

NEWRY PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, December 7, 2022
Raymond C. Foster Municipal Building

Full discussion on topics below is available on audio recording at the Newry Town Office.

Members Present: John (aka Gootsch) Gauthier (Board Chair), Bruce Pierce (Board Vice Chair), Ted Baker (Secretary)

Members & Staff Absent: Joelle Corey (Code Enforcement Officer), Randy Akers (Alternate)

Call to Order: Chairman John Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Current Attendance/Quorum: The Chair took attendance and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Prior Attendance/Voting Eligibility: All full members were at the last meeting and are eligible to vote at this meeting.

Previous Meeting's Minutes: The Board reviewed the previous meeting's minutes. **Bruce moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting of October 19, 2022, of the Newry Planning Board as revised on 10/28/2022, and Ted seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed with all voting in favor.**

Business - none

CEO Reports

- a) **Matterhorn/Starwood Fire Pond Update:** Matterhorn has a full sprinkler system according to the State Fire Marshall. The fire pond is still the water source for Starwood's fire protection. Bruce talked about his conversation with John, a member of Starwood Association, who was cutting back the alders. They are planning on getting someone in there probably next spring to dredge it. Ted explained what he found in his research on this topic. A cistern with a well was the fire protection that was approved by the Planning Board for the Matterhorn application. The Building Permit issued for the Matterhorn also says a drilled well and a 6,000-gallon cistern are to be installed – no fire pond is mentioned in either document. In Ted's research of the Town's files, the first mention of a fire pond on that property is a letter from the Fire Chief at that time, Tink Conkright, to Delphina Inc. There is no proof that the drilled well and cistern was ever put in place. In 2005 when the Starwood application came before the Board, that application talks about using the "existing approved fire pond" as it's source of fire protection. No covenants for Starwood talk about the association sharing in the maintenance of the fire pond. The fact of the matter is that the fire pond is there, Starwood depends on it, and there is correspondence on record that shows the Town's Fire Department has acknowledged its existence.

The lesson to be learned for the Planning Board is that in the future, the Board follow up and if a fire pond is required, then the Board should also require that draft covenants, etc. stipulate the maintenance responsibilities are required in the approval process.

The Board reviewed the current language in the UDRO regarding fire ponds.

The Board debated at length the possibility of the Town taking over fire ponds – or at least the maintenance of them.

Open Discussion

- a) **Continued UDRO edits for Campgrounds:** Gootsch noted that he listened to the recording of the first campground meeting that was posted on the website.

Brooks noted that there has been a second meeting, which is posted on that same website. Bruce interjected that the committee agreed upon the fact that campgrounds should only be allowed in the Rural District in the Town of Newry – not in the General Development nor Resort Districts. Bruce added that the committee is meeting again to extrapolate from that and go further to discuss minimum size, density, etc. Ted pointed out that it seems the committee completed the task per the letter that the Select Board approved for the formation of the committee--- deciding in which district(s) campgrounds should be allowed--- and that the details would be a Planning Board function.

Brooks stated that included in the second video is a link or a picture of the State's Planning Office's guidelines for campgrounds which covered more details, including RV's. Brooks spoke of the concern of only one way out of the Sunday River valley, and that RV campgrounds would need to be on flat land. He recommended that the Planning Board look at the State Planning Office's website for guidance.

Bruce stated that the committee is meeting again in January – Wednesday, January 11th.

Ted said that he drafted a new definition for campgrounds; however, a copy of that draft was not available for the Board to review tonight. It will need to wait until the next Planning Board meeting.

The group discussed the Grafton Notch Campground and its approval within Shoreland Zone.

It was reiterated that the Planning Board still needs to come up with some parameters for campground standards.

- b) Ted would like to get the Board's thoughts on proposing a moratorium on major, minor and site plan developments north of the post office in the Sunday River valley. Ted spoke of his concerns with the intersection of Sunday River Road and Skiway Road and the amount of traffic that intersection sees during some peak periods each year. He said at times, it is a liability waiting to happen. He spoke about several close calls he has witnessed there as a shuttle bus driver for the resort and noted that in the Comprehensive Plan approved in 2005, the task was for the Town and the resort to pursue some resolution to the traffic situation on Sunday River Road for first responders' access and for traffic safety at that intersection. Some Board members spoke of some improvements made by the DOT in 2006. Ted talked about future development and the additional traffic that will result from those developments. Gootsch suggested that someone contact DOT and request a traffic study on that intersection – perhaps Loretta or Joelle. Following discussion about various future developments in the area, Ted said that, although egress and exit of the valley is a concern, his primary concern is the Skiway Road/Sunday River Road intersection, and he would like to discuss a resolution. It was noted that there are no speed limit signs in that area. Suggested solutions included traffic lights, a roundabout, etc. Other Board members noted that they would be okay with looking into a moratorium.

In view of the fact that the Board has not received any applications for consideration before this Board in the near future, Ted moved that the Board not meet on December 21st and move its next meeting to the first Wednesday in January, which is January 4th. Bruce seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Next Scheduled Meeting – Wednesday, January 4, 2023

Adjournment Gootsch moved to adjourn; Bruce seconded. Motion passed with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.