

TOWN OF TEMPLE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
PLANNING BOARD
December 4, 2019
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING

Board members present: Allan Pickman, Randy Martin, Tedd Petro, Brian Kullgren, Bill Ezell, Nicole Concordia, and Bruce Kullgren, Jr.

Call to order by Pickman at 7:00 p.m.

Public forum on affordable housing: Pickman welcomed the 30+ audience members and provided a general overview of what the board has been working on. A printed handout was available to explain the three topics to be discussed: 1) allowing duplexes, 2) offering a density bonus for Planned Residential Developments (PRD's) that meet specific qualifications, and 3) allowing new gravel roads to be built within a development if certain criteria are met. Pickman read information and statistics regarding the current status of housing in the state of NH. He noted kids who grew up in Temple cannot afford to live here now. Also, the local elementary school enrollment has dropped considerably and young families with children cannot afford to move here. He indicated the PB would like to try to reduce housing costs by tweaking things a bit, but are not considering condos, or changes to lot sizes, or changes in basic zoning. If the board decides to proceed with offering any changes, public hearings will be held and then voters can decide via a ballot vote in March.

The floor was then opened to public commentary:

Q. = question, C.=comment, A.=answer

Q. What is Temple's share of affordable housing needed? The PB should have a number. Also, the board might consider making changes to auxiliary dwelling units. Does not want to see large developments of duplexes.

A. No numbers yet so cannot provide one. No major large developments are wanted, but cannot control the rate of development. Mention of a growth management ordinance enacted in the past during the 1980's when growth was rampant.

C.Thinks it is great that the PB is taking a look at this. The state does have housing data available in a report, and is also working to provide PB tools to help figure out what works best for towns. The state is saying this is a really important issue and is giving tools to the town. There are also seminars available for both PB members and citizens to attend and learn; a recent Housing-NH seminar had a speaker advise that towns cannot compete, but must develop a "brand" for their town and region. Towns are not able to attract with high paying jobs. Temple's magnet for people is open space, farms, good schools, etc. Don't want to line streets with developments. Housing prices in the area at a size of 1600 sq ft currently cost \$345K in surrounding towns, and the state number is above \$300K. Regarding condos, don't throw them out of the mix just yet. Do carefully, try to attract people, don't rush. Keep Temple "Temple".

C."I am a Temple kid." Urged the board to think long-term. Current thinking of development as many parcels of the same size is now obsolete. Now development should have a "village" feel with surrounding environment protected; make a rural community. Also, consider allowing "tiny houses". Young people have college debt and need a good paying job to be able to live here. The biggest cost of a house is the land; can create a more innovative model to shrink lot sizes; 3-acre parcels fragment everything. Younger people like a village feel. Also, it is difficult to do farming in this area; there is an innovative type of farmland development

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in Amherst known as an “agri-hood that supports both affordable housing and agriculture; there are lots of resources and there is lots to learn, and urged the PB to “think short-term with long-term outcomes”.

A. One reason changes to PRD's are being proposed is to help preserve open space. Can be creative with PRD's, and cannot legislate creativity. Current PRD regulations are vague with regard to being open to various types of communities. There have been several successful PRD's built in town.

A. Visual example shown of a white board drawing of current zoning that with a 3-acre lot, 300' of frontage.

A. Auxiliary dwelling units (ADU's) are not on the PB's radar, and should be. Also, the PB should know the number for affordable housing needed. Tiny houses are on the board's radar. The board wishes to keep “rural character”, and doesn't wish to wreck the town; do what we can do to keep all demographics.

A. Regarding ADU's, the board is okay with one house at a time but does not want a development full of duplexes; admission the board should do more to promote; there is some question as to how many ADU's there actually are in town as some are “bootlegged”.

C. Urged the PB to study this, look at US Census Data, go to seminars and gather information.

Q. Has town adopted RSA 674:21 regarding innovative land use controls? Allows more town control. Mention of town owned Skladany parcel of nearly 60 acres located near the village area; town could develop and the area is good for housing; ask developers for RFP's (request for proposal). See if it could be done; the right development could attract millennials.

A. The town could establish a town agency, develop the land, and manage it.

A. The board could establish a select study committee.

C. Suggestion for an update on the work being done by the Temple Community Planning Committee (TCPC).

A. It was recommended the conversation stick with the PB agenda re: zoning issues.

A. PB member Tedd Petro is also on the TCPC, and commented the group is not going to promote any zoning changes this year; their idea is to get people together, to have gatherings to talk and help define problems; he also accepted the blame for bringing up “duplexes” and said it was just an idea and he did not want the board accused of trying to put things in.

C. Visual example shown of a white board drawing of a 2-family duplex on a 3-acre lot, 300' of frontage, and perhaps a 100' setback from road; would have one driveway, one well, one septic, one power source; would provide more affordable housing; feedback sought from audience.

A. Feels 300' frontage could be 600' frontage.

A. Duplexes give early ownership to people; “auxiliary is not the lead dog”.

C. Has read the government report, and feels moving into a town like Temple is a multi-faceted decision. Should plan and build a community for the future. There is education available for planning boards, and urged the PB not to move hastily.

