



**Planning Board Workshop Minutes
Town of Foster
Saturday, April 28, 2007
Benjamin Eddy Building, 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

A. Call to Order

Workshop convened at 8:50 by Julia Parmentier, Chair.

B. Roll Call

Present were Debra L. Marshall; Ann-Marie Ignasher, Town Planner; Heidi Colwell, Zoning Board member; Bob Fallon, Building Inspector; John Obiurka; John Neale, Planning Board member; Maureen McEntee, Julia Parmentier, Planning Board Chair; Helen Hardy, Planning Board Secretary.

C. Old Business

Purpose of workshop: To determine strategies for zoning project

Done to date: Division of Route 6 into four segments:

1. Scituate line to end of former Spencer Family Practice. The intention is for it to be Agricultural-Residential except for existing commercial lot.
2. Former Spencer Family Practice to Paine Road. Includes possible area to be developed around the former Marv's, Sue Ann Creations and Village Inn. Includes area west of Rt. 94 & Rt. 6 with former Countryside Pizza and large lot owned by the Diocese of Providence, and on south side of Rt. 6, the Things Made Wonderful store.
3. Paine Road to west end of Shady Acres. From Paine Road to Snagwood on the north side, includes the Cell Tower and Foster Marketplace, Danny's Auction, Hopscotch, Shady Acres. On the south side are Lucky's, and Pine Tree Gun Club. The south side is a possible area for Affordable Housing.
4. From west of Shady Acres to the Connecticut line. Commercial development: north side is Helen's Place, gas station, Whippoorwill Terrace. Includes property of proposed Northwest Community Health Care. South side, gas station, State Line Diner, and Cell Tower. 31 acres undeveloped.

All properties have been identified, including owners and constraints to development.

John Obiurka met with DEM regarding the leaking of underground storage tanks. There are five sites: Foster Mobil, Sunoco, Texaco, Atlantic Auto Sales, and Supreme Pools. All five sites have been remediated and monitored, but any excavation would require remediation at the developers' expense. The current monitoring is to two feet.

During the Rt. 6 reconstruction, there was a report that the DOT only excavated to 18 inches (rather than 36 inches) due to finding contaminated soils. This means that the #4 segment has contamination issues. Any lots being considered in these areas will have to undergo a hazardous waste review. In order to get DEM information on any other lots for development, each lot must be researched by Plat and Lot number.

Because the Segment 1 will be Agricultural-Residential and Segment 4 has the problem with contaminants, Segments 2 and 3 may be the best bets for nodes. However, Maureen McEntee pointed out that a commercial use with remediation of the land may actually make this the best area for commercial nodes.

Ann-Marie Ignasher, Town Planner, spoke on the procedure for Re-zoning. Owners of lots will have to be notified that their lots will be re-zoned. The Planning Board must make recommendations to the Town Council, including the findings of fact: e.g. making the lots all one zoning classification, as required by the zoning regulations, and conformance with the Comprehensive Plan. It is appropriate to do this in four segments in order to get it done; however, the entire plan must be available so the people know what the overall plan is.

Anne Carlson, Tax Assessor, says there is no difference in tax rate between Highway-Commercial and Agricultural-Residential.

Bob Fallon, Building Inspector, reminds the Committee that we do not have a mixed use zone and have not defined the characteristics of a mixed use zone.

Ann-Marie Ignasher recommends that we define mixed-used zoning before we proceed because this type of zoning lends itself more to the maintaining of rural character and affordable housing, which are part of the goals for Rt. 6. She strongly recommends incorporating design criteria into the subdivision regulations which should also be supported by the zoning regulations. Currently design criteria is “hidden” in the zoning and subdivision regulations. These need to be rewritten to be more applicant and board friendly.

An important part of this process will be to keep the communication pathways open so that citizens have opportunity to comment on the plan and the process.

Ann-Marie suggests that we need to be proactive rather than reactive in order to educate the community about the danger of keeping the current zoning and what its effect will be on the rural character of the town.

John Neale suggested that before we go to the Town Council however, the subcommittee felt that we need a better idea of what we will be presenting on the whole project so this report will be at a future date.

Ann-Marie said that the Vermont land trust and Housing board have developed a workable procedure for carrying out this sort of change.

Heidi Colwell suggested that the Manufacturing-Industrial zone (Turnquist Lumber) should also be looked at because it will probably come up for sale sometime in the near future.

Identification of nodes:

- A. North side
Plat 21, lots 25-29 (~5 acres) (Wrights, Bear Arms...)
- B. South side
Plat 14, Lots 97, 98, 100, 101 (~ 57 acres) (former Marv’s, Sue Ann, Village Inn, auto repair)
- C. North side
Plat 14, lots 19 A, B, C (~ 26 acres vacant) Rt. 6 to 94 “Simmons’ Crossing”, St. Paul’s Church
- D. South side
Things Made Wonderful, Plat 14, lots 108, 109; Plat 11, lots 110-119; Plat 11 lots 25, 41B, Paris Olney Hopkins Road, lot, horseshoe shaped lots up to gun club (~ 60-70 acres). Also, west of Balcom Rd., Plat 11, lots 19, 19B, 20. This will be better defined in the future.
- E. North side,
Plat 14 (lot 2, 2A, 2B) Cell Tower to Foster Marketplace (~ 27 acres)
- F. North side
Plat 13, lots 24, 26, 28, 28A, 29, (~ 26 acres) Hopscotch, Danny’s
- G. North side
Plat 10, lots 36, 37, 37A. Shady Acres, Stone House.

Tentative next meeting June 23, 2007. Probably no meetings in July or August.

L. Future Agenda Items

1. Identify mixed-use ordinance from other communities. Suggestions: Westport, MA; Tiverton, RI; Little Compton, RI; Nantucket, MA; Block Island, RI; Martha’s Vinyard, MA.
2. Finish identifying possible nodes.

M. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Hardy, Secretary