

**PLANNING BOARD  
RINDGE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
August 7, 2012**

**DATE:** August 7, 2012    **TYPE:** Planning Board Meeting    **APPROVED:** August 21, 2012  
**TIME:** 7:00 pm –9:30 pm  
**CALL TO ORDER:** 7:00 pm  
**ROLL CALL MEMBERS:** Chairman Kirk Stenersen, Vice Chairman Kim McCummings, Phil Simeone, Hank Whitney,  
**ROLL CALL ALTERNATES:** Burt Goodrich, Charlie Eicher  
**EX OFFICIO:** Roberta Oeser  
**PLANNING DIRECTOR:** Matt Henry  
**APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES:** Burt Goodrich  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Holly Koski, John Kauer, Sharon Rasku, Amy Reiseut, Richard Mellor, Tim Murphy (SWRPC), Rick Sirvint, Roberta Gordenstein, Pat Martin, Julie Flood Page, Ed Eicher Jr.

---

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Stenersen called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Burt Goodrich was seated for Mike Quinlan and Charlie Eicher was seated for Dave Tower.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Roberta Oeser distributed an LGC publication to the Planning Board. It explained some considerations that a town should be aware of when pursuing sidewalks. She said that she has concerns with the operating costs of maintaining sidewalks and ensuring they are ADA compliant. She said that she will explain her concerns more during the Master Plan Public Hearing.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1) July 17, 2012

The following corrections to the minutes were made:

- Chairman Stenersen handed Matt Henry a copy of the minutes with a few clerical corrections.
- Roberta Oeser stated that “Taggard” should read “Taggart”

**Motion: Burt Goodrich moved to “approve the meeting minutes of July 17, 2012”. Phil Simeone seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-0**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC HEARING** regarding whether to accept the Plan NH Charette as part of the Town of Rindge Master Plan.

Chairman Stenersen began by explaining the purpose of the Public Hearing. He asked Matt Henry to summarize the main points of the Plan NH Charette.

Matt Henry explained that the main concept is to emphasize Rindge as a “gateway” to the Monadnock region by incrementally lessening the desired density of commercial development from the existing high-density Business-Light Industry Zone, to medium density Gateway Central Zone, to the traditional West Rindge Village Zone. The four main points of the Charette were as follows:

1) Build on the existing assets of West Rindge Village

West Rindge has all of the attributes of a thriving village. Rindge should capitalize on the traditional neighborhood charm that it already has.

2) Enhance the unique qualities of the Historic Rindge Village Center

The existing town center has municipal services, a church, and beautiful New England Architecture. Rindge should focus on attracting certain small shops and businesses that were once here.

3) Rethink the Franklin Pierce University and foster town connections

A crucial piece to creating a town center is a consumer base. Partnering with Franklin Pierce University is an essential piece to implementing the idea’s of the Charette. College students bring a high demand and disposable income that would be spent in the new Town Center. The potential for either student or elderly housing along Mountain Road would make West Rindge Village appear closer to the university and promote pedestrian traffic.

4) New ideas for the 119/202 intersection: tax base and jobs

Another major piece of the Plan NH Charette has to do with narrowing the existing 119/202 intersection and landscaping in such a way to create a bit more “charm” and force traffic to slow down to appreciate Rindge.

Matt Henry said that there were various public input sessions and the Planning Board has begun the recommended implementation. They have established an Economic Development Task Force, obtained a Grant to conduct a Regulatory Review, met with SWRPC/NHDOT to discuss the road change procedures among other things. The Planning Board could adopt the Plan NH Charette as either part of the existing Economic Development Chapter or a new Community Design Chapter. Since a Charette is geared towards the “streetscape” of a community, the Community Design Chapter seems most appropriate.

Chairman Stenersen asked for input from the Planning Board.

Burt Goodrich said that this plan was well attended by the public and establishes a vision for the community. This plan will likely not be implemented exactly as written but it provides the Town of Rindge and developers with an idea of what type of development they want in the community. The Town has no desire to do this on their own, but will require a partnership with developers, the town, and the University.

Hank Whitney said that he wanted to stress that the details of the plan would be worked out in the future but he feels the concept should be adopted into the Master Plan.

Phil Simeone said that the town should look to attract the types of businesses listed in the Charette. Right now you have to go all the way to Peterborough or Keene to get to a coffee shop. Details will not be identical to what is in the plan but he supports what it calls for in concept. Phil Simeone said that the most important piece of this is creating a closer connection with the College. That would benefit the town.

