

Town of Farmington
Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 6, 2023
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street-Farmington, NH 03835

Board Members Present:

Rick Pelkey, Chairman
Bill Fisher, Vice Chairman
Mike Day
Rebecca Patton-Sanderson

Board Members Absent:

Charlie King, Selectmen's Rep, excused
Stephen Henry, excused
Jeremy Squires, excused

Others Present:

Kyle Pimental, Planning Director
Danielle Harris, EDC Chair
Angela Cleveland, SRPC Principal Planner
Steve Whitman, Resilience Planning

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Pelkey called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Review of Minutes:

August 16, 2023- No errors or omissions

Motion: (Fisher, second Pelkey) to approve the minutes as written passed 4-0.

4). Public Comment: None

5). Old Business:

Renewal of Economic Revitalization Zones- Mr. Pelkey said the Planning Dept. is looking for feedback from the board on the Sarah Greenfield Business Park ERZ and that this information was shared with Economic Development Committee and will be discussed in greater detail at their meeting on Aug. 24. The deadline to submit the renewal certificate is 12/31/23 he said. Mr. Pimental said in the board's packets he included the ERZ certification form that they discussed at the last meeting as well as a FAQ that the state sent them that provides some additional information about the program and how it works. He said Business and Economic Affairs Program Manager Bridgett Beckwith sent this along to them that can be shared with business owners within the zone and that she also sent around a template that can be used by the Town to send to businesses informing them about the program.

He said he shared this with EDC Chair Danielle Harris with the idea that the EDC in collaboration with the Planning Dept. that they send something out to the business owners within both the

downtown ERZ and the Sarah Greenfield ERZ and invite them to a workshop that Ms. Beckwith from BEA said that she would be willing to host on the program and hopefully drum up some interest for those business owners to participate when it's time for them to go through the process in Feb. 2024.

Mr. Pelkey asked if they knew the percentage of businesses that are taking advantage of the program.

Mr. Pimental said he had no idea. He said they do know based on the tax parcel data and the assessing data they can pull all of the different business owners within the zones and get their mailing addresses and send the FAQ along with the letter and if they come up with a date invite them to participate in that workshop.

He said the workshop would be sponsored by the Planning Board and the EDC but it would be the BEA that is hosting it so there are a couple of different options. He said they could either have it here, they could have it at an EDC meeting or they could do it online. He said that she said that the presentation that she has done in the past translates really well in whatever manner that the Town chooses to do.

He said she mentioned that the 6 p.m. time slot online sometimes can be a little bit easier for people to participate in as we enter the fall with people in flu season if people are nervous about being in public spaces with lots of people they may want to choose to participate virtually. He said she said it's entirely up to what we want to do she said she would be open to doing it either way so we have a couple of different options that we want to take advantage of and use her help to drum up some interest. Especially if we're going to renew these zones for another 5 years let's get those business owners to sign up for this in Feb. so they can use the full 5 years up until 2028 he said.

Mr. Pelkey said one of the reasons they're doing all this is to benefit them.

Mr. Pimental said they talked about changing the Sarah Greenfield zone because the way that it is delineated right now does not make a ton of sense. He said if they look in their packets they will see a rough draft of what he thought makes a little bit more sense and that he was looking for feedback from the board on that. He said in talking with Ms. Beckwith it is not going to be complicated for them make that change as part of the renewal process and they don't have to do it through the renewal process they can change the boundaries at any time.

Mr. Pelkey asked if the changes were not done by the legislative body it's done by the Planning Board by applying to the state through the Planning Office.

Mr. Pimental said yes and the Select Board authorizes the Town Administrator to sign the renewal letter but he thought it would be a recommendation from the Planning Board to make this change to these particular properties. He asked the board to look at the 2 maps that he included in their packets one is the original and current zone and the second one essentially eliminates everything that is south of the Public Safety Building down to the Town's gravel pit area and including all of the Sarah Greenfield, all the properties that abut Rt. 11 and then to the

east the several properties that are directly across the street from the Sarah Greenfield Park. Mr. Pelkey noted those properties had site work done that was going to be a solar facility. Mr. Pimental said there has been a ton of site work done there, it's been cleared but it's just vacant land and it fits the intent of these zones as being underutilized land.

He said the same with some of these other areas and it really just expands it to those areas and removes the areas that are south of the Public Safety Building that are likely not going to be developed because of what the Fire Dept. may want to do behind the building and the McCarthy Trail as well as a significant wetland is in that area so it's just not developable land. He said he tried to concentrate this on areas that would seem to be more beneficial to use this program than what it currently is. He asked the board for their initial thoughts on this new area and if they support this and whether they should move this forward as part of the certification. Mr. Pelkey said they really didn't discuss the area of the old solar site but he thought that was a good inclusion. He said they did talk about the corner that one big area that he picked up at Rt. 153 and Rt. 11 and he liked that as well as the Town's gravel pit.

He asked if the land that is further up Rt. 11 to the northwest is all privately held right now and then said that might be an additional place because it's fairly level area and there are some wetlands but it has great access to Rt. 11. He asked if that was part of the discussion when the Rt. 11 Corridor Study Team did their "windshield tour".

Mr. Pimental said no but that area that is just off Paulson Road could be a potential area to include.

Mr. Pelkey said there was some previous excavation down in there.

Mr. Pimental said Ms. Cleveland mentioned that area but they didn't stop there. He said looking at the aerial photo with the brook and that wetland area and any buffer shrinks that area down. He said if they want to take this zone and extend it to the 2 properties to the west just south of the 500 Club he didn't think there was any harm in that but the opportunities for development are right off Rt. 11 and the further you go back the more environmental constraints you have.

Mr. Pelkey said if somebody comes in and picks up the Town pit parcel and decides that they want to add that additional acreage once they have a piece of what they're doing in the zone if they would get the full advantage of it throughout what they're doing.

Mr. Pimental shook his head yes.

Mr. Pelkey then asked about the site across the road.

Mr. Pimental said the Superfund Site is already an ERZ zone.

Mr. Pelkey asked if that is one that they have to renew as well.

Mr. Pimental said they did that in 2021 and it was more of just a sign-off. He clarified that the property directly west of the Town owned property is owned by the Conservation Commission and the one that is along Rt. 11 is not and is privately owned.