C. Regarding affordable housing – in Temple only two houses under \$200K are on the market, all others are \$300K and up; right now from a realtor's perspective affordable housing is a rental; people cannot afford a mortgage. Does not see Temple “becoming a Milford”. Asked the PB to look at land in town that could be

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available; considering wetlands and slopes there is not that much available, but look at large lots; sub-community as community; new construction as "affordable" is not workable with costs of land, labor, etc.

A. The PB has taken a look at a parcel of land down by the reservoir; a workup was created showing potential development of the the parcel as a conventional subdivision (9 lots), a PRD (9 lots), and workforce housing (11 lots). Take a look at tax maps which show 12 parcels of 100+ acres; mention of Atter Bros. land as large and potentially buildable.

A. Affordable cost of building does not translate into affordable housing.

C. Mention of grants to subsidize rent.

A. PB cannot do that but the town can. Town can develop town land at a reduced market rate.

C. We all love this town; was drawn to move to Temple because of privacy; the town does not attract millennials, who need to be social and be able to walk to work; shared driveways do not work (personal perspective); compare to neighboring town of Greenville, which has Section 8 housing and has seen an increase in crime rates; Temple does not need lower income housing.

A. Feels insulted as a low income, working millennial who wants to live here; not going to resort to committing crimes.

Q. Why does the drawing of a duplex differ from an ADU?

A. Feels one duplex on an individual lot is okay, but not a development of them.

A. Think of duplexes as a box, which can be offset or built different ways, and could be mixed with capes and colonials and gambrels.

C. Regarding loving this town – would like the PB to become very well educated before doing anything; how many PB members go to seminars; educate yourselves and then bring back to the town.

C. Regarding duplexes - have attended a seminar, and can convert older housing stock into duplexes; use existing housing stock/infrastructure.

C. Mention of use of group house living in Europe as shared living space.

Pickman reminded everyone there were three topics on the agenda, and there has yet been no discussion about allowing new class V. gravel roads to be built. He had spoken to the town's road agent, who indicated he would be okay with gravel roads off existing gravel roads. Thoughts?

A. Like the idea.

A. Gravel roads can become muddy (used example of Hudson Road).

A. Spoke to former road agent, who said it is cheaper now to maintain a gravel road as the new gravel packs harder.

A. Just gives developers a break on cost and is of no advantage to buyers.

Q. Mention of "granny pad" - are they considered an auxiliary unit or a tiny house?

Q. Tiny house septic?

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A. PB has not explored issues related to tiny houses.

Q. Is affordable housing a requirement for Temple?

A. No. Not yet, but state is putting pressure on towns and may mandate in the future. We are bringing up ideas because the town may need to act at some point.

C. Affordable housing equates with “riff-raff”.

A. Low-income housing is not the same as affordable housing.

A. Affordable housing and Section 8 subsidizes housing are not the same. Temple wants working families with kids to live here. Mention of very active recreation department in town.

C. The PB started this due to the school situation; both the town and state need additional affordable housing.

C. Mention of Temple Elementary School (TES) Thanksgiving dinner tradition; data of houses and # of kids were related. The data has changed now. Families are having less kids. Times have changed and demographics have changed.

C. The school issue should not be on the table, as it is not going to be closed; PB accused of “tugging on heartstrings.”

A. The PB was not aware of all the facts when they initially made the claim that TES was a target for closure.

C. Clarification that condominium is a form of ownership; does not mean apartments.

C. From the PB: of the 33 audience members in attendance, how many did not attend the last forum?

A. Show of hands indicated 9.

C. Complaints from audience that this forum was not well publicized, not on website or in town newsletter.

A. PB took responsibility and admitted they failed in properly advertising it.

C. TCPC activities include: millennials need social engagement opportunities; before and after school care is important and being worked on; salaries and living wages; housing prices are up 5 percent since last year; promote how to get people to come in; affordable housing should be done in a thoughtful way.

C. Speaking of cows...or a thoughtful perspective on rural character in the future. If the town wants agriculture and farmers, with land costs and taxes so high – where do we put housing? Hopefully not on farm land. “We must work together for totality for future”.

A. Great point, and the state has on radar.

A. Need to put together a list of the remaining farmland in town.

A. The state may have information including LIDAR map available on line that may show what the farmland looks like.

Q. What does the PB hear in this conversation?

A. The PB has not discussed as a board yet.

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A. This is a starting point.

Q. From the PB – high speed internet is needed in town. How many in audience would like/need?

A. All/many would like/need.

Q. The cost would be about \$1 million – how many would be willing to pay for it in their taxes?

A. Process of bonding and paying for as you go along. Need RFI to get data available.

-Reminder of the lighting of the town Christmas tree on the common this Sunday evening.

Q. What are the the PB's next steps?

A. The board will meet and discuss what to do. May decide to jettison or tweak. At the PB meeting people will listen to the board; at this meeting the board listened to the public. People seem skeptical; unknown consensus.

C. The board needs a better presentation, and more information is necessary, some sense of what is right for Temple.

Pickman suggested all other items on agenda be tabled until the next meeting, with all board members in agreement. Ezell then made a motion to adjourn, second by Pickman, and so voted unanimously at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Betsy Perry

~ The next meeting will be held on December 18th, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. ~