stewart (present)
Paul Wainwright, (present)

John Ottow (present)
(Master Plan Team)
Heidi Mahoney (not present)
Bill Baldwin– Selectman Ex Officio (not present)
Hannah Rizzo, Alternate (not present)
Sue Coppeta, Planning & Zoning Administrator, Alternate (present)

Others Present

Julie LaBranche, Planner (present)
Karen Wemmelmann, Recorder (present)

Ken Grant

Call to Order:

Chair Turell called the workshop meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Public Hearings: NONE

Minutes: August 1, 2023 and August 16, 2023

August 1, 2023

Member Wainwright made a motion to approve the minutes for the August 1, 2023 site walk visit as written. Member Ottow seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 4/0/0.

August 16, 2023

Member Wainwright made a motion to approve the minutes for the August 16, 2023 meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board as amended. Alternate Coppeta seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 4/0/0.

Old Business:

Appointment and Vote of Term of Planning Board for Alternate Sue Coppeta

Chair Turell requested a motion to appoint Ms. Sue Coppeta as an alternate to the Planning Board.

Member Wainwright made a motion to appoint Ms. Sue Coppeta as an alternate to the Planning Board. Member Ottow seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 4/0/0.

Sign Oath/Appointment Documents for Alternates Hannah Rizzo and Sue Coppeta

Vice Chair Turell informed the Board that Ms. Coppeta would be appointed for a two year term and requested a motion.

Member Wainwright corrected his motion to appoint Ms. Sue Coppeta as an alternate to the Planning Board to add that she would serve for a two year term. Member Ottow seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 4/0/0.

Vice Chair Turell requested the Board sign the term of appointment for Ms. Coppeta and Ms. Rizzo. Ms. Coppeta signed her oath of appointment.

Housing Needs Assessment Project – Julie LaBranche

a. Review of First Draft of Report

Ms. LaBranche informed the Board that she does not have a draft for them but she should have a first draft by next week. The Board can review it and she will have a second draft by the next meeting. The final draft should be ready early in October. The final report will be issued by October 18, 2023.

b. Discussion of Outreach Plans through October 2023

Ms. LaBranche plans to put together a list of the people who had signed up for the study group and create a poll on Friday. She will have a meeting at the end of September.

Member Ottow suggested Ms. LaBranche invite some of the teachers from the local school. Firefighters and police officers can also be invited.

Ms. LaBranche requested that the Board members send her an email referencing the line items and page with any suggestions or corrections once they have reviewed her first draft.

Alternate Coppeta reminded the Board not to send emails reply all. She also informed the Board that the Master Plan Committee will have a focus group on September 26, 2023. Member Ottow stated that around 35 people may be attending. The subject matter overlaps with the housing needs assessment. Ms. LaBranche will send Member Ottow a list of the people she plans to invite for her study group.

Ms. LaBranche informed the Board that the first draft of the second part of the project, the regulatory audit, will not be ready until October. She will make recommendations on zoning changes based on the results of her needs assessment. Ms. LaBranche informed the Board

that there will be a third round of grants to adopt regulatory changes. Vice Chair Turell informed the Board that he received an email stating that the State will not accept any more grant requests because funds have already been committed.

Master Plan Committee Report – Member Ottow

There was a meeting on September 17, 2023. Project timeline, focus groups, goals and objectives were discussed. There was an online meeting today with Resilience Planning.

There will be a one and a half hour housing focus group meeting on September 26, 2023 to be held at the Community Center from 6-8 pm.

There is no clear direction so this focus group is very important. The goal is to have 35 people take part. It will be by invitation only. Invitations will be started on Friday and cut off on September 17, 2023. Planning Board members and Master Plan Committee members will be invited and count towards the 35 people.

ADUs, assisted living facilities and other housing options will be discussed.

Zoning Topics – Potential March 2024 Amendments - Identify Potential Topics for Potential Zoning Amendments

Alternate Coppeta gave the Board a list of five potential topics to decide on.

Topic 1 is regarding updates required by changes in statute RSA 674:21 Innovative Land Use Controls. This is the only topic she suggests the Board have ready for March of 2024. It was required to be allowed as of July of 2023 but it is not currently in Atkinson zoning.