Mr. Pelkey said that parcel might be a good one to add if they're not really making full use of it.

Mr. Pimental said he thought it would make sense to add that one but the one above it is the Town owned piece where the brook runs right through it and he didn't know if it's under an easement or not and that's the one that's connected to the 500 Club.

Mr. Fisher said it's in conjunction with the 500 Club.

Mr. Pelkey said he knew the plan is to have a walking trail that goes around the edges of that.

Mr. Fisher said that's probably going to happen next year.

Mr. Pimental said he would add the other one that abuts Paulson Rd. that is between Paulson Rd. and Rt. 11. He said most of this is from feedback from the board at their last meeting outside of the solar piece and it seems to make to make sense to add that as a contiguous zone to this. I'll add that other piece in there as part of the renewal he said.

Mr. Pelkey asked what the next steps are for the board on this. He asked if they need to make a recommendation or wait until after the EDC looks at it before he asks this board to make a recommendation.

Mr. Pimental said they should let the EDC look at it as well and then if there is support from both boards he will put together the certification, a final map with the new boundaries and a short write up on why they are changing the boundaries. Let me pull all that together once the EDC has a chance to look at it I'll bring it back and you can make a motion to endorse it and I'll send it over Ken (Town Administrator Ken Dickie) so he can go through the channels to sign it and then we'll get it to the BEA prior to the end of the year he said.

6). New Business:

Route 11 Corridor Study Team- Angela Cleveland, Principal Planner with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission said they wanted to go over the Farmington Rt. 11 Corridor Study with the board tonight. She said in their packets they have the outreach materials that they created for both the board and the public and that can also be found on their website.

Mr. Pelkey asked if the plan was to put this up on the Town website like this.

Ms. Cleveland said yes and she would be happy to work with someone to get it up on the Town's website as well. She said she is serving as the Project Manager and she wasn't here when they applied for the funding but as they probably know back in May they received word from the state that the Town had been awarded a Housing Opportunities Program Grant through Invest NH and with that they hired 3 consultants, one of which is their prime and the others are working with Mr. Whitman so she would let him introduce the team.

Steve Whitman of Resilience Planning and Design said they're doing several things on the project and they are the private counterpart to Ms. Cleveland in managing the project team. He said his firm is based in Plymouth, NH and they do comprehensive planning, Master Planning, zoning and they have been doing a lot of these housing opportunities grant studies and in that work they started to partner with RKG Assoc. who used to be based out of Durham, NH and are now based in Cambridge, Mass and Virginia and they are really great at acquisition of data and analysis so they brought them in for this.

He said they were part of the windshield survey and he would go into the details of some of the different tasks they're doing and they're going to be assisting them with as well as Mark Fugiere who is from Southern NH and has done a lot of work around zoning and planning especially on housing advocating for communities and making housing regulation changes and with developers who are working on housing projects. We brought him in so he can push us a little bit and use him to think about what other communities are doing and give you a broader set of choices. Our job is to work with those partners and report back to Angie and Kyle to make sure the board is brought along through the remainder of the year and there are no issues he said. Ms. Cleveland said on page 3 of their handout (or go to the Farmington page at Strafford.org) is the work plan for this project and she would go through the community engagement piece and then hand it back over to Mr. Whitman for the more technical piece. She said as planners they believe strongly in community engagement and the HOP grants not only require it but it gives them some tools to find various and unique ways to engage the public so tonight they wanted to do an activity with the board and they also intend to do a survey which they will also talk to them about tonight and then plan for a community forum and that they would talk about their preference on the date, time and venue for the forum later in the meeting.

She said about 11,000 cars a day drive up and down Rt. 11 which is a significant number of people going up and down this corridor which is not just residents obviously.

Mr. Pelkey said it depends on what day of the week it is and the weekend traffic going north is crazy.

Ms. Cleveland said thinking about what that looks like with the various land uses as they are now and zoning and how they could be formed or not formed is part of this project and they want to make sure they are using layman's terms in engaging the residents and the stakeholders that may not be residents but are landowners along that route. She said there will be forums, interviews, focus groups and who else should be included in this will be part of the discussion tonight.

Mr. Whitman said also in their packets are all the various tasks and the timeline for completing those tasks and he would simplify it for them. He said one way to think about the schedule is basically there are 2 phases and Phase I is this fall and winter of 2023 and Phase II is the first half of 2024.

He said Phase I is where they try to learn some of the things that they know about the community and answer some of their questions about to what degree there is land available for development and to what degree there is demand for the different kinds of uses with a market analysis. He said they just started the process of collecting and looking at the available housing data that SRPC has come up with and looking beyond that with some additional census data and other things that are more specific to Farmington and as specific as possible to this corridor.

He said that is where RKG is helping them and they are doing this data analysis and they will do

a market analysis to look at demand or interest and certain kinds of uses including housing because that is where the funding comes from but they don't have to look at that exclusively. Mr. Pelkey asked if he was seeing a lot of demand for housing now not the demand signal, but the people developing it and if they are looking for that type of property to actually develop. Mr. Whitman said yes they are seeing some and they are going to get better data within the next month or two that they will present as a draft to the board that is more specific to Farmington. His said this first phase is for them to learn all this, bringing it to them as draft information so they can see it first and ask additional questions through Kyle and Angie. He said they can then use this information to go out to the public and say this is what they're seeing physically in the corridor that's why they started using these maps to look at what the zoning is, what other kind of programs like the conversation they had about their economic revitalization efforts, where the infrastructure is, what the transportation opportunities and challenges are, where the natural resources are and places you want to stay away from and don't want to encourage development and the places that are more appropriate long term and fit with your Master Plan.

Mr. Whitman said the last piece of this is looking at the Master Plan and the existing regulations and do an audit of all of their materials and look for where there are disconnects between your planning policy and your regulations. He said they will have some conversations with Kyle and he will help point out some things that have been coming up routinely and they will think about where the opportunities are in the spring.

He said in the spring they'll have shared all this information with them and have started to talk with the public to see what their desires and questions are for the corridor. We'll come back at the beginning of 2024 and we'll have conversations with the Planning Board and whoever else you want to engage in this process and say this is what we're seeing if you want to encourage certain kinds of uses in certain parts of the corridor which may be distinctly different and the whole corridor might not be the same and what it would take to do that he said.

