

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**PLANNING, LICENSES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 7, 2017**

**7:00 PM**

**Council Chambers A**

**Members Present:**

Philip M. Jones, Vice-Chair  
George S. Hansel  
Bart K. Sapeta  
Robert B. Sutherland

**Members Not Present:**

David C. Richards, Chair

**Staff Present:**

Medard Kopczynski, City Manager  
Tom Mullins, City Attorney  
Rhett Lamb, Planning Director  
Kurt Blomquist, Public Works Director  
William Dow, Deputy City Clerk  
Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager  
Patricia Little, City Clerk

**Other Councilors Present**

Terry Clark

Vice-Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**1. Robert Kerr - Request to Use City Property - Whitcomb's Mill Road – Filming**

Robert Kerr stated he is a student at Columbia University School of the Arts. As part of his graduation requirements, Mr. Kerr is looking to film a production entitled "August" in Keene. The scene location is Whitcomb's Mill Road. Filming is anticipated to occur on either June 16th or the 17th. Mr. Kerr noted his awareness of the bridge being out; he also outlined his safety plan for the filming. Mr. Kerr reported the University has provided the required insurance certificate.

There being no comments from the public or Committee, Vice-Chair Jones asked for a motion. Vice-Chair Jones recommended adding the statement about rain dates to the prepared motion.

Councilor Hansel made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Sutherland.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee moves to recommend that the City Council grant permission to film student Robert Kerr to use City property on the Whitcomb's Mill Road, on June 16 and June 17, 2017 for filming with the use of a vehicle mounted camera; rain dates subject to coordination with City staff. Said permission is conditional upon compliance with the customary licensing requirements of the City Council, and compliance with any recommendations of City staff.

Vice-Chair Jones advised this would go before City Council next Thursday. He also recommended Mr. Kerr contact the City Clerk's Office next Friday.

## **2. Adoption of the Airport Master Plan Update - Airport Department**

Vice-Chair Jones introduced Jack Wozmak, Airport Manager and Ervin Deck, Senior Aviation Planner from Stantec Consulting Services. Vice-Chair Jones reported a presentation was provided to City Council and tonight the Committee members each have a binder which includes the entire plan. Vice-Chair Jones thanked both gentlemen for the presentation last week and asked for Committee questions.

Councilor Sutherland noted his concern for what we are not doing at the airport; relative to land that is not useful to airport operations. He referred to Exhibit A and the properties at the south end of the runway as an example. Councilor Sutherland said it would be in the best interest of the taxpayer to sell the land and let someone develop it; with easements on it. This land is marked for non-aviation development and Councilor Sutherland would like to see something in the presentation relative to what we should not be doing; holding onto these properties. Noting the Alps Restaurant property is assessed at \$373,000, and the taxes the City pays are minimal as an example of a property to sell.

Responding to Councilor Sutherland, Mr. Wozmak noted tremendous amounts were spent to acquire these properties and that Council could decide to sell; Mr. Wozmak disagrees with this idea. Mr. Wozmak continued we have just begun an effort to try to develop the land and there is a possibility of a land lease forever. Mr. Wozmak said he thinks we should give this a shot. Mr. Wozmak noted if it were sold for the sale price the City would get five percent of that which is a short-term gain against the possibility of leasing the property. Mr. Wozmak said he is loath to see us eliminate the very asset we are trying to develop.

Councilor Sutherland followed up by noting it has been years with no income from that property and is not core to the operations of the Airport. Councilor Sutherland noted the plan also omits the operating structure of the Airport. Councilor Sutherland shared how the City of Laconia turned their operations over to an Authority, noting it is now running in the black. The two towns involved with that Airport work together; right now it is just us versus Swanzey. Mr. Wozmak reported the Airport Advisory Committee did discuss what operating profile would be most advantageous. He explained more research needs to be done on that. Mr. Wozmak also reported the City renegotiated the taxes paid on the building and they are now less than one dollar per month.

Vice-Chair Jones said the plan is just a template to follow and agreed City Council could decide to sell the land. Mr. Wozmak noted the funding partners (State and Federal) explaining this is why the plan has to be laid out. He added it is not intended to be the "be all to end all" at the Airport. Councilor Jones commented Swanzey is reluctant to extend their TIF District. Mr. Wozmak explained the TIF District Swanzey created (200 acres) has met with little success; hence they are reluctant to extend it. Mr. Wozmak outlined his argument to Swanzey for the Committee.

Councilor Sapeta thanked Mr. Wozmak for presenting the plan. He said he thinks there is synergy between this plan and the Economic Development Plan. Noting aviation technologies

are evolving Councilor Sapeta encouraged pursuing avenues that leverage that; along with clean, high tech industries that can utilize the Airport. Councilor Sapeta suggested the Drone program discussed at the presentation last week should be advertised to the schools if it is not already. Mr. Wozmak noted he agreed with Councilor Sapeta's comments.

Councilor Hansel thanked everyone who worked on the Committee explaining he joined as a fill-in Chair late in the process. Councilor Hansel was very impressed with the Consultants and Mr. Wozmak's coordination. Councilor Hansel also noted the work of Committee members such as Ann Shedd; adding he thinks this is a valuable result.

