

**Ashland Planning Board  
Draft Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 28, 2024**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Kendall Hughes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kendall Hughes, Chris Janosa, Mardean Badger, Paula Hancock, Tricia Farris, Linda Barnes (alternate), Bethany Franz (alternate)

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Megan Carrier, attorney for Lakes Region Community Developers  
Kevin Leonard, Northpoint Engineering

**DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

The Board reviewed the minutes from the Wednesday, August 7, 2024 Planning Board meeting. Mardean Badger made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris Janosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

- Alteration of Terrain from DES for WMCC
- Alteration of Terrain was received by DES for the WMCC Cartbarn. DES sent a letter to WMCC requesting more information about this project

**OLD BUSINESS**

**DESIGN REVIEW**

A set of 64 questions were gathered from the members of the Planning Board **and via public coment.** The questions were distributed to the Planning Board members and the applicant at the meeting. Kevin Leonard, of Northpoint Engineering, provided brief answers to as many of the questions as possible ~~and as time would permit.~~ The questions are attached to the minutes of Wednesday, August 28, 2024 meeting. The applicant was requested by the Planning Board to submit all answers to the questions to the Planning Board in writing **for our September 25 Meeting.**

**NOTIFICATIONS**

The following notifications were received by the Planning Board:

- James Spanos came before the Board with an application pertaining to the **former** St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church property. Mr. Spanos was advised **the original application was rejected as it was unreadable, and was unable to find the check and plans, which later were found. Also the Abuters need to be looked at. Mr. Spanos was advised** ~~—that the next step in his application process was~~ to meet with the Land Use Assistant, Jane Sawyer, to review the application.
- Jane Sawyer is our new Land Use Assistant. She will begin her new position next week.
- Three septic notifications and three shoreline notifications were received by the Planning Board
- The present deck of Union Bridge will be undergoing repair. During the project traffic will be restricted to one lane or at times closed. The project is slated to begin in 2025.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Kendall Hughes, Chair, made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM. The next Planning Board meeting will be Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at 6:30 PM at 6 Collins Street.

*Minutes submitted by Paula Hancock*

## Mill Pond Questions from Design Review Presentation

1. This is an area that is prone to flooding, how are you planning to reduce the flooding and mitigate the proposed development? **Well, be working throw the process with DES and EPA**
2. The roadway is too close to the water on two sides. How are you going to be able to bring the road up to town spec, without further restriction on the already narrow waterway? **Will work with town and state to make a 26 ft, road will get a variance from the town**
3. A study needs to be done with the schools, (Ashland Elementary and PRHS), Water Department, Septic, Electric, Fire, EMS, police, DPW, Waste Recycling and recreation once the survey is complete, are you willing to pay for the additional cost you incur to the town? **Will do a full and comprehensives study to show the impact to include enrolment and cost to be incurred.**
4. Will you bond for these additional expenses? **Yes**
5. In previous discussions, the developer was going to do a switch back why is it now able to go straight down what are you doing to make this happen and what is the effect this will have on the already overused swamp land? **After looking at the land it was determined that in this area the land is not that steep and will not need a switch back to maintain the slopes.**
6. How are you planning on controlling the mosquito-borne illnesses?
7. Are you planning on these roads to be town roads?
8. What are your intentions regarding the properties on Mill Pond Road? you renting or selling?
9. How will water and sewer be brought in and how is it crossing the swamps? And road, using Mill Pond or the right of way?
10. What are your plan details for the cleanup of the hazardous waste, that was dumped their drums of liquid, asbestos, lead, unfired ordinances?
11. Currently this is an animal sanctuary. How are you going to protect the eagle's nesting, other birds, the moose, deer, and bear, as well as the fish that go back and forth under the road to the ponds?
12. What is the sustainability of the infrastructure of your building? The number of years?
13. Who will be responsible for maintaining infrastructure and buildings once it's built?
14. Building sustainability and maintenance plans?
15. You said you're digging out the old foundations and filling them with hazardous materials you find on the property. How will these be monitored and who will be responsible for cleaning up if something goes wrong?