He said within the scope of work here they have the ability to re-visit and update the Tax Increment Financing District so that is the other reason they brought RKG in because they have done a lot of work on TIF Districts in different places. I've never worked on a TIF District so we brought them in so they can review it all and understand what we're learning from you and they will want to meet with you at some point to talk through some alternatives he said.

Mr. Whitman said this project is not going to happen real fast...

Mr. Pelkey noted that any regulatory changes would not go into effect until 2025 based on that timeline.

Mr. Whitman said they would be drafting it for them and they could also present them with some options so along the way they won't necessarily have to choose one or the other and there will be some places where they give them options and it will explain why there are options and there will be some story to it. He then asked if there was anything that he missed.

Mr. Pimental said the zoning recommendations that will come out of this project will not be ready to move forward to Town Meeting until 2025. He said the board should remember that Farmington not only has the HOP grant they also have the Housing Navigator and she has helped them put the RFP together for the old fire station property and she helped write this grant to get this project. He said she is also going to be looking at for this coming year potential zoning amendments specifically for the Urban and Suburban Residential districts for zoning changes in 2024.

Mr. Pelkey said based on that it's Sept. and they need to start talking about those pretty quick. Mr. Pimental said they will see her in Oct. He said as of right now the Planning Dept. is intending to pump the brakes on any other zoning amendments outside of these particular ones they are going to bring forward to the board unless there is something they are really chomping at the bit to fix then they should address that. If there is not something we think this is a mess and we really need to fix that this year we are going to put that on hold to allow Courtney to look at what kind of potential density bonuses may be allowed for people that are connected to water and sewer, the minimum lot sizes in the Urban zone does not match up with what's on the ground he said.

He said they're going to concentrate on those 2 districts and hope that they keep the amendments relatively concise and not 9 to 10 like we've been at for the last couple of years. He asked the board to let him know if there is something they really want to tackle but as of now he has encouraged Courtney to concentrate on these 2 areas knowing that they were going to have stuff on Rt. 11 in a much bigger context the next year and he didn't want to overwhelm the voters.

Mr. Pelkey asked him to put that in his staff notes for the next couple of meetings so they make sure that that gets repeated when all of the members are here to see if there is anything to solicit from the rest of the crew. He said they may have something that they feel we must address this year though they've done pretty good job of going after the things they thought were painful the last couple of years.

Mr. Pimental said the reason that she is concentrating on those 2 districts is that in 2020 they did a really good job with making some changes in the Village Center district and have seen redevelopment because of those changes and it never would have been able to happen without those max density changes as well as some of the other things we did in that zone. So I think that using that as a good example of how to change your regulations it will encourage certain growth he said.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said she would love to see more development along Rt. 11 but that road cannot stand as it is any more traffic. She said without some sort of road widening and improvement she can't see anything more being developed along that corridor because as they mentioned especially on Fridays and Mondays it's a nightmare.

Mr. Pelkey said it's fairly heavily developed in the Rochester area not so much through here so

he thinks there is the potential to develop Farmington to maybe not quite the same level as Rochester has developed it. He said the road has already been impacted on the Rochester end so we're just going to extend that through Farmington.

Mr. Whitman said that is an important concern and a concern they would share on their behalf. He said as part of this they are looking at what are the alternative transportation connections and how they can manage access points so property owners have the access they want but it doesn't create a worse situation.

Mr. Pelkey said right now in Farmington we have 2 roads that parallel Rt. 11 that used to be back roads and if you did a traffic study on those over the last 10 years you'd find that the residents of Farmington no longer use Rt. 11. We take the back roads he said.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said her back road is dirt with potholes so Rt. 11 is necessary sometimes. But none the less I really think that road needs to be improved she said.

Mr. Pelkey said that she was right about that and the impact to the roads in Rochester that used to be a pretty quick commute from here to where the Spaulding (Turnpike) is but not anymore.

Ms. Cleveland said having them all along every month is a goal of theirs and as they will see on the timeline there are monthly updates where they might not see her and Mr. Whitman every month it will be quarterly where they will do a workshop with them and talk through some of the issues like they are doing tonight. She said they will be provided with updates and present findings and dive deeper so these aren't going to be sprung on them next spring. She said they will be building their capacity while also keeping the public informed so it's almost like a mini campaign in a lot of ways and to keep that in mind as they go along.

She said this is their first workshop and then it will be a little less than quarterly for the Nov. workshop and then again in Feb. and in May and those are based on the key milestones for the project.

Mr. Pelkey noted that there's a good size gap between Feb. and May and that the town has elections in the middle of that so they were okay with that.

Mr. Whitman pointed to the maps on display and said this is one version of the mapping they have done so far. He said it was explained to him that it's easier to make the corridor wider to start and it's easier to go narrower later if you decide to dial it in a little bit and focus the area you want to look at so that is why they went as far as they did. He said the other reason is to look beyond the initial roadway fronting zones and look into some of the neighboring zones so they can understand if there are opportunities to change where those lines are or to rethink some of the existing zoning or if it works as it is.

Mr. Pelkey said there has been a discussion amongst the board about the zone along Rt. 11 and to the east out towards Chestnut Hill Road.

Mr. Whitman said they have the lot lines, the infrastructure map, the zoning map and the natural resources and there are so many layers of natural resources that they can see on this

map tonight. He said this is just an overlay of them to see where the color is darker is where they're higher currents and with the river and some of the other resources you're all aware of along this corridor that they're pretty significant and yet there are a lot of areas that show as having development potential.

He said they have the overlay of the TIF District and the Wellhead Protection areas, etc. He said they can continue to add information to these maps as they get it and if they have ideas on something that would be beneficial and as they pull more transportation data in and look at some of the counts for some of the neighboring and intersecting roads they'll be able to add that. Then we can start to conceptualize so when we are back with you in Feb. we will be able to tell you these are all the things we're seeing and this is what we've been hearing from people both landowners and the public at large he said.

He then asked if they could come up with any remaining questions or a concept that would work within the Master Plan that would work for Farmington that they think they could talk about at a town meeting where their heads would shake yes and agree that makes sense. He said they need to come up with a concept for the corridor or a section of the corridor and then talk about what rules would be necessary to bring that concept to reality over time and that will inform the changes to the regulations.