Vice-Chair Jones recognized the City Manager who shared the knowledge he has regarding Swanzey's TIF District, and their reason for not expanding it. Through discussions their reason is the lack of specifics; the actual water/sewer system sizing and the money for doing the improvements.

Vice-Chair Jones followed up on Councilor Hansel's comments. He said as far as Economic Development Keene has its pluses and minuses. We have our school system, Keene State College, and this Airport that allows jets; which is something we can take advantage of for economic growth. Vice-Chair Jones noted minuses as no interstate highway system, no inner City transportation, and the nearest International Airport is two hours away. Vice-Chair Jones concluded his comments by thanking Mr. Wozmak and Mr. Deck for pushing us in the right direction. Mr. Wozmak discussed the infrastructure for moving freight and people noting most of it was built in the 1960's. He referred to studies by the FAA and the Department of Transportation on how to deal with congestion. Mr. Wozmak continued their conclusion was the only way to deal with congestion in the traditional metropolitan areas, which we are so far away from, is to expand capacity. He reported more and more Regional Airports up and down the coast are buying more land because many corporations are moving out of the metropolitan areas because of the congestion. This is the move Mr. Wozmak is pushing in terms of expanding the capacity and offering Keene as an opportunity to shed some of the congestion without sacrificing delivery times for goods. Councilor Sapeta clarified Mr. Wozmak is talking about changing the perception of where we live and he encouraged Mr. Wozmak to do that even more than he is now. Councilor Sapeta shared an example he recently read about where a European Airlines is considering flying into Warwick, Rhode Island. He continued the perception of flying into Warwick, Rhode Island or Keene, New Hampshire and then going into Boston is not so farfetched anymore. Mr. Wozmak reported on a survey he is sending out to local Chambers of Commerce to obtain a sense of their travel expenses.

Vice-Chair Jones asked for public comments.

Ann Shedd, of 59 Greenwood Avenue noted she has been a member of the Airport Master Plan Advisory Committee since its inception. She noted the reasons she was asked to serve on the Committee. Ms. Shedd served on the Conservation Commission and is still a member of the Cities for Climate Protection Committee. Ms. Shedd noted some positives about the plan such as:

- The narrowing of Runway 1432- even with construction of a parallel taxiway
- The construction of new fuel storage
- The fencing location has less impact on wetlands- but allows less wildlife connectivity

Ms. Shedd noted she was pleased to see at least a passing reference to the option of putting a conservation easement. Ms. Shedd noted the improvements to Runway 220 will cost 18 million dollars in federal, state, and local taxes over the next 20 years. Ms. Shedd noted her unease about the paths that come out of these proposed infrastructure improvements. She continued the City is justifiably proud of being the first pioneer in the state to adopt a Climate Action Plan. She thanked Rhett Lamb, Planning Director for his role in this endeavor. Ms. Shedd commented she wished the Committee had known about sustainable development plans earlier on. Ms. Shedd hopes the Council will weigh the carbon costs of any project that comes before it. She reported Keene's greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are between a third and a half. All of the greenhouse gases at the Airport come from the jet fuel she noted. Ms. Shedd said it would take a 4 megawatt solar installation to offset the carbon footprint of the jet fuel at the Airport. Ms. Shedd hopes the Council will consider the three E's outlined in the vision and values of the Comprehensive Master Plan when weighing the path laid out by this investment in infrastructure. Vice-Chair Jones thanked Ms. Shedd for bringing this forward and for all she does for the City.

Councilor Sutherland asked if any of the access issues (to Route 10 and connectivity to the bike paths) discussed were addressed in the plan. Mr. Wozmak replied that was not covered in this one because of the nexus between federal and state funding. Mr. Wozmak suggested we should still talk about those things locally. Mr. Wozmak also noted there are no federal dollars for these improvements. Mr. Deck suggested treading lightly in this area noting the FAA's response of we do not do bikes we do airplanes when he worked on a project years ago. Councilor Sutherland also noted we have traffic issues getting out of the Airport. Mr. Wozmak agreed noting he started a conversation a while ago with Swanzey to encourage them to ask the Department of Transportation to designate Lake Street that comes out at Route 32. Mr. Wozmak has also placed a sign encouraging people to turn right as the quickest and safest way out. Mr. Wozmak has not readdressed this conversation with the Swanzey Selectmen.

Councilor Sapeta asked if there were any plans to accommodate flying cars in the future. Mr. Deck advised no special changes would be required if the car folds its wings up to depart the Airport. Councilor Hansel asked if people bring homemade airplanes onto the Airport. Mr. Wozmak replied in the affirmative noting like a flying car the wings are unbolted and folded up. Mr. Wozmak also shared we get amphibious planes that land on Wilson Pond.

Mr. Deck commented on how much he enjoyed working with the City and the Planning Committee noting they were very active with their input which was very helpful.

There being no further comments from the public or the Committee Vice-Chair Jones asked for a motion.

Councilor Sapeta made the following motion which was seconded by Councilor Hansel.

On a vote of 4-0, the Planning, Licenses and Development Committee recommends the adoption of the Airport Master Plan Update.

- 3. Adjournment** - There being no further business before the Committee Vice-Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 7:47 PM.

PLD Meeting Minutes  
June 7, 2017

Respectfully submitted by,  
Mary Lou Sheats Hall  
June 9, 2017

Additional Edits by,  
Terri M. Hood, Assistant City Clerk