16. If you find hazardous material in the current foundations, what is your plan for disposal?
17. How far from the groundwater/kids' play area/the development will the new hazardous waste sites be?
18. How will light pollution be controlled?
19. What is the maximum build-out of units? Is there a second and third phase to this?
20. What similar projects have you proposed to do? What similar projects have you built?
21. I believe a site walk of these and other projects is in order.
22. Your traffic study said 65% of traffic will be headed to I-93, why?
23. The traffic study said people will be headed into town. Why would they not use Winter Street?
24. With 568 new motor vehicle traffic generated how do you not see that as a significant increase in traffic? What would you consider to be significant?
25. What is the current traffic count at Winter Street, Main Street intersection, ballpark, Industrial Drive, and Main Street as well as the business exiting and entering?
26. A full traffic study is in order and the need for signage and lighting also needs to be studied. When do you plan on making this available to the board?
27. Will there be lighting on the sidewalk going up the hill? This is due to concerns of wildlife, particularly the bear that frequents that hillside.
28. The ballpark is the emergency landing zone for medical helicopters. Lighting is an issue. How will that be handled?
29. Has this plan been sent to DOT for comment and what was their comment? Ashland Public Works comment?
30. You talk about having a coordinator for Public Transportation, what public transportation are you talking about? Are you bringing public transportation into Ashland? Or are you planning on increasing the services that the taxpayers pay for in Transportation Central and others?
31. You talk about a "welcome packet" should be provided to residents detailing available public transportation services, biking and walking alternatives, and other commuting options; Please explain.
32. You talk about providing secure parking for bikes. I am assuming you mean bicycles, how?
33. How much additional bike traffic and where would that be? Where does your traffic study include that and what directions do you plan on that going?

34. Based on your site map showing the properties, it appears that your line is on the northern side of the fence. Are you claiming your own part of Industrial Drive? Or will that all have to be shifted south back onto town property?
35. What are you doing with the catch basin, water, and electricity that is currently in the ground at the ballpark?
36. Please explain: the information shared by Lakes Region Community Developers:
- a. Ashland census data shows 0.47 children ages 0-18 per household.
  - b. Their non-senior rental portfolio of approximately 340 apartments in Ashland, Laconia, Meredith, Tilton, and Wolfeboro show 0.75 children ages 0-18 per household. About 40% of these apartments are subsidized though, which will not be the case with Mill Pond.
  - c. Their non-senior portfolio that is not subsidized shows 0.5 children ages 0-18 per household.
  - d. Estimate that Mill Pond will be somewhere in the range of 0.47 to 0.75 children ages 0-18 per household.
36. What is the total number of students with all phases done we can anticipate, and what is the max number? Broken into Elementary and High School students?
37. What is the formula used to pay taxes to the town? (ie Municipal, County, School)
38. Our electrical substation needs an upgrade, this impact will increase our electrical demand, what is the anticipated electrical usage, and how will this affect our substation? Will you be paying additional to upgrade the substation?
39. The area from Main Street to the development and Mill Pond Road will be running through sensitive environments with steep grades. What is your plan for keeping the road passable with the low sodium? Or do you plan on full sodium?
40. How will you be doing spring cleanup of sand and salt on the road and on the projects?
41. The basements that are from the old mill were filled with asbestos, if you are planning to dig them out what is the plan to handle the Haz-mat issues what are you doing with the already contaminated soils?
42. The proposed development location is close to the wellhead protection area. What safeguard are you using to protect our municipal water supply and the aquifer, regarding salt, disturbed haz-mat, and other potential contaminants?
43. From the traffic study you/reentering a 5-way intersection, a stop light/directional light will be needed.
44. Has your traffic study been seen and approved by Division 3 NHDOT?
45. What is your estimate of the time, labor and materials cost to extend the water lines from the Winter Street to the project?
- What is your estimate for the volume of water that will need to be provided for the 76, 2-3-bedroom homes?

