

**ALTON PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP  
MINUTES OF 2021  
TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021**

**APPROVED**

**Members Physically Present:**

Drew Carter, Chairman  
Roger Sample  
Scott Williams  
Bill O'Neil  
Virgil MacDonald, Selectmen's Rep.

**Members Appearing Remotely:**

Russ Wilder, Clerk, Home alone

**Others Physically Present:**

Jessica A. Call, Town Planner  
Amelia Cate, Planning Secretary/Zoom Moderator

***UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE: To keep our members and staff safe, and to comply with RSA 91-A, the COVID-19 State of Emergency, and the Governor's Orders on restrictions at public gatherings, the Town of Alton has moved from "in-person" meetings to "remote audio participation meetings". To remotely attend the meeting visit our website: [www.alton.nh.gov](http://www.alton.nh.gov), for the conference call and Zoom access instructions listed under "News and Announcements" on the home page. If you are having difficulties accessing the meeting, please call (603) 507-1002.***

**Call to Order**

Mr. Carter called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. +/-

The Board started with the Construction Observation Guidelines. Ms. Call noted that there were some more changes that she made, but most were just formatting. She noted that she went through the wording and made sure that it coincided with the Site Plan Review Regulations and the Zoning Ordinance. She pointed out that the Board stated previously that they wanted to take out the reference to the four (4') foot diameter catch basin, but it was actually indicated as that size in the Highway Policies and Regulations, and wondered if they wanted to change it. It was noted that that was a standard size, but if there were intersections coming into a catch basin, then it would bump up to the five (5') feet in diameter. Ms. Call noted she would take out the reference to "four (4') feet". Ms. Call noted she added a definition for "Punch List"; the Board agreed with it. Mr. Wilder liked the reference to the Zoning Ordinance in the definition section. On Page 24, Ms. Call added a note, but Mr. Wilder thought that the reference was for the Selectmen when they made the decision to take over a road.

Mr. Williams thought that Section 4.3 Construction Observations Escrow should include some type of method of what the Town Engineers would be using to generate their costs of service. Ms. Call asked if that was similar to the worksheet entitled A-3 Project Security Worksheet. Mr. Williams noted that the engineer would fill out that worksheet with the number of materials needed and then use an online program to plug in those numbers, along with a zip code, and a price point would result. Mr. Williams would send Ms. Call some companies to refer to. Mr. Carter did not think that the Board could restrict the engineer to estimating based solely upon those online programs. Ms. Call would ask the town engineers what they used to price projects.

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Mr. Williams wondered why the Board did not allow colored plans. Mr. Carter thought that was because if the plan was color coded, those indicators would not show up on a black and white copy. Mr. Williams thought that the Town should invest in a large printer/scanner so the office did not have to lend out plans to people that needed copies; he thought that was a risk. On another note, Ms. Call pointed out how much paper was used to create packets for meetings, and she noted that it was excessive. Mr. MacDonald thought that a warrant article should be written up by the Board to request electronic devices for Board members to use during meetings.

The Board moved on to the Site Plan Review Regulations.

Ms. Call asked the Board to refer to the January 12, 2021, Planning Board Workshop minutes. She indicated that the Board made some suggested changes at that January meeting, but she thought that they would be best addressed with the ZAC Committee, like:

