

NEWTON PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

June 23rd, 2020

Chairman Hamel called the Public Meeting to order at 7:19pm and read the following statement:

As Chair of the Newton Planning Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, and most recently extended by Executive Order 2020-10 this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

We are utilizing Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # (929) 205-6099 and using Meeting ID 869 0753 6632, or by going to the following website address: [Https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86907536632](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86907536632)

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the Town website.

If anybody has a problem, email to: PlanningBoard@newtonnh.net.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be rescheduled and adjourned.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Also, in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #23 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, and most recently extended by Executive Order 2020-10 the Planning Board is relieved from the statutory and local requirement to meet on a particular schedule or a certain number of times within a given time frame. The Planning Board is also relieved from complying with statutory or local deadlines for accepting, hearing, and acting on planning board applications under RSA 676:4.

When the roll is called, each member states their presence, and also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

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When speaking during the meeting, please announce your name so the Administrative Assistant can know who is speaking as he takes the minutes.

Mr. Hamel asked Administrative Assistant Doggett to call the roll:

Mr. Hamel – Present and alone	Mr. White – Present and not alone
Ms. Estabrook – Present and alone	Mr. Andrews – Present and alone
Ms. Collyer – Present and alone	Mr. Crnolic – Not Present
Mr. Foote – Present and alone	

Also Present:

Ms. Allen - Alternate – Present and alone	Ms. White - Alternate – Present and not alone
Mr. Sforza - Alternate – Present and alone	
James Doggett – PB AA – Present and alone	Ms. Rowden - Circuit Rider–Present and alone

Chairman Hamel appointed Ms. White as a voting member in place of the absent Mr. Crnolic.

The following items were discussed:

1. Board Business and Correspondence

a. Continued discussion of operating procedures during the COVID-19 Emergency

Mr. Hamel re-introduced the topic and reminded the members of the discussions of the previous meeting. He commented that the Stay-at-Home order expires on the 15th and the State-of-Emergency would remain until June 26th. He brought up the subject of starting the public hearing portion of the meeting on July 14th, 2020 with a vote to continue any noticed public hearings that had not been started to the July 28th meeting.

Ms. Rowden Suggested that at the beginning of the public hearing section that the Board could vote not to start any public hearings after a set time. She doubts that the Board will get through the scheduled public hearing on the 14th.

Ms. White asked if you need to open a public hearing in order to continue it.

Ms. Collyer suggested that the Planning Board stay with, as moved on June 9th, to the 5 applications that were in-hand at that time.

A.A. Doggett informed the Board that an additional application was received before the deadline and had been added to the Public Notice. He further disclosed that an additional 2.5 applications had been received on June 22nd.

Mr. Andrews **MOVED** to set 9:30 as the end-time for starting a new Public Hearing and any remaining would be opened and continued. Mr. White seconded the motion.

Ms. Estabrook asked if this should be a new procedure.

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Mr. Andrews agreed that this should be a procedure until the crisis is under control.

Ms. Collyer called the question.

Mr. Hamel asked Administrative Assistant Doggett to call the roll:

Mr. Hamel - yes	Ms. Estabrook - yes	Ms. Collyer - yes	Mr. Foote - yes
Mr. White - yes	Mr. Andrews - yes	Ms. White – yes	Unanimous vote

Ms. Estabrook asked about how individuals would be recognized as there would be the Board, applicants and other interested parties involved.

Ms. Rowden suggested that all would be muted until the chair opened the meeting to specific groups for input.

Mr. Foote talked about the meeting being live and in-person.

Mr. Hamel asked the A.A. if people could still participate via Zoom if the meeting was held in the main hall?

A.A. Doggett stated that he was working with Selectmen's Secretary Diane Morin on this subject.

Mr. Foote discussed the work that had been done to be able to hold in-person meetings the Selectmen were working on the issue. He brought up the limit of people who could be in the hall at a meeting and it being limited to 27 people in total.

