

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Swanzey Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – February 28, 2013

Note: Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Board. Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

The regular meeting of the Swanzey Planning Board was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chair Glenn Page. Members present: Scott Self, June Fuerderer, Joe Smith, and Alternate Jane Johnson. Jane Johnson was seated for Jeff Goller. The roll call and agenda for the meeting was read by Chair Page.

Absent: Gus Lerandean, Paula Miller, Jeff Goller, Bob Audette, Deborah Davis, Selectmen's Representative

Others Present: Town Planner Sara Carbonneau

Minutes: Minutes from February 14, 2013 were reviewed. **Motion** by Smith to accept the minutes as distributed. Seconded by Fuerderer with all in favor. **Motion passed.**

Regional Impact: Board members considered whether any items on the agenda could be construed as having the potential for regional impact. **Motion** by Fuerderer that no items on the agenda could be reasonably construed as having the potential for regional impact. Second by Self, no further discussion, and all were in favor of the motion. **Motion passed.**

A. PUBLIC HEARINGS -

1. Home Occupation - Robert Lotito wishes to utilize the property situated at 60 Oliver Hill Road for a home occupation consisting of a financial planning business. The property is situated in the Rural/Agricultural District, shown at Tax Map 21, Lot 8.

Public Hearing opened at 6:06 p.m. No one was present on behalf of the Applicant. No abutters were present. Page noted that Robert Lotito had appeared before the Town of Swanzey Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) to request a variance and that request was approved by the ZBA. He also noted that Lotito said his clients would be arriving at the home business between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. He noted that the number of employees is limited to three (3). The Lotitos are modifying an existing garage for their home occupation usage. After the review of the application by the committee Page asked if there were any questions. He noted that there were no abutting neighbors in attendance at the hearing. Johnson pointed out there are no close neighbors as the property is a sixteen (16) acre lot with the house set back from the road. Therefore the business will be held in the middle of that acreage. Public Hearing closed at 6:10 p.m.

Smith made the **motion** to grant the home occupation application as presented, seconded by Johnson, no additional discussion, all were in favor, **motion passed.**

B. DISCUSSIONS/OTHER BUSINESS -

1. Master Plan Update.

Page began by referring to the section of the Master Plan Executive Summary under **UTILITIES** and specifically **Electrical Supply/Hydroelectric Power Generation** starting at page 22. Page said the Electrical Supply/Hydro section could be deleted since the dam has been removed.

In the section entitled **Water & Fire Precinct** he noted that part of the work is done and gave as an example the work replacing lines along Wilson Pond. He referenced the need to accommodate new commercial customers and that the water precinct has already approved a new contract which guarantees just over 200,000 gallons a day. There will be a 15% surcharge if the amount is exceeded.

Regarding **Radio Communications** Page said he spoke to Emergency Management Manager Bruce Bohannon and learned that the goal of enabling direct inter-agency communications on compatible high-band (154 mHz) frequencies has been accomplished. The Town now has such a radio system in place.

With regard to **Sewage Treatment** Page stated that the first objective is partially done (page 24 of the Master Plan Update). He noted that a pump station is costly, and other utilities are to be considered, so some of the objectives won't happen in the near future. He said there are new technologies to consider in septic system design, but also noted that the TIF district already provides the infrastructure needed for development there.

Telecommunications and Telecommunication Facilities: Carbonneau pointed out that the Town has regulations that have been developed concerning these types of facilities and we can add language about that in the Master Plan. Carbonneau also pointed out fiber optics lines have been strung (but not yet live) for central Swanzey.

Page discussed **Water Supply** (page 25 in the document) and noted that Swanzey is the second biggest municipality in Cheshire County. He said that with all the separate and independent water companies in the town, with perhaps different agendas, one goal would be to combine them under Public Works.

A discussion was held regarding the West Swanzey Water Company and questions arose about the infrastructure and the costs associated with updating the system for a modern municipal water supply. Johnson asked what the alternative would be if the West Swanzey Water Company is substandard. Page said that the Town could buy it and bring it up to standards. Carbonneau said the Town would need to investigate what it would take to bring it up to standards. Smith said the Planning Board should be making an educated recommendation. Carbonneau pointed out the negative impact (of not having a reliable supply of water) on commercial development since companies need a good water supply for fire protection. Page said he agreed that the Planning Board should be thinking about the situation. Page suggested creation of a committee to investigate the infrastructure of the current system so that the Town knows what it would be dealing with. Self said he doesn't believe that there are drawings for the laterals to the buildings for the West Swanzey Water Company, but they do know where the wells are and the status of the pumps. Self said the pipes are asbestos cement, which is good pipe, and the wells are viable in terms of delivery of water. He noted that while the wells are good, the pumps would have to be replaced. Self thinks the current owners put in a new 5,000 gallon tank for storage. Page noted

that at a recent public hearing the water company stated it was down to one pump. If that pump goes, a many residents in West Swanzey won't have water. And if the company that currently owns the water supply abandons the business of supplying water, the Town might be responsible for providing water to the homeowners who would be left without water.

