

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS  
PLANNING BOARD  
Tuesday,  
February 19, 2019 6:30PM**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** R. Snelling called the meeting to order at 6:25.

**ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:**

*Members Present:* Robert Snelling, Chairman; Donna Bunnell, Secretary; Angi Francesco, Member; Ronald Huntoon, Member; Louis Pare, Member; Woodie Laverack, Ex-Officio

*Members Not Present:* Carl Lehner, Vice Chairman

*Staff Present:* Linda Levy, Land Use Board Assistant

*Others Present:* Kevin Coburn

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft of the minutes of the January 15, 2019 were reviewed with suggested edits.

**Motion: "To accept the minutes as amended."**

Motion: D. Bunnell

Second: A. Francesco

Discussion: None

Motion Passes: 6-yes 0-no 0-absention 1-absent

(Note: C. Lehner was not present for this discussion or vote.)

**NEW APPLICATIONS:** None

**CONTINUED APPLICATIONS:** None

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Discussion regarding the potential adoption of road standards (Kevin Coburn)
  - R. Snelling: Asked Kevin to share thoughts on the road standards.
  - K. Coburn: I was asked to review the standards. I went through a whole bunch of different standards, some were good for us, some better. Then I went through Gilford's; theirs are plain, simple, they have good standards. It puts a lot onto the applicant, which is good. The testing would be under our supervision and your recommendations on what you would want from them. I have a couple that I want to talk to you about. On page 26-5 (the maximum allowable grade should not exceed 10%), there is no reason that it could not go to 12%. We maintain roads now (Shepard Hill) that's up around 16%. Most communities allow 12%. The other one is on page 26-10, #18A (driveways). The line of sight of 250' is too much. I wouldn't be able to give out a driveway permit. Because we don't have a standard, it is up to our discretion.
  - R. Huntoon: Does the distance have to be real long or real short?

- K. Coburn: This is all line of sight, so when you're pulling out of a driveway, this is saying that you have to be able to see 250' in both directions. I wouldn't be able to issue a driveway permit for them.
- R. Huntoon: Would we issue different standards for different roads?
- K. Coburn: No, I have been issuing permits for the town and it has been at my discretion for the past 10 years according to the safest place for you and the oncoming traffic. Those were the only questions that I had. I went through the road standards that the DOT puts out and theirs are more for their material specs. Everything is the same thing that we've been doing.
- R. Snelling: Are these derived from the state standards?
- K. Coburn: They are.
- R. Snelling: So, why not say that any roads in Holderness have to comply with state standards?
- K. Coburn: You could do that, but there are several state standards. They would cover Class V roads, but not Class VI roads.
- R. Snelling: What about application to private roads? If it is a private road with 3 homes and each one has an easement or something like that, that to us, is a subdivision. Currently, they would have to meet our subdivision road standards, which is basically 0-200 ADT.
- K. Coburn: That's why we're sitting here.
- R. Snelling: What if it's a private road and they want municipal services? They want fire, etc.
- K. Coburn: It is all spelled out right in here.
- R. Snelling: It would apply?
- K. Coburn: That's how I read all of this.
- R. Snelling: So, any road that is not a driveway. What if there is a long road into a home, it is not a subdivision, do we allow fire engines and the police to get up in there, do we need to make clear that they either waive or guarantee that we provide services?
- A. Francesco: We've already said that in some steep slope language that we have that when driveways are over 15% grade, that the homeowner has to maintain the road so that fire services can get up there.
- R. Snelling: What if it meets the percent grade, but it doesn't meet the width.
- A. Francesco: If you look at 26-10, #21 at the bottom, there seems to be a provision for that. It is according to traffic volume. So, that to me allows for a subdivision.
- R. Snelling: Subdivision is not an issue. If the owner has a ¼ mile driveway into the woods, there is only 1 home, but they want to make sure we provide fire, police and ambulance services, would we want to impose a road standard in that kind of situation?
- K. Coburn: If you go back to 26-10, #18, it states right in there a minimum of 12' width.
- W. Laverack: What if there was no place for a truck to turn around?
- K. Coburn: The home owner gets handed the standards and told that this is what they need to do. That takes me out of it, the board out of it. These are our standards.
- R. Snelling: Where does this exist in Gilford? It is in their planning ordinance or does it exist as town policy?
- K. Coburn: It is their town road standard.

