

Carroll County Lands Subcommittee

Date: April 14 2023

Location: Carroll County Administration Building

Present: Commissioner Matthew Plache
Representative Mark McConkey
Representative Richard Brown
Wendy Scribner (UNH Cooperative Extension) (remote)
Mellisa Seamans, Executive Coordinator
Jonathan Smith, Ossipee Zoning Officer
Mitch Yeaton (White Horse Recovery Center)
Anthony Fallon, architect
Josh Kaaake (local developer)
Daymond Steer (Conway Daily Sun)

Absent: Representative David Paige (excused)

Pledge of Allegiance

MOTION: Approve April 7 2023 meeting minutes. Passed 3-0

Comm'r Plache: Looking at three projects – daycare, workforce housing, recovery center. We have been looking at roughly 10% of the land. Doing research in terms of value – wildlife habitat, county usage. Last week we talked with folks from Ossipee Concerned Citizens about their needs. Today we will hear from White Horse. We were talking conceptually about the land along Route 171 behind the administration building. Not high value for farmland, trees, habitat and has road frontage.

Rep. Smith: Made it clear he is attending on his own time, not on behalf of the town. All County-owned land is in rural zone. Changes in zoning make daycare permissible in all zones. Housing has a multitude of options. In rural zone for standard house lot you need one acre and 200' road frontage. Within one acre allowed to put two principal structures if you meet lot coverage of 25%, complying with setbacks. Allowed one and two family structures on the lot. Can put two two-family homes on one-acre lot. Cluster development needs 10 acres of land and allowed to put 10 individual lots but can shrink the lots to 1/4 acre lots because it follows the village district requirements. So you can put ten quarter-acre lots within the 10 acres and this cuts down on infrastructure costs. You can also put two structures on the quarter-acre lot. Village district also has 50% lot coverage. Lot coverage definition is in Article 6.5 "Lot coverage is the percent of the total lot area which may be covered by all impervious surfaces, including, but not limited to, sidewalks, paved or gravel parking areas and/or drives (unless designed to be porous) and structures."

Multi-family dwelling units over 4 units requires a variance. Recovery center will require a variance.

Rep. McConkey: Jonathan one of the main architects of the zoning work. Breath of fresh air for the Town of Ossipee.

Mr. Smith: Site plan review is required for subdivisions, multi-family, commercial through the planning board.

Mr. Steer: Is there anything in the regulations that state government doesn't have to follow zoning

Mr. Smith: If it is a County-owned and operated would not have to follow zoning

Comm'r Plache: Governmental entity is exempt from zoning according to State law. The way we are looking at these projects now, the County would not own and operate housing, daycare or recovery center. We don't have the expertise and ability. Looking at making land available.

Mr. Yeaton: About 35% of the people we see are homeless. Since 2014 we've built up to 30 employees. Credentialed in 2017 to provide substance abuse and mental health services. Looking to do a combination of residential and outpatient services. We want to build our own low intensity (sober living) of different levels. Expand aftercare programs. Today we have peer resource centers where people can walk in and get food, assistance

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with setting up bank accounts, etc. Want to do education programs on campus. Workforce training. We opened in 2015. We do walk-in recovery support. We offer IOP, family counseling. We are at capacity of providing mental health services for children. We do intern programs. We have resource centers in Center Ossipee, Littleton and North Conway. Potentially opening one in Berlin. We provide transportation services. We provide emergency supplies, family nights. We offer 24-hour emergency support services to Huggins Hospital and Memorial Hospital. If someone overdoses, we go in and offer services to them right away. Have a mobile mental health crisis team. The mental health crisis is deep. We can put people through an intensive program but we have to send them back to where they came from – the homeless encampment, bad housing situation, etc. We want to do more to offer support – sober living, transitional housing, etc. On a campus we could have the different levels of housing under better control. Our next step is we need a commitment on property. We've been trying for four years but comes up against a lot of opposition. There is funding out there for us, once we have the property and zoning permits. At White Horse we refuse to deploy something unless it is excellent. Modeled after Isaiah House in Kentucky. Medicaid pays about 50% of what it costs to provide the services. White Horse gives away about \$300,000 in services annually. We take everyone regardless of ability to pay. We would have a building for clinical treatment; transitional housing; business incubator to teach trades. It takes about a year for someone to transition through the levels of care. Other programs in the State have 6 month waiting lists.

