

**TOWN OF EATON
PLANNING BOARD
July 22, 2024**

The Planning Board held a Special Joint Board Meeting at the Eaton Town Hall on Monday, July 22, 2024. Present were Chairman Dennis Sullivan, Judy Wilson, John Hedden, Kevin Conklin, Stan Dudrick and Peter Klose. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Also present were Selectmen Ed Reilly, Greg Grinnell and Dick Fortin and Conservation Commission members Marnie Cobbs, Holly Fortin, Paul Nuccio, Robin Nuccio and Dagmar von Schwerin.

Planning Chair Dennis Sullivan gave an overview of the Master Plan purpose and read the pertinent State Statutes (674:1). Chairman Sullivan explained that the purpose of the meeting is to gather input on Master Plan Chapters relevant to the Selectmen and Conservation Commission and to review the draft questionnaire. Chairman Sullivan noted that the Planning Board is currently reviewing the 2015 Master Plan to determine whether any of the stated goals/objectives have been achieved and can be removed from the Plan.

The Selectmen reviewed Chapter 4 (Town Hall Operations). Ed Reilly noted that the Town Hall should be enhanced to make it ready to be used as an Emergency Operations Center during emergency situations. Kevin Conklin questions whether it would be used by citizens during events as well as emergency service personnel. Dick Fortin noted that in prior Plans it was noted that residents take care of each other and that shelters are not needed, but that the population is changing and that it may be necessary to provide an open facility. Kevin Conklin questioned whether this issue should be part of the 10-year Plan to address upgrades to Town Hall. Ed Reilly stated that if the Town wants to move in that direction, the Selectmen can work with the affected Departments to determine what would be needed at the facility. Kevin Conklin stated that a stated goal could be to determine whether the shelter would be needed.

Ed Reilly reviewed the current goals/objectives. Ed Reilly stated that the Selectmen are working on a Volunteer Manual that could include employees and replace the Operations Manual. Bethany Hicks gave an update on the new Town Facebook page. Dick Fortin noted that the issue with notices via websites and Facebook is that when the power is out, there is no internet access. Kevin Conklin questioned if that is a good reason that the Town Hall be open during storms. Ed Reilly noted that the Selectmen are working on cybersecurity issues and an update was given on the status of computer security. Dick Fortin stated that the Selectmen are looking at ways to digitize all Town records.

Dick Fortin stated that objectives regarding Fire and Ambulance services should be split due to the difference in contracts. Ed Reilly recommended that all Board members

reach RSA 91-A. Judy Wilson questioned the status of getting house number signs for residents. Ed Reilly noted that the Selectmen put out requests to the residents on an annual basis.

Conservation Commission Chair Marnie Cobbs explained that the Commission has been focusing on the Recreation, Land Use and Natural Resources chapters of the Master Plan and will be submitting draft revisions to the Planning Board.

Dick Fortin stated that the blueberry fields on Foss Mountain are not recreation and that the Town used to have a Parks & Recreation Department. Marnie Cobbs expressed concern regarding water quality in the lakes and noted that the Conservation Commission has not been involved in making sure that the water is protected. Ed Reilly questioned who would be responsible if the Town hired extra people to monitor the water bodies. Marnie Cobbs stated that the Town of Conway works with the NH Lakes Association (NHLA). Greg Grinnell questioned whether there is funding available. Marnie Cobbs stated that NHLA does have programs and that they also work with land owners regarding best management practices for lake front properties. Paul Nuccio noted that there is commercial use of the canoe put-in on Potter Road. Marnie Cobbs noted that the State has put that launch on their website even though it is on private property. The Board discussed education to prevent invasive species in Eaton's waters.

Paul Hennigan expressed concern regarding USVLT and noted that the Foss Mountain trail is expensive to maintain. Dennis Sullivan explained that USVLT had originally discussed the creation of trails but has reconsidered that proposal due to concerns expressed by the Eaton Conservation Commission. Kevin Conklin stated that the Planning Board did discuss additional trails and noted that issues such as parking on roads should be discussed. Dick Fortin noted that the Commission is not equipped to deal with the increased use of Foss Mountain.

The Board reviewed the draft Master Plan questionnaire. Greg Grinnell noted that steep slopes should be identified with a percent of slope and stated that he supports controlled growth. Dennis Sullivan noted that the questionnaire is being reviewed, which will solicit input from residents.

Marnie Cobbs suggested revising #7 to ask how people recreate in Eaton and perhaps use a list. The question should ask what residents do or like to do in Eaton. Marnie Cobbs suggested turning over the questionnaire to the Conservation Association to review and make suggestions. Judy Wilson stated that more open-ended questions will solicit input from residents. Kevin Conklin noted that it would then be more difficult to tabulate the answers.

Paul Hennigan stated that the addition to Town Hall has been within the Master Plan for quite a while and stated that the question should be revised to allow residents to express their thoughts. Ed Reilly stated that the Selectmen continue to discuss the Garage and Town Hall projects and noted that the two questions do not belong on this questionnaire. Dennis Sullivan stated that the NH Planning Handbook states that these

projects do belong in the Master Plan. Dick Fortin stated that the Selectmen will work on a revision to these questions.

Ed Reilly stated that the Eaton School Board is working on contract negotiations and that asking questions regarding the school is not appropriate. Paul Hennigan stated that the school is not relevant to the Master Plan. John Hedden questioned whether the topic of education should be included in the Plan. Kevin Conklin stated that the benefit of the Master Plan is that it outlines what the Town does for residents. Judy Wilson stated that the School District operates separate from the Town and that they could put out their own questionnaire. Dennis Sullivan stated that this information could be useful for planning purposes. Peter Klose stated that no where within the State description does it reference education. Kevin Conklin asked why any questions pertaining to education if it is not part of the Master Plan. John Hedden stated that including information about major financial expenses that exist in Town is beneficial to new residents.

Dick Fortin suggested requesting assistance from NH Municipal Association to review and revise the questions. Marnie Cobbs stated that the Board should determine what information they are looking to obtain and then work with the Conservation Commission Association to revise the questions.

Ed Reilly stated that the topic of wetland setbacks was discussed at the last joint Board meeting and noted that residents should be asked whether they are in favor of limits rather than what they think. Stan Dudrick noted that the Zoning Board already receives pushbacks because the Town's setback requirements are more stringent than the State regulations. Dennis Sullivan stated that the Planning Board will review those setback requirements. Marnie Cobbs noted that there was discussion on educating property owners prior to adoption of any regulations. Dennis Sullivan stated that the Town can adopt regulations while educating the public. Ed Reilly noted that these regulations affect private land so residents should be asked for input.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lianne Boelzner

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