- R. Snelling: So, if we had had this when we wrote subdivision standards, rather than having those specific road requirements in our subdivision, we would just say that any subdivision would have to meet town standards, period. I've been told that the reason the standards are in there is because we didn't have road standards, and we are required to approve subdivisions. In order to approve subdivisions, we had to stick some road standards in there as part of the approval. But if we have road standards in the town, then we would reference the standards.
- K. Coburn: It would be from this day forward. It cleans up a lot of the stuff we have out there. I don't know how you'd make them do this today. Take Woods Rd. There is not much more than a goat path with 5-6 houses off the road. They want to add another house that has a right of way through an existing driveway. The question is, what do we need to do? Well, this is what you need to do.
- R. Snelling: Now, it is the Select Board's job to accept a road.
- K. Coburn: They have full authority.
- R. Snelling: This strikes me as not something that the Planning Board should approve. We should review it and provide comments. But the Select Board has to adopt it.
- W. Laverack: It makes sense to me. That sounds like the right process. We want to know what are the acceptable standards that we should apply. You guys are the ones that should tell us that. So, I think that is the logical next step.
- R. Snelling: My intent was a two-step process. I wanted Kevin to address the board to get the concept across and answer any questions you have. I was going to ask, why Gilford. You answered that. You looked at a number of different plans and in your judgement, this looks like the most reasonable. I think that now you have it and you've heard Kevin. Go back and read it again and at the next meeting we could take any comments and then this would come out as a recommendation to the Select Board to adopt a set of standards for roads. Does that sound like a reasonable way to go? In March we'll collect and vote on your comments. I think the idea of having a road standard makes all the sense in the world. We need standards established.
- K. Coburn: As it stands now, we don't have established width or gravel depths, that is what this does. It makes it difficult to deal with Class VI roads. This takes me out of the middle of it, takes the Board out of the middle of it.
- R. Huntoon: Because of the nature of the land around here, if you put a driveway in, you couldn't drive a spade in the ground. There are ledges. Would the owner have to truck in gravel or dynamite it out? This seems like a burden. Are there any options for the ZBA?
- K. Coburn: The way I read this is if you wanted to put in a development or a new road, or 3, 4, or 5 houses, this what you'd have to follow. It protects us if we have to take over a road. The owners might have to find a way to get around the ledge.
- R. Huntoon: With all the ledge around, people ought to be able to do what they want without have to deal with standards that are impossible to meet? Do you have the authority to make decisions outside the standards?
- K. Coburn: This is not about making it hard for anybody, it is about not making it hard for the highway department to take it over in 10 years. We 've taken over so many roads since I've been here. When new houses are built on those roads, they would have to meet those standards.