Comm'r Plache: In November, we had someone graduate the programs at our jail. She was released and went back home and a few weeks later froze to death on the streets of Manchester. That really upset me to see that happen. Could you help with that?

Mr. Yeaton: Would like to put CSWs in the jail to help with aftercare. We are at the jail doing Smart Recovery classes.

Rep. McConkey: We are rated for 76,000 gallons of water a day. We have meters in the Village and know how many gallons the customers are using.

Rep. Brown: It would make sense to develop these projects independent of any dependence on county facilities such as own septic and well systems. It makes it cleaner and their responsibility. We are trying to provide land but not supporting infrastructure.

Rep. McConkey: For the purposes of workforce housing and daycare/community kitchen, if we have the capacity we should explore it for those purposes. We have an amount of water but part of the project is that the County is supposed to be metered off to know what flow is leaving the pipeline and going to the complex. As soon as the system is upgraded with new lines, reservoir, the factor of four to one will go away. We will have expanded capacity for our needs and for these things. I want to know the sewer rating. We may have additional capacity that could benefit the daycare. My understanding is the recovery campus will purchase the land at market rate, have their own systems.

Mr. Smith: How many homes in each cluster? 35 acres doesn't look like a lot of land for what you want to do. The cluster development has its requirements. You will trigger a need for a variance.

Mr. Fallon: Will seek umbrella variance for the number of uses going on.

Mr. Yeaton: This will be a phased in approach. The organizations that provide funding will only do a portion each year.

Rep. McConkey: Let's say they need 30 acres to get the buildings. Perhaps an easement can be provided to additional land for the systems. Land by the jail is gorgeous. Stone lined walls and gorgeous views. Calm, beautiful piece of land. Takes away hayfields, conservation value. We could rehab other properties for agriculture. Saving of one soul has much greater value than a couple bales of hay. I will not sit here and think any other position than that. There isn't one of us that doesn't have someone with an issue in this. A few bales of hay should not be a deterrent.

Comm'r Plache: The Commissioners vote on a sale or lease of land. Then it would go to the Delegation for approval. Has to be a competitive process. The Delegation said yes to these uses and to move forward. This is a big process. I also want it to happen quickly because there is money available this year for these purposes. I think when

looking at land, it would make sense to look at value of the land with perspective to the County and taxpayers.

Rep. Brown: We have identified three or four potential places. We should take the agricultural value into account. We are not using the property now. I don't see near term use and I can't think about a better use for the property than what we are talking about now. The soil designations are similar on the entire property. Don't think it would be a problem to repurpose this.

Rep. McConkey: Piece of land already cleared cuts down on site work costs.

Ms. Scribner: Hundreds of different soil types across the state. New ways of grouping them. What we are looking at on County property is agriculture potential. Hayfields are located where they are because highest quality soils. If you decide to put a building on those soils, you are not going to create those anywhere else. The old and new nursing homes and the jail are located on the prime soils. That's where development tends to go because the land has been cleared. Parcel on north side of Route 28 should not be taken out of consideration entirely.

Rep. McConkey: Have we made any headway with regards to determining any reversionary clauses on County land.

Comm'r Plache: The Register said based on the research she has done it is unlikely there are. Purchasers are going to have to do the due diligence.

Rep. McConkey: The County would be selling the property. Can we at least find out what it would cost to do a title search and the Commissioners make that happen.

Comm'r Plache: Depending on the number we could potentially find it in the budget.

Rep. McConkey: I see that as an expense we should incur and I don't want to meet again unless we do that. Timeliness is extremely important with the grant resources out there. We're spinning our wheels. Is it your position that you will not consider prime farmland in this process?

Comm'r Plache: I think everything should be considered. All things being equal we weigh in on preserving prime land. I think it would be easy to build, It's away from neighbors. It could be the easiest to get through the variance. We might have to upgrade the access road.

Rep. McConkey: Provided research the daycare will require about 2,252 gallons of water per day. There was talk about adding an adjacent building with commercial kitchen dining room; 5,122 gallons per day total. Would require about 1.62 acres for the well. If they had to have their own well and septic in these soil conditions they would need 5.7 acres. If they were able to locate the well on County property could be in a minimum lot size of 4 acres. It may take more for site plan review requirements. This is a planning number; has to be at least 5 acres. I think the project is a win-win. I see having them on our campus that could also be used in time of emergency is tremendous. Spoke to Executive Councilor Joe Kenney and he is willing to help.

