

**TOWN OF UNITY
LAND USE REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 31, 2013
LOCATION: UNITY MASONIC LODGE, UNITY, MAINE**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kenney, Nancy Zane, Randy Reynolds, Tony Avilla, Mark Nickerson, John McIntire, Barry McCormick, Don Newell, Emily Newell

OBSERVERS: Charlie Porter

RECORDER: Sherry Powell-Wilson

Jim Kenney called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Jim Kenney: First, I want to make the group aware of a personal standard I have, that being I do not want you to feel you have to put your lives at risk trying to make it into a meeting due to inclement weather. Second, we need to get something out of the way, that being that John Piotti would like to come before us. I'm asking for a commitment. Would we be ready to have here John on the 6th?

Mark Nickerson: Why do we need him to speak?

Jim Kenney: Let's see, what are some of the things? If it is the decision not to have him here then I will say that. I think he has some knowledge and I say let him make a presentation, 20-30 minutes. He has knowledge that we might want to have and need.

Barry McCormick: Are we ready? I say give us some time.

Jim Kenney: Do you think it is too soon?

Don Newell: We need to have a strong foundation of what we're doing before we dive into meeting with him.

Tony Avilla: I think it is too soon right now.

John McIntire: I don't have enough background, yet, I would like to know why they did it the way they did, such as why Main Street was eliminated from development or is it time to change our way of thinking? Without the history of knowing why they set it up the way they did....we don't want to try and reinvent without knowing the history.

Emily Newell: It would be good to know why the lines were drawn as they were, and John could shed light on the history. I'm not really giving an answer.

Jim Kenney: I interpret that as yes but not yes.

Emily Newell: I would like to determine what each district is allowing in before any recommendations or changes are made. We should outline all of the districts first.

Nancy Zane: I would consider his input to be helpful.

Emily Newell: I don't see any reason to wait. More important, we need to hear him sometime. I don't feel like it is too soon, and he should be involved more than once. I would like to hear his ideas.

Jim Kenney: My thoughts are we need to hear him.

Emily Newell: Is he the Chair of the Planning Board?

Jim Kenney: I think we will be meeting with the Planning Board more frequently than not, we will be meeting with all of them.

Barry McCormick: I feel when it is time to make the presentation, that it be from all members of the Planning Board and let John say what he has to say in front of all of them. We need to plan what we are going to do, get a handle on it, move forward, keep everyone abreast, and everyone on the Planning Board will have a vote and this might get them more involved.

Jim Kenney: You are saying we go to them as part of the whole?

Barry McCormick: Educate the whole board.

Don Newell: We're not trying to educate the Planning Board. We have been charged with looking at this ordinance, making it easier for folks to use. When you get to the change part, that's not a Planning Board function. They would have to meet the terms of the ordinance. John's presentation could be what went into making this, and I suspect he would go back to what was a comprehensive plan. Unity was one of the first towns in Maine to create a comprehensive plan and John was in a great position, he was qualified, there were grant monies involved of \$6,000-\$7,000. It was a very laborious process costing upwards of \$20,000 to do the comprehensive plan. What he will do is share with us how that comprehensive plan evolved, how those 24 people felt and how that translated into an ordinance, and how it was pushed and this and KVCOG came together. Sixty percent of this document (current ordinance) is KVCOG. John knows the whole history of how this came together and well as some of the issues that may confront us as we try to push through this. John knows the history and how it implicates this body. I think we are in part wasting our time if we don't get this behind us.

Nancy Zane: Thank you, that helped clarify the whole process and I think you're right. It would be nice to hear that whole historical prospective.

Barry McCormick: Don won't be here next week.

Jim Kenney: It would be important for everyone to be here. Any feelings on what Don has said?

Barry McCormick: I still think it is too early. I think we need to know more about it.

Mark Nickerson: We need to delve into this more before he shows up here. We need to be able to ask the right questions.

Jim Kenney: When do you think that might be?

Barry McCormick: One more thing, I don't care how this (ordinance) was formed. We have been requested to change this up, we're dealing with it in present day so does it really matter how it got here? Will that play a part in my decisions?

Tony Avilla: In looking at this, there are all kinds of lines here (on the map) and there is a reason behind those lines and I would like to know the reasoning behind this. I think it should be squared out. I'm not saying he should come in now...

Jim Kenney: When do you think that might be? Several months from now?

Don Newell: The answer to the question will come in the presentation. Why are you pushing that off? On page 6 it tells us why the lines are the way they are, and John will indulge.

Tony Avilla: Like Emily said, we should meet more than once with him. We could find out what the reasons were behind this, look further into it, and have him come back.

Emily Newell: Three weeks from now, maybe a couple weeks.

Don Newell: One-quarter of the way into these meetings.

