

**DRAFT**  
**Town of Fitzwilliam**  
**Planning Board Meeting**  
**April 7, 2015**

**Members Present:** Terry Silverman, Robin Blais, Suzanne Gray, Mac Landy, Tom Parker and Nancy Carney, Selectman.

**Others present:** Selectman Holman arrived at 7:20 PM

**Call to Order:** 7:05 PM

**Vendor Permit.** Silverman moved, Gray seconded and the Board approved the vendor permit for Kevin Rule to operate his kayak and canoe rental business from May to October 2015 on property located at 311 NH Route 12 S., Map 12, Lot 12. The Chairman signed the permit.

**Monadnock Region Future: A Plan for Southwest New Hampshire.** The Board reviewed the document prepared by Southwest Region Planning Commission. It states that “In developing this Plan, SWRPC sought the opinions, ideas and perspectives of hundreds of residents, workers, and/or visitors of the Region.” Hard copy is available for review in the Land Use Office and the plan is available electronically.

**Minutes.** The Board reviewed the March 17, 2015 meeting minutes. Gray moved, Landy seconded and the Board approved the minutes as written.

**Depot Road Layout.** The new layout was presented to and approved by Town Meeting 2015. Silverman and Blais signed the Mylar for recording at the Cheshire County Registry of Deeds.

**Quarry Report.** Carney reported that the state’s March PQDG removal report for the KMO/Webb Hill Quarry indicated zero cubic yards of material removed.

**Route 12 Corridor Study.** Suzanne Gray attended the meeting and reported on the study conducted by SWRPC. Silverman had written to Lisa Murphy, SWRPC Senior Planner, regarding this study suggesting changes. Gray said all agreed that the intersection of Route 12 and Route 119 in Fitzwilliam was problematic. Various solutions have been discussed and dismissed for one reason or another. The question is how to get drivers to slow down. She said of all the towns along this corridor, Fitzwilliam has the straightest and flattest section of Route 12 and the heaviest truck traffic and highest speeds. This safety issue needs to be resolved to encourage business location along this corridor. Carney said there was no discussion about traffic enforcement on Route 12. Parker noted it is state police who enforce traffic speeds on this road.

Another Study recommendation asks towns to maintain their rails to trails pathways along Route 12 to encourage their use by non-motorized travel. There was some discussion about rumble strips to slow speed but it is a noisy solution for residential neighborhoods along Route 12. Carney said she didn’t feel that pathways along Route 12 in Fitzwilliam were feasible given the safety issues. Gray said she was impressed with the research that went into this study.

Mr. Holman asked to speak to the Board. He wondered if the Board had discussed expanding the Town Energy Policy in the Master Plan. He feels a more comprehensive policy would

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provide leverage for upcoming projects. He added that wetlands are a big issue for the Board and at some point the issue of septic systems may land in the Board's lap. He asked about the Energy Committee. Landy felt the Selectmen had not supported the Committee's work and so it disbanded. Holman said renewable energy provides mitigation opportunities.

Gray said she wasn't sure where he was going with this topic. Blais said a strong statement on using renewable energy is important. Holman said he was at the State House for the pipeline presentation and talked with the Kinder Morgan people who are in charge of the plan for property.

Silverman said the Town could establish tax abatements for homes with solar energy, adding that the state could stop the surtax on solar panels that feed the grid.

Holman said that would be a good way to attract solar businesses to town, adding that profits for these businesses are 10 times higher than profits for other businesses. Parker said if we want more people to use solar energy, then we need to provide more information. Holman said he felt wood heat was the best renewable choice for our area. Gray said she has solar panels on her house. Silverman said the American Lung Association has vouchers for people who replace wood burning stoves with catalytic converters with stoves with re-burners.

Silverman asked Gray about her impression of the State Senators' meeting with Kinder Morgan. She said Senator Sanborn made his case against eminent domain takings in the pipeline case. Kinder Morgan said they had never taken property by eminent domain; however, she felt that FERC probably had done it for them. The public was not allowed to ask questions of Kinder Morgan. David Maloney and Maryann Harper made presentations on alternatives to the pipeline, on environmental issues and on eminent domain, giving copies to the Senators. A Selectman from Mason, NH spoke, letting the Senators know that Mason had allocated \$80,000 to fight the pipeline, unheard of for Mason, according to him.

Gray said she encouraged Nancy Nye, whose home is in the path of the proposed pipeline, to speak about the impact of eminent domain so the Senators could hear from a real person whose home is threatened. Ms. Nye told them she had been in Fitzwilliam since 1960 and that soon after arriving PSNH had come in with their power lines, promising a ball field, which never materialized. Gray told the Senators that Fitzwilliam has 2000 acres of wetland, conservation land with no easement provisions for a pipeline, lots of granite and a superfund site on or near the proposed route.

Gray said NH Plan-Pipeline Awareness group is a professional and very well organized group who plan to meet with the Governor on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Gray was surprised to hear Senator Molly Kelly say she didn't know much about the pipeline and was just learning about it. Gray noted that more education and outreach needs to be done – "we need to get the word out and energize the state." Carney said Senator Kelly had been invited to every meeting Fitzwilliam has held on the pipeline.

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Silverman said he and Susan had attended a meeting in Brookline to organize a coalition of towns for the purpose of hiring an attorney to represent all 17 towns affected. He said Amherst now opposes the route, not the pipeline itself.

Carney said Avitar, the town's assessing firm, estimated that the amount of taxes to be gained by the pipeline installation as estimated by Kinder Morgan, was inflated by about 20 – 30 thousand dollars. The town has asked Avitar to estimate the impact on residential property taxes of the devaluation of all properties caused by the pipeline, not only abutting properties.

Silverman thought it was time for a Board discussion about Town regulations. He thinks the regulations regarding mining that passed in 2014 should be added to our zoning code as soon as the proposed changes to state legislation pass.

Parker thinks the Board might want to consider whether current lot sizes, frontage and setbacks are reasonable. It is his opinion that the restrictions were put in place to keep the town from growing too big by spreading growth out. He said Paul Grasewicz told him some of the Town's setbacks exceed those of the state. Parker would like the Board to review the zoning ordinance now while it is quiet in Town.

Silverman said the Prime Wetlands study authorized at Town Meeting would help determine whether some of the wetland standards could be relaxed. Parker asked what it costs the town to enforce these restrictions, adding that he'd like the state to do it. Silverman said that if the Town had a local shoreland protection ordinance, the Town would know about violations that could then be enforced by the state.

Gray, Silverman and Blais initiated a discussion about scenic roads and scenic sites, following up on the presentation by Eversource, which they felt denigrated the aesthetic and scenic nature of Fitzwilliam. They noted that the Master Plan does not mention scenic roads or scenic site protections and maybe it is time to look at these issues. Carney and Parker both feel education is the key to a successful scenic roads designation effort. Parker suggested signage entering Fitzwilliam stating "You are entering beautiful scenic Fitzwilliam."

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.