



TOWN OF WARNER

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Planning Board Meeting November 18, 2024, DRAFT Minutes

Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

I. **OPEN MEETING :** Chair Karen Coyne called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM.

ROLL CALL

Planning Board Member	Present	Absent
Karen Coyne, Chair	✓	
James Gaffney arrived at 7:11 PM	✓	
Pier D'Aprile	✓	
Barak Greene, Vice Chair	✓	
Ian Rogers	✓	
Harry Seidel – Select Board	✓	
John Leavitt	✓	
Bob Holmes – Alternate	✓	

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

David Bates asked for an update on the search for a land use secretary. Karen Coyne explained there have been approximately 5 candidates interviewed and two more tomorrow. David Bates asked for an update on the public input relating to HAC. Karen Coyne explained the progress to date. She indicated that it could be a part of tonight's discussion.

Ed Mical informed the Planning Board that FEMA and the State reviewed the Warner Hazardous Mitigation Plan and the Select Board voted to approve the plan. Next year he will be back to ask the Planning Board to incorporate the Hazardous Mitigation Plan as an attachment to the Master Plan. James Gaffney stated according to the RSA the Master Plan is a Planning Board document and he believes it should be a stand-alone document.

III. MINUTES: November 18, 2024

Barak Greene made a motion seconded by Harry Seidel to accept the November 18, 2024, Planning Board meeting as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Michael Smith Select Board – Discuss Potential lot sales

None

B. Floodplain Ordinance Ed Mical – Discuss Floodplain Ordinance wording/revisions

Ed Mical brought forward the Floodplain Ordinance that was reviewed by the State's office of Planning and Development. He asked the Planning Board to go through the ordinance to stay in compliance with FEMA's floodplain program. Barak Greene stated this will require the Planning Board to adopt the changes to the Floodplain ordinance, the flood hazard areas of the site plan review regulations and make changes to the subdivision regulations. James Gaffney noted that the Planning Board has the authority to amend the site plan review regulations but zoning changes need to be brought to town meeting. Karen Coyne outlined the required

procedural steps that will be needed to adopt the suggested ordinance changes. The Planning Board reviewed the deadlines for postings and hearings.

C. Housing Chapter Master Plan Draft – Board discussions on new Master Plan draft. (Second of at least four planned discussions. This discussion is to focus on bias.) The public is invited and encouraged to attend. Karen Coyne asked the Planning Board to discuss bias as a starting point. John Leavitt asked how the Planning Board would encourage residents to build energy efficient homes. He noted that just writing it in the ordinance is not sufficient. Barak Greene inquired about density bonuses. He clarified that it is not a financial incentive it would be the allowance of 2 or 3 units opposed to just one. John Leavitt spoke about his concern that in the future there could be a tax incentive given.

Harry Seidel pointed to areas in the previous two Master Plans that specifically points to the opinions and objectives that the towns people have said they wanted for Warner. James Gaffney noted there are areas in the Master Plan that the town's people have changed their position on such as sidewalks, which they have voted down twice. He stated the HAC is Planning Board document and this chapter is about recognizing the housing shortfalls in town and in the county. James Gaffney stated that the Planning Board asked for suggestions and recommendations but they received a draft of the entire document. He stated that he is concerned that the first portion was written to justify the end outcome. Bob Holmes explained that input was received and the recommendations were drawn from that input. He further noted that some of the proposals received were very specific relating to energy efficiency which is where the encouraging language came from. He stressed that recommendations are not requirements. Barak Greene suggested that the financial impact of sidewalks attributed to the voting down of sidewalks. James Gaffney reiterated that the survey pointed to high property taxes as a major concern for the residents in Warner. He is concerned that is being ignored in the draft document and it goes on to other things that will cost the town more money. Ian Rogers stated that public opinion has changed relating to sidewalks but that should not be construed as a rejection of other chapters. He stated that sidewalks are separate from energy and housing. Ian Rogers stated that a discussion of costs could be added to the chapter. He stressed that the focus of this chapter is housing, not budget or property taxes. He stated that Master Plan includes an implementation section where it lists all the recommendations and the potential costs of implementing certain ideas.

Bob Holmes reiterated that this discussion is on the housing chapter not property taxes or spending. He suggested language that says “as we review the zoning ordinance the property tax impact needs to be considered”. Barak Greene spoke about the ways the housing chapter can help struggling residents; he suggested allowing ADU's and multi-family housing. He spoke about the increase of subdividing property for family members or to sell it for additional income. Barak Greene stated that the Town can make all that easier by decreasing the road frontage requirements and acreage. He suggested the town can add uses to zoning areas. James Gaffney stated that much of the survey response indicated that residents want to maintain the rural nature of Warner. He stated that the zoning ordinances are not currently being taken advantage of. Ian Rogers explained that he is aware of approximately 4 ADU's that have been built. He stressed that a small town like Warner will have a smaller number. He noted that most if not all the recommendations were designed with keeping Warner a small rural community. He stated the recommendations are designed to be solutions for Warner. Barak Greene spoke about the possibility of moving towards co-op multi-family housing. He stated that while property taxes are a concern for residents the residents have voted to approve the town budget. Harry Seidel spoke about the possibility of 2-4 unit residential buildings that developers would build for profit. He reiterated that Warner needs more housing and housing will develop a tax base.