She summarized it as requiring any incentives provided for elderly housing also be provided for workforce housing. She has put together some actions, where there are incentives in zoning, if they can be revised, do any definitions need to be added, and can revisions be ready by March of 2024.

As an example, in the zoning section for the RRRCV/ SCR area, Atkinson allows alternative design residential buildings for over 55 residents that can be up to 35-55 feet high and up to 40 units. She has highlighted areas in her handout.

Currently, zoning regulations require elderly housing developments have at least 250 acres.

Alternate Coppeta pointed out that according to the statute, if a project is brought in for workforce housing, then the Board has to allow it if the incentive is provided for over 55 housing. The statute now requires that if over 55 housing is allowed, then workforce housing must also be allowed. The rest of the zoning requirements do not change.

Whether Atkinson wants to have less restrictive zoning is a separate topic and it will come out of the studies by Ms. LaBranche and the Master Plan Committee.

Mr. Grant asked if regulations for workforce housing should also apply to over 55 housing and vice versa.

Vice Chair Turell pointed out that all zoning for workforce housing must conform to RSA 674-21.

Alternate Coppetta also pointed out that Section 620 in Atkinson current zoning only allows over 55 housing in the RRRCV/SCR zone. It has to be 250 acres and have public water and public sewer. Larger buildings have to be 300 or 400 feet from the road. This section of zoning came in as a citizens petition and was only for over 55 housing. The Board continued to discuss the requirements for over 55 housing in Atkinson zoning.

The Board agreed to draft something. Mr. Grant pointed out that currently, there is no zoning in Atkinson for workforce housing.

Ms. LaBranche pointed out that the permitted use table would have to be amended.

Alternate Coppeta recommended that the Board not try to make a decision on the other four potential zoning changes before March of 2024. There are too many other issues the Board needs to look at such as the Master Plan revisions and affordable housing.

She reviewed her suggestions for Topic 2, review zoning requirements for ADU's, and stated that it might be possible to include some of those in the zoning changes to be recommended in March of 2024. Vice Chair Turell pointed out that there must be an administrative process for a conditional use permit. Currently, applicants must go to the Planning Board.

The Board discussed if a detached ADU should qualify as a house for school impact fees. Mr. Grant pointed out that lot sizing is based primarily on septic requirements. If another house and septic is added to a lot, the lot size demand is changed. The Board discussed whether any changes to ADU zoning can be made before March 2024 and decided that there was not enough time.

The Board discussed topic 3, zoning for elder housing and/or continuing care communities.

Member Ottow suggested looking at past decisions regarding elderly housing. He suggested that the zoning changes presented in March of 2021 be amended to allow only one or two zones. Member Stewart suggested it be restricted to the commercial zone and/or the country club area. The Board continued to discuss where to allow elderly housing.

Ms. LaBranche will work on topic 4.

Alternate Coppeta asked if the Board had other topics and what should be discussed at the October workshop. Ms. LaBranche informed her that she would need a good part of the meeting to discuss the workforce housing project.

Mr. Grant informed the Board that there are around 25 high yield wells with protected areas extending over 35 feet and they need to be protected. Another issue is polluted areas that need to be protected; also high yield water sheds. The wells are all mapped. Mr. Grant also pointed out that the high yield wells pull water from the water sheds very quickly, draining the area. There is also a map of the PFAS areas.

Member Stewart pointed out that elderly housing will be all off site water.

Mr. Grant pointed out that for example, a high density project could not be put near high yield water sheds and it is regulated by DES. Ms. LaBranche informed the Board that there are six high use land uses that are not allowed in the well radius by the State.

Alternate Coppeta suggested working on topic one. There are no new applications for September. Palmer Gas will need to ask for an extension.

The Board returned to discussing zoning for elderly housing and workforce housing, agreed that there should be something in zoning, and discussed areas where elderly and workforce housing can be developed.

Alternate Coppeta stated that the Board may be able to recommend zoning changes for items 1 and 3 at the March 2024 Town Meeting.

Adjournment:

Member Wainwright made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chair Turell seconded the motion. Vote: 4/0/0. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

The next Planning Board meeting will be a on September 20, 2023 at Atkinson Town Hall.