Wastewater permit is 28,000 gallons per day and we aren't doing that much. We may be able to serve the OCC building. We need to zero in on this. We also have the possibility of renovating the commercial kitchen at the Annex.

Rep. Brown: We seem in agreement in what we think about daycare. The next thing is the housing.

Comm'r Plache: Do you want to talk to a potential developer. We don't have a specific party that has requested this.

Rep. McConkey: Where you have identified originally to do that project; Route 171 makes sense. Also on the properties along Route 28. We will need to direct what we are looking for. We need housing for people who work in the County and that is higher priority. Not looking to provide land for luxury condos or subsidized housing. It's our nursing staff, people in corrections struggling to pay their rent; we kind of say this is the parameter. It might be a mix of studio apartments or two-bedroom. Starter home. Dover is doing this successfully. Put restrictions on the buildings to be a certain size and permit them to add a storage shed. Deed restricted so it can't become a 1,500 square foot building; stays affordable.

Comm'r Plache: Single family, duplex, what kind of density, mix of sale and lease...? A lot of parameters we can look at. They should not be subsidized. Homes that someone making at or near the median income can afford. Because this is a County asset I think we can define it to address a certain need such as lack of housing.

Rep. McConkey: Dover (NH) model; cluster of houses 800 square feet. Property management. Common area. Their model ties it to median income rate but is not subsidized. One model we should look at. What works currently with the zoning? I see this project as the third prong of what we need. I think we look at it from a planning point of view, work with the town. Maybe we consider something less than market value or we consider an infrastructure improvement that we have water and sewer but the County is always getting that revenue.

Mr. Fallon: Developers are almost always looking for water and sewer. Fairway Drive in Farmington is a project he worked on – workforce housing, townhomes, common area. Has a developer friend that is now focusing on micro homes for someone just starting out. So if we could do a mix of small three-bedroom townhouses, apartments, studios.

Mr. Kaake: For the recovery center, they can go look for land anywhere but having it here it would be less likely for people to say 'not in my backyard'. For a developer, well and septic are huge and with the zoning changes, greater density.

Mr. Yeaton: One of the problems we have hiring people is that there is nowhere to live.

Rep. McConkey: We should work on this as a project. Work with Ossipee, get density to a point it makes sense for a developer. There might be someone that independently would be willing to build the water and sewer infrastructure and they provide the service at a cost. I don't think we can do this quickly but overall we are doing something of value. Let's do it as a Town/County project. I'm sure we can get Lakes Region Planning Commission to come in for data. I've owned high density properties for many years. Common mindset that houses equate children, children equate schools. When the highest part of your tax rate goes to the schools, it makes people nervous. Workforce overlay district worked into Ossipee zoning. Public process, vetted, goes to Town of Ossipee where the voters decide.

Coord. Seamans: Ossipee received a grant to hire a consultant to work on the housing section of the Master Plan. Do we know the status of that?

Rep. Smith: The grant just got approved. Could put this in the master plan revision and move toward zoning change. Planning board has to have proposed zoning changes by the beginning of December.

Comm'r Plache: We need to see what is working in other places. We are not a real estate developer. We just see the need and want to make it happen.

Rep. McConkey: Ossipee zoning changes, hiring a consultant a great start. Catch the ear of the planning board. We provide data of soil analysis, etc. We need the framework. My goal is a great percentage of units are for working people.

Rep. Brown: I think we are good with the OCC plan, know the needs of White Horse. I would like to walk the parcels.

Comm'r Plache: Schedule next meeting and focus on land for workforce housing. I will speak to attorney and look at exploring the reversionary clauses on County land.

Rep. McConkey: We need to create the framework. Developers want water and sewer and high density. We need to have a conversation with LRPC – can they give a person that comes to our meetings. We are looking at numbers that tell us we can double the sewer system. We don't have water meters so we don't know how much loss. There is grant money to replace transmission lines and all sorts of things. I'm hoping we can at least absorb the water for the daycare, might be able to absorb the sewer.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 24 at 9:30am.