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**Town of Pownal  
Planning Board Minutes  
Wednesday, May 15, 2024  
Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Matt Altieri, Orion Breen, Brian Stornelli, Bill Schmidt, Mercedes Pour-Previti, Thomas Ursia, Town Planner, Ginny Giddinge, CEO, and Recording Secretary, Alison Purinton

**Members Absent:** Excused, Marcia Bowen, Todd Mellin

**Guests:** Jon Morris, Selectboard, Mary Adams, Steve Leary, Amanda Lessard, RRCT (Royal River Conservation Trust), Hanae Garrison, RRCT, Alan Stearns, RRCT, Nina McCandless, Nicolas Carter, John Green

**Call to Order** at: 6:05 pm by Matt Altieri.

**Secretary's Report:** Approval of Meeting minutes for April 17, 2024.

Matt- I move that we accept the minutes as amended for the April 17, 2024 meeting. Brian to second  
All in favor 3-0 Motion carries

**Old Business;**

Bill Schmidt attended the public hearing, on May 13, 2024 and reported everything went smoothly.

**New Business:**

Site Plan Review- Proposed Inn on 162 Merrill Road

Tom- Welcomes everyone and explains this is the first application that I am aware of for an Inn in the Town of Pownal. The applicant has been very helpful in putting together all the items necessary for this review. This is not a new building but a retrofit of an existing building. If there are any waivers, they should be considered this evening. This is a special exception and requires a vote by the board.

Nina McCandless introduces herself and presents a slide show of the plans for a 4-5 room Inn at 162 Merrill Road. The property has 5 acres and is about ½ mile from the Freeport line. Letters have already been received by Public Works and the Fire Department. The site plan that is here addresses all the items on the checklists.

Tom- Many of these points are addressed by the letters from Public Works, Fire Department and myself.

Matt- Are you asking for any waivers?

Nina- Not asking for any waivers. Asking for the special exception. Per the ordinance it is zoned for RA. There are things on here that I don't want to do. I don't want to pave the driveway it takes away from the beauty of the space. Because I am not paving I am using pea stone I don't know if I need to get a waiver for that.

Tom- This will not be a heavily traveled. It makes a lot of sense to keep the driveway with the allotted pitch in pea stone.

Matt- You are not talking about expanding the existing footprint of the barn. You are not talking about having events there?

Nina- Not expanding the area. Not planning events there. If one should present itself, I would need to come to the board. There is not sufficient parking, we would have to tent and it is way more complicated. It is not the basis of what I am trying to do. I realize there is already a wedding venue in town. We are also not seeking a restaurant.

Mercedes- A point of clarity regarding parking. That is field parking in case we need to utilize future parking. The previous owner used it to bring her horses in. I don't want guests parking there.

Brian- You are living in the remainder of the home.

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Nina- Yes. We are hoping to stay in the front part of the home. This will be done in phases. The barn is first and then the 5<sup>th</sup> unit.

Matt- We have a few decisions to make. We need to determine completeness, which I think will be a quick decision and then do we want a site visit and a public hearing. My view on the site visit is we don't need one. I have driven past the property and there is no expansion of the barn. I don't know if we would get that much more information.

Orion- Does anyone in the audience have a feeling of the project? No response.

Matt- Hold next month's meeting as a public hearing, and from 6pm to 6:20pm will be a public hearing and then form a decision. I would propose we do that as we have a special exception.

Tom- If you follow that course of action. The board should decide on what Wednesday you will meet. Options would be the Wednesday before or the Wednesday after June 19<sup>th</sup> because of the holiday.

Matt- Everyone agrees that a public hearing should be held and the date of June 26, 2024 in addition to the June meeting.

Nina- How do you inform residents of the plan?

Matt- A notice will be put in the Forecaster; the application and the recording is online. You will have the opportunity to present again at the public hearing. Tom, do you have any items that need to be addressed?

Tom- Access points have been well addressed. Side-walks are not applicable. Open space has been maintained. There is no loading docks. The second page on the site plan review is optional. Because of the multi-phase project, you may want to consider what you are approving 4 units now or 4 plus 1 at a later point. The applicant has been fourth right in what may be coming. They should be clear in the posting of the public hearing and in the approval.

Matt- I propose we post the question?

Mercedes- The piece of the "L" is that going to be a service area office to support this like cleaning supplies, etc.

Nina- Yes. We would use the second floor for the 5<sup>th</sup> unit, and the ground floor would be storage. The previous owner wanted to use it as a garage. I do want to make note that because I will be providing lodging, I need to get a permit by the State of Maine Fire Marshall's office. I have been in contact with them and can't proceed until the Town has made a decision.

Final Site Plan Review- Trailhead Parking Lot on Elmwood Road by the Royal River Conservation Trust

Hanae- Passes out a document and displays a posterboard. Introduces the other members, and indicates she has some distances for the proposed parking lot. This will improve public safety and access for our trails. It will be constructed on a 1.2-acre parcel. Alan had previously presented a parking lot on this parcel back in 2023 and we have made some improvements based on the feedback. We had our surveyor put in on the site plan in relation to the boundaries. We have increased the parking spots from 4 to 7 with one being handicapped accessible. There would be a 20-foot-wide driveway and parking could be there as well to discourage people from parking on the road shoulder. The lot would develop about 3 percent of that acreage. It would be built on higher ground so not to disrupt the natural drainage. Trails would be moved to the back of the parking lot. There would not be any lighting or utilities. When we walked onsite with Tom, he was concerned about the turn radii-. We do have a permit that was obtained from Department of Transportation in 2020. Given the width of the driveway and low volume of traffic this parking lot would see, we would propose 15 feet turn radii at the intersection.