Roberta Oeser said that she supports the ideas listed in the plan but has real concerns with the addition of sidewalks. It would create a real burden for the town to maintain them even if a private developer put them in. Once a developer puts them in, the Town needs to ensure that they comply with the American with Disability Act (ADA). It could be a real liability for the town if they fail to do so. Roberta Oeser said that the Planning Board could consider making the Plan NH Charette an appendix like the Rindge 2020 project was so it holds a bit less weight.

Chairman Stenersen said that if we are not proactive in laying out a vision for what the community wants they are reactive when something undesirable wants to come here. He said that the last thing we want is three pharmacies located at the four corners and getting into legal trouble by changing our regulations specifically to prevent something. At least we provide a direction for the town to move in a proactive manner rather than reacting to something after the fact.

Matt Henry said that sidewalk budgetary concerns are very valid and should be studied carefully before the town decides to construct them. However, they are really a Board of Selectmen issue regarding how they will be maintained. It is the Planning Board's role to gauge whether they would be desirable and less of the cost issue (at this early stage).

Kim McCummings said that she has been involved in the process from the start and is very happy with the cross-section of input from residents and business owners alike.

*Chairman Stenersen opened the Public Hearing*

The following was discussed during the Public Hearing:

- 1) John Kauer expressed concern that the Plan NH Charette was just a dream and brainstorming sessions were focused on "what would you like to see in Rindge" rather than any cost concerns. Bringing new businesses to Rindge will have a detrimental impact on taxes. Many have a false notion that businesses will expand the tax base and lower the tax rate but that is not the case. Mr. Kauer said that he does not want all these shops and businesses to come to Rindge because that will raise taxes. There are benefits to being a bedroom community due to low tax impact.
- 2) Pat Martin expressed support for the Charette. There is a strong desire in town to expand our tax base and provide relief and bringing businesses to town will do just that. If we are considering creating a town center sidewalks should certainly be looked at. It is difficult for people with disabilities to get around without pedestrian pathways. Ms. Martin said that FPU has a program for environmental

sciences that may eventually encourage science and technological fields and consultants locate to Rindge. The Town of Rindge is missing the feel of the college town and will make it difficult for FPU to compete.

- 3) Richard Mellor said that he would like to stress that FPU and the Town of Rindge is missing that mutually beneficial “college town” atmosphere that consumers are looking for when choosing a university. If the Plan is not adopted into the Master Plan we are putting ourselves into a box. We need a vision in order for economic development to occur and the most important piece of this is partnering with the college.
- 4) Roberta Gordonstein said that the Town of Rindge is missing a tremendous opportunity if they do not adopt this plan. The potential that Rindge has with the location of FPU is critical as the town looks to develop its economy. College students should be integrated with the Rindge community.
- 5) Rick Servent said that the Master Plan is a living document that can change in the future. The Plan NH Charette is a very good concept that will not be implemented exactly as written. However, if the concepts are implemented it would be good for the community. Mr. Servent said that he certainly has concerns with some of the details but the overall concept is that the Town of Rindge should engage FPU, pursue Economic Development within the concept of a traditional New England Town with rural character is something we should pursue. His fear is that Rindge will someday become the Bronx’s “hubcap city” if we do not set out a vision for the community. A Master Plan is a flexible document that will be tweaked as applications come in the future.
- 6) John Kauer said that he received a survey because his daughter was a student at FPU asking what types of businesses they wanted at the four-corners. He expressed concern that residents and town officials did not know about it. Roberta Oeser said that residents knew about the survey and it was sent out to everybody on the Town mailing list.
- 7) John Kauer said that he sees a lot of costs involved in moving in this direction. One of the options NHDOT brought up when discussing the 119/202 intersection was regarding a possible round-about. He said that pursuing wastewater via a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) would be very expensive. He said that REDI calls for low income housing and the Charette does not do that.
- 8) Richard Mellor said that not adopting the Plan NH Charette would send a message to the community that they do not value their input.

Burt Goodrich said that the Town of Rindge balance is currently 90% residential and 10% commercial. It would be in everybody’s best interest to shift that to 80% residential and 20% commercial. Mr. Goodrich said that businesses coming to Rindge would position them as the “gateway” to the Monadnock Region.

Holly Koski asked why Peterborough has such a high tax rate. Some explanations may be that they have more administrative staff such as a full-time GIS tech, higher demand for public services, among other possibilities. Holly Koski said that as a Real Estate agent it is becoming very difficult to explain why taxes are so high in some Cheshire County Communities and especially why Rindge ranks so high.

Kim McCummings said that it is very important to put instruments in place now for when developers do want to locate in Rindge. She agrees with Chairman Stenersen that Rindge should take a proactive approach and she supports adopting the Plan NH Charette into the Master Plan.

