

ORIGINAL

PC Members: Rob Litch, Chair, Benjamin (Benj) Putnam, V.Chair, Francie Caccavo, Bev Landon, Dan Monger and Pat Palmer **Others:** Brian Hill, Robert Hill, Chanon Hill, Kathy Barrett, Randy Boise and John Madden
PC Staff: Dave Wetmore

Rob called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Dave Wetmore took minutes. The agenda was posted.

I. Adjustments to Agenda/Visitor:

1. **Adjustments- none**
2. **Visitors' Business:**

- a. Randy Boise- Randy is here to represent Tim Goyette. Dave shared that Tim has recently purchased Rodney Boise's apartment and farm buildings on North Street and that the farm shop/building has been used for storage and shop space. Dave expressed that he is not aware of any permits for the current use. Randy stated that he has used the shop space since late 80's. Tim would like to continue the use and is requesting a change to the Village Planning Area such that his property would be included in this Planning Area.

PC- discussed that changes to this planning area could not be considered at this time, mainly because the Plan is in the hands of the Selectboard and the PC can't change. It was briefly discussed whether the use could be considered "grandfather", i.e. the use has existed for at least 15 years. Dave stated that he was not willing to concede this until more investigation could be done. Randy stated that Tim has discussed petitioning the Town for the change with an attorney.

- b. Robert, Brian, Chanon and Ronald Hill- Chanon expressed they are here to protect their interests in the property they own here in New Haven. The Plan addresses "scenic views" and most of the scenic view areas identified in the Plan they own part of. The Hill's are very concerned that the investments they have made in land would negatively be effected by these scenic designations. The Hill's don't like to pay taxes on land on which uses are restricted more than their neighbors.

Scenic areas discussion- Kathy spoke on behave of the SB and Plan and expressed that the SB did not include the scenic views map in the plan. Any designation of scenic areas would require further study and community input. Rob Litch suggested that the broad scenic language of the Plan would include all of the Rte. 7 and 17 corridor and that it would negatively impact those landowners. Francie shared that the scenic areas designation discussion started in 2009 as an overlay district. The discussion recognized the need to justly compensate property owners for the taking or restricted use. Benj noted that the Plan specifically allows for the creation of a "conservation fund" that could compensate owners for the restricted use. Identifying and creating an overlay district will require a much more intense community discussion. Brian Hill expressed that they or any property owner who happens to own land in these areas should not be penalized for being a good steward. Kathy acknowledged the SB has discussed compensating property owners. Brian noted that if compensation is considered it needs to be equal to the value of the property as if it were developed. Robert Hill suggested that the Plan language opens the door for further erosion of property rights. If view shed conservation is important to New Haven then the fund to compensate landowners should be in place first. Dave noted that there are zoning tools that could be implemented to limit loss of rights while seeking to designate scenic views. Francie believes the present scenic language in the Plan needs to be modified to address the concerns expressed tonight. She does not feel it is appropriate to say no to all renewable energy projects.

Environmental harm discussion- Rob L. referred to page 63 and the comment that "farming causes

environmental harm”. Rob suggested that we should not paint farmers this way, it’s not the image that should be expressed in the Town Plan. He asked that it be removed. Rob also cited page 23 reference to “NH residents have expressed concerns regarding environmental impacts of large farm operations...”. Rob stated that the reality is that a relatively small group of people expressed this concern. He was clear that the Plan should not denigrate farms in general. Kathy noted that the PC is looking at the final draft and that changes can’t be made. Benj felt edits could be made up to 15 days before the public hearing, which is March 6. Francie respects the Hill’s view but shared that all views and agricultural property are owned by someone and the PC needs to balance the needs and perspective of all residents. Kathy stated that NH has spent a lot of money (over \$120,000) fighting in your face solar projects. The Town Plan is a reaction to the Towns efforts to site solar appropriately and the decisions of the PSB. Brian expressed that NH needs to decide what is really important. Robert Hill shared his father’s experience with land along the interstate in Williston. The State paid for the interstate right-of-way and then determined the views from the interstate were important. It was not until the interstate had been developed was it determined that the property was in a scenic corridor and landowners did not receive any compensation for the designation. Hill’s left at 7:40.

Rob Litch asked about resources cited in the Plan. Specifically, scenic viewsheds map, Rte. 7 Corridor study, Greenbelt Alliance and T.J. Boyle study. Kathy stated these are past studies and they are available for review in the Town Office. PC noted the viewshed map is a product that was created by Jerry Smiley and Rod Case and that it is only their opinion. Francie shared that when the PC had reviewed the viewshed map it was determined to be of little value as it identified too large a section of NH.

