

## PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

May 14, 2008

### ROLL CALL:

Phil LoChiatto, Chairman – Present

Rick Okerman, Secretary – Present

Ruth-Ellen Post, Regular Member – Present

Bruce Breton, Selectmen Member – Present

Nancy Prendergast, Vice Chairman – Present

Walter Kolodziej, Regular Member – Present

Pam Skinner, Regular Member – Present

Galen Stearns, Selectmen Alternate – Excused

### STAFF:

Al Turner, Director of Planning and Development – Present

### OTHERS:

Ben Frost, Director of Public Affairs at New Hampshire House

John McGowan, Attorney, Donahue, Tucker and Ciandella

Mr. LoChiatto opened the meeting at 7:00 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Workforce Housing Workshop** – 2½ hour panel discussion for an introduction to this important southern New Hampshire issue.

Mr. Frost gave a presentation which included his employment background. He discussed that workforce or affordable housing can look good and should be mixed with market rate housing and not segregated, there are two pending bills on affordable housing, “reasonable and realistic opportunity for the development of affordable housing must be provided” is vague language, pending legislation would prevent towns from prohibiting affordable units, the other bill would allow towns to create Affordable Housing Commissions, legislation would also speed up the appeal process for developers, he recommended mixed-use affordable housing that includes market housing and retail units, and their website has additional information if needed.

Attorney McGowan, discussed his background in affordable housing, Windham has a lot of potential, he discussed other State’s legislation for affordable housing, NH needs smart policies, he discussed affordable housing financing and “green” building.

Mr. LoChiatto thanked Mr. Frost and Mr. McGowan for their participation. Board comments included about 353 acres are zoned for multi-family residential use, the Board struggles with “not in my backyard” mentality, in the past abutters of a proposed development showed up to protest the proposal because they thought it would drive down their property values, people worry about the stigma attached to those who live in affordable housing especially the children, and the town is not without land to support multi-family units.

Public comment from Jeff Gowan, Pelham Planning Director, discussed that Pelham is also working regarding workforce housing, asked about the legislation and potential loss of local control.

Dianne Fallon asked about successful models.

Ross McLeod suggested that a public relations campaign to help sell this, how to keep it affordable, and not to have these units isolated but integrated into the Town.

Kristie St. Laurent stated that she feels that Windham is workforce housing for Boston which creates a

disconnect with the Town, will there be penalties for not keeping the units affordable.

Margaret Crisler stated that this will provide housing for adult children of current residents, and is there anyway to restrict the housing to Windham jobs.

Chris Nickerson stated that there's a lot of parallels between open space development and workforce housing, and what tools would help make workforce housing work in Windham?

Mr. Frost and Mr. McGowan responded to the public. Board discussion regarding need rental units in Town, and further discussion of HB 1259.

Mr. Kolodziej motioned to adjourn. Mr. Breton seconded. Passed 7-0. Meet adjourned at 9:15 pm.

These minutes are in draft form and have not yet been reviewed and approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nancy Charland