There was a general discussion regarding TIF's and how they are implemented.

*Chairman Stenersen closed the Public Hearing*

There was a general discussion regarding whether the Plan NH Charette was best suited for the existing Economic Development chapter or a new Community Design chapter. There was an agreement that they were both relevant chapters but the Community Design chapter is the best place for it.

Kim McCummings said that adopting the Plan NH Charette into our Master Plan would have no regulatory impact at this point. The next step would be to conduct an analysis of our regulations to complement our Master Plan. Matt Henry agreed and said that the Planning Board may not deny an application solely because it is not supported by the Master Plan. They shall only use the Master Plan to assist them in drafting town regulations for the purpose of guiding development. The enabling legislation mandates that municipalities with Planning Boards adopt a Master Plan as a prerequisite to Zoning, Subdivision, and Site Plan Review.

**Motion: Burt Goodrich moved to “adopt the Plan NH Chareete to be incorporated into the Town of Rindge Master Plan in a new chapter entitled Community Design”. Phil Simeone seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0-0**

**PUBLIC HEARING** regarding rejoining Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC)

Matt Henry explained that there are various projects going on that may warrant discussions regarding the benefit to rejoining SWRPC. He said he has met with NHDOT and his sence is that SWRPC is the first step if there will be any 119/202 road changes implemented. He also introduced Richard Mellor and Tim Murphy who will be discussing some other upcoming projects.

Richard Mellor explained that SWRPC will be receiving a \$3 million grant to draft a regional plan and Rindge should be proactive in making sure that their input will be heard as a part of this plan. Regional planning is very important to the vitality of all towns in the Monadnock region.

Tim Murphy explained the following benefits to membership which included:

- 1) SWRPC's 2012/13 operating budget suggests that for every \$1 of membership dues, another \$6 is available to assist in meeting the needs of the Region and its municipal members.

- 2) SWRPC oversees several programs for the benefit of its members. Examples over the past year+ in which the Town of Rindge has benefited include:
- 3) Broadband Mapping & Planning
- 4) Energy Technical Assistance Program
- 5) Hazard Mitigation Planning
- 6) Additional programs for the next few years include:
- 7) CDBG Administration
- 8) GIS/Mapping
- 9) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- 10) Brownfields Assessment
- 11) Transportation Planning
- 12) Granite State/Monadnock Region Future

Tim Murphy explained that it really depends on how much use a town is able to make of these programs which will influence its return on investment through payment of membership dues to SWRPC. Being a part of an on-going regional dialogue is very important by being represented in planning and development activities. Direct access to SWRPC's professional planning staff also helps municipal staff by seeing what other communities in the area are doing.

Kim McCummings said that when the decision was made to withdraw from SWRPC, there was a lot of discussion that included cutting the Planning Board's budget. The conclusion was that the Planning Board did not get a direct return on their investment because there were a lot of other departments that benefitted as well.

The Planning Board discussed the possibility of moving the SWRPC dues into the Administrative budget. It was decided that the Planning Board will approach the Selectmen about the possibility of moving the dues portion into the Administrative budget. They also asked Matt Henry to develop some sort of spreadsheet attempting to place monetary value on each benefit.

## **PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT**

Matt Henry briefed the Planning Board on the following:

- 1) Subcommittee meeting times and their progress.
- 2) Upcoming meetings and Workshops
- 3) The candidate he would like to hire as Planning Secretary. Chairman Stenersen said that he would like to meet this person first. Kim McCummings said that she wanted to make sure the candidate could type.
- 4) Forestall Road Improvements: NHDOT held a public session last week. Roberta Oeser said that she would like to see rumble strips in the painted island to alert vehicles making a turn onto Forestall Rd.
- 5) Scope of Work for the Community Planning Grant: Matt Henry said that there will be a Public Hearing to accept unanticipated revenue tomorrow.

- 6) 119/202 median landscaping: Matt Henry discussed the possibility with a friend who is a landscape architect. He was advised to be very careful with any landscaping since the current islands do not have good growing soil and little room for root growth. Matt Henry said that based on the advice, it is not as easy as it may appear and it is important to do it right as opposed to doing it quickly.
  
- 7) Bonds: Matt Henry explained that the Van Dyke Excavation Site was reclaimed and the Bond will be released. He stated that the Michaels Drive Bond is in the works. The applicant offered some sort of collateral in the form of property but Matt Henry had advised against it since it would not likely adequately protect the town.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

## **NEXT MEETING**

August 21, 2012

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Henry  
Planning Director