- R. Huntoon: To me there has to be a back door to these issues.
- K. Coburn: It says that the Select Board has the authority.
- A. Francesco: This comes back to the property owner to know the rules.
- R. Huntoon: I agree with you, but if you tell me that you can't do something, you better have some good reasons for doing that.
- A. Francesco: There are some things that could be taken out without damaging the standards that we are trying to achieve.
- C. Lehner: What made some of the state standards not good?
- K. Coburn: They were too deep, too detailed, too many (150 pages). Gilford is plain and simple, they are a similar community, they have the same type ground as we do. The back page of their standards is very simple.
- D. Bunnell: On page 26-5, #12 (construction supervision), could you explain how that works, the steps that would be involved in that?
- K. Coburn: That is just more of the town having the authority or the Select Board or they ask me to stop in to make sure that all the materials are correct. I am overseeing the project, stop in 2-3 times a day. So that 10 years from now when the town takes it over, you know they've done what they're supposed to.
- D. Bunnell: That is something you would do?
- K. Coburn: Whoever the Board chose. If we got into wetlands, we'd probably stay away from it, we'd rely on the engineers. There is no cost to the town.
- A. Francesco: The owner has to give the town a sum of money first.
- D. Bunnell: I thought that's what it meant.
- R. Snelling: Aside from the subdivision approval, I see confusion. On page 26-5, #11, it says that the Planning Board is reviewing the application and determining acceptability. If it's not a subdivision, we don't get involved in it, it is not a Planning Board issue. In the next, #12A says the cost of construction is related to the subdivision. What if it's not a subdivision? There is ambiguity about who has the authority for what. I suggest as you read through this, share your opinion on what we should change. Read it for consistency, when does the Planning Board approve, when does the Select Board approve.
- A. Francesco: If someone was going to build some roads on a 100-acre lot for their own personal use, they don't have to come to us now for anything, right? With this road standard, it appears that if they wanted to build driveways, roads or anything through their 100 acres, that they have to talk to us.
- K. Coburn: That's correct.
- R. Huntoon: Would that stand in court.
- A. Francesco: That's what we need to talk about – where and when would these standards apply.
- R. Snelling: And, who approves or disapproves.
- A. Francesco: We would give these standards to the Select Board, and the Select Board would work on adopting them into the town regulations. They are not a part of the zoning ordinances, but they would be standards for the town. If people wanted to do a subdivision, they would come to us and we would look at their application, and we would say that the driveway has to be brought up to the standards.

- R. Huntoon: Say that they had a ½ mile road going to 3 houses and then they'd want to put a 4<sup>th</sup> house in, would they have to bring the standards up for the 4<sup>th</sup> house or for the other 3 houses also?
- A. Francesco: It is pre-existing. If we adopt this, we're not making everybody change anything. If they choose to add a 4<sup>th</sup> home, that's when they have to abide by the standards.
- R. Huntoon: But when they add the 4<sup>th</sup> home, do they have to make that ½ mile up to standards or just few hundred yards up to the 4<sup>th</sup> home?
- K. Coburn: That is in here. The road would have to be upgraded to include the whole thing up to the last house.
- R. Snelling: On the first page under General Layout, the last sentence says, "these standards shall govern new subdivision layouts, road extensions, private to public requests and Class VI to V upgrades". That covers just about everything. Of these, the only one that we would approve is the subdivision. The rest goes to the Select Board. So, as you read through this make sure the sections agree. That is the intent. Any other questions for Kevin?
- C. Lehner: What would we have to do to get Rt. 113 to maintain itself, to get rid of speed bumps everywhere? What would it take to make it flatter?
- K. Coburn: You'd have to do something that they would never do. They would have to excavate the road, add fiber, do drainage, add weep holes so you don't trap the water. We did that on 4600' of Perch Pond Road. There isn't a crack in that road! It was well worth the money. It is not going to happen on Rt. 113 or Rt. 175, they are state roads.
- R. Snelling: If you read anything that raises a red flag, we could reword it to make it understandable. Hopefully, we can come together for recommendations at our March meeting.
- K. Coburn: The only thing that bothers me a bit is Shepard Hill, Lane Rd., Mt. Prospect, any road that we already own and that we maintain. If a section of a road washed out, we're going to fix it. I need permission to fix our road. I may not have enough money. The Board will find the money. These standards from this day forward would take care of this.
- R. Huntoon: If there were repairs needed, you could repair it and not go by the standards.
- K. Coburn: The property owner can repair it.
- R. Snelling: If you looked at the road standards based on average day trips, I could see roads jumping requirements if the property was subdivided.
- K. Coburn: The standards are from this day forward.
- R. Snelling: I wanted you to hear Kevin, read through them and look for anything that flags.
- K. Coburn: Don't be afraid to call me. I'll clarify it, at least as I see it.

## 2. Master plan

- R. Snelling: Angi?
- A. Francesco: The master plan sub-committee have finalized our work. I will email it to Linda to send out. We have comments in there. Everyone will have it in hand by the end of the week. Everyone can discuss it and make comments at the March meeting.