- Adding a definition for “Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations” to the existing “Automobile Service Station”;
- Clarifying the definition of “Modular Homes” and the current definition in the Zoning Ordinance for “Pre-Site Built Housing”. There was a section in the ordinance entitled “Manufactured Housing”, and that was where “Modular Housing” was listed, and that was misleading. There was also a question about “Panelized Housing” and whether that should be listed as well;
- “Historic Structures” – Ms. Call stated that she had a meeting with Mary Cornelissen and Mr. Dever, and Mr. Cornelissen suggested that the definition for “Historic Structures” also include the information from the State on how a structure can qualify as historic. Ms. Call noted that Section 5.13 in the Site Plan Regs entitled “Protection of Natural and Historic (Structures) and Features” did not guide the Board on how to determine whether a structure was historic, what would the Board be looking for. She thought that this should not just sit in the Site Plan Regs, she thought that it should be some type of ordinance because someone may come in with a building permit for a historic house, or one could be located on a subdivision plan. Mr. Williams suggested that Ms. Call contact Gilmanton, Gilford, and Wolfeboro to talk to someone on their historic committees, and John and Nancy Downing here in Alton. Mr. Williams thought that there could be some incentive by the town to save these buildings like a tax break. Mr. MacDonald stated that the Town already did that with historic barns. The historic buildings in town were town hall, Derocher’s, the meeting house at Gilman Corner, the grange in West Alton, the train trestle on Letter S Road, and more. Ms. Call noted that when she talked to Mr. Cornelissen, he did not have any specific criteria for the Board to determine, and that it was actually up to the Board to come up with they felt was appropriate. Mr. O’Neil thought that something should be put in place so when a permit was applied for on a historic structure, there was a way to notify the Historic Commission so they could go and look at it before it was torn down.

It was clarified that the last Master Plan was in fact completed in 2007, not 2005. Ms. Call was to research the average kW for residential homes and small businesses and get back to the Board at their next workshop.

Ms. Call noted that one of the biggest things discussed at the February Workshop was the definition section. She pointed out that at least 60-70 of the definitions came directly from the Zoning Ordinance and she thought

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that when definitions were updated in the Zoning Ordinance, over time, definitions would not be reflected properly in the sets of regulations until that particular set was updated. After a lengthy conversation at the February Workshop, Ms. Call went through all of the definitions in the Site Plan Regs that appear in the Zoning Ordinance and deleted the definition and in its place she indicated, "See Town of Alton Zoning Ordinance for definition". She further pointed out that when applicants were applying for an application, if they did their due diligence, they would be referring to more than one document.

Mr. MacDonald brought up Section 5.05 Streets, Roads and Driveways, "All public and private streets .....requirements and standards of the Town of Alton Highway Policies and Regulations." He wondered why that was written in the Regulations and when people came in they were told that the Board did not use those. Ms. Call noted that this Regulation had been in place for a while. Mr. MacDonald stated that Ms. Call and Mr. Dever told people that the Board did not use them, that they were "Kenny's" regulations. Mr. Carter thought that the Board was trying to create a hierarchy of which regulation overruled another regulation. He saw Mr. MacDonald's point. Mr. Carter thought that what Mr. MacDonald was stating was that the current regulation in the Site Plan Regs referred people back to the Highway Regs. Mr. MacDonald stated that this regulation stated that people should use the Highway Regs and it was the Planning Board's regulation. Ms. Call stated that she would talk to Town Counsel about this regulation. The Highway Regs informed people how to the build a road, and the Construction Observation Guidelines guided people on how to inspect a road. Mr. MacDonald stated that Highway Regulation 8.5 stated that the Road Agent or someone with three to five years of experience could inspect a road. Mr. Carter thought that the Highway Regs needed to be adjusted. Mr. MacDonald stated that the Highway Regs were set up so that the Road Agent could build and inspect the roads. Mr. Carter thought that was a conflict of interest because the Road Agent would be the one saying they were built fine.

Ms. Call recapped that she would be talking to Town Counsel about letters of credit versus bonding, and have him review the proposed amendments to the regulations. The next workshop was scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2021.

**Adjournment**

**Mr. Williams MOVED to adjourn.**

**Mr. MacDonald seconded the motion.**

**Mr. Carter called for a roll call vote:**

**Roger Sample, Aye; Scott Williams, Aye; Virgil MacDonald, Aye; Bill O'Neil, Aye; Drew Carter, Aye; Russ Wilder, Aye.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 P.M. +/-

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica A. Call, Town Planner  
Minutes approved as amended: May 18, 2021