TOWN OF DUNBARTON, NH  

PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  

September 4, 2019, 7:00 p.m. at Dunbarton Town Offices

IN ATTENDANCE: Chairman Ken Swayze, Vice Chairman George Holt, Secretary Chuck Frost, Brian Pike, Jeff Crosby, Ex-Officio Mike Kaminski

Fire Chief Jon Wiggin, Conservation Commission Chairman Brett St. Clair, Conservation Commission Member Margaret Watkins

BUSINESS: Secretary Chuck Frost stated that meeting notices were posted per regulations.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Crooker – Guinea Road upgrade - Chairman Swayze reiterated from the last meeting that the Planning Board’s role, based on state statutes, to oversee roads and offer a recommendation of improvement standards to the Board of Selectmen. Under consideration for obtaining a building permit, is to upgrade a section of Guinea Road from Class VI to Class V. Mr. Swayze stated that the lot (E4-02-05) was established pre-zoning, and the owner has a right to build. Chuck Frost and Brain Pike stated that while this is true, this right is subject to conditions. George Holt made a motion that the Crookers are entitled to build on a Class VI road under certain conditions. Motion seconded by Brian Pike. The Planning Board voted for this motion unanimously.

Discussion continued concerning requirements for upgrading a Class VI section of Guinea Road. Jeff Crosby stated that a site walk was conducted last week (8-27-2019), attended by several planning board members and town representatives. The Road Agent’s position is that the road should be upgraded to a 24 foot traveled way plus 3 foot shoulders on each side.

Mike Kaminski spoke concerning a compromise upgrade proposal of a 20 foot traveled way plus 2 foot shoulders. Mr. Kaminski provided a draft write-up of his proposal to the Secretary. Mr. Kaminski’s said that this proposal will allow for retention of current stone walls and only allow for removal of “nuisance” trees.

Mr. Crosby stated that he still wants a 24 foot traveled way plus 3 foot shoulders on each side since there is potential for future subdivision further down the road on the Crooker property. He’s been through this before and wants to ensure that what’s occurred in the past on compromises done one at a time doesn’t occur again. Mr. Crosby stated that the road must be raised to a level of 1 and a half to 2 and a half feet due to the current incision in the road. Mr. Crosby feels that an engineered plan is not needed and that the town engineer should be able to work with the owners and contractor. Mr. Crosby noted that many large trees had already been cut along the roadside of the Crooker property, and that on the other side (Meadowsend Timber property), there were trees left. The turn around needs to be separate from the driveway, and beyond the driveway as pointed out during the site walk.

Brett St. Clair, Conservation Commission Chairman, stated that the Conservation Commission submitted a letter to the Planning Board concerning this matter. Mr. St. Clair believed that responsibility for scenic
roads had been given to the Conservation Commission and approved by voters in 1975 in accordance with the state RSA. He stated that the last time a Class VI road had been upgraded was Gile Hill Road in the 2004 to 2005 timeframe, and that a compromise had been worked out. The Conservation Commission’s objective is to maintain the rural character of the road. Mr. Swayze brought up that he felt less development occurred than what was expected when the scenic road designations were given in the 1970’s. Mr. St. Clair stated that the Conservation Commission had spoke with the Crookers earlier this year about a proposal for a trail on their property, which could connect to the Koerber property.

Fire Chief Jon Wiggin spoke that there are twenty houses now on Rangeway Road, with 5 houses on the Class VI section, and that this road was not a good example of what the town should end up with. Mr. Wiggin stated that the Fire Department’s minimum requirement is for an 18 foot traveled way plus 1 foot shoulders on each side (20 feet total).

Brian Pike spoke that from his experience plowing snow, that he is not in favor of an 18 foot (20 foot total) road way, he wants to split the difference. Mr. Pike said that he agrees with Mr. Kaminski’s proposal of a 20 foot traveled way plus 2 foot shoulders on each side.

Chuck Frost stated that he also agrees with Mr. Kaminski’s proposal and what Brian has stated. Mr. Frost felt that this was a reasonable requirement to place on the owners of the property. Mr. Frost stated that safety should be a factor and felt that many trees had been cut in the case of the Gile Road upgrade. He said that it was good conservation to do it right and provide for proper drainage.

George Holt spoke that the State’s minimum requirement is an 18 foot traveled way with 2 foot shoulders on each side (22 feet total). He stated that the conservation commission does not want a 24 foot traveled way with 3 foot shoulders on each side since this would mean that significant trees would need to be taken out and would impact the current stone wall. Mr. Holt stated that the 18 foot requirement with 2 foot shoulders is consistent with NH DOT and UNH standards for a road with minimum traffic (less than 50 vehicles per day). This road is being upgraded for just one house at this time. If future subdivision were to occur on this property, the town will have the opportunity to address improving the road at that time.

Jeff Crosby spoke that he wants the 30 total width to avoid future problems with land owners about maintaining the road and cutting trees, etc.

Mr. Swayze asked the secretary to state the total road widths being proposed. Mr. Frost stated that the three proposals are 22, 24, and 30 feet.

Mr. Holt stated that the property owner does have the right to build on a Class VI road with a waiver and maintain the road themselves. In this case the requirement could be an 18 foot traveled way with 1 foot shoulders on each side (20 foot total).

Mr. Swayze asked if any members of the public wanted to comment. Margret Watkins, member of the Conservation Commission spoke that she didn’t understand the need for various widths along Guinea Road, and stated that she felt that the paved portion of Guinea Road is only 20 feet wide.

Jeff Crosby stated that the wide roads in some developments in the town has promoted walking.

Ken Swayze stated that Guinea Road doesn’t currently look scenic since it is significantly rutted and looks terrible.
Mike Kaminski made a motion for the Planning Board’s recommendation to the Dunbarton Board of Selectmen (BOS). The motion is to upgrade the traveled way of the road to 20 feet plus 2 foot shoulders, 24 feet total. The current sunken road bed is to be built up an additional 2 feet, with 12 inch base and 6 inch graded gravel top layer. No paving required. The motion was seconded by Mr. Frost. A letter to the BOS reflecting the intent of the motion will be drafted by the secretary and emailed to the Chairperson of the BOS.

Discussion on the motion: George Holt stated that he was opposed, based on the precedent of the Chan (Gile Hill Road) subdivision (18 foot traveled way, 2 foot shoulders each side), and that this is not even a subdivision, only one house.

Mr. Swayze asked for a vote on the motion. The motion passed 4 in favor, 2 opposed.

Brian Pike moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:10 p.m.; seconded by Mike Kaminski. All PB members voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Frost

Secretary