### 3. Flood zone ordinances

- I was going to bring the map tonight, but I didn't. This is a kick-off, there won't be any decisions tonight. What you have in front of you is a whole bunch of recommended changes. Most of it is wording changes, clarification, that type of thing. We have 3 flood zones. I'll start with the Holderness Flood Hazard District which is the area west of the highway to the river. Basically, in that area, you're not allowed to do anything. You don't allow people to live there, you might allow a storage shed or something like that. Then we have the Pemigewasset River Corridor Overlay District. That is more an environmental overlay. It also helps out with flooding and the quality of the Pemigewasset. It emanated from recommendations from the Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee. Most of the towns up and down the Pemi have this overlay. They are not always exactly the same. Campton does not, Ashland does, New Hampton does, we do and it is primarily intended to limit development. It doesn't preclude development, but limit development with 500' by requiring setbacks, woodland buffers and things like that. It is primarily an environmental overlay to protect the quality of the Pemigewasset. Then we have Flood Plain Development. What it is, is actually FEMA. It's for flood insurance. They use actual historical flood data to set a projected height of water in an area. It goes by 1% flood or 1 in a 100-year flood. The area it covers is technically developed based on flood data. The question that our sub-committee came up with is, why isn't the Holderness Flood Zone the same as the federal flood zone? Why are there 2 different flood zones? Why do we have west of I-93 as one flood zone and the other side as another flood zone? Basically, it extends our flood area to the other side of I-93, which is mostly the Holderness School property (ball fields). The question is, why isn't that part of Holderness' flood zone? The sub-committee is recommending that the Holderness Flood Zone be the same as the federal flood zone.
- W. Laverack: There is a problem with that. My recollection is that FEMA admits that those maps are incredibly inaccurate. There is a flood way, flood plain, flood zone and they have them improperly designated on the FEMA maps. My recollection is when Plymouth was thinking about tearing down the existing Field House, that was when the primary discussion occurred because part of that Field House sits in a flood zone. Then there is the flood way that comes up from the south side, I think. And the areas that are affected partly were changed when they put in the new exit ramps in off I-93. All of this predates that. When the conversation came up with them regarding the ALLWell project, they basically said that the map is inaccurate, but that the map will stand unless somebody wants to pay for the redoing of it, and we're not going to do it. So, Plymouth was offered the opportunity to spend \$100,000 to redefine the area, but that was not acceptable.
- R. Snelling; Words become important. Part of the problem is that in our existing ordinance we use all kinds of phrases – flood zone, flood area. One thing we could do is clean up our language. Leave everything just the way it is, but clean up our language so that the average person could understand. Or, given the uncertainty where the flood zones lie, the question is the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, which is that area that is subject to a 1% flood. It would be defined as the Holderness Flood Hazard Area. In that area we just don't allow development. You can develop in the FEMA area as long as it is

elevated 1 foot above the projected area above the water area of the 100-year flood. They don't prevent you from building, but in order to get insurance, you have to meet their standards. If we made our district the same as the federal district, you wouldn't be allowed to put a home in there. The school could put in a storage shed or something like that. It is a significant decision, if we want to be aligned with the area that the federal analysis says is subject to a 100-year flood. Or, do we want to stay with what we have and just view the FEMA thing, not so much as a zoning thing, but as an insurance question.

