

**Board Present:** Alan Putnam – Chair, Bill Rescsanski, Alissa Bascom, Keith Weed, Stacy Hassett, Richard Carter

**Alternate:** Lenny Ostasiewski

**Board Absent:** Patty Chaffee

**Public Present:** Jason Lopez, Shawna Jammis, Dick Lincourt, David Streeter, Albert St. Pierre, Lorri Boynton

Alan Putnam called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

*Lenny Ostasiewski sat for Patty Chaffee.*

### **Approval of minutes of 10/03/2023 & 10/17/23**

Motion by Ms. Bascom to approve the meeting minutes of October 3, 2023, seconded by Mr. Weed. 7-0-0, motion approved.

Motion by Ms. Bascom to approve the meeting minutes of October 17, 2023, seconded by Mr. Rescsanski. 7-0-0, motion approved.

### **Applications:**

#### **1. Sign Permit Application: Rick Fortier's Storage Units on Old Claremont Rd**

Ms. Emerson explained that the applicant is proposing two signs. The applicant has received State approval for a sign on a State road. The proposal is for one 2'x4' sign on Route 12 and one 2'x2' on a post on Old Claremont Road. These signs are not proposed to be lit at this time but may be lit by small LED lights in the future. These signs will include vinyl lettering on PVC board.

Motion by Ms. Bascom to approve sign permit for Lawrence Fortier, seconded by Mr. Hassett. 7-0-0, motion approved.

#### **2. 2023-SDFP-004: 689 River Road LLC & Chinburg Properties (Owners) Jason Lopez of Keach-Nordstrom Associates Inc. (Agents):** request final review for a 20-lot subdivision; the property is identified as Map 207 Lot 002 and is located at 689 River Rd in the Mixed Use (E) Zoning District.

There was discussion regarding abutter notification. Ms. Emerson stated that there is receipt that proper notification was sent to abutters.

Motion by Ms. Bascom to accept the application as complete, seconded by Mr. Hassett. 7-0-0, motion approved.

Jason Lopez, Keach-Nordstrom Associates, Inc., explained that this is a proposal for a 20-lot open space development. The property was purchased in May 2022 from the Student Conservation Association. In August, he was before the Board to present a five-acre subdivision of the property, which has since been approved and sold. There are two existing buildings on the property which will remain. North of this is a field that the applicant is proposing to develop. The property contains 44.7 acres, with 2,717' of frontage on River Road and approximately 2,000' of frontage along the Connecticut River. In the Mixed-Use Zone, the applicant is allowed to have half acre lots, when serviced by municipal water and/or sewer. There is municipal water in this area. The applicant may also seek the Board's approval for lot

averaging. To utilize this calculation, the property must be at least 20 acres and none of the lots may be less than 15,000 s.f. The subdivision regulations deal with frontage and require 200' of frontage, but a waiver can be requested from the Board if the applicant is proposing lot averaging. A waiver from 200' to 80' of frontage for each lot will be submitted. The project proposes a 1,350' long, 20' wide road and an open space lot of 3.7 acres to protect trees along the subdivision. There are no wetland impacts from this proposal. The Connecticut River has a 250' zone protection buffer and the project has been designed to stay outside of this. An Alteration of Terrain permit will be required, and an application has been submitted. A drainage design has been completed as part of the application. The applicant also filed with the Ascutney Subcommittee regarding local river advisory. A few historic artifacts have been located on the site and a determination was made by the State that there will be no adverse effects. A State driveway permit has been applied for. The municipal water line along River Road is proposed to be brought into the property. A State subdivision application will be completed. Test pits have been dug on the site and there are appropriate locations for septic systems. There is 400' of sight distance along River Road.

Ms. Bascom asked why the current driveway is not proposed to be used. Mr. Lopez stated that there can be multiple driveway access locations due to the amount of existing frontage. NH DOT may require that one of the access points be eliminated.

Mr. Lopez stated that the intention is for the Town to take over the road in the future. This will not be a condominium association but may have an HOA.

Mr. Weed noted that the driveway culverts have a 15" Town standard requirement. He does not believe the Town wants to get involved in a retention area.

Lorri Boynton expressed concern regarding this proposal. She asked what type of houses will be built. A representative of Chinburg Properties stated that the intention is to create 2–3-bedroom, stick-built, workforce properties. The average size home will be approximately 1,000 s.f.

Ms. Boynton stated that North Charlestown is a quaint village, and this proposal will bring in many tiny houses. This is not the proper placement for this. She asked if there should be a second access point for the property. She is against this proposal.

David Streeter also expressed concerns.

Ms. Bascom noted that there is a great deal of need for "missing middle" housing types in this area of Town. Mr. Lopez agreed that this type of affordable downsizing or starter homes are needed.

Mr. Lopez explained that the road is proposed with open drainage along the side. Stormwater is proposed to be directed to a detention pond, with catch basins in the swale along the way.

Ms. Bascom asked about the retention pond proposed. She stated that it would be a lot of responsibility for a homeowner to maintain this. Generally, HOAs are formed to maintain these structures. Mr. Lopez stated that this could also be placed on an open space lot that could be under fee ownership of the HOA. This can be worked out in the process.

Ms. Bascom stated that there is a huge need for this type of housing in Town. This will be 20 quality homes that add to the tax base, without adding a significant burden on the school system or Town services.

In response to a question from Mr. Rescsanski, Mr. Lopez stated that the open space will go under restricted covenant. While potential uses would be decided by the HOA, the best use of the space would be to remain as a woody buffer. The Town could also consider purchasing the open space area.

It was noted that the approximate cost of these houses would be \$300,000. Ms. Boynton expressed concern regarding these houses being sold. She stated that doctors will not be attracted by these small homes at this distance from the hospitals. She asked if soil testing has been completed to determine if it is contaminated. Ms. Emerson stated that 20 test pits were dug on the property, but she is unclear of the results. Mr. Lopez stated that financing of this property was completed through a bank and, typically, this process would include environmental studies.

Motion by Ms. Bascom to continue this application to December 5, 2023, seconded by Mr. Hassett. 7-0-0, motion approved.

**New Business:**

1. Housing Chapter Presentation

Dick Lincourt presented with Bill Rescsanski regarding the updated Housing Chapter. There were recommendations made regarding an accessory dwelling unit bylaw. It was noted that the Board could vote to adopt the Housing Chapter at any time. The Board agreed to discuss other potential zoning warrant articles at the December 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Administration:**

None at this time.

**Continued Business:**

None at this time.

**Communications:** None at this time.

a) **Board – Master Plan Discussion**

b) **Public Participation:**

Motion by Mr. Ostasiewski to adjourn at 9:12pm, seconded by Mr. Carter. 7-0-0, motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Patenaude  
Recording Secretary