

**ATKINSON PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
Wednesday, March 5, 2014**

**Members Present:**

Sue Killam, Chairperson  
Mike Turell  
John Wolters  
Tim Dziechowski  
Ted Stewart  
Scott Simons, Alternate

**Others Present**

Julie LaBranche

**Call to order:** Chairperson Sue Killam called the workshop meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board, Wednesday, March 5, 2014 to order at 7:45 PM.

**Minutes:**

**January 15, 2014** - postponed

**February 19, 2014** - postponed

**Workshop Topics**

**Master Plan Future Land Use Chapter Review** - Buffers for Water Quality and Habitat Protection - Julie LaBranche presented the draft buffer section of the Atkinson Master Plan - Future Land Use Chapter

- Mr. Turell suggested changing the second sentence to say "...of part of the buffer zone contains a bioretention." in the Maintenance Considerations section on Page 2 of the proposed chapter.

Ms. LaBranche briefly explained each section of the proposed new chapter.

**Recommendations regarding buffers by the Conservation Commission**

The Conservation Commission made three recommendations. The first was for an education campaign about the benefits of buffers including best practices for landscaping, lawn maintenance and management of agricultural activities. The second was to offer an alternative to the existing 100 foot building setback conversion to a 50 foot no disturbance buffer. Third, the Conservation Commission recommended revising Zoning Ordinance Article IV, Section 410 Wetlands to require that new development have a 50 foot no disturbance buffer from wetlands and surface waters.

**Discussion:** Chairperson Killam pointed out that Section 410:8 of the Zoning Regulation includes garages as buildings requiring a 100 foot setback along with all buildings that have animal or human waste.. Sheds and driveways are excluded. Another issue is implementation and enforcement. A variance or special exception would have to be granted. In many instances, an exception or variance is granted for a buffer instead of a 100 foot setback and the buffer is clear cut or mowed. Ms. LaBranche pointed out that many towns successfully use buffers instead of setbacks. She also informed the Board that aerial photography could be used.

The Board discussed the recommendation by the Conservation Commission to require new development to have a 50 foot no disturbance buffer from wetlands and surface waters. Chairperson Killam expressed concern about property owners maintaining buffers. Ms. LaBranche informed the Board that towns with successful buffer regulations have the buffers monumented. Another issue is invasive plants in buffer zones. Bittersweet is one invasive plant species, crown vetch, Japanese Knotweed and loosestrife are others. Insects such as the emerald ash borer and wooly adulgents should also be considered invasives.

The Board discussed whether a buffer should be required for surface water. It was agreed that it should. Ms. LaBranche suggested functional analysis - is there a wetland and will granting the variance disturb it? Mr. Dziechowski also pointed out that buffers to wetlands do not always appear on maps.

### **Future Uses of Municipal Land**

Mr. Dziechowski has a spreadsheet of all Town owned property listing location, size and other issues. He explained that one of the functions of the Conservation Commission is to research municipal property and make recommendations for future use. Mr. Dziechowski related that conditions should be:

- will future land use be different than present land use?
- highest, best use;
- is it buildable?
- is it a wetland?

Also some lots were 7 1/2% donation lots that were supposed to be returned to the owners due to a NH Supreme Court decision. One building with legal issues is the Family Mediation building which was originally donated to the Town to be used as a school and was supposed to revert back to the owners if the use changed. Mr. Dziechowski recommended that the Town Attorney take all the lots that should have reverted and do a quiet title for each of them.

Mr. Dziechowski asked about lots that were used as fire ponds. Mr. Stewart informed him that the only one he knew of that was discontinued was the one on Meditation Lane. There is one other that was converted from a wetland to a fire pond but a hydrant was never installed.

Mr. Dziechowski asked about using the lot on Hall Farm Road as a transfer station. Mr. Stewart replied that a commercial transfer station would be a bad idea. Mr. Stewart also informed the Board that the current recycling center is on less than an acre. Chairperson Killam asked if a recycling center is what the Town wants at its entrance. Mr. Dziechowski replied that most of the adjacent land will probably developed within the next ten to twenty years.

Chairperson Killam informed the Board that an application for a new tower is pending on the golf course. The Board discussed zoning regulations for cell towers and possible locations.

Mr. Dziechowski would like to discuss the Chadwick Town Forest. He mentioned that the Boston Redevelopment Association is going through a bad spot because they took a million dollars from the Department of Recreation for a park. The Forest Rangers found a copy of the original letter and a map. There are 5-7 properties in Town bought by Department of Recreation money. One is the Chadwick Town Forest. There are 3 lots in the back that are Town owned, deeded to the Town but not as Conservation Land. Because the Chadwick Town Forest was bought with Federal money, a road cannot be put through to the lots.

Mr. Stewart asked if the lot on Lakeside Drive was valuable. Mr. Dziechowski replied that there is no access because the driveway was deeded to another lot. Mr. Stewart asked if it could be used as a community septic system. Mr. Dziechowski replied that it is wetland.

The Board discussed if some of the Town owned land could be used to resolve issues with septic.

Mr. Stewart left the meeting.

Ms. LaBranche stated that she would incorporate the section on buffers into the draft master plan and add a section "G".

### **Other Business**

Chairperson Killam informed the Board that the drainage calculations for the Clinton Teague and Ruby Holdings applications had arrived so those applications will be on the agenda for the March 19, 2014 meeting. There are also 3 vacant lots that were purchased on Industrial Way.

### **Adjournment**

Chairperson Killam requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Member Mike Turell made a motion to adjourn the January 7, 2014 meeting of the Atkinson Planning Board at 9:30 PM. Member John Wolters seconded the motion. Vote 5/0 in favor.**

**Next Planning Board meeting Wednesday March 19, 2014**

**Please Note: Planning Board Workshops are public meetings open to all, but are typically not televised.**