Mr. Whitman said the way this grant was written you're getting a deeper level of analysis than they've seen in a lot of the other towns where typically they get to look at the census data and you might be able to picture what it looks like on the ground and what some of the other considerations are. He said because they have the mapping and they're bringing in other consultants they can work in their area and also challenge each other. I think we can go further with this with a better range of options he said.

Ms. Cleveland gave the board copies of the map showing the top 11 spaces that Mr. Pimental had chosen as stops from the project field trip with the consultants.

Mr. Pelkey said they discussed that and went through those stops at their meeting. He said the question was if the board wanted to add any before they do this so they were a part of that.

Ms. Cleveland said they also talked about Paulson Rd. and she takes that route because she comes from upstate NH and it's interesting to see it through a different lens now when she comes through. She asked if there are other areas on here, especially after this exercise and hearing the spiel from her and Mr. Whitman tonight that they think they should be exploring or other opportunities, maybe not necessarily on a parcel but it would be nice if it was parcel based and that they have some markers for them too.

She asked if there are other stakeholders and said they are going to be doing focus groups and they want to make sure they are talking to the landowners who are all along here not just on Rt. 11 itself but maybe even on abutting parcels.

Mr. Pelkey said it's tough on the bottom side of this because of the topography at least until you get out past Cameron's then after that it's still not great but it gets better.

Mr. Fisher said it gets flatter and there is not as much ledge there.

Mr. Pelkey said that's why they were talking about making sure they were trying to address the zoning what happens when other uses about the Rural Residential and Agricultural Residential zones and what they do so they tried to change our zoning last year to allow that so if there was some type of industrial or multi-use activity that wanted to come in along the corridor to the north side of that we could entertain them being able to buy into the AR and be able to do what they wanted to do. He said those parcels are on this map and they're like the 2nd layer of the onion out to that side of Rt. 11 not just the set of parcels right along it the next layer back. He said there are other parcels as you get further out toward New Durham as well. He said there would be areas out past #9 and #10 that would be good for that but they have them on this map. He said the Ela River is there which means access is a little bit tough off of Rt. 11.

Ms. Cleveland said that is definitely one of their challenges that and the topography.

Mr. Pimental asked if they have LIDAR data and that he thought it would be interesting to look on the west side of Rt. 11. He said one of the spots they did stop at was the parcel that has been cleared and the berm was removed and it was an interesting stop in that it was really one of the only places that they could stand from the road and see how far back it goes until you get to the river. He said that is hard to visualize anywhere in the town along the route except for that one spot because it has been cleared. We don't really have that on the west side anywhere where they can see the topography as clear as you can at that spot he said.

He said the one area they may want to mark up that they discussed today with the Town Administrator and SRPC's Transportation Planner is the intersection at Central St. and Rt. 11. He said they stopped at Tappan St. which is where the Rite Aid was but one street over is Central St. so those were the 2 areas they discussed as 2 gateway areas that lead to the downtown along with Spring St. that's a little bit further out.

He said he understood that Central St. onto Rt. 11 is a very dangerous intersection to take a left turn out of.

Mr. Pelkey said the sight line is not good on the corner and the traffic accelerates as they're coming past the store and Central St. is right across the street from it. He said people want to pull out and the traffic is coming and the sight line is bad.

Mr. Fisher said that Central St. and Rt. 11 hit at almost a 45 degree angle and if you are trying to make that left turn you can only see maybe 100-150 ft. down the road so the way they come around that corner at 75 mph there have been several deaths at that intersection.

Mr. Pelkey said the speed limit thru there was 55 mph and they lowered it to 45 mph.

Mr. Fisher said plus the bridge that is right there is narrow also so any type of work to expand Rt. 11 there they're looking at bridge replacement and encroachment on private property.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson asked where that is located on the map.

Mr. Pelkey said just to the left of stop #9 there is a road that comes up where the Mad River goes across.

Mr. Pimental said they may put that safety improvement project into the Ten Year Plan for SRPC. He said they also stopped at the intersection of Rt. 153 and Rt. 11 at the Farmer's Kitchen and looked around that area and that is also another safety issue that needs to be addressed that may also make it into the Ten Year Plan.

Mr. Whitman said that is a signalized intersection and asked how it is a safety issue.

Mr. Pelkey said there are a lot of accidents there even though there are left turn lanes there. He said you have traffic that wants to turn left and immediately past the intersection you have traffic that wants to turn right and it bottlenecks from 2 lanes down to one right there. So you have people going in 2 different directions and nobody has any place to go so there are a lot of accidents going toward Rochester there he said.

Mr. Pimental said that area at that intersection as well as at Tappan St. where they looked at the Rite Aid site where there is that underutilized building that is going to be looked at for redevelopment as well as the Rt. 153/Rt. 11 area that is also an area that is prime for redevelopment. He said they looked at the site right on the corner of Meetinghouse Hill Rd. and that is an area that is for sale and there are a couple of other lots that are right there and that is all within the TIF District so if the Town is going to try to promote development in that area it needs to be done in coordination with the DOT with intersection improvements that need to happen over time.

He said the other thing the Planning Board should be aware of is that as you get to stops #9 and #10 the land uses in that area change dramatically from what you see in the rest of the town and it is very dense residential development in that area and those folks are zoned commercial. He said all of those homes are non-conforming so it may make sense to convert it to Suburban Residential because of the density and maybe as you go further out on Spring St. that becomes Rural Residential.

Mr. Pelkey said by zoning it out like that that would also bring in some density numbers that would be more favorable to development.

Mr. Pimental said that's correct but to keep in mind that if they're making zoning changes to any of the residential zones that may change in 2025 because of this project and they want to be thinking about that further out not just that makes sense for these zones as they exist today and asking if they are comfortable with changing that density or whatever it may be. We have to be looking out a 2 year timeframe with what we want to accomplish next year and the year after that with this project he said.

Ms. Cleveland asked if they have any of the specific stakeholders along here.

Mr. Pimental said (Selectmen's Rep to the Planning Board) Charlie King would be one as he owns a couple of properties next to stop #1.

Ms. Cleveland asked about the property that was just recently sold at an auction.

Mr. Pelkey said the Town bought Mr. Bradsher's old property.

Mr. Fisher said there is also 12 acres of conservation land there.

Mr. Whitman asked if there are areas that they may want to down zone that are better as conservation land.