Pier D'Aprile acknowledged that taxes/affordability is a high priority. He spoke about the significant amount of land that is town owned. He explained that Michael Smith (Select Board) has taken the initiative to sell town owned land to increase revenue. He would like the Planning Board to go through the draft keeping in mind that

amendments can be made. Karen Coyne agreed, she would like the discussion to get to the point where the Planning Board is discussing constructive change.

Derrick Narducci from the Zoning Board stated that he has only seen one ADU case in three years which leads him to believe that it is not zoning changes that are needed. Jan Myskowski asked for clarification on the term bias as noted on the agenda. Karen Coyne explained that during their first discussion there were several comments from the board that some of the recommendations seemed biased. David Bates encouraged the Planning Board to reach out to other boards and committees for their input in an effort to keep things moving along. Barb Marty cautioned about using the term “non-contiguous multi-family housing”. She spoke about the reference to the Community Land Trust, she feels that it is given too much weight in the document. Ian Rogers agreed that the Community Land Trust could be scaled back. Barb Marty cautioned about the areas in the document that stated Warner will *provide* instead of encourage or support.

James Gaffney would like the verbiage to encourage or support be replaced with “permitted by zoning ordinance”. He stated that it is his opinion that the zoning ordinance is the most succinct and accurate language that should be used. He further noted that throughout the document the ordinance is restated or explained which is not necessary. Ian Rogers explained the rationale behind restating or explaining the ordinance. He stated that the idea was to provide support for recommendations and ideas. He further stated that it provides a snapshot of the current Master Plan. Harry Seidel views the Master Plan as aspirational goals and objectives. He views this chapter as a different kind of document than the zoning ordinance. He spoke about his concern about replacing the verbiage *to encourage or support*, with “permitted by zoning ordinance”. He stated it would reduce the aspirational element. Karen Coyne stated that she is also uncomfortable with the verbiage “the town will provide”. Bob Holmes explained that restating or explaining the town’s ordinance is another way to inform residents about what is currently in place.

Karen Coyne asked the Planning Board to focus on moving away from theorizing and towards actual amendments. Barak Greene would like to strike the language regarding the housing commission. Barb Marty supports striking the housing commission section. David Bates suggested the Planning Board hold off on editing the document without receiving public input. Bob Holmes and Karen Coyne both explained that the HAC was opened to the public and the Planning Board discussions are open to the public. Derrick Narducci suggested reviewing the draft in the same manner they review minutes. Dana Myskowski stated that walkability referred to proximity to downtown not sidewalks. She spoke about a study that looked at expanding housing that allowed duplexes and other multi-family housing reduced the tax rate significantly. She advised the Planning Board that HAC is on the Library trustees agenda for tomorrow night.

The Planning Board recapped the suggested modifications

Ian Rogers:

Page 8 Chart H 1 median home values; add - these values are constantly changing and should be updated frequently.

Page 10 4th paragraph correction needed regarding the number of housing units needed per year

Page 13 Senior Housing Section 2nd paragraph 6th line strike communities replace with facilities

Page 13 Senior Housing Section 2nd paragraph 9th line strike issues replace with needs

Page 13 Senior Housing Section 1st paragraph add etc. after facilities

Page 15 Recommendations #6 should this be removed or should the Planning Board discuss reclassifying multifamily as 5 dwelling units

Barak Greene

Page 12 Housing Commission should be removed unless the Select Board decides to create one.

Page 13 Workforce Housing needs to be defined in relation to what it means to Warner and a recommendation that the Select Board create a Workforce Housing policy.

Bob Holmes

Page 13 Manufactured Housing 13 lines down add: is built on a permanent chassis

Page 12 Open Space Development chart: minimum lot size OC-1 needs clarification

Barb Marty

Page 14 noncontiguous multi-family language needs revised

Page 5 Community Land Trust section needs to be condensed

Page 2 replace the word provide with better verbiage (support, encourage, as allowed or permitted by ordinance)

Karen Coyne encouraged everyone to bring their suggested amendments to the next meeting. James Gaffney questioned if the draft should be distributed as it is now. The Planning Board had previously decided to take a pass at the document before distributing it. Ian Rogers would support distributing the draft to the various town boards and departments. Barak Greene concurred. John Leavitt questioned the definition of manufactured housing. Pier D'Aprile would prefer to send an email to various boards asking them to please review and provide suggestions allowing the Planning Board to manage the editing/revisions. The Planning Board agreed to send the draft to various committees and Boards. Harry Seidel will provide information on the energy efficiency component.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

IV. REPORTS

- a. Chair's Report- Chair, Karen Coyne

None

- b. Select Board - Harry Seidel

The search for a Land Use Secretary is still ongoing. Elderly Property Tax Exemption is under review.

- c. Regional Planning Commission - Derek Narducci, Ben Frost

None

- d. Economic Development Advisory Committee

None

- e. Agricultural Commission - James Gaffney

None

- f. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee

None

V. COMMUNICATIONS

None

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ian Rogers stated that the September 9th minutes still need to be reviewed. The October 7th Encore Renewable Energy review decision is not posted on the Town website.

IX. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty