

**LONDONDERRY, NH PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2023,
AT THE MOOSE HILL COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Art Rugg, Chair; Al Sypek, Vice Chair; Jake Butler, Secretary; Lynn Wiles, Assistant Secretary; Jeff Penta, member; Ann Chiampa, member; Ted Combes, Ex-Officio – Town Council; Giovanni Verani, Ex-Officio; Roger Fillio, alternate member; Tony DeFrancesco, alternate member

Also Present: Kellie Caron, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Economic Development; Benjamin Bennett, Town Planner

Chairman Rugg called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., explained the exit and emergency procedures, and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD WORK

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes to be approved.

B. REGIONAL IMPACT DETERMINATIONS:

There were no regional impact determinations.

C. DISCUSSION WITH TOWN STAFF:

K. Caron introduced Benjamin Bennett, the new Town Planner. The Board welcomed him.

III. Old Business

- A. Public hearing on an application for formal review of a site plan to construct a 58,432 square foot warehouse and storage facility and associated site improvements, 88A Harvey Road (Planeview Drive), Map 14, Lot 17, Zoned IND-II, Patriot Holdings, LLC (Applicant) and VAB Properties, LLC (Owner).
This is a continuance from August 2, 2023.

There is a continuance request to October 11, 2023, for this public hearing.

Member A. Sypek made a motion to grant the continuance request for the above-referenced application.

J. Butler seconded the motion.

The motion was granted, 8-0-0. The Chair voted in the affirmative.

Chairman Rugg stated that the public hearing on an application for formal review of a site plan to construct a 58,432 square foot warehouse and storage facility and associated site improvements, 88A Harvey Road (Planeview Drive), Map 14, Lot 17, Zoned IND-II, Patriot Holdings, LLC (Applicant) and VAB Properties, LLC (Owner) is continued to October 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. This is the only public notice.

- B. Public hearing on application for formal review of a lot line adjustment and consolidation plan to adjust the lot line of Map 28 Lot 29-2 and consolidate with Map 17 Lot 2 and Map 28 Lot 31-6. 52 Grenier Field Road, Map 28 Lot 29-2 and 104 Grenier Field Road, Map 17, Lot 2, Zoned Industrial II (Ind-II), Londonderry Holdings, LLC and Woodhaven Limited Partnership (owners) and Ken Solinsky (applicant). **Continued from August 9, 2023.**

There is a continuance request to October 4, 2023, for this public hearing.

Member A. Sypek made a motion to grant the continuance request for the above-referenced application.

J. Butler seconded the motion.

The motion was granted, 8-0-0. The Chair voted in the affirmative.

Chairman Rugg stated that the public hearing on application for formal review of a lot line adjustment and consolidation plan to adjust the lot line of Map 28 Lot 29-2 and consolidate with Map 17 Lot 2 and Map 28 Lot 31-6. 52 Grenier Field Road, Map 28 Lot 29-2 and 104 Grenier Field Road, Map 17, Lot 2, Zoned Industrial II (Ind-II), Londonderry Holdings, LLC and Woodhaven Limited Partnership (owners) and Ken Solinsky (applicant) is continued to October 4, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. This is the only public notice.

IV. New Plans

V. Other Business

Chairman Rugg reminded the Board there will be a non-public meeting with Town counsel on October 11, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.

Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Workshop

Chairman Rugg thanked the CIP Committee and staff members for their work on the CIP. Per RSA 674:5, the Planning Board is responsible for the development of the CIP.

K. Caron reiterated this process is in accordance with RSA 674:5 as well as Section

5.5 of the Town Charter. The Planning Board finalizes this recommendation and adopts the CIP, then forwards it to Town counsel and the School Board for consideration. The CIP is an advisory document that looks out over six years to assist the Town in recognizing and resolving deficiencies in existing public facilities, and anticipate and plan for future demand for capital facilities.

L. Wiles asked for clarity regarding the difference between the CIP committee priority assignment and the placement in the 2024-29 CIP. K. Caron explained that 2024-29 is last year's ranking and priorities.

Town Projects

1. The Department of Public Works submitted a community center project (Lions Hall), ranked as Priority 1.

Dave Wholley, Public Works Director, appeared before the Board. He explained the building has been vacant since September 2023 and is experiencing rapid decay. They are in the conceptual phase with Weston & Sampson discussing traffic flow, parking lot design, the ability to meet ADA compliance requirements, and the addition that will facilitate HVAC, mechanical, and electrical. The cost could be more than \$2 million, due to the amount of site work required and the need to bring water to the facility for fire protection. The lion's share of the work is ensuring electrical, plumbing, fire, and ADA compliance codes are met.

If renovated, the building will serve as a community-style center that also offers recreational services and conference room space.

A. Sypek asked when the building would no longer be salvageable, if it were left untouched. D. Wholley said the more decay that occurs, the greater the cost to repair it. If approved now, it could still be a year before work could begin, due to the timeline involved in the design process. A. Sypek noted it is important to present a plan to the public before funds can be expended and D. Wholley agreed.

A. Chiampa asked about the water issue under the building. D. Wholley said they believe surface water is causing the settling and it is being addressed. A. Chiampa stressed the historical significance of the building as the oldest public building in town and its importance to the community. D. Wholley concurred and explained this is being considered in the design process.

J. Penta noted while the history of the building must be celebrated, the safety and future use of the building is also important. D. Wholley said once a plan is developed, it can be critiqued and improved.

T. DeFrancesco asked if the expenditure of \$2 million will result in a usable building. D. Wholley said he believes it will probably be between \$2 and \$3 million, due to the site work needed. T. DeFrancesco asked if a building of the same square footage could be built for that amount and D. Wholley said no. T. DeFrancesco noted this project is a good value to the community and a good use of taxpayers'

money.

L. Wiles asked why this project has been ranked as Priority 1, as it is not a threat to the health and safety of people. D. Wholley said this is due to the age of the facility and the need to address the issues as soon as possible. L. Wiles would like to know the proposed use of the building before approving the expenditure of funds. He asked what the plan is, if the warrant article is not approved. D. Wholley said he doesn't have a general operating budget for the building. He said perhaps the design could be completed in preparation, if the article is not approved.

G. Verani asked if there is a plan B, if this project is not approved. D. Wholley said he struggles with spending money on a building that is not being used. There is no mechanism to slow decay on a building. Justin Campbell, Town Finance Director, noted that the building is insured, should a fire occur.

J. Butler said it is a condemned municipal facility, which is a public safety issue. The potential for further damage occurring is the impetus for ranking it as a Priority 1. The cost of the project could continue to increase, if it is delayed. D. Wholley said once the conceptual design is completed, they will have a better idea of the total cost. Creating the final design will be part of the total cost of the project.

The Board discussed if the building could decay to a point where it will not be insurable. J. Campbell said if the Town knowingly does nothing, that could be an issue. D. Wholley clarified the Town is not being negligent and there are no known structural deficiencies.

A. Chiampa asked if the public has been asked what they want the building to be used for. D. Wholley said there has been a lot of change in staffing recently, so this has not been done. However, there has been discussion in Town about the subject and he is open to suggestions.

K. Caron clarified that the purpose of this meeting is to have this type of discussion. The Board can propose changes to the priority levels. Chairman Rugg can allow public comment at this meeting, if the Board desires. At the public hearing on October 4th, any proposed changes will be finalized, with input from the public.

L. Wiles said he supports conducting an engineering study to determine the total cost. He would recommend changing the project to a Priority 2.

T. DeFrancesco said this project, by definition, is the only one proposed that meets the requirements for a Priority 1 ranking. He believes no school project can have a Priority 1 ranking per the current verbiage, which cites health and safety. K. Caron verified that the verbiage was changed after a similar discussion last year and recommended this issue can be discussed at another time.