Randy Reynolds: To reply to Tony, he is just getting to know enough about this, when we get in there we will start asking ourselves questions. I think we need to read the ordinance backwards and forwards so we know how things fit together.

Jim Kenney: You're saying you're not ready.

Don Newell: To follow up with Randy, it seems to me as we start talking about this we will start talking about changes, so it will be hard to confirm how we should change it. I don't disagree with you a bit. We need to jump right in, take a short period of time to learn the thing.

Jim Kenney: I'm sensing, correct me if I am wrong, yes someday but ... this time next month?

Emily Newell: Sometime like a month from now.

Randy Reynolds: We just spent a week getting some plans; we have got to get into the ordinance to do anything knowledgeable.

Jim Kenney: Would you be comfortable a month from now?

Barry McCormick: We've spent too much time on this particular subject. Let's get a motion on this, will table this for a month and then we'll get back to him. End of discussion?

All in favor.

Jim Kenney: Any adjustment to the Minutes, how say you on the Minutes? Are there any issues that need to be addressed? I found that the Minutes reflected what was discussed here. Are the Minutes acceptable?

Barry McCormick: I approve.

All in favor.

Barry passed around a document on creating a user-friendly ordinance and procedures.

Jim Kenney: Moving on the agenda, let's talk about the village district. Emily has done some work.

John McIntire: I want to say thank you to Randy for making these maps, crisp, easy to read.

Emily Newell: I read through the ordinance again and I marked every section that would pertain to somebody wanting advice building-wise in the village district. I started with general provisions, basic stuff, administration; I found these were all applicable to starting in the village district. I thought I would keep pulling out stuff specifically to the village district, yet the document was getting really long. What I did was I took it all out and made a table of contents section

and subsections and then listed whether it was applicable or not. I went through this twice. When we do the rural district, we will have more opportunity to pull in what is applicable. I thought if there would be a bigger section that it would be easier to summarize but I just couldn't do it. It is very overbearing.

Barry McCormick: Were there any in there that you question if they were applicable or not or was it 'black or white?'

Emily Newell: It was easy to understand what did apply.

Barry McCormick: Did you find stuff scattered throughout the whole book?

Emily Newell: I read it all from top to bottom.

Barry McCormick: Did you read each article and does it fit or not?

Emily Newell: Of course, we all read things different. I'm just curious, how many times did everyone read it?

Nancy Zane: It took me at least three times.

Jim Kenney: I have lost count of the number of times, but I have not made it all the way through. I have formed opinions.

Barry McCormick: I have read it four or five times.

Randy Reynolds: I have read it over 50 times over the years. My biggest problem is to go in and find something, or then I find something over here that is different, conflicts on different levels. I heard the statement during a Planning Board meeting that on doing something, it says no over here, but I can show you a dozen ways you can.

Barry McCormick: For example, when it comes to the signs, in one section it says one thing about having a lit sign, and then pages over it says you can have a lit sign but it has to be off when your business is not running. It is hard to determine.

Jim Kenney: Tony has a precedented interest in reshaping that. Tony has a business and if the sign is not on when you are not there, yet somebody needs to find him at 2 a.m. at times, bringing a car in.

Mark Nickerson: Why is it that we cannot have lit signs?

Randy Reynolds: Back 30 years ago one person thought that they should have no lit signs on buildings.

Charlie Porter: You are exactly right, one person.

Randy Reynolds: Emily did it right and she did a terrific job. I was looking for the village district, rural, and downtown all together, these are the table of contents, sections 1 through 11, and it goes right down through it. Downtown takes less than 10% of the whole thing. If we're going to make different districts, and I'm not pro or con either way, we need to have taken out what does not apply.

Emily Newell: Ten percent does not apply to the village district.

Randy Reynolds: We can have a package for each district, and then the 'Holy Bible' (the complete) on top.

Jim Kenney: That is what we were talking about last week, the different sections.

Randy Reynolds: I would like to offer some questions. Let's say the only thing they have to deal with is one district, who is going to tell them which district they are in?

Don Newell: Can't Sue do that?

Randy Reynolds: You have to have someone who is knowledgeable where these are... they need to know which map and lot to pick out in that district. In looking at a map of the whole Town of Unity, you really cannot tell the different districts.

Jim Kenney: You have formed an opinion that it would be clearer, not based on page count but content?

Randy Reynolds: The other way to approach would be to take this (document) and better define the districts in it. Have one or two pages, whatever it requires, even if it is only 10% of this whole thing, include images. Have it better defined. That will take some doing because you want to keep it all in one book (see pages, etc.).

Mark Nickerson: If I'm coming into town to build a business, say to build in the downtown district, Sue gives me the downtown booklet. Is everything going to be in that one booklet? Why do I need the 'Holy Bible' to reference if the little booklet will answer all my questions?

Randy Reynolds: You can do exactly that, give them this and it is up to them to figure out what district they are in. It would be their responsibility to figure out which district they would need.

