

City of Keene
New Hampshire

PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday April 1, 2020

4:30 PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Douglas Barrett, Chairman
Chris Cusack, Vice Chair
Michael Burke
Mayor George Hansel
David Orgaz
Gail Somers
Councilor Michael Remy
Emily Lavigne Bernier, Alternate
Tamm Adams, Alternate

Staff Present:

Rhett Lamb, Asst. City Manager/Community
Development Director
Tara Kessler, Senior Planner
Mari Brunner, Planner

Members Not Present:

Andrew Weglinski
Pamela Russell Slack

I. Statement of Authority to Hold Remote Meeting

Chair Barrett began the meeting by reading the following statement with respect to holding remote meetings: “In Emergency Order #12, issued by the Governor of the State of New Hampshire pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, certain provision of RSA 91-A regulating the operation of public body meetings have been waived during the declared COVID-19 State of Emergency.

II. Call to order – Roll Call

Chair Barrett called the meeting to order at approximately 4:45 PM and roll call was taken. All members of the Board were asked to disclose if there were any other persons in the room with them.

III. Review and Discussion of Zoom Online Meeting Platform

Chair Barrett called on Tara Kessler, Senior Planner to explain the purpose of this meeting and to initiate this discussion topic.

Ms. Kessler explained that the purpose of this Planning Board meeting is to ensure that the Board is familiar and comfortable with using Zoom in advance of the next Planning Board meeting. She stated that other than this discussion topic, which is focused on testing Zoom and preparing for an online meeting format, there is no official business for the Board to conduct during the meeting.

Ms. Kessler noted that she would be reviewing a mock presentation similar to what the Board

will experience at their next meeting on April 13, 2020. She has asked the applicants, who will be presenting at this meeting, to join the Board this evening.

After ensuring that Board members were comfortable with the tools of the Zoom platform, such as mute/unmute and raise hand, Ms. Kessler started the mock presentation. She reviewed the roles of the Chair, Board, staff, and applicant during the meeting. She presented a fake application for a subdivision and reviewed how the Board will walk through each step of the public hearing process with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. The Board was asked to practice conducting roll call votes on each motion. The applicants were asked to practice presenting on the fake application. City staff were asked to offer comments on the fake presentation. The Chair and Board became familiar with how they will be asked to speak and how they will discuss questions/comments with the applicants and staff. They also reviewed the proposed method for soliciting public comment during the meeting. Ms. Kessler noted that they would be demonstrating this method during the next agenda item.

Prior to moving on to the next agenda item, the Board generally discussed their thoughts on this presentation and with conducting an online meeting.

IV. Public Comment

Ms. Kessler noted that they have arranged for City staff to demonstrate how the public would call into a public hearing. Ms. Kessler worked with Rhett Lamb to test the method for how the public would call into the meeting, and provide comments to the Board. She noted that staff are still working to improve the process and the method that they use on April 13 would be similar but may vary slightly than what is being tested this evening. Staff and the Board practiced a few options for how the public might be brought into this online meeting format.

V. Upcoming Dates of Interest

Planning Board Meeting – April 13; 6:30 PM

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Tara Kessler, Senior Planner