



**CITY OF DOVER**

## DOVER PLANNING BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Workshop  
Meeting Location: Council Chambers – 288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820  
Meeting Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2009  
Meeting Time: 7:00 pm

**REGULAR MEMBERS PRESENT:** Frank Torr, Dean Trefethen, Linda Merullo

**REGULAR MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ron Cole, Perry Plummer, Doug Steele, Marcia Gasses, Don Andolina,  
John Swartzendruber

**ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jan Nedelka

**STAFF PRESENT:** Christopher Parker, Planning Director, Bruce Woodruff, City Planner, Dean Peschel,  
Environmental Engineer, Jennifer Bretz, Recording Secretary

**OTHERS:** Tom Fargo, Paul Martel, Rick Proulx

Workshop called to order at 7:07 pm.

### **1. Discussion on Master Planning and Future Land Use of Gravel Pit Parcels.**

Parker stated that the Planning Board had asked for a workshop on the gravel pits. Tonight we'll be discussing what direction the Planning Board would like to see the gravel pits moving towards. At a later meeting we'll talk about forming a subcommittee to continue working on the ideas and issues that are brought up tonight as well as developing next steps.

Bruce Woodruff stated that the last few years of the gravel pit permit process brought up the need to start discussing with regard to what the eventual highest and best land use, from the owner's perspective, would be. Also, what land use would be compatible with the fact that most of the land off of Mast Rd is secondary groundwater protection zone for two of the City's wells? With that in mind, the Planning Board is the Board in the City that recommends the zoning and the zoning districts which is something that should be kept in mind. He was hoping that representatives from the Open Lands Committee and the Conservation Commission were going to be present because they also have a stake in what happens here. You'll hear from the gravel pit owners about what their future plans are and how that stacks up against what the City's desires are for that land.

Dean Peschel stated that he's speaking from the water supply perspective. The City has two wells in the Mast Rd area. The area is known as the Pudding Hill Aquifer. (Went over to map of aquifer)  
Peschel stated that it runs from Bellamy Road on the East side to Rte. 155 on the West side. It's not a large area but it has a lot of water within that aquifer and the City takes full advantage of it. Within the area described, there is very little residential development. On the western side is a metal recycling facility which has created a number of water quality problems for the Griffin Well over the years. There's a DPW facility located out there. When it was designed, they had taken great lengths to ensure that it would not impact the water quality. The storm water leaving that site is monitored to make sure that it doesn't adversely affect the aquifer. He proceeded to discuss the public water supply.

Tom Fargo, prior Chair of Conservation Commission, stated that he's been monitoring the Pudding Hill aquifer area for a while. There is an evolving land use out there. Many of the pits are reaching the end of their lifespan. There are activities taking place that are not just extraction. There's material handling, storage and in some cases disposal. Over the past few years, the Planning Board has imposed upon the pit owner's the restrictions that they're not to import any contaminated materials. They're making sure that threats to the groundwater quality are not created there. In 2002-2003, he started working with the Planning Board to look at the reuse of the gravel pits. They created a new zoning requirement that there be a 4 ft separation between the bottom of the pit and the seasonal high water table. Over the past few years there's been a lot of effort put in on everyone's part to make sure that is satisfied. The areas out there are not all created equal. There have been a number of investigations, over the past few years, that have shown that the aquifer is not homogenous. It's not one big pile of sand.



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There's a significant variation from one place to another. The reason why they can extract sand and gravel is that the sand and water is above the water table. Looking at the distribution of resources below the water table, in certain areas, there's very little sandy material before you get to the bedrock. The sand is where the water is. It's important to recognize that there's very little saturated thickness left. Particularly below Martel's pit. He proceeded to discuss future land use.

Paul Martel stated he's not sure if he'd like to develop his property or not. He asked Fargo if it's possible that another well could be drilled on his site.

Woodruff stated the answer is no.

Rick Proulx stated he has met with the Planning Dept. to discuss future use. They have successfully obtained a permit from DES to pump water, clean it up and make it into drinking water to sell as bulk. He's hoping to present it to the Planning Board within the next six months. They are still trying to decide where on the property to place it.

Parker stated you would be getting out of the extraction business and into the water production business.

Proulx stated he would do both for a period of time and then switch over to water primarily. There's 7-10 years left of material, approximately.

Woodruff stated one of the things the Board should ponder is the City land behind the DPW facility. What is the ultimate plan for the City piece? In the beginning, when the idea for an extraction company to come and extract material was created, the idea was to eventually have playing fields or recreational fields for the City of Dover which still may be viable. He's not sure what the Master Plan says at this point but anything that you Master Plan for land use centers on what the City will do with its own piece. Directly behind that is the Griffin land. It's a gravel location that has not been permitted for three years. It's one of the prime locations for the recharge area and reclamation. At one point, the owner did make an effort to try to fill in to bring them up to the four feet above level when the zoning ordinance was changed. The materials that he brought in were not very pervious. To this day there are mounds of clay like material sitting there. There are jurisdictional wetlands springing up in great numbers which are expanding. Once we have all of the information, a future subcommittee could begin to formulate a plan.

Parker stated that there are pits off of Glen Hill Rd in the Hoppers aquifer. Is that a different/similar scenario?

Woodruff stated that there are a different set of issues involved. There is a City piece, where the well is, surrounded by excavation land which is owned by Brox Industries. There may be an opportunity to make sure that some of that depleted excavation land is conserved at some point. Had the owner's representative been here tonight, he would have talked about the need that he sees for some kind of Lot Line Adjustment with the City.

Trefethen asked if the wetlands popping up are good bad or neutral for the aquifer.

Peschel stated that they're neutral. From a development point of view, they are an obstacle. As far as water quality or water supply, they don't hurt the aquifer. They do filter out nutrients if you have them.



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Discussion ensued regarding the development of the Martel property.

Merullo stated she's assuming the pit owners own their land. If the City doesn't have the money to buy the land from them and develop it the way the City would like to develop it, their thought is they have all of this acreage and they can develop it the way they want to.

Parker stated that is why they are having this dialogue. It's good to hear what they are planning. One of the differences, regarding recreation uses out there is that there is a difference between the location of Martel's land, on top of the aquifer, and Proulx's land. Where we might not want to see ball field's on top of Proulx's, we might not have a problem with it on Martel's. To go one step further you could take Peschel's idea and go artificial which may be a good location for it if we're not going to place it at the High School or Bellamy Fields.

Merullo stated that it's something that City Council would have to think about putting aside money for purchase of it.

Parker stated that you develop and implement a plan. The Planning Board then recommends it as part of the C.I.P. project set aside for future redevelopment. The first part is this discussion blossoming into an idea to think through and articulate how the Board wants it done. He's glad to see the Proulx and Martel are present. Severino doesn't have to be present due to the fact that the City represents that property. He's concerned that Brox isn't present because there is somewhat of an issue there.

Trefethen stated that if one of the owners is interested in selling, it doesn't necessarily have to be taxpayer money that purchases it. He can envision where they could justify some type of capitol reserve out of the water fund over a period of time. The water department would own the land and controls what happens to it.

Parker stated that someone had made a comment that the Open Lands Committee or the Conservation Commission should have been present tonight because there are Conservation Commission funds that could be used as well. There are multiple funding sources that could be used because there are multiple areas of preservation.

Discussion ensued regarding preservation of the land.

Trefethen asked Proulx what he envisions happening to his land.

Proulx stated that he's going to push for as much development as he could.

Trefethen asked Martel what the timeline was for the Madbury pit.

Martel stated 5-7 years.

Workshop ended at 8:03 pm.