Don Newell: Is it possible for you to go the next step and take these lines (on the map) over to the existing tax map? That way they could flip through and see where they are.

Randy Reynolds: The tax map is already on there; that's part of the process.

Don Newell: So they could determine where they are by looking at the map?

Randy Reynolds: As long as they get a tax map and lot number.

Emily Newell: Some towns, on their tax map, will have the outline of whatever district is on it.

Randy Reynolds: Who has control of the tax maps? They have to have somebody to keep them updated.

Jim Kenney: You do not have the digital master?

Randy Reynolds: I would like to get that.

Barry McCormick: My take on this is two options, in going through the process several times as a business-person, clarity is what we need. We have to make the master book easy to understand and organize each zone so it has its own booklet. Otherwise, if we do a good enough job with the master book, maybe we won't need the smaller books.

Don Newell: I think Randy has got it, dividing it so it isn't as small.

Barry McCormick: So I don't have to go through the whole thing. If we can accomplish that, we've done our job.

Jim Kenney: Randy has shown us what it would be like. I would like to be able to go into the office and say, 'I'm building at Depot Street #, tax map, lot#, and the map and the booklet.

Randy Reynolds: The general public needs to be brought up to speed.

Mark Nickerson: Why can't we put it right on the tax bill?

Randy Reynolds: That is very labor intensive, puts a lot of pressure on Sue.

Jim Kenney: Everyone who has tax bills know where their land is at.

Don Newell: Barry is frustrated because we're not making enough progress. I say we take a consensus, let's get a great idea, head for that and move on. I say three separate documents plus the master, that's our goal.

Emily Newell: I have a warning. I tried to summarize it and it is frightening trying to take out items without the knowledge of why it was in there in the first place, but we do need to make it plainer. I don't know that we can simplify it. Like, if you want to build in the Rural District, everything does apply to you.

Don Newell: The whole point is to reach a consensus for now. We need to take baby steps, it's a great idea and, based on your work, it makes sense.

Randy Reynolds: I would like to add one thing; this is a major step we're taking tonight. We need to make sure 100% of what we want is in the master before we start breaking down each district.

Barry McCormick: Randy and I came up with as we go through each paragraph, to label them as a key so we won't have to go through it all over again.

Jim Kenney: What this represents, we have to get our feet on the foundation. We have two basic districts, we have at least downtown and rural, but then we have three overlays that lap into that.

Randy Reynolds: We have two districts, rural and downtown, and within the village district protected resources such as the aquifer protection.

John McIntire: Retail is also in downtown?

Jim Kenney: It is not a defined district; it is where you can do things.

Nancy Zane: What is our next step?

Barry McCormick: Something that would help me tremendously would be to take these maps at hand and tell us exactly where those zones are.

Randy Reynolds: (Stepped up to point at the map) – This demonstrates the districts, such as the village district, and then you go to the main book and you actually see it described.

Nancy Zane: Can we add maps when we redo?

Barry McCormick: Will each one of those have that map?

Randy Reynolds: This is why we need John. He may know where that came from. It doesn't even include all of Unity College; we have more questions than answers on this.

John McIntire: Can we start getting a list of these questions down so when we have John here we can cover all of this. Can we just consolidate these questions from the Minutes?

Emily Newell: I'm actually writing down these questions down for John.

Randy Reynolds: This will help everyone coming in. The map will be on the wall down at the town office, the map showing all of the districts will be on the wall and we can update the tax map overlays.

Charlie Porter: The resource maps are horrible, the ones we have at the town office are horrible.

Randy Reynolds: Will it have the lot numbers in there?

Don Newell: I want to say, if we were sitting in a neighboring town, it would be going a whole lot different. If we had to hire somebody to do this stuff and create an overlay, I don't even want to guess at how much it would cost.

Charlie Porter: \$5,000 easy.

Don Newell: Let's take the steps to lock down what Randy needs. He needs to have the digital copy of the Unity tax maps and will integrate this.

Jim Kenney: Let me have that task, to get the digital map for Randy.

Don Newell: We need an agenda for the next meeting.

Barry McCormick: I think what we'll end up doing is taking it paragraph by paragraph, do we modify it or leave it alone.

Nancy Zane: Let's start next week.

Randy Reynolds: I think we could take the first four or five sections.

John McIntire: Rather than print all of that, we've got it digitally, we can put it up on a projector.

Don Newell: The Rotary has a big projector. I think the Rotary would like to have a part in this process. We have a wonderful projector. They would want to contribute.

Jim Kenney: Fed by transparency or digital?

Don Newell: Digital.

Emily Newell: We could use only the master copy to mark on when we're together.

Randy Reynolds: We'll start out with #1, and make an opinion.

Jim Kenney: What other technologies do we need beyond the projector?