- a. Would you pay for a preliminary feasibility study with Ashland Water and Sewer Department?
- b. We have been asking the town to extend the town water lines to the homes on Rte. 3 between the covered bridge, and the Ashland Holderness line. The town has said it does not have the funds to pay for the project. Where will the funding for the water lines come from for the project, and how is this a priority over the request from current residents to extend the sewer line to their homes?

46. What is your estimate of the time, labor and materials cost to extend the sewer lines from Winter Street to the project?

- a. What is your estimate for the volume of effluent waste that will need to be treated by our Sewer Department for the 76, 2–3-bedroom homes?
- b. We have asked the town to extend the town sewer line to my home and all the homes that are located along Rte. 3 between the covered bridge, and the Ashland Holderness line, but the town has said that they do not have the funds to do so. Where will the funding for the sewer lines come from for the project, and how is this a priority over the request from current residents to extend the sewer line to their homes?

47. What is your estimate of the time, labor and materials cost to install underground utilities to all the proposed buildings, phase 1: 39 rental units, phase 2: 37 rental units, phase 3: 4 single-family homes for ownership, via Habitat for Humanity model or is it a long-term rental property?

48. How will the rental properties be more energy efficient to allow residents to enjoy lower utility bills? What is the estimated electric bill per unit, and what will the total electric supply needed from Ashland Electric Company?

49. What are the planned property taxes to the town of Ashland in years 1-10 after occupancy?

50. What percentage of the residents' income will go toward rent? 30% or more?

51. What will be the cost to the town of providing services to the residents? Will there be payments to the town to support the new development?

52. What does the DES, Federal Brown Field Report show for hazardous clean up and contamination?

53. What are your plans to incorporate the wetlands on the property into your design plans?

54. Will your present plans for the property disrupt the vegetation (nature) and the natural animal routes through the property?

55. What is the status of the abandoned foundations on the property? Is there a current plan to remove these foundations sometime in the construction process?

56. On Phase 2: Mill Pond Lane Plans: is the lane going to be dirt or pavement?

57. The four lots on the Subdivision Plan will these lots be accessed by the roundabout. If so, could this create a safety issue of vehicles backing into a roundabout?

58. What lots designated in white on the Subdivision Plan, do these lots have access to Winter Street or Mill Pond Lane? I can't tell from the plans presented. Could you explain in more detail?

59. Any chance of flooding the subdivision by the overflow from Mill Pond? Could this be a safety issue that needs to be addressed in the planning stage of the project?

60. There are lots on the property, one side is parallel to Winter Street and the other side is parallel to Mill Pond Road. How would these lots be accessed?

61. On the Site Plan there is a 50' easement (next to the Industrial Drive). This is designated as private. Is there any problem of residents accessing the buildings in the easement?

62. On the "Buildings" Plan there is a private drive designation for a parcel of land. On the Site Plan Review plans this same parcel is designated as an easement. I am wondering if this parcel is designated as an easement, can it be developed? How can a parcel be used/developed if it is designated as a private drive.

63. On the Village Site Plan #4 if a private drive is used as an access road to the buildings is there any problem with seasonal runoff into the wetlands on the property. How can the runoff be mitigated at the planning stage of the project.

64. Please remind us of who the housing project is for. Workforce Housing? Or family residential residences or duplexes?

### **Design Review of Mill Pond Project**

A set of 64 questions were gathered from the members of the Planning Board. The questions were distributed to the Planning Board members and the applicant at the meeting. Kevin Leonard, of Northpoint Engineering, provided brief answers to as many of the questions as possible and as time would permit. The questions are attached to the minutes of Wednesday, August 28, 2024 meeting. The applicant was requested by the Planning Board to submit all answers to the questions to the Planning Board in writing.

Questions were asked about the land, the wetlands and the environment contained on the property:

- The question concerned the issue of flooding. Kevin Leonard responded that the applicant has submitted to the DES a request for an Alteration of Terrain Permit. This permit is pending. The applicant has reviewed all FEMA maps of the property. The applicant will be meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers to further discuss the project. The EPA will be meeting with the applicant to comprehensively discuss the wetlands on the property which is part of the pre-application process with EPA.
- The property was initially a railyard and transportation corridor. The applicant will meet with DES relative to all necessary wetland and shoreline permits. The applicant will follow all town of Ashland road designs regulations.
- The present sewer system on the property will be upgraded as will the electricity. Overhead utilities will be installed underground. There will be no sewer substation at this time.
- The Site Plan Review Application process will address all issues relative to all infrastructure and feasibility reports. Technology and impacts will be addressed as part of the Site Plan Review process.

- The applicant has had discussions with all department heads concerning this project. The sewer department advised that there would be no problem with sewer capacity relative to this project.
- The Nobis Group will collaborate with DES on hazardous waste cleanup. Nobis Group is presently in the inventory phase of the process.
- The applicant when dealing with asbestos will follow all State regulations pertaining to asbestos cleanup and disposal.
- Anything that the applicant does relative to the removal of the foundations and buildings on the property, there will need to be full agreement with DES. An environmental specialist hired by the applicant will team with the applicant and DES relative to all issues and their solutions
- The applicant will minimize the impact on the wetlands. The applicant will install an 8' pipe burying it with the use of natural materials. This will allow both aquatic and animal passage through the property.
- The wetlands is a natural area to collect storm water and capture sediment from the larger area.

Questions were asked about issues relative to transportation:

- The final traffic report for the development will be shared with NHDOT when completed. The final report will include traffic counts from NHDOT and LRPC (Lakes Region Planning Commission). A traffic engineer will be present at a future Planning Board meeting to answer questions specific to final traffic report.
- The Rte 3 catch basins will be checked. The culverts on Rte. 3 will need to be upgraded to modern design standards.
- There will be access points to the development from Mill Pond Lane and Winter Street

Many of the remaining questions that Kevin Leonard responded to at this meeting pertained to the Site Plan Review Application and the Subdivision Review Application processes. As these processes go forward there will be more detailed answers discussion about issues pertaining to the layout of the development, the placement of buildings, phases of development etc. The applicant has agreed with the Planning Board that the applicant will submit full answers to all questions in writing and submit them to the Planning Board at a future date.

### **Public Questions and Concerns**

Questions were asked about:

- The final environmental study reports, will they be made public? Yes.
- The size of and materials and aesthetics used relative to the proposed retaining wall: The applicant will meet with DES to discuss further. More discussion is needed.
- Environmental cleanup costs: The applicant is still in the inventory process. Funds will be available for cleanup when needed
- There will be both public and private roads in the development. Public roads will be built to all town and state road standards
- Have soil samples been done? An environmental study will be completed soon.
- Will abutters properties be devalued when this project is completed? No, the abutters properties will not be devalued, and the public road will be improved.

Comments were made about:

- Where the laundry facility for the project would be located. It will be located in a separate building close to the development buildings.

- The ballpark is frequently used as a landing area for Emergency Medical flights. This landing area needs to remain extremely dark for successful helicopter touchdown. The applicant was asked to include this use of the ballpark when making decisions about lighting in this area.
- There was concern raised about flooding on this property as well as flooding near the dam area. There was a major flooding issue in 2023 and 2008. The flooding issue and its impact on this property needs to be addressed. Photos of these incidents in 2023 and 2008 are available to the applicant for review.
- Lakes Region Planning Commission has a 2015 map of the property. The narrative that accompanies this map is an official description of the property

Mardean Badger made a motion to close the Design Review pending the written answers to the questions. Chris Janosa seconded the motion. The motion passed.