School Projects:

1. Moosehill 1A (six rooms), ranked as Priority 1

**2. Moosehill 1B (full-day kindergarten), ranked as Priority 2
(necessary to be completed within three years)**

School Board Chairman Bob Slater and Lisa McKinney appeared before the Board. The first two items were separated to allow the School Board to consider them separately.

Moosehill is severely over capacity: leased portables are being used and students are being served in hallways. They believe it is important to the education and success of students and their futures to offer full-day kindergarten. The expansion will eliminate the need for the portables. A building committee has been formed and asked to present their recommendation to the School Board on October 3rd, after which an education decision can be made. Each project involves construction an extension to the existing building.

A. Sypek asked regarding the bond situation. L. McKinney said all bonds will be paid off in fiscal year 2029, so the school is in a good position debt-wise. A. Sypek asked how much interest is being paid annually for the bonds. L. McKinney said for the current year, the principal payment is \$935,000 and the interest payment is \$71,000. Each year, those numbers decrease.

The Board clarified that full-day kindergarten has never gone to public vote.

T. Combes asked if there would be potential cost and time savings by combining the two projects, as well as avoiding confusing the voters. He believes they should be combined into one item on the ballot. L. McKinney said projects will need to be addressed in phases. The estimates numbers are good through 2025, assuming this issue is on the ballot in March 2024.

A. Sypek clarified that the bond rate depends on the dollar value, so a higher dollar value would result in a better rate. So, combining the two projects could result in a lower bond rate. L. McKinney verified this. T. Combes noted there would be more funding from the state, if the school goes to full-day kindergarten. This will offset operational costs.

Board members voiced their support of full-day kindergarten.

3. High School, including addition and renovations, ranked as Priority 2.

L. McKinney explained the high school building needs major renovations. It has been ranked as Priority 2, due to safety concerns. The wood foundation in Phase 1 is a fire hazard. While it is not as critical as the Moosehill project, it should be the next project considered. Building aid money could potentially be obtained due to the safety concerns in Phase 1. B. Slater noted the high school was originally a middle school, with wooden walls and foundation, which are a safety concern. Improvements cannot be made to make safety accommodations. An education committee will complete their work first, then a building committee will be formed.

So, recommendations are possibly three years out.

L. McKinney noted with the HVAC infrastructure bond, they will be able to take care of more pressing mechanical issues, which includes obtaining a new boiler for the high school.

4. SAU project, ranked as Priority 2.

The school district office is in the sixth year of a ten-year lease on space at Kitty Hawk in North Londonderry, with no option to renew. It is important to build a district office to avoid leasing space. B. Slater noted this issue did not pass 1.5 years ago. The cost has increased approximately \$1.1 million since then. The school does not own property to build the district office. They have proposed building at the Town Hall, believing this is the most fiscally responsible option. This will need to be discussed with the School Board.

T. Combes noted this project has increased in cost 26% from last year to this year. Board members expressed the belief that this project should have been passed earlier.

Other potential locations for the offices were discussed, but none were suitable. Approximately two acres of land would be needed and developing bare land incurs additional cost. The site at the Town Hall is the most cost-effective for the taxpayers.

The Board determined there would be no changes suggested to the priorities of these projects.

Chairman Rugg asked for public comment.

Ray Breslin, 3 Gary Drive, said something should be done with the Lions Hall. He said the drainage issue should be addressed. He hoped the DPW could assist with this. He said if an amount is placed on a warrant article, it shouldn't be too high. He said the foundation is a problem, and offered suggestions to address this. He said there needs to be an idea of what the building will be used for.

Chairman Rugg reiterated the public hearing on the CIP will be held on October 4th at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

VI. Adjournment

Member T. DeFrancesco made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:18 p.m. Seconded by J. Butler.

The motion was granted, 8-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:18 p.m.

289 These minutes were prepared by Beth Hanggeli.

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291 Respectfully submitted,

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293 Lynn B. Wiles Lynn B. Wiles

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295 Name: Jake Butler Lynn Wiles

296 Title: Secretary Asst. Secretary

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298 These minutes were accepted and approved on 11/1/23 by a motion made by

299 A. Syfka and seconded by L. Wiles.