

**CITY OF KEENE  
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**JOINT PUBLIC WORKSHOP  
PLANNING BOARD/  
PLANNING, LICENSES, AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, December 10, 2018

6:30 PM

Council Chambers

**Planning Board Members Present**

Gary Spykman, Chair  
Doug Barrett, Vice-Chair  
Nathaniel Stout  
Douglas Barrett  
Councilor George Hansel  
Chris Cusack  
Mayor Kendall Lane  
Pamela Russell Slack

**Planning Board Members Not Present**

Martha Landry  
Michael Burke

**Planning, Licenses and Development  
Committee Members Present**

David Richards, Chairman  
Councilor Margaret Rice  
Councilor George Hansel

**Planning, Licenses and Development  
Committee Members Npt Present**

Councilor Philip Jones  
Councilor Bart Sapeta

**Staff Present**

Rhett Lamb, Community Development Director  
Mari Brunner, Planner Technician  
Tara Kessler, Senior Planner

**1. Roll Call**

Chair Spykman called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and a roll call was taken.

**2. 2019 Meeting Calendar**

A motion was made by Councilor George Hansel to approve the 2019 meeting calendar. The motion was seconded by David Richards and was unanimously approved.

**3. Building Better Together Update**

Senior Planner Tara Kessler addressed the Committee first and welcomed those present. She went over the format of the meeting; this meeting would be a hands-on activity. Those present introduced themselves. Ms. Kessler began going over the timeline for this project and the work that has already happened such as meeting one on one with department heads, hiring consultants, looking over city code and regulations, public launch of the project, community outreach

She noted initially the plan was to finalize the downtown zoning updated and to have a draft of the land development code by March 2019. However, staff is here to propose a revised schedule to be considerate of the time the community has to look at this project as well as knowing that this is a rather ambitious project. The new proposal is to shift the latter half of the schedule by six months. The final draft of the project will be ready for review by Fall 2019.

Ms. Kessler stated the first activity question for tonight is “should the proposed downtown boundary be amended”?

The consultants have proposed certain subdistrict/place types – are these appropriate?

The proposed downtown boundary as proposed by the consultants begins north at Mechanic Street south at the Marlboro/Winchester/Main Street roundabout, west at Gilbo Avenue connects to West Street and east along Beaver Brook to Dunbar and Water Streets. The existing zoning district consists of eight districts.

The audience next split into groups to discuss the first question which is the boundary for downtown appropriate, does it go far enough. Are the place types identified by the consultant appropriate?

Discussion Summary:

Contrast between zoned or existing uses.

Could the Main/Winchester/Marlboro Street roundabout be taken out of the boundary.

Extend the boundary down Emerald Street to just before the substation

Extend the boundary down Marlboro Street to just past Grove Street

Stop the boundary at Mechanic Street on Court/Washington Street

Ms. Kessler went over the sub-districts:

Downtown Core 1 – heart of the downtown, highest mix of uses – the areas the consultants saw as core 1 (city hall, buildings at the head of the square). Buildings go right up to the sidewalk. The thought is if there is a sub-district that preserves the building height that exists today, the pattern of development could be preserved. The regulations that exist today allow for building between one story and seven stories if you meet certain conditions or obtain special exception. Setting the building creates a scenario the city might favor.

Downtown Core 2 – Areas off Main Street and Central Square – denser and mixed use development. Consultants recommend higher building heights for these areas; 0 – 5 build to zone, two to seven stories – Central Square Terrace and the Cleveland Building are examples.

Downtown Core 3 – Low intensity, smaller scale development, north of downtown, one to four stories (2.5 story is the average), setback requirement, parking is located on the side. Development on Mechanic Street was used as an example. 0-30 feet built to zone.

Another building type that was recognized was Downtown General – transitional areas (geared more for vehicles rather than pedestrians), towards the south and northeast of the downtown. Examples – Horatio Colony Museum, Post Office, certain Keene State buildings, Jake’s Five Star Plaza.

Downtown Growth – The consultants in reading the master plan and looking at the existing zoning standards saw this as a sub district where additional growth can be encouraged as the existing development is rather sparse – these are areas along Gilbo Avenue to the east of the Food Coop.

A different pattern of development is being encouraged; 0 – 10 foot build to zone, two to seven stories.

The next place type would be the Downtown Transition – transition from downtown areas to adjacent existing neighborhoods. 10 to 20 feet build to zone, one to three stories. Dunbar Street looking east, mixed use with residential next to each other. Same along Davis Street.

The question for the next group activity is:

Do the descriptions of the place types make sense for downtown?

Where would these fit on a map?

Should they be amended? Should there be fewer place types or different place types?

Consolidate into three zones – downtown core, downtown general and growth

Core – should come up to a sidewalk

General – transitional sections on outside

Growth – areas the city would like to see transformed to be more like downtown

Core 1 and 2 should be combined into one district, but buildings should be set back based on their height. If they are above five stories they should meet the SEED District Standards.

Increase core 1 – combine core 2 and Growth.

The reason for extending down Marlboro Street is because historically this street was an extension of downtown.

It doesn't make sense to split up the office zone.

It would make sense to keep Main Street as is – it has unique feel to it and it does not make sense to split office zone,

#### **4. Downtown Zoning Update Workshop with City Council**

Not addressed

#### **5. Next Meeting - Monday, January 14, 2019**

#### **6. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Krishni Pahl,  
Minute Taker