

## 2020 Planning Board Annual Report

The Planning Board witnessed an eclectic mix of issues this past year, including an unusual first.

COVID-19 concerns did impact board operations. A number of meetings were cancelled; however, the board was able to continue working using Zoom and social distancing in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Orders. This was only possible thanks to the exceptional efforts of our Town Administrator, Eric Fiegenbaum.

The board conducted preliminary site plan consultations on three different projects. First was an initial inquiry on a possible 24 to 36 unit workforce housing project to be located in Madbury but accessed from Dover. The second was a preliminary review of the possible expansion of the apartments at the intersection of Madbury Road and Route 155. The proposal would replace the rear building with a larger two-story building and add approximately 10 units to the complex. Finally, the board continued working with LandCare Associates to update their out of date site plan. This plan is of particular interest since the LandCare property lies along the Bellamy River. The board fully expects to see the latter two projects in the coming year.

The board also reviewed the Town's proposed purchase of an easement on 9 Mill Hill Road (Tax Map 7, Lot 6). The board's role was to provide recommendations to the Town and not to approve or disapprove the purchase. The board found the purpose of protecting natural resources and allowing public access to nearby trail systems to be worthy and supported purchase.

Three subdivisions were considered by the board during the year. A one lot subdivision of Map 12, Lot 7 was completed while initial reviews were conducted on a one lot subdivision of 1 Hayes Road and of the Madbury portion of a Durham subdivision off of Gerrish Drive. These likely will be before the board in 2021.

The purchase of 40 Old Stage Road (Map 3, Lot 43) was brought before the board to determine if it could still qualify for a non-conforming use. Despite initial indications, the board determined that the non-conforming use was continuing and that the new owners could use the lot in a similar way.

The board conducted a site plan review of a new backwash tank at Portsmouth's water treatment plant at 60 Freshet Road. Since this constitutes a "governmental use" of land, the board's role was simply to provide comments on the proposal's conformity with Madbury's land use regulations. The review also offered the public an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on the new facility. The only concern the board noted was that the condition of Freshet Rd should be monitored during its use by heavy construction vehicles.

Eversource was granted a Conditional Use Permit by the board for pole maintenance in wet areas off of Madbury Road. A primary concern was successful revegetation of the area. Eversource provided a report in early 2021 on this for the board's review. The board also considered whether permits for routine maintenance such as this should be granted simply by notification. The board decided that maintaining the current process of formal applications bests support Town's priorities.

And, in first, the board was asked to comment under the National Historic Preservation Act on a new Land Mobil Radio Tower near the Madbury line in Durham. The board did not detect any impacts on historic resources in Madbury.

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In addition to the above actions, the board hoped for the voter's approval of changes to the Wellhead and Aquifer Overly District. Disappointingly the board found that inaccurate information and claims had been distributed before the vote suggesting that the updates would endanger our water, were driven by developers, didn't follow traditional procedures, and would allow dense development. The board values differing opinions and ideas; however, none of these claims were at all accurate and all were far away from the board's goal to improve our water protection ordinances. Because of this misinformation, the board decided to provide correct information and to trust the people of Madbury in a new vote.

As always, the Planning Board welcomes and encourages your feedback and participation in our meetings. We normally meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall and while necessary also via Zoom. We also urge residents to sign up to receive e-mails of the Planning Board's agendas. It's a great way to stay informed on Planning Board topics and issues before they are discussed. To sign up, just send an e-mail to [MadPlanBoard@gmail.com](mailto:MadPlanBoard@gmail.com) asking to receive the notifications.

We also invite residents interested in the town's development to consider joining the board.

Finally, please note that the Planning Board maintains a website providing planning documents, applications, and meeting information at [www.madburynh.org](http://www.madburynh.org).

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Avery  
Chair