

Kingfield Planning Board

Date: Tuesday, December 12, 2023
 Location: Webster Hall
 Time: 6:00-7:55
 Topic: WMMH Contract Zoning app.; Ira Mt.: bridge, subdivision; Signage ordinance
 worksession
 Board present: J. Clukey, S. Davis, R. Hawkes, S. Hoisington, C. Tranten, M. Wahl
 Board Absent: B. Smith,
 Public: Jeff Maget, Polly and Rob MacMichael, Bill Swain, Kyle Parent, Charlie Cary, Will
 Jeffries, Mark Green, Jerry Graffam

Planning Board Chair Clay Tranten opened the December 12 meeting at 6:00 pm. He noted that there was a quorum and asked for approval of the agenda and then of the minutes.

Agenda and minutes approval

Tranten noted that Item #3 with Jonathan Jordan is eliminated for tonight. Jordan will be holding up his application until the Planning Board has completed the current Western Maine Mountain Housing (WMMH) Contract Zoning application to avoid issues still being resolved. The rest of the agenda will stand. *Jared Clukey moved acceptance of the revised agenda, seconded by Scott Hoisington. The motion passed unanimously.*

Scott Hoisington moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Jared Clukey. The motion passed unanimously.

WMMH application

Planning Board members received a letter late this afternoon from the Town lawyer Amanda Meader outlining her issues with the WMMH application. PB members read the letter as the meeting began. Meader's points included:

1. If the project is intended to be done in phases the phases should be noted by lines.
2. Pump track: *Meader didn't understand this to be a recreation structure for bikes, not a water feature.*
3. Total area of the project should show how much was devoted to phase 1.
4. Multi-family projects of 15 units or more allow (require?) a second means of access, purposely left out.
5. There should be at least a traffic turnaround for phase 1.
6. Whether the access road is public or private does not appear to be addressed.
7. Adequacy of soils to support septic: lack of proof that soils can support the density.
8. If single family homes be detached or part of co-op or condo is not addressed.
9. Pedestrian access/safety is not addressed.

Tranten thought that many of the issues raised had been addressed. Planning Board member Mark Wahl, also a developer, believes that the soil test that has been done indicates the site can handle the density easily. WMMH executive director Mark Green responded that an official engineering study has not been done.

With these concerns, Meader believes that the special Town meeting needs to be delayed at least two more weeks to be able to accommodate possible changes that could result from issues she has raised.

After considerable discussion, all agreed that the housing coalition's lawyer and the Town lawyer needed to meet to discuss the points Meader has brought up. Mark Green agreed to have the lawyers

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meet to discuss them prior to the Select Board meeting next Monday, Dec. 18, to determine future action, whether by the Select Board or the Planning Board.

Ira Mountain: Pleasant River Partners bridge study

A condition of the PB's 2019 approval for additional lots in the PRP subdivision was to do a traffic and bridge study as soon as 8 of the 14 lots were sold. When that point was reached, Gorrill Palmer and H. Ward engineering firms completed a bridge and traffic study. Planning Board member Richard Hawkes, also a civil engineer, had questions about some details of the bridge study. H. Ward responded to those questions with an updated response. Ira Mt. resident Charlie Cary, also an engineer, was concerned about the layer of wood between top and the structural part. Hawkes confirmed that the study did look at these wooden stringers.

A final step of the condition was that PRP give their plan of action for incorporation of the studies recommendations. Prior to the meeting PRP submitted their plan of action for the bridge study. In summary, they will take action on all H. Ward recommendations, which include:

- A structural engineer inspect the bridge every 5 years
- Measure steel degradation at those inspections
- Post the bridge at 32 tons/64,000 pounds, which is 10% lower than its design load. This could impact travel of a heavily loaded logging truck and a fully loaded cement truck. It is noted that any Town of Kingfield fire trucks, school buses are well below this load limit.

The bridge is owned by the Brochu trust but according to their respective deeds, each landowner on Ira Mt. shares in the cost of maintenance for the bridge. Owners do not pay on an annual basis into any kind of a reserve fund, however, and have only been asked for money once in the memory of owners who have been there the longest. Neighborhood residents in attendance worry that if the bridge were to fail completely, they'd suddenly be faced with an enormous expense.

Iron bridge traffic study

A full traffic study depends on another metric, when the total number of homes on that side of the river reaches 85. A traffic study could impact Rt. 27 with wider shoulders, signs, tree removal for better site lines, etc., which MDOT is not prepared to do without accident data showing there is a problem.

PRP has not provided any plan of action to the traffic study recommendations at this time. It was noted there is an estimated (from town tax records) 55 homes (building structures) on that side of the river today. The PB will revisit this action in the future as more homes are built. It was also noted that many of these recommendations involve DOT actions.

Chair Tranten pointed out that the bridge is **not** covered by Kingfield ordinances, that the Planning Board's interest derives solely from its mission to ensure resident safety. The PB can do nothing about Ira Mt. resident concerns otherwise, that they must address them themselves.

Ira Mountain resident Bill Swain said his main concern is traffic on the bridge, how much the bridge can take and what appears to be non-residents not following instructions to give cars entering from Rt. 27 right of way crossing the bridge. The school bus will not cross the bridge, requiring residents with children to either drive them to school or take them to a designated pick-up location.

Hawkes, also an Ira Mt. resident, recommended the Ira Mt. Homeowner Associations presidents gather their concerns about the roads and bridge collectively and get together to discuss them with the Brochus and PRP.

Another issue is Homeowners Road Associations. There are 14 subdivisions on Ira, some of which do not have road associations, although the original owner Lanny Holden's deed requires that all homeowners belong to one. Those without HRAs benefit from those subdivisions that do have them. Chair Tranten noted that the PB is scheduled to update the town's Subdivision Ordinance and subdivisions passing thru other subdivisions will be addressed.

Mark Wahl moved to accept the bridge study recommendations presented by Pleasant River Partners, seconded by Jared Clukey. The motion passed unanimously of those present.

Mark Wahl's proposed subdivision

Wahl's surveyor has been too busy to prepare the plan for his subdivision. He is hoping to have them by January 24th to present for the February PB meeting. Though not ready to present his proposal, Wahl was happy to answer questions of Ira Mt. residents attending the meeting. Wahl described his intent was to build houses in the \$250,000 to \$300,000 range, of which there is limited-to-no supply in the area.

Wahl indicated that it had not been determined yet if construction traffic would use the Iron Bridge Road or come through his Eagle Ridge development. Neighborhood residents in attendance made it clear that they would like the entrance to this subdivision be off the Ira Mountain Road and not the Iron Bridge Road. Their concern is traffic, safety and road maintenance.

An access off Ira Mountain Road would cut distance significantly and would avoid most of this neighborhood. Kyle Parent (former Claybrook road association president) offered to walk this property with Wahl, showing him logging trails that already exist off Ira Mountain Road.

Signage Ordinance work session

Scott Hoisington has sent two working documents with components of similar recreation-based and sized towns, Bethel, Rangeley and Greenville, to fellow Planning Board members for their review. Davis responded she had studied them all, feeling that the Bethel ordinance was the best. She suggested going through the Bethel ordinance line by line to create a Kingfield ordinance. However, Hoisington, familiar with all three, thought the Greenville one to be the best.

Hoisington agreed to gather together in one document the best of the three for Planning Board members to review. Davis thanked him for such generous offer. All agreed to go over it for a future workshop. The goal is to be done, including informational meetings and one hearing, to be ready to submit an article April 1st for the annual Town meeting in June.

Jared Clukey moved to adjourn, seconded by Scott Hoisington. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Davis, Secretary.