- L. Levy: This isn't really questioning flood area or flood way, it is just whether or not we want to think of this as applicable for FEMA flood insurance purposes. It is not changing any of those inaccuracies.
- W. Laverack: Right, unless it makes a difference to the insurance company whether you are in a flood way, flood plain or flood zone.
- R. Snelling: If we make ours the same as theirs, we won't allow any development. It aligns us with a logical definition of what our flood area is.
- A. Francesco: We're talking about the Holderness School lower fields. It is the biggest chunk of property that is impacted.
- R. Snelling: That's it.
- A. Francesco: I'm not opposed to doing this. You mentioned this in front of the Holderness guy who was here at our meeting and he didn't think it was going to be a problem. This strikes me as, with the Holderness School as an interested party, we should have a conversation with them. They are the ones that are going to be impacted the most. I don't see the Holderness School selling off that land or putting a dorm there.
- R. Snelling: I talked with them after our meeting. I gave them the map. My intent was to get back to them. Their immediate reaction was fine, they have no plans to do anything with that. So, the fundamental question is to be consistent. The feds have a scientific definition. Ours is where we always see it flood. It made sense to the committee to have one flood zone that agrees with each other. If we did that, we wouldn't allow any development in that zone. The only zone affected is the Holderness School practice fields.
- A. Francesco: I don't disagree with it, because you are saying that if the other group is going to build here, here are the standards. They have to have extra insurance.
- R. Snelling: There already is an existing conflict because the FEMA flood area includes the area west of I-93. So, they're saying that you can build in that area, but your building has to be 1 foot above the projected flood zone. Our zoning for the same area, says no you can't. There are inconsistencies. By making them say the same thing, we eliminate them.
- R. Huntoon: Why would we be able to say, no you can't? What is the reason you can't build here?
- R. Snelling: Health and safety
- D. Bunnell: But if we change that to the FEMA plan, doesn't that take that away?
- R. Snelling: The FEMA plan is for flood insurance, we have to be consistent in how we define the flood area. We have the feds saying this is the flood area and we are saying this is the flood area.

- A. Francesco: There is a distinct difference between the flood area being habitable and having an area at risk of flooding.
- R. Snelling: FEMA would say you have to meet certain standards.
- A. Francesco: We are making them aware of the risks.
- R. Snelling: We can leave this the way it is and make the language and definitions clear or we can redefine our flood area. Your homework is to run through this and be ready to discuss it at the next meeting. We want to get the ordinances and master plan done this year.
- R. Snelling: I'm not going to propose this next item for the agenda yet, but this is an item that is going to be floating around that we will want to address in the next year or two. The Squam Lakes Association is updating, with state funding, the master plan for the Squam Lake Watershed. Part of that is a build-out analysis for the entire watershed, which covers 2/3 of Holderness. Carl, Angi and Woodie attended that meeting. The question will be, do we want to extend that build-out analysis to pick up the rest of Holderness? The issue in the past has been that once you approve the build-out analysis, it implies that builders have approval to build to that level. It allows for homes to be built. Our zoning allows that to occur. The question is, do we want that to be allowed? Do we want the population of Holderness to get to 10,000 people? If we think that is going to destroy the rural character of the town, the only way you have to control of that is through zoning. You have to make rural properties 5 acres or even 2 acres. Regardless how accurate the build-out analysis is, it raises a flag. Do we want to allow this? Do we want to allow the town to reach that population that is projected through this analysis?
- A. Francesco: Another thing that came out – at the current rate of increasing the population, we would reach that point of the build-out in 2150, well more than 100 years from now. In the last version of the master plan, Holderness' population growth through the 80's and 90's and then projected over the next 10 years, we would have more than 3,000 or 4,000 residents. That hadn't happened. There are lots of things to consider.
- R. Snelling: I think it is a worthwhile data set to have as a reference point.
- A. Francesco: The SLA gives us that information so that the town doesn't need to pay for the rest of it to be done.
- R. Snelling: My understanding is that the Lakes Region Planning Commission has the data. It's not going to cost us a lot, because they already have the data. It is just a matter of carving Holderness out of that database and making it whole for the town. We do have questions about whether we want to do this, does it have value?
- R. Huntoon: The build-out must take into account existing roads, yes?
- A. Francesco: It made assumptions that there would be roads, that roads would be brought up to standards.
- R. Snelling: My understanding is that they were going to come and revisit each town. When they schedule that, I'd like everyone on this board to attend that. I don't see that as a high priority this year, but we might want to get a build-out analysis for the town.
- A. Francesco: That analysis was done by the SLA and it's posted at the SLA. The data is great data and some applies to the entire town, not just the website.
- R. Snelling: The work was done for the SLA by the Lakes Region Planning Commission.



- R. Snelling: Any other business?

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** At 7:50 the following motion was made.

**Motion: "To adjourn."**

Motion: R. Huntoon

Second: D. Bunnell

Discussion: None

Motion Passes: 7-yes 0-no 0-absention 0-absent

Respectfully submitted,

Linda S. Levy  
Land Use Boards Assistant