Mr. Pelkey said if it is in a conservation easement they don't get a choice on it anyway.

Ms. Cleveland asked if there is a priority protection plan through the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Fisher said there really hasn't been much done to that 12 acres and when he first took over as Chair of the Con Com the Town came to him and said they have this 12 acres of land and nobody wants to buy it but how about we make it conservation land and then they did.

Mr. Pelkey asked if it was Town owned conservation land.

Mr. Fisher said yes and then he found out that Mr. King wanted to buy it after they turned it into conservation land.

Ms. Cleveland asked if there are other parcels they have their eyes set on in the dark purple areas that are high value resources along the corridor.

Mr. Fisher said the only other land he was looking at maybe doing some conservation easements on maybe later is the 94 acres the Town just bought were Town Well #6 is at. He said it has easy access to the Cocheco River and if they are just going to leave open land like that because we have to have a well protection area maybe they could use part of that for conversation.

Mr. Whitman asked him to point out the locations of the 12 acre and 94 acre parcels on the map and Mr. Fisher did so. He also pointed out the 360 acres the Town is in the process of acquiring through a donation to the Town in the Bay Rd./Spring St. area.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson suggested adding some intersecting street names that would help with orientation.

Mr. Pimental said he didn't realize that the donated land was in the study area but that whole area is part of the conservation land. He then went to the map and circled the area just before stop #10 going towards New Durham. He said right now this whole area is in the middle of the deed being written to transfer that to the Town that will be for conservation.

Mr. Whitman said they can add their understanding to these bits of information and then add things to help them navigate across the map like the names of intersecting roads so each version is a little bit better. He said they would try not to overload every map especially with the public and they don't want to try to show them everything on one map.

Mr. Pimental asked if any of the board members knew exactly where the Town just purchased the land that was for auction (the Bradsher property).

Mr. Day said the owner of PIP Rental and Storage bought some of it and they got the other side of it.

Mr. Pimental asked if the Town bought the land going towards downtown.

Mr. Fisher said he thought it is where it's parallel to Rt. 11. He said it starts right about where Cardinal's Sampler is and runs south.

Mr. Pimental said the first place they stopped was at Places Crossing.

Mr. Fisher said it's north of that area and that it would be behind stop #2.

Mr. Pimental said the land north of stop #1 was purchased by a private developer that owns the PIP store and he would be a person to talk to about what they are planning to do. He said he also thought talking to the Selectmen about the land that was purchased in and around the well that is right in that area about what is going to be conserved as part of the wellhead area and if they are thinking about subdividing and selling off other parts for potential development. He said the Select Board authorized the purchase of that land and that well is the primary drinking water supply for the town so there is going to be some protection around that area where they are going to want to limit certain types of land uses but they may not need 94 acres for that. He said there may be areas where they want to keep some form where they can protect the well but then subdivide a piece of it off that can be developed closer to Rt. 11. That's within the aquifer area too so the Town is going to want to be very cognizant of development that close to the well he said.

Mr. Pelkey said it is not only our aquifer it feeds down into Rochester too.

Mr. Pimental said those areas because they were actively mined the potential in terms of where the land is makes them more ready for potential development because of that type of excavation activity. He said they have had some internal discussions about when you look at those gravel pits that are there all the way from Pike to Bradsher there are these haul roads that connect all of them together and one of them comes out in Rochester.

Mr. Pelkey said they go all the way out to Little Falls Bridge Road.

Mr. Pimental said some it has bridges that were built and there are some other crossings back there but he didn't know how much traffic goes over them. He said they need some sort of byway or pass way that gets people off of Rt. 11 and some of these haul roads potentially offer that opportunity but the challenge is they're all owned by different property owners so they would have to have some long term vision of if there was ever going to be an upgrade to those haul roads to a roadway to decrease the traffic now you're creating something where you could get access across the river and you have a different roadway that's somewhat already built. He said it's something that may offer more opportunity for something like than on the other side. There is nothing like that on the other side as it is completely forested and no disturbance has taken place but it may offer up some different opportunities to consider. There's going to be a whole lot of outreach needed and a lot of coordination from the property owners he said.

Mr. Whitman said there is a regulatory tool that they could adopt where if a developer came along and purchased a bunch of these properties they could come before the Planning Board with an overall master plan and then they could back for each phase as they build down the infrastructure. He said they would have some assurance that their overall plan is going to fit within the zoning, that it's going to be approved and the board would have some assurance that it's going to be inspected building it out over time.

He said it would allow that kind of coordination not having to do it all at once. It's one of a

couple of tools that we will look at and bring you some information on and show you some case study examples to consider because this is a unique opportunity for sure he said.

Mr. Pelkey said those excavation sites all along thru there need a good review and we have a contractor in place now to help us do that so if you are ever looking for a motion from the board to instruct those contractors to go out there and do a review of these pits that would be excellent. He explained that the Town is responsible to ensure that excavations in town comply with the state laws and they have not been monitored.

Mr. Fisher said they set up a group to go over it all and they had 1 meeting.

Danielle Harris Chair of the EDC said with regards to the Master Plan and their rural vision it seems like Rt. 11 we're trying to focus on business development and that she was curious from the housing side it sounds like the hauls they mentioned she could see that where there's channels and maybe housing behind them. She said they have been reaching out trying to bring business in and even for the open business fronts it's hard to imagine right now but for the future it would be great to have as much of it for businesses along Rt. 11.

She said she knew it was hard to imagine with the amount of traffic that's on there now and thinking of maybe extending it. She said they may be aware that Phase II of the Ridge and everything that is coming there and they're planning breweries, housing, lots more restaurants, a theater and there's a lot of stuff going in so we're only going to get more traffic down Rt. 11.

Mr. Pelkey said part of what they have been talking about on how to zone those is we changed the zoning to allow for mixed use building in that area so it wasn't just about business it was about mixed use stuff so they could get housing in as well as business.

Mrs. Harris said that's great and asked just how much they can factor into that on how that will look and what they've seen in Rochester and it will be great to see how they're positioning that for Phase II. She said it's really well laid out with the businesses in the front and as much as they could continue that on the Farmington side that would help bring a lot more funds into town.

She said we should be strategic about it and she knew we inherited some zoning from long ago and that we have some postage stamp properties and houses that are right on Rt. 11 and maybe that won't make sense in the future if there's going to be channels where maybe there's a housing development behind and utilize the businesses in front that they could walk to.