Matt- The plan doesn't should the 15foot radii?

Hanae- No not on the plan.

Mercedes- Can you remind me how Royal River maintains the parking lots in the winter?

Hanae- We have someone plow them.

Matt- I remember this coming up several years ago. My concern about this location is that it is Elmwood Road and people drive way too fast on it. Can you put up signs?

Hanae- Yes, we could do that, The DOT has given guidance on where to put signs up. We would hope the overflow parking would fill up before the road shoulder.

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Tom- Given the cooperation of the applicant to put in the 15-foot radii, that would logically seem you would need to adjust your culvert size as well as length. I suggest prior to approval there should be proper design and for it to be maintained. I think it is undersized and the plan doesn't reflect the proper radii- I suspect there is an amended plan showing the updated radii, culvert update and how the calculations came about. That should be reflected on a new plan.

Mercedes- What does the lay of the land look like.

Tom- The parking lot is at the highest point.

Hanae- We wanted to keep the existing draining channels.

Alan- I am almost certain 15 inches came from DOT.

Tom- Culverts only work unless they become clogged. Maybe we should have the input on the Public Works.

Alan- Maintenance would be easy for us. I say we bring back a new plan with the changes.

Matt- Does anyone have any other questions.

Orion- Are we saying you have to come back with these changes, or would we like you to come back with these changes?

Matt- I think Tom's point is valid. They are asked to come back in June with the plan showing the 15-foot radii showing and having spoken with the road commissioner with regard to the culvert. Thanks everyone for the presentation.

### **Minor Subdivision at 215 Tuttle Road- Letter of Inquiry**

Steve Leary - Introduces himself and describes how he purchased the above-listed property, and he would like to develop this into a minor subdivision. He has called around for surveyors and they are booked 3 to 4 months out. He has spoken with Tom about his proposals and is looking for thoughts and ideas. Passes out a paper with what the plot may look like.

Matt- The application process is a requirement before the board is legal and practical. We can't give advice on an application before it comes to us. We may lead you astray. I am happy to answer any procedural questions. Do you have questions about how the process works?

Steve- No I am familiar with the process. We went through it on Farmview Drive. What I am trying to do is save time and money. I don't want to pay the money for a survey for you to say that we can't do what we are hoping to accomplish. My thought was I can get the boards input in concept. Is this in concept ok with you?

Orion- Are you anticipating special exceptions?

Steve- I think it is straightforward. Each lot will be 2-3 acre lots and 2 ½ acre lots with 1000 feet of road frontage on Tuttle Road. One lot in the back would take advantage of the road frontage on Tuttle Road.

Orion- Is this the driveway location you're thinking, points to handout.

Steve- The driveway will come off Goss Lane. Points out a couple of different alternatives.

Orion- With minor subdivisions it really is if it fits within the ordinances

Matt- Bring in an application that meets the ordinance and it will need to be approved. We don't have the ability to say on we don't like the way it looks. There are some discretionary pieces like buffering.

Steve- Understood, my thoughts get my ducks in a row early and be as proactive as possible. I have met with Tom and the road commissioner. I don't want to be surprised

Matt- You are working with Tom and Matt. I am sorry we can't give you more.

### **Water Capacity RFP**

Tom-Two qualified engineering groups submitted to the RFP. The Economic Development and Sustainability Committee recommended Drumlin Environmental to the Selectboard. This will be an investigative study of hydrogeology in the area for the potentiality to connect with one of the aquifer systems to enhance the towns capacity for public water. This is being funded by a grant from the State

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of Maine. Our town attorney will be working on a contract. We hope to see the start up in July of 2024 with completion by November 5, 2024.

Matt- Is there anything you need from us?

Tom- Just let me know if you want a progress report. At the outcome I will provide the results.

### **Conservation Subdivision and Minor Subdivision Checklist NorthStar**

Matt- Sam from NorthStar has put together checklists, I have reviewed and looks good. I think we should spell out the lot density map a bit more. I will circulate before the next meeting with some additional criteria.

Brian- It would be worth putting a paragraph in there to explain lot density.

Matt- Please review it, as we have time to make changes.

### **Planning Board Procedures and Welcome to the Planning Board**

Matt- I suggest we look through these in June. I have looked through them. Welcome to the Planning Board document is very helpful. There are a couple of changes on here that reflect the additional town staff.

Mercedes- One of the best resources is a training the State does. It should be mentioned here.

Matt- Those are workshops through Maine Municipal Association. If anyone would like to go the town would pay for it. Just let Becky know.

### **June Town newsletter**

Matt- Does anyone want to give a report for the June 10<sup>th</sup> newsletter? It is just a report of what has been happening. We might observe there are some applications for the before the Board.

Mercedes- I will try.

### **Communications**

Matt- A request was received from a resident that we approach the microphone as there is some difficulty in hearing on the video recordings.

### **Discussion**

Matt- I want to remind others that I will be stepping down as of the July meeting. It is important that we have a chair, and I would be happy to transition someone into the role. In many ways it is a very fulfilling role. As you know Marcia does a mountain of work to make it easier for us. I am happy to pitch in anyway.

Orion- Thanks for your service. Having people with your experience and thoughtfulness has been a good guide to the process. I appreciate it.

Matt- I move that we adjourn the meeting. Brian to second. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.

Respectively submitted,

*Alison Purinton*

Planning Board Recording Secretary