Page said he wanted to make a recommendation independent of the Master Plan, given the various weaknesses in the water supply for West Swanzey, that the Town creates a committee to investigate resources for a new water supply. Carbonneau agreed that it is highly likely that the Town would have to step in should the current system fail. Carbonneau said she would draft a memo to the Board of Selectmen seeking to establish a committee. Self volunteered to serve on that committee since he is familiar with some of the aspects of the system in use today.

Aquifer protection - Carbonneau asked about whether the Planning Board was interested in an ordinance to restrict such land uses as gas stations or others uses that might contaminate the water aquifer. She also suggested that education might be more effective than a restrictive ordinance. Johnson agreed that education is the best tool.

Carbonneau took a look at Town **COMMUNITY FACILITIES** section, starting on page 20. She said that she sent the section regarding the **Carpenter Home** to Dawn Rice to consider future goals and objectives for the facility and to Francis Faulkner to make recommendations for the physical plants at Richardson Park.

As to the section entitled **Town Hall Facility** she noted that the Town Hall will be included in an assessment being done in anticipation of the Fire Department vacating (at some point in time) the lower level space in the building. The goal is to determine if Town Hall functions could be expanded into the vacated space and at what cost.

Under section **TOWN GOVERNMENT** (page 17 in the document) Carbonneau said she is seeking input from the department heads for the sections appropriate to their work for the Town.

For the section on **RESOURCE CONSERVATION** (page 10), Carbonneau has invited Open Space Committee Chair Jeanne Thieme and Conservation Commission Vice Chair Robert Goodrich to provide some ideas and suggestions for the Master Plan.

Carbonneau said that the Whitcomb Hall committee is starting fund raising. She noted that the Fire Department will need to come up with requirements regarding fire safety and answer the question as to whether the building can be utilized for events without a sprinkler system in place. Self pointed out that a sprinkler system may be a requirement for any public activity in the building, but Carbonneau said that buildings with historic significance have some leeway in that regard and the committee needs Chief Skantze's research and response before moving ahead with event planning.

Carbonneau also noted that the Main Street Advisory Committee will be starting to meet in March. They have a three (3) month window to come up with written recommendations for the Board of Selectmen as to what they want to do with Main Street. She noted that the **Town Facilities** section will also include the fact the Town has acquired the former West Swanzey Athletic Association building, although it is anticipated that the building will be taken down. Self suggested that may be good lumber in the building that could be salvaged. He said the granite foundation in the oldest part of the building is solid and

suggested that it also might be used for retaining walls. Johnson suggested that the old foundation might be incorporated into the park that the Town is anticipating for use of the land where the building is now located.

A discussion was held regarding the **Town Libraries**. Johnson asked about the section (page 21) and would like to see it expanded. She said that Town doesn't provide much money to Mt. Caesar Union Library. The Town provides an allotment every year, but it is a small amount for operations. Carbonneau said she would research the library situation to see if the goals might be updated. Carbonneau said Mt. Caesar Library has been struggling with providing handicap access. She said a discussion with the Library Trustees might be in order.

Carbonneau also noted that she is going to include the Grange building in the plan and mentioned that the Board of Selectmen discussed the possibility of using the Grange building or the Post Office space for expanding office space that is needed for Town Hall activity.

Self reminded everyone that on page 13 of the document, #12 item which states, "Establish a septic system maintenance and inspection program for lots fronting on Wilson Pond" can be deleted from the plan document since it is no longer relevant.

2. Construction Details, Construction Procedures Manual, and Road Acceptance Policy. This item was not discussed.

3. Other business as may be required.

Carbonneau told the committee that Paula Miller is not going to repeat as an Alternate. Carbonneau will be posting a notice about the vacancy. She said that Smith and Self will be running unopposed. She also noted that the Rules of Procedure specifies 7:00 p.m. start time so the text needs to be amended to reflect the change to 6:00 p.m. start time. It was agreed that the start time in the text needs to be amended to 6:00 p.m. This change will be formally acted upon at the Board's next meeting on March 14th.

Motion by Smith to adjourn, seconded by Johnson, with all in favor. **Motion passed.**
Adjournment at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary