

**TOWN OF NORTHUMBERLAND
PLANNING BOARD AGENDA
Weds., May 5, 2021
Groveton PD/Ambulance Bldg. - Meeting Room
10 Station Square
Groveton, NH
7:00 P.M.**

*** Social distancing shall be practiced during the meeting and the wearing of masks is strongly encouraged***

Board Members Present: Al Rossetto, Chair, Mario Audit, James Weagle, Ryan Shannon, Nicole Canavan, Ted Caouette

Others Present: Elaine Gray, Clerk, Elizabeth Ball, Clerk, Tom Covell, Mark Vander-Heyden

1. MINUTES of April 7, 2021 Meeting Al opens the meeting at 7pm and asks for motion to accept minutes from last meeting. Motion by Nicole, second by Ryan, all in favor, 6-0.

Al closes Planning Board meeting and opens Public Hearing.

2. PUBLIC HEARING:

FILE # P21-03: John Call, Melody Fogg, & Trudy Ann Parker are seeking a Lot Line Adjustment with Thomas Covell & Gloria Brisson-Covell for Map 101 Lot 37 & Lot 36, respectively, in order to convey 0.8 Ac. to Lot 36. The acreage for Lot 36 would change from 0.93 to 1.73 Ac. And Lot 37 would change from 22 to 21.2 Ac. Lot 36 is zoned Residential High Density and Lot 37 is zoned Residential Low Density-located off of First Street.

Someone questions the zoning of Lot 37, thought it was high density not low.
Liz shows map to person.
Jim confirms that it is low density.

Al closes Public Hearing and goes back into Planning Board and asks for a motion to approve the lot line adjustment.

Mario makes motion to approve, Nicole seconds, all in favor, 3-0.

3. Letter of Support for Grant for Public Safety Building Al briefly details the letter. This letter is to show support of Robin moving forward to secure grants for the Public Safety Building.



**Town of Northumberland
Planning Board
19 Main Street
Groveton, NH 03582
(603) 636-1450**

May 5, 2021

Benoit Lamontagne, Program Manager
Northern Border Regional Commission
James Cleveland Federal Building Suite 1501
53 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

Re: NBRC-SEID Grant Request-Northumberland Public Safety Building

Dear Mr. Lamontagne:

The Northumberland Planning Board supports the Town of Northumberland's application for a State Economic & Infrastructure Development grant from the Northern Border Regional Commission for the construction of a Public Safety (Police & Ambulance) Complex. The current facilities for both departments are rented (the ambulance department rents office space and ambulance garage space?), significantly code-deficient having hazardous and unsafe conditions ranging from unsecured fire egress to leaking roofs onto internal electrical circuitry, and non compliance with ADA (with a metal roof that dumps its snow onto its ramp, bathrooms without handrails, doorways that are not wide enough for a wheelchair etc.). In addition to these issues, there are state and federal mandates that cannot be resolved without considerable investment into a building in which the Town has no equity, e.g. lack of separate gender holding cells (also a juvenile holding cell), lack of secure evidence room, lack of secure patient file room, lack of secure cyber-room. The plan proposes construction of an energy-efficient headquarters serving as the Town's Emergency Operations Center having ambulance bays designed to also be the Town Hall/Community Room. Another critical feature, the decontamination room, is included particularly in the wake of COVID19, but also because First Responders and other Town employees require this kind of facility when exposed to sewerage, chemicals, human fluids, and other unknown contaminants.

The Town's Warrant Article #6 for Town Meeting 2021 requested to raise and appropriate \$2,306,667 for the purpose of constructing the new Public Safety Building. The legislative body did not pass this warrant article—mostly because they had just passed a school budget that was going to result in a \$3.00 increase to the tax rate bringing the Northumberland to the fifth highest in the State. Already feeling over a barrel, the voters did not vote for this bond or any other project that would result in an increase. Further, the sentiment at Town Meeting was very clear—that the voters wanted to know EXACTLY what the grants were at the time of voting and the exact impact on their taxes BEFORE they were going to vote. Although this is typically the opposite way that funding agencies want to operate, it is the only way that Northumberland will operate. So, because the expansion will result in the retention of departmental positions and likely result in hiring of additional paramedics and another full-time police officer, install water/sewer/fireline/ and sidewalk infrastructure, and significantly strengthen the workforce by creating a training center that improves the region's EMS workforce, making the Town eligible for economic development funding, the Planning Board approves of the Town's objective to seek NBRC grant funding to reduce the tax burden on local residents. The Planning Board understands that this project has been controversial, mostly because taxpayers are feeling the sting from loss of state aid to school. The fundamental way to cultivate local support is to create collaborations with funding agencies to reduce the Town's match appropriation and reduce the tax impact. Further, despite lack of local attendance at the public information meeting regarding the Public Safety Meeting, the meeting was recorded and information was uploaded onto social media sites. It was clear from review of these materials that this project has support from our District Representatives Troy Merner and Arnold Davis, Senator Erin Hennessey, Executive Councilor Joseph Kenney, and Commissioner of Department of Safety Robert Quinn. The majority of the Selectboard, the Northumberland Planning Board, and Groveton Regional Economic Action Team (GREAT) are also supporting this project. We and the other supporters appreciate the committee's consideration of the Town's application for NBRC funding for vital EMS construction.

Respectfully,

Alan Rossetto, Chairman
Northumberland Planning Board

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4. Any Other Business To Come Before the Board

Al announces that this is Elaine's last Planning Board Meeting. She has been on for 12 years. Al truly thanks Elaine for keeping the lights on and told Elizabeth they will be leaning on her.

Al asks for motion to adjourn. Mario makes motion, Ryan seconds all in favor, 6-0.

Next meeting, June 2, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Kathan
Northumberland Planning Board Minute Taker

Minutes approved by Northumberland Planning Board Members on _____