

Town of Foster
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Via Zoom™
Wednesday January 20, 2021

A. Call to Order

Chair Anthony Renzi called the Planning Board to order at 7:09 p.m. via Zoom.™

B. Roll Call

Planning Board Members: Michael Carpenter (via his phone due to technical issues); Hilary Downes Fortune; Vice Chair Warren Ducharme; David Paolissi; George Sackal; Chair Anthony Renzi; Secretary Helen Hardy.

Staff: Michael Antonellis, Planner; Joanna Achille, Solicitor

Town Officials: Denise DiFranco, Town Council.

Department Heads:

School Department, Michael Barnes, Superintendent; John Obiurka, Head of Land Trust, Linda Tibbetts, Dennis Therien,

Members of the Public: Joe Carey; Ron Cervasio; Eric Rotondo; Dee Tavaras; Norbert Therien.

C. Approval of Minutes

Warren moved and David seconded the motion to approve the Minutes of the December 16, 2020 Planning Board Meeting as corrected. Motion carried 6-0 (Hillary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen – aye).

D. Correspondence

None

Hilary moved and Warren seconded the motion to move the Master Plan review to next on the agenda. Motion carried 6-0 (Hillary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen – aye).

F. Major Subdivision, Master Plan, Public Informational Meeting

Public Informational Meeting, Major Subdivision, Master Plan, AP 3, Lot 34, Pierce Road and T. Parker Road, Applicants Michael and Susan Barnes.

This application was represented by Norbert Therien, National Surveyors-Developers, Inc., with the plan completed and certified on 1/23/2020, for the purpose of Subdivision Suitability determination by the Department of Environmental Management (DEM).

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This lot had come before the Planning Board in 2018 for a 7-lot subdivision, and the Board had advised the applicants that they had to contend with wetlands, rock outcrops, and steep slopes. At this time the application is for a 6-lot subdivision with four lots fronting on Pierce Road, one lot with frontage on both Pierce and T. Parker, and one lot with frontage on T. Parker. The proposal was submitted to DEM for wetlands verification and for Subdivision Suitability and received DEM approval and permits. The lot sizes vary from ~ 5 acres to +/- 28 acres. Norbert stated that the lots all have approved locations for wells, ISDS, house location, and meet all setback requirements.

Michael Antonellis said that he had asked for input from the Fire, Ambulance, Conservation Commission, and DPW.

Linda Tibbets, Chair of the Foster Land Trust, explained that the previous owner had been in the process of donating the land, which abuts Parker Woodland and Audubon properties, to the Land Trust, but this did not go through for various reasons.

Dee Tavaras, an abutter on both Pierce and T. Parker Roads (corner lot), expressed concern about the frontage on lot 5, which has ~645' of frontage on Pierce Road, but ~212' of frontage on T. Parker Road, which is designated as the front of the property with house and driveway location. There was a discussion on whether the required 300' of frontage must be on the house/driveway-side of a property, and this will be researched before the application returns for approval. Ms. Tavaras said that at the 2018 hearing it had been suggested that abutters be allowed to purchase some of the land adjacent to their property, and she asked if the abutters and neighbors could have first right on the purchase of the lots. Dr. Barnes said that other neighbors have also expressed an interest, and that they were open to selling to neighbors at a fair market value.

Warren expressed concern about flood plain lines; these apparently have not been ascertained for this area. Michael A. said that FEMA is working on flood maps.

George asked if there are side line setbacks for driveways, and this will also be researched before the next meeting.

E. Capital Improvement Plan

1. *Foster Land Trust:* The Foster Land Trust did not request funds from the Capital Budget, but the Chair, Linda Tibbetts, wanted to inform the Planning Board of the work that they were doing and had funding for, on the Land Trust properties

Linda explained how the Land Trust has gained its endowment. The State determined that a conveyance tax would be added to the sale of each piece of open space property

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in 2004, with 45% of this tax being returned to the town in which the property was located, for the purpose of acquiring and preserving open space for recreational and environmental reasons. This money has gone to fund local Land Trusts. The Foster Land Trust now has funds in their endowment. They are proposing to use this money in various ways including purchasing the development rights for a farm, improving and maintaining trails on Land Trust properties, creating kiosks with maps and information at each location, providing safe parking at their existing properties, etc. [Please see Land Trust presentation.] Brochures on Land Trust properties and what they offer to the public are placed in the Post Office, libraries, and Town Hall. They also place a monthly article in the *Foster Home Journal* to publicize these properties to Foster and nearby residents. They now maintain a space on the Town's website and are creating their own website.

Mike Carpenter had detailed information about the number of acres maintained by the Foster Land Trust, how much was donated or purchased with matching funds, etc.

Linda emphasized that the Land Trust makes an effort to be as frugal as possible with their endowment, by obtaining grants and matching grants for the purchase of properties, development rights, etc.

The Land Trust is requesting that the Planning Board endorse their efforts, which would supplement their presentation at the Town Financial Meeting in May.

2. Recommendation of Funding for Departments

Joanna stated that since Mike C. does not 'appear' in the meeting (no picture, only his name and voice) and therefore he could not vote.

The Board decided to follow the recommendation of the Treasurer and the Planner.

Town-wide: Requested, \$20,000. Warren moved and George seconded the motion to approve \$20,000. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

School Department: Requested, \$90,541. Warren moved and David seconded the motion to approve \$188,047 from State Housing Funds. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

Engineering Board: Requested, \$270,000. Warren moved and Hilary seconded the motion to approve \$125,000. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

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Police Department: Requested, \$59,500. Warren moved and George seconded the motion to approve \$59,500. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

Public Works: Requested, \$999,000. Warren moved and David seconded the motion to approve 329,000. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

Recreation: Requested, \$137,500. Warren moved and David seconded the motion to approve \$137,500. Motion carried, 6-0 (Hilary, Warren, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye).

Total approved from the Capital Reserve, \$671,000. Total approved from Housing Aid Fund, \$188,047.

Anthony would like to recommend to the Town Council that the Town hire a Financial Consultant to make recommendations for the Capital Improvement budget. Joanna said that the proposal should specify details and that Anthony could put it on Future Agenda Items.

George and Hilary said that they would like to report on the progress they have made on Public Outreach at the next meeting.

David moved to adjourn at 9:18. Motion carried 5-0-1 (Hilary, David, George, Anthony, Helen, aye, Warren abstained).

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Hardy, Secretary