Don Newell: John, are you willing to use your lap top, as long as it works with Word?

Jim Kenney: Emily and John are agreeing to try this before next Friday.

Randy Reynolds: Set up and make sure.

John McIntire: I have a big white board.

Don Newell: It would be nice to put it right up on the wall.

Charlie Porter: How about a movie screen? We have a couple down at the firehouse.

Jim Kenney: Charlie, you have that action. Somewhere along the line, 12 different opinions will not be settled on the first day. Just make notes, what the issues are and thoughts, and then we'll come back to it. We won't make any decisions until after we're done, and then we'll bring John Piotti in.

Don Newell: As I see it, we're going to see some language that we will feel we can change to make it clearer, we can put it in red; i.e., this would be much easier to understand if it were said like this. At the same time, we can put some side bars in there on sections that we don't like, we may want to get rid of this, or fatten this, and then we can go back through and hammer it out. We'll keep a record of our work so we can go back and pick up where we left off.

Randy Reynolds: If something doesn't get talked about, we can bring it back up again. We will not get rid of anything until we have gone through the whole thing.

Emily Newell: Some of this should be guided by the survey we're going to do.

Barry McCormick: What survey is that?

Emily Newell: Do people really want to see development in certain areas, perhaps at a town meeting. I am interested if we can work on that survey some time.

Don Newell: I think we need to go through this top to bottom to understand what it really means, have the sidebars, then have the survey.

Emily Newell: We can pull out those questions for the public.

Jim Kenney: We can denote this as we go. We're going to be fully immersed.

Mark Nickerson: Question. Are we going to start on page one next week and read through this thing page by page?

Jim Kenney: Yes, we will start with page one. The table of contents will be massaged as we go.

Randy Reynolds: We talked about this last week and I would like to hit on it again and that is the situation where someone could come into town and do whatever they want to do. The districts are not set up, they could do it today. Someone could literally open a car dealership on the old doc's property and there is nothing to stop them.

Nancy Zane: Can we do a moratorium until we wade through this?

Jim Kenney: Only the citizens can decide on a moratorium.

Nancy Zane: If that is what it takes.

Don Newell: Recognize when you do something like that, there could be a full-fledged business waiting at the door, and you push them away.

Randy Reynolds: We have that right now. Somebody wants to build just lots over but not in the district where we say they can build.

Randy Reynolds: I brought up the fact you can put a car dealer ship in, I would like to see a small subcommittee address some of these issues, where future growth would be, what districts in town would be designated, and start blending in something we could work on, something that we need to think about looking ahead.

Jim Kenney: Keep in mind that our conversations over the next year will direct what happens 25 years from now, keep that in mind. If Unity has a good basis for business to look at, that will apply for the next 25 years.

Randy Reynolds: I would like to point out one thing, remember Newport about 20 years go.

Nancy Zane: One thing to think about in favor of a moratorium, when we look at these as a subgroup, you have to consider all of the possibilities, the additions we make now will affect us 25 years down the road so we have to be careful. We have to be careful about what we do to the Town, what businesses can come in. A moratorium would give us time to decide. I go by the five Ps, proper planning prevents poor performance. I would rather step back, even though we might send one or two businesses away. We can be thinking of the businesses we want to bring in, the longevity of those businesses. We need to lay the groundwork; I think we just really need to think about it.

Randy Reynolds: We need to lay the groundwork, get something established. I'm just doing this to get you to think. Consider Dick Hodges lot, what would happen if somebody brought in a stink plant like what is up on Hawk Ridge, and put it there.

Jim Kenney: I think the Planning Board, as it sits today, would be really restrictive about what is coming in.

Barry McCormick: Having been through the process, I'm not quite as worried about having somebody put a car dealership; I think the ordinance would prohibit.

Randy Reynolds: In the village district or School Street, they have free reign.

Nancy Zane: I think that is really important food for thought. We need to create business but we need to think about what kinds of businesses we want to allow in.

Randy Reynolds: We can start a list of the worst things that can happen.

Don Newell: I think it is a great idea and we have to do it although it's a little early. A lot of people don't have a grasp of what this ordinance does or does not do. We can start choosing a subcommittee. Once we all come up to speed together, you will find the conversation gets a lot richer.

Barry McCormick: I think every one of these issues will come up as we go through this.

Nancy Zane: One of our biggest assets is that pond that we don't use.

Jim Kenney: How do we wrap up this evening?

Randy Reynolds: Something I would like to say about this meeting hall. The Masons want to welcome everyone on this committee. Anything to do with the Town, we want to help at no cost whatsoever. We have four Masons here today, Don Newell, Barry McCormick, Charlie Porter, and me. The only thing, the kitchen is off limits as well as the upstairs.

Jim Kenney: Are we concluded?

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry E. Powell-Wilson, Notary Public