She said and the greenways that there are at one point she heard of potential rail biking trail.

Mr. Pelkey said the rail trail is there and they have been talking about improving it all the way out to Lake Winnepesaukee.

Mrs. Harris said they are trying to push eco-tourism as much as possible with the trails that we have and the things that are going to be expanded and things with South East Land Trust and the **Moose Mountains Regional Greenways** so as much as they can expand on that that also brings funds and people into town.

Mr. Whitman said a team member just did an update to MMRG's conservation plan so for the first round maps they said they didn't want to see that they can't do anything on Rt. 11 so he

had the conservation mind set as he was looking at it. He said when they started looking at where the development should stay away from and what opportunities exist, things start to become a little clearer. He said over the course of this year they have an opportunity as a community to say there are areas that you envision really just as commercial or business opportunities and maybe because of the site constraints or what's going on there maybe the zoning should be very specific for that.

He asked if they could present a vision for Farmington for these mixed use nodes or areas that is different from Rochester and maybe has the eco-tourism flavor that they don't built on the assets of the river, the bike path and these things that shows a developer what your vision is as a community so if there are houses and new businesses that come in together maybe there are some things that support each other on adjacent sites so people don't have to come out onto the highway. He said they are still going to have to come out to get other services and go to work and things like that and then asked what they could do that gets people to feed back into the village for services and gets people to feed onto the adjacent sites.

Mrs. Harris said she is on the Meaderboro Rd. side and they have already seen an increase in traffic on that and Ten Rod Rd. and that should be considered and when Phase II goes in they are going to see a lot more. She said they have worked with UNH seeing a lot of studies on access to eco-tourism sites and how that can help bring industrial and other businesses in. She said it works for a large corporation but when they see an area where people can move in and have access to trails and housing is part of it. She said for Rt. 11 as much as they can to keep that prime spot against the road for things that can generate funds.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said there is so much traffic going through here to go to the lakes but it just goes though here there's nothing for them to stop at. She said if we gave them some points of interest we'd get a lot more activity because we've got the foot traffic.

Mr. Pelkey said above the tourist piece of it if they create something for the residents, the people who live here, stay here and spend their money here that's what he would like to see.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson agreed but the people that are taking that trip that draws them to maybe move in here instead.

Mr. Fisher said the property they are working on getting with the 370 acres goes not only along Bay Rd. but also along Spring St. and one of the things he envisions is putting in hiking trails, trails for bicycling but no motorized vehicles and make it so family oriented that people from other areas will want to come here and take their families there to hike the trails. He said the Cocheco River runs through there, it gets stocked, there could be a handicapped fishing area that would draw people up Rt. 153 into town, stop by Farmington House of Pizza, pick up a couple of sub sandwiches and go up there and have a picnic. I envision picnic tables and that kind of stuff and I'm hoping that can be developed to be a draw to bring people from around and through town and that may make them stop along Rt. 11 to look at Cardinal's Sampler or new places coming in he said.

He said he sees a lot of stuff for that area but it's going to take a while to get it done. He said there could be 2 parking lots one off of Bay Rd. and one off of Spring St. and everything can be connected.

Mr. Whitman said just hearing about that kind of vision for that one property it's something that's different than some aspects of the community it has an eco-tourism component and it means if somebody lives here now or were to live or work along the Rt. 11 corridor in the future they might use the bike path to get to that property. It helps tell the story and helps us understand how that part is different than maybe the Rochester end he said.

Mr. Fisher said there was talk but the Army Corps of Engineers won't let us do it along our berm that goes along the Cocheco River because of the degradation that could happen to the berm and the floodplains. He said at one time UNH had talked about doing a hiking or walking trail along that berm but you can't use it but that would have been neat because that could have connected one part of town to Rt. 153.

Mr. Pelkey said we can't use it as is but he thought if we were willing to improve it we probably could use it.

Mr. Fisher said the 370 acre property (the Cartwright property) could connect further down and maybe get some trails up there through to Paulson Rd. He said it also goes to the schools so there could be trails from Bay Rd. thru there to get the kids to school. A lot of different things can happen to that property he said.

He said he envisions getting a side-by-side and starting at the parking lot he is planning on from Rt. 153 and then just head out and make a trail all the way to Spring St. and back up into Bay Rd. again and snowshoe trails would be a good winter sport area. He said he is trying to keep motorized vehicles out of there so that the perimeter neighbors can still live in their nice little country area and not be bothered by stuff but keeping that conservation area makes their property values go up knowing that nobody is going to move in behind them.

Ms. Cleveland said she heard there's a pretty big snowmobile community in this area and asked if they have contacts with them. She said they would be a stakeholder in this since they use the trails in the area.

Mr. Pelkey said yes and Charlie King was part of the group that was trying to connect the trails.

Mr. Whitman asked if the snowmobile corridor was pretty active.

Mr. Pelkey said very much so and the Powder Mill Snowmobile Club's trail groomer lives off of Hornetown Rd.

Mr. Fisher said they also about the French property conservation area too.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said she has a friend that has an interest in the snowmobile trail and asked how she would connect them and him.

Ms. Cleveland said she could give her the e-mail address to contact them or they could contact Mr. Pimental as they are still a couple of months off from focus groups.

Mr. Pelkey said Mr. King is also a mountain biker and he is a hiker so he would love to see biking

and hiking trails through the town and that connect the town to the next town.

Mr. Whitman asked what other communities near here are doing that and noted that Wolfeboro is doing some but nothing like the VT and northern NH communities. He said that is an opportunity for the town and you are so close to the seacoast.

Mrs. Harris said that is something the EDC could partner on and this has the seeds for a recreation destination. She said we are next to Rochester and the people going from Rochester seacoast to Wolfeboro and no one has this sort of environment with the mountains and everything we have here so it's something new to discover in town.

Mr. Pelkey said there are mountains that people hike in this town that are not advertised.

Mrs. Harris said they are starting to put them in the EDC newsletter and most people don't know about the trails located in Farmington. She said they have been getting more active on Face book and getting the word out and as they expand and retain more trails there's definitely a lot of opportunity there.

Mr. Pimental said that's not uncommon when the SRPC did their Pathways to Play project where they were mapping all the recreational opportunities in the region it was astonishing how many people did not know what opportunities they had in their own community. He said they didn't know where certain parks were, they didn't know there were trails it was amazing. He said it's not uncommon for a community to not know that so the more that the EDC and the Town in general can promote those types of things and what makes Farmington a little bit different than the surrounding communities the more you can get that information into their hands the better.

He said the one thing he is excited about with this particular project is they were able to get their hands on \$130,000 for this project with no match requirements and that type of funding to do something like this doesn't come around all that often. He said this is an opportunity for stakeholders in town and they've already gone through the Master Plan process, they've made some additional changes but Rt. 11 they haven't really tackled all that much other than more recently when they talked about the excavation activities. So this is an opportunity to really think visionary and long term about what this could look like and one of the benefits of the project team is as group-the Planning Dept., the Planning Board and the stakeholders can go wild with ideas and then let this group ground us through some of that. Let's keep our minds open and let's play with this like there are no constraints and then let them tell us what the data is telling them and be able to make decisions accordingly he said.

He said Mr. Whitman said Farmington is in a unique position because of the HOP grant and the Housing Navigator and having the planning staff also connected with the SRPC and over the next 2 years we could have a detailed plan that sets the course for what the town wants to accomplish for this area into the future which is great.

Mr. Whitman said the Phase I step they're working on will be some draft information that they'll get out to them through Kyle so they can look at it before they are talking to the public.

He said they are going to keep that draft for this first phase because there are going to be things as they think about it they will have additional ideas or have additional questions and as they hear from the public they are going to realize there are gaps they will want to go back and fill. He said their hope is to clean those up into briefing reports for each of the topics early in 2024 so half way through this process they will be showing their work and they can go back to it and it doesn't mean you can't change your mind if there are areas you want to start to view differently as you work on the regulations you'll have the chance to do that.

He said that is a part of what they will be doing through the fall and then cleaning up rather than just bring them a draft and then have it sit there as a draft. He said they can't figure that they will nail it on the first try they have to go through the process with them so that is why they structure it that way.

Ms. Cleveland said that outreach and engagement starts next Monday.

Mr. Whitman said and then they will do some interviews and some of the consultants will be in touch with people and they have already given them Mr. King's name and a few other people. He said the market related and business people want to talk to some of the property owners and some of the business owners and then they are going to start putting together some details with Kyle for a fall community forum. He said one of the questions they had before they wrap this tonight was if they were going to have a workshop with maps and information where would be the right place to invite people and how many people do they think they can get if they were clever with their marketing. He said they probably have been through things like this in the past so they may have a sense of where the best meeting spot is.

Mr. Fisher said they previously held a meeting in the conference room in the Public Safety Building but the old Town Hall would hold more people.

Mr. Whitman said they will look into that.

Mr. Pelkey said if they really get the word out and tell people they really want them to come in and talk to us about what this town wants to do as far as development on Rt. 11 there's a great demand by the people in this town to do something to help expand the tax base so if you told them that we're trying to make an effort to figure out the best way to do this for the town he thought that would be a draw.

Mr. Whitman said there is a possibility they can replicate what they do for the first meeting with all of the materials and also share some of the concerns online.

Ms. Cleveland said they plan to schedule the forum for the last week in Nov. and asked if that would conflict with anything. She said Thanksgiving is early this year so it would be after that. She added it is the 5th week of the month so she didn't think there were any board meetings.

Mr. Pelkey said he didn't think there was anything big on the Town calendar but they don't know when the primary is yet and there is stuff that has to happen before that.

Mr. Whitman said they wanted enough time to get the survey out for long enough, get the survey information to them so they can digest what they have been learning and not try to

press it too hard and not wait until December when everyone starts dealing with the holidays. Mr. Pelkey said Town Meeting is in March, the School Deliberative Session is in Jan. and although that might not be the focus meeting where they want to reach out to people it's an opportunity to get information out on a table at both of those of those events. He said if they want feedback online from them they can add that to the handout.

Mr. Pimental asked Mr. Whitman how they are generating the list of property owners and/or landowners for the stakeholders.

Ms. Cleveland said she already has a list that she requested several weeks ago.

Mr. Pimental asked if they want to share that list with this board or somewhere else to do a quick look through to see if anything needs to be added. He said it's a small town so he was sure this group knows which people are missing and it might be helpful to have another set of eyes at the local level before they start the interview process.

Mr. Whitman said what might be helpful is if they could identify the people that really deserve to be interviewed especially if they are doing multiple things and there might be some people you think would be part of the focus group or a small group conversation and then just other people they want to make sure they invite and any outreach.

Mr. Pimental said Charlie King, Packy Campbell come to mind as well as Pike as they are one of the largest excavation operators and are reaching the end of their useful life at that site. He said they want to make sure this board and the EDC review this and put stars next to the people they absolutely need to reach out to that way they can concentrate on them if that list is really long and help prioritize where to allocate their resources.

Mr. Pelkey said when they put together the list of people to reach out to for conversations in the community for just the old fire station property it was a long list and they had about 40-something names and they needed to narrow it down quite a bit. He said that it's a good idea to get a pass at it and have everybody pick their top 5.

Ms. Cleveland said their initial list was 10 acres or more and they could re-run it. She said she thought they would have a really big list if they start doing every single person. She said they thought it would be beneficial to send postcards by direct mail because that has worked in other communities.

Mr. Pimental said that would work for the workshop and asked if she remembered how many property owners there were for 10 acres or more.

Mr. Whitman suggested they pick a subset of the property owners and then other interested parties who are business owners or other organizations they think fit into these categories and with the help they can build out that list.

Mrs. Harris said they need e-mails as well as there are something like 300 businesses in town.

Mr. Pimental said the EDC has an opportunity to play a role in this project because of what they are looking to do so as much as they can keep them in the loop and keep the engagement happening there's an opportunity for them to really help out with this and make sure their

input is heard.

Mrs. Harris said they are featuring their article on the first 2 pages of the fall newsletter and on social media as well.

Mr. Pelkey said this was a good start and he enjoyed the back and forth. He said it was more like a conversation than a presentation.

Ms. Cleveland said they could have these maps if they need them and just want to tuck them away for future exercises.

Mr. Pelkey said he would get focus dates for them in a little bit but asked them to keep in mind that the primary is coming up and the School District Deliberative Session is at the end of Jan./beginning of Feb. and the Town Meeting will be the second week of March. All of those are different opportunities where you'll have a whole bunch of people at least walk by and access the information. It would be a good opportunity to get something out there if it's ready he said.

Ms. Cleveland then thanked the board for letting them take up most of their meeting.

Mr. Pelkey thanked them both and said that they look forward to seeing them again.

7). Member Comments: None

8). Any Other Business before the Board:

Next Meeting- Mr. Pimental said at their next meeting on Sept. 20 they will hear the Torr excavation and they finally received the update revised plan set with the drainage analysis and all the different safety improvements. He said that has been sent to Dubois & King for third party review and they are expecting to get their memo along with the updated plans that will be in their packets for the 20th. Hopefully at that point the board is ready to hear that and potentially make a decision on that project he said.

Mr. Pelkey asked if they have been consulting with each other on this during the process so they have some sort of consensus.

Mr. Pimental said yes they've done a site visit together and they've gone back and forth so the applicant's consultant has been coordinating on their original memo that was back in May and they have addressed all the comments related to what they had submitted and they will see that on the 20th.

October Agenda- Mr. Pimental said the Kodiak redevelopment project has submitted a redevelopment plan to address all of the compliance issues that came up as part of the construction. He said he just received the amended site plan so that will give the board an opportunity to review it and hopefully start to move it back on track.

He said the Grondin Drive design review that was before the board last month received their variance from the ZBA in August to allow for the non-conforming lot and they are working on a subdivision for that property and they need a Special Use Permit for the wetlands buffer impacts so they will get them before the Con Com and it's likely this board will see the subdivision in Oct.

Mr. Pimental said he may start to include the conversation about zoning amendments on the 20th but they will probably dive into it at the first meeting in Oct. and then use all of Oct., Nov. and Dec. to beat them to death and be ready to have the public hearing at the end of Dec. He said they hope to concentrate on specific barriers to housing and ways they can improve the bulk and space standards.

Transportation- Mr. Pimental asked if there are any board members interested in participating in a conversation to talk about transportation projects the SRPC's Transportation Planner is going through a solicitation process for transportation projects to get into the state's Ten Year Plan. He said they do this every year to brainstorm projects and get them in process. He said if you can get them into the Ten Year Plan when it comes time for funding the DOT will spend the money and implement that project. He said there are already a few projects in the plan for Farmington and one of them is on Lone Star Ave. which is a plan to build sidewalks down to Main St. because there are a lot of children in that development and they will probably have them in the next year or two.

He said he is meeting with their Transportation Planner and the Town Administrator and if there are board members that want to participate in that discussion to let him know and he will e-mail them with the time and dates that they will meet. Or if you just have ideas of something that needs to be looked at they can e-mail them to him and he will get them to the Transportation Planner. I will include at the next meeting the list we have already developed so we can have a discussion about it at the next meeting he said.

Mr. Pelkey asked if this only pertains to state roads and it does not pertain to our bridges or Town infrastructure.

Mr. Pimental said he didn't think so and that it's just for state property but asked not to be quoted on that because he is not a Transportation Planner.

Mr. Pelkey said looking at the list they all appear to have some piece of state road involved.

Mr. Fisher said at the last SRPC meeting they talked about bridges and he brought up a point that the bridges they were discussing were all on state roads and how everything looks good in the state and asked about the cities and towns. He said he told them Farmington has 4 red listed bridges that we can't get funds from the state to fix because everything has been shut down and we've had to take out a bond to get our bridges fixed and yet this report is going in saying everything is fine to the federal government but the feds don't really know what is going on with the towns. So that got a discussion going but it didn't go anywhere good he said.

He said the DOT said their job is to take care of where the most people use the roads and he can understand that but his next question was what happens when we have a 100 year flood and people can't get anywhere on Rt. 11 out of Farmington or New Durham because the bridges on the side roads are condemned and nobody can travel on them. He said their response was "I don't know" but they did find out there is more money coming into the state in grants to fix bridges.

Mr. Pimental said they could have the Transportation Planner come to the Sept. 20 meeting. Mr. Pelkey said he thinks there is a separate list at the state level for municipalities looking to do bridge repairs.

Mr. Pimental said the bridge repair funding is different than the Ten Year Plan and the difference between municipal owned bridges and state owned bridges is also broken out separately. He said they have engineers that are under contract with the SRPC to help with preliminary design and cost estimates to make these projects more realistic when they send them to the DOT for review. He said if folks have thoughts on potential intersections that need to be looked at or want to participate in the meeting to let him know.

Mr. Pelkey asked him to forward the e-mail to the board so they could get a look at what is already on the list that's being discussed so that they don't say the same things and if they know of something that's not on there they can let Kyle know.

Mr. Pimental said he would send them the spreadsheet with the projects that have already been discussed along with the write-up of what the Planner is doing.

Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said that might be a good time to bring up the Rt. 11 corridor.

Mr. Pimental said he wished the DOT would do a corridor study there.

Mr. Pelkey said the whole road was not designed for the use that it's getting.

Mr. Fisher asked if the DOT did a study of the Central St. / Rt. 11 intersection a few years ago.

Mr. Pimental said they looked at it but nothing ever came of it. He said they need to look at the corridor as a whole not just Farmington. I have seen corridor plans that the DOT puts together and they implement them and all of the improvements done to Rt. 16 were all recommendations that were part of a corridor plan put together years ago he said.

He said if have a corridor study you've got recommendations and actions for what needs to be done for the future and then you can go and do it. All of Rt. 11 needs to be looked at eventually but that is completely out of the Town's hands he said.

Mr. Pelkey said there is no doubt that the whole Rt. 11 corridor is only going to be more developed over time so the road is not in any kind of condition to be able to address that.


Mrs. Patton-Sanderson said this is a 10 year plan for the state roads so let's do it.

Discussion also included the changes made to Phase II of the Ridge shopping mall in Rochester and the housing planned right off of Rt. 16 which will have all those stores and amenities nearby and will probably get top dollar for rents.

9). Adjournment:

Motion: (Fisher, second Day) to adjourn the meeting passed 4-0 at 7:58 p.m.

Kathleen Magoon, Recording Secretary


Richard "Rick" Pelkey, Chairman