II. PC BUSINESS

1. Town Plan- Public hearing on Town Plan was held December 14, 2016. Benj, Francie and Dan attended. Francie shared that she does not like the tone of the proposed Plan. Both she and Benj suggested written edits to the Plan. A few of Benj points were included and none of hers. It is her opinion that the Plan has been developed by someone who seriously dislikes solar. She had hoped that her comments would have been weighed more seriously. The Plan as presently proposed is significantly different from the one forwarded to SB by PC. Bev asked to view the comments offered by Benj and Francie. Kathy will get a copy to Bev.

Kathy stated that at the 1/3/2017 SB meeting the discussion was not cordial and any efforts to soften the language regarding solar was not well received, and getting enough support for changes was not successful. Benj again asked about the TP approval timeline. The public hearing is scheduled for March 6 with vote by Australian ballot on March 7.

The PC is required to submit a report approved by PC before the hearing. PC members questioned whether they can support this Town Plan as drafted? Most felt they could not. Dan doesn’t agree with everything in the Plan but does support because we need a Town Plan. Rob expressed support for many provisions of the Plan including the “Dark Skies” policy, but the PC had not discussed this and he would like more information about it. The Plan presents a major change from the PC’s Plan. Rob expressed more concern on page 77, bullet #3- that scenic views would be “designated by SB”. Dave expressed concern that it is that language that might not pass the DPS review. Rob expressed concerns related to curb cuts and safety, page 38. After discussion he understood that the attempt to increase width of curb cuts for fire rescue purposes and limiting the number of curb cuts is all about safety and is not conflicting. Rob again pointed out the conflict for small (less than 15kW) projects being sited near historic structures, page 77. Bev noted that there is a difference between a state and Federal designation. State designation is about architecture and may only refer to a lock set. Rob still

thought the historic standards may be far reaching. Rob referred to page 79 and the support for the concept of the good neighbor policy which the PC had included. He also thought it was curious that the Sequin property on South Street was identified as a scenic viewshed, in light of the solar proposed there. John shared that Governor Scott may have a different policy regarding renewables.

Kathy reiterated that the deadline for warning is January 26. Francie noted that the Town Plan needs to meet the needs of all and that denying any future solar in Town does not serve all. She suggested outlining the major points made tonight and those that she and Benj had suggested previously and meet with the SB. Benj questioned what would be the outcome if the PC did not provide a report. As evidenced here tonight, there does not appear to be overwhelming support for the Plan as proposed. Dan reiterated his support for the Plan citing that; 1. No Town Plan is perfect. 2. NH has spent enough and 3. NH has contributed enough solar. Benj made the point that this Plan may not achieve the goals the SB hopes. It may just create more for attorneys to argue about.

Action- Rob suggested a joint meeting between the PC and SB. He suggests that the PC address the fundamental changes to the Plan. Francie suggests putting together a bullet list of concerns. Rob moved to meet w/ SB on January 17th at 6:00 PM. Dan 2nds. Motion carried 6-yes and 0-no. Dave should warn as a "special meeting" for PC. PC members may send their comments to Dave if they want them shared with other members. Pat left at 9:00 PM

- 2. **Bylaw Updates-** no action-
- 3. **PC Clerk-** no action.
- 4. **PC member vacancy-** still down 1 member.
- 5. **Energy Updates**
 - a. No action

III. REVIEW OF MINUTES

- 1. 12/12/2016- no action, review next meeting

IV. CORRESPONDENCE-

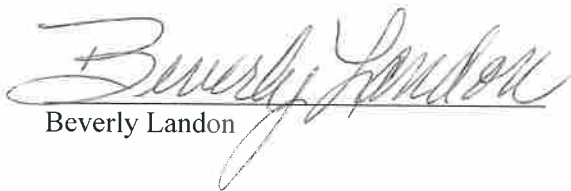
- Not reviewed, review next meeting.

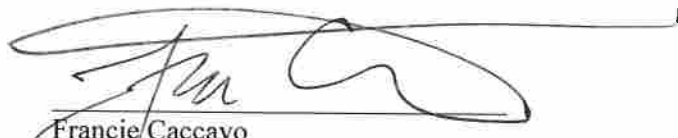
V. OTHER - NEXT MEETING- January 17, 2017- special joint meeting of SB and PC, 6:00 PM

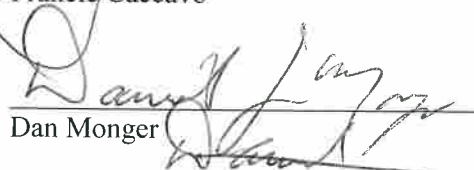
VI. ADJOURNMENT- Benj moved to adjourn at 9:10 PM, Dan 2nds. Approved, 5 yes, 0 no.

Approved on: _____

Rob Litch


Beverly Landon


Francie Caccavo


Dan Monger



Pat Palmer

Benj Putnam

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Pat Palmer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.