

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 24, 2020**

**7:00 PM**

**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Kate M. Bosley, Chair  
Philip M. Jones  
Gladys Johnsen  
Catherine Workman

**Staff Present:**

Elizabeth A. Dragon, City Manager  
Thomas P. Mullins, City Attorney  
William Dow, Deputy City Clerk  
Rhett Lamb, Community Development  
Director

**Members Not Present:**

Mitchell H. Greenwald, Vice-Chair

Chair Bosley called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. She read a prepared statement explaining how the Emergency Order #12, pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04 issued by the Governor of New Hampshire, waives certain provisions of RSA 91-A (which regulates the operation of public body meetings) during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency. She explained the procedures of the meeting and how the public can participate.

Roll call was conducted.

**1) Amendment to the Zoning Map – Properties on Krif Road and Winchester Street – Ordinance O-2020-04**

Chair Bosley reminded everyone that the City Council has held a public hearing on this matter and will not be taking public input tonight. She continued that Rhett Lamb, Community Development Director, is here to answer questions as needed. She asked if the committee has comments or questions about this agenda item.

Councilor Jones stated that he is opposed to this ordinance for a number of reasons. He continued that as mentioned at the Joint Committee meeting, by Councilor Greenwald, the City Council adopted a policy a number of years ago saying there would be “no net loss of industrial zoning outside the bypass system.” In the presentation, yes, they heard about the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) but no one talked about the economic development plan that the City Council adopted on October 4, 2019. On page 9 of that plan under “Appropriate Industries” is a carry-over from the 1993 plan, which calls for “addition of land suitable for increased manufacturing capacity.” Page 10 says “growth in local economy will require drawing industrial development projects that will effectively expand the Keene tax base.”

Councilor Jones continued that he thinks this ordinance goes against all that was put into those plans. They also talked about the gateway, because this is a gateway area, at the Joint Committee. He does not see how changing from Industrial to Commercial helps the gateway at all. Coming up Route 12 from Swanzey is a gateway and it is commercial and he does not think there is anything pretty about it. Coming south on Route 12 from Westmoreland means going right through an industrial zone and it is probably the most beautiful gateway coming into Keene. He thinks this ordinance goes against the City Council's policies and he is opposed to it.

Chair Bosley stated that those are valid points. She continued that she has thought about this a lot herself. She noted she wants to hear from Mr. Lamb regarding those statements.

Mr. Lamb stated that this was one of the important pieces of their review. He continued that many of the principles in prior master plans, including the one about "no net loss of industrial land," were paramount in staff's minds as they evaluated this change. They tried to cover the subject well in the Joint Committee review. Staff's take on it is: the only elements of industrial being given away, by changing from Industrial to Commerce Limited, are the smokestack industries that no one is building anymore. In that location you can no longer do an asphalt plant, smelter, tannery, forge, explosive manufacturing, and so on and so forth, but you can still do assembly or manufacturing or the type of industrial uses they want to encourage in that location. Commerce Limited is a hybrid district. It does allow manufacturing elements while it also allows larger commercial operations such as car dealerships that require a lot of outdoor storage. Staff thinks the change is not as drastic as it would seem with respect to the loss of industrial activities. If it were truly running against that he thinks staff would have identified that as a large concern from the beginning. They think Corporate Park meets the needs of the City, in terms of the possibility of industrial activity taking place there, and allows the current applicant to move forward with a use that tends more toward the commercial side.

Councilor Jones stated that he understands that clearly. He continued that he wanted to mention that they just took away a lot of Industrial zoned area during the Marlboro Street Rezoning project, which was originally his suggestion to the City Council, because it was mixed in with Residential, and he felt it did not belong. It was zoned Industrial many years ago when it was serviced by the railroad. He thought it was a good time for a change. If they are going to have any of those industrial uses, like Mr. Lamb mentioned, this is the part of town where they want it – away from the residential area. He thinks they should keep it Industrial. There might be one of those uses that want to come to town and they do not want them near residential areas.

Chair Bosley stated that she agrees with staff's interpretation of the use of this property and how it benefits the City moving forward. She continued that when she looked at the list of items that were being precluded by changing this zoning, it left all the things they would intend or think are important, and took away the polluting, difficult industries that she would not necessarily want to see sitting right there on Winchester Street. She cannot imagine what an asphalt smelting plant would look like sitting there. This particular piece of property fitting in with its neighbors made more sense to her.

Chair Bosley asked if other councilors had questions or comments. Hearing none, she stated that she would entertain a motion.

Councilor Workman made the following motion, which was seconded by Councilor Johnsen.

On a vote of 3-1, the Planning, Licenses, and Development Committee recommends adopting Ordinance O-2020-04.

Councilor Jones was opposed.

There being no further business, Chair Bosley adjourned the meeting at 7:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,  
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk