

**Buckland Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2021 6:30 p.m.
Meeting Via Zoom**

AGENDA

- I. Open Meeting.
- II. Approval Not Required (ANR) for 26 Upper Street, Catherine Russillo.
- III. Recap of Housing Forum Held on 12/2/20.
 - A. Discussion during meeting.
 - B. Results or status of survey.
 - C. Next Steps.
- IV. Discussion of Public Notice Requirement Fees.
- V. Review and Approve Minutes.
- VI. Public Comment.
- VII. Other Topics Not Anticipated by Chair 48 Hours Prior to Meeting.
- VIII. Adjourn the Meeting.

ATTENDEES

John Gould - Planning Board Co-chair
Michael Hoberman - Planning Board Co-chair
Andrea Donlon - Planning Board Member
Brian Rose - Planning Board Member
Jon Wyman - Planning Board Member
Alyssa Larose - Senior Land Use and Natural Resources Planner, FRCOG
Mary Bolduc - Boards' Clerk
Catherine Russillo - Resident, ANR Applicant

MEETING

- I. Open meeting - Michael Hoberman opened the meeting at 6:33 p.m.
- II. Approval Not Required (ANR) for 26 Upper Street, Catherine Russillo-
 - A. Ms. Russillo presented her request to the Board, including a survey of the land in question. She is looking to buy a parcel from the Buckland Library which will increase the area of her property and decrease that of the Library by an equal amount. Her well is on that parcel and though she has an easement for water, she wants to own the land which contains her well. The parcel in question is not a buildable lot nor does it create one. The Buckland Library wanted to complete its expansion and observe the swale before selling the parcel. The ground drains properly and water goes where it was intended, so they are ready to proceed with the sale.
 - B. John Gould explained the process by which the applicant's fees were determined.
 - C. After a Board discussion regarding Ms. Russillo's request, it was determined that she first needs to appear before the ZBA for a finding. Discussion included but was not limited to:
 1. Library frontage and square footage must also be noted on the survey. There is no need to re-survey, just include all necessary data on the current copy.

2. Parcel A is being taken from a non-conforming lot; if conforming, ZBA would not be involved. Square footage of both the Library property and that of Ms. Russillo were discussed in terms of Parcel A; areas before and after either the removal or addition of the parcel.
3. Ms. Russillo inquired about abutter notification and any further expense; she will cover Library expenses. John Gould will provide answers

III. Recap of Housing Forum Held on 12/2/20 -

A. Discussion during meeting -

1. Alyssa Larose recapped the process thus far including the forum and the survey. She asked if the Board wanted to extend the survey based on the number of responses to date, 42.
2. Board discussion included, but was not limited to:
 - a) The possibility of allowing proposals included in the presentation to apply to Upper Buckland was a topic of discussion. Water and sewer are the biggest deterrents, in addition to the fact that the housing forum/survey/project focused on the village.
 - b) Cottage and cluster developments can have provisions for style, etc., but infill does not provide the same. Tools such as historic preservation offer guidance for architecture, landscaping, etc., for which there are both pros and cons. Suggestion was made that perhaps new construction could match the house to which it is mated.
 - c) It was noted that there will only be a finite number of lots available for infill. Making lot size reduction easier could conceivably invite demolition of existing stock.
 - d) Northampton has changed its regulations regarding lot size in recent years. It would be helpful to investigate the impact those changes have had in that city.
 - e) In reviewing comments made about short term rentals, owner occupancy is preferred. Alyssa reported that some towns do not allow ADU's unless one unit is owner occupied. She will survey other towns.

B. Results or status of survey -

1. Those who did not attend forum tended to be more negative in answers.
2. Those who did attend responded more in the spirit of participation.
3. Alyssa Larose screen shared survey results which were discussed by the Board. She also presented graphs comparing forum vs online responses.
4. Many comments were received referring to Rural Residential and why it was not included. Alyssa attributed those comments to not having attended the forum or not having all the information. Board members suggested various ways to address Rural Residential in a future forum, emphasize existing bylaws, and illustrate models allowed in that zone.
5. It was noted that Affordable (deed restricted) housing always elicits feedback/dialogue.

C. Next steps -

1. Alyssa will draft an FAQ sheet.
2. Board discussion on whether or not current housing format would pass at town meeting without inclusion of Rural Residential.

3. Andrea had spoken with Rebecca of the Shelburne Falls Water District to inquire if there is the capacity for expansion. Rebecca reported that water usage is down as a result of industry leaving town. Use of more efficient appliances also contributes to reduced consumption. Water usage is about 135,000 gallons per day, down from 270-290 thousand gallons.
 4. Alyssa asked if the Board wanted more survey responses, and Michael raised the possibility of another forum before the final draft of the bylaw. It was determined that the Board should have a bylaw draft before hosting another forum.
 5. In an effort to create more opportunities for comfortable dialogue, Alyssa suggested another way to solicit opinion is to have the virtual equivalent of open office time. That practice had been used in Williamstown (pre-Covid, so in person) in a coffee hour format to gauge public opinion and answer questions. She offered the idea of Zoom “gatherings” of several residents at a time to chat with one or more Board members.
 6. Addressing the housing project by section and presenting it that way was discussed, recognizing that some people may be in favor of one housing scenario but not necessarily others.
 7. Drafting the bylaw in terms of timeline for Annual Town Meeting Warrant was discussed, furthering the debate on drafting and approval by section as opposed to the whole.
 8. Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
- IV. Discussion of Public Notice Requirement Fees -
- A. John Gould screen shared the fee schedule followed by Board discussion. Fees are now payable up front, no billing for services after the fact. Application fees are non-refundable.
 - B. It was suggested that the total cost be disclosed to the applicant, then specify their share. Thus, applicant will understand that the Town is bearing a large portion of the financial burden.
- V. Review and approve minutes -
- A. Board reviewed minutes for November 23, 2020 meeting and December 2, 2020 forum.
 1. John Gould moved to approve November 23, seconded by Jon Wyman. Vote: Gould, yes; Hoberman, yes; Donlon, yes; Rose, yes; Wyman, yes.
 2. Two changes were made in the spelling or place of residence for persons listed as Attendees at the December 2 forum; also the word “forum” to replace use of the word “hearing”. John Gould moved to approve December 2 as amended, seconded by Michael. Vote: Gould, yes; Wyman, yes; Rose, yes; Donlon, yes; Hoberman, yes.
- VI. Public Comment - N/A
- VII. Other Topics Not Anticipated by Chair 48 Hours Prior to Meeting - N/A
- VIII. Adjourn the Meeting. John Gould moved to adjourn, seconded by Andrea. Vote: Rose, yes; Gould, yes; Wyman, yes; Donlon, yes; Hoberman, yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Bolduc, Boards' Clerk, February 25, 2021