Mr. Hamel opined that he felt the first priority after Board members was applicants, then the remaining space could be filled by the public. He suggested that the public be encouraged to follow the meeting via Zoom as opposed to coming to Town Hall.

Ms. Rowden suggested that the applicants be asked to limit their number of attendees to the applicants or their agents to 2 people. She further suggested that the applicants be reminded that it would be very difficult for the Board to review any new paperwork at the meeting.

Ms. Estabrook brought up that that was a continuing practice of the Board.

A.A. Doggett reminded the Board of their reaffirmation that they would only work with paperwork delivered in time to be included in the board packets (12:30 on Thursday July 9th) and any new paperwork delivered at the meeting would necessitate a continuance of the public hearing.

Ms. Collyer brought up the issue of setting time limits on the public hearings and abutter input.

Mr. Hamel has not seen problems with this issue.

Ms. White offered that abutters could be asked to not repeat what other speakers have said.

Ms. Rowden gave suggestions on how the Board could offer lines of communication for interested parties and how they could submit comments and queries ahead-of-time on specific applications.

Mr. Andrews asked about how other towns have had some members present and other members participate via Zoom.

Ms. Rowden offered to work with the Chair, Vice-Chair and the A.A. on what she knows on this matter. She reiterated her prior suggestions to have the information on the website and other possible ways to get the information to the public. She also reminded the Board if the State-of-Emergency is not extended only one Board member may participate telephonically. But she suspects it will be extended.

Mr. Andrews asked if the Selectmen have mandated the wearing of masks in Town Hall.

Mr. Foote stated the Selectmen's requirement is for people coming into Town Hall to wear masks.

A further discussion of how Zoom would be utilized for the meeting. Another person may be needed to ensure the smooth flow of the meeting.

b. Acceptance of minutes of the 6/9/20 Public Meeting

Ms. Collyer **MOVED** to accept the minutes; Ms. Estabrook seconded the motion. Mr. White offered the correction that Ms. White was not alone at the meeting as stated during the rollcall of members.

Mr. Hamel asked Administrative Assistant Doggett to call the roll:

Mr. Hamel - yes	Ms. Estabrook - yes	Ms. Collyer - yes	Mr. Foote - yes
Mr. White - yes	Mr. Andrews - yes	Ms. White – yes	Unanimous vote

c. Correspondence

There was none.

Ms. Rowden made her presentation on Master Plans in general and Newton's Master Plan in specific (see attached).

Mr. Hamel asked about funding for work on the Master Plan. Ms. Rowden discussed how it could be funded through the Planning Board budget or via Special Warrant Article.

Ms. Collyer asked about demographic data. Ms. Rowden replied that while a certain amount of data is necessary, the data rapidly becomes outdated and should not be relied on heavily.

Ms. Collyer suggested that the Master Plan be worked on by a sub-committee of the Board or with volunteers. Ms. Rowden suggest that while possible, volunteer workers typically extend the time needed to get the project completed though that can improve the public reaction to the plan.

Ms. Estabrook suggested that the Planning Board have a discussion of which chapters to address.

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Mr. Hamel offered that this should be done after the Board has addressed the growing list of applications coming to the Board.

Mr. Andrews put forward his ideas. He suggested the Board put this on the first September meeting for an initial discussion of the route forward.

A.A. Doggett suggested that as he has been trying to update the physical copy of the Master Plan, he has seen very little that he feels needs rewriting, that it is more statistical updating. He offered to (as time allows) scan in each chapter separately and email them to the Board members. He will start with the newest Land Use and Vision chapters.

Ms. Collyer brought up the subject of the presentation on Workforce Housing by the N.H. Housing Authority. Mr. Hamel suggested that be put on hold until the Planning Board gets a better handle on its workload.

3. Adjourn:

Chairman Hamel adjourned the meeting at: 8:53pm

Respectfully Submitted,

James L. Doggett, AA
Newton Planning Board