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TOWN OF BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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Planning Board Work Session Minutes March 11, 2021

Present: Alan Rosenberg, Co-chair (voting) Eric Bernstein, Co-chair (voting) Ron Pelletier, Member (voting) Brendan Denehy, Selectboard Representative (voting) Valérie Rearick, Town Planner Absent: Chris Duncan, Member

Alan called the meeting to order and noted that they are meeting remotely under the governor's Executive Order 2020-04 and Executive Orders #12 and #23. In following with these orders, he asked each Board member to state where they are, why they are there and who, if anyone, is in the room with them. All members responded.

Alan said the focus of tonight work session is to discuss the towns ability to provide adequate services for the potential new development. The driver behind this discussion is the submission of 4 petition warrant articles that were submitted. These will be discussed and voted on at a Special Town Meeting held on Sunday, March 28, 2021 at 1:00 pm at the Captain Douglas Academy.

Alan read the 1st proposed warrant article:

1.) (By petition) Shall the Town of Brookline impose a 365-day moratorium on any development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing under the Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance? The moratorium shall be effective immediately upon the vote and shall include but not be limited to: approval of any development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing by the Planning Board, land acquisition, surveying, tree removal, or any other physical alteration of any land within the Town of Brookline for a development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing.

Alan said Peter D'Agostino is in attendance to speak to these warrant articles. He has submitted the 4 warrant articles.

Peter said warrant article 1 and 2 are tied together but he will start with the first one. **Peter** thanked the Board for adding a meeting and allowing him the opportunity to speak to the petition warrant articles that were submitted to the town. The reason for a moratorium is to our town ability to provide service under our current structure.

Peter said he did these 4 warrant articles along with 117 voters that signed the petition warrant article **Peter** had a PDF presentation for the Board (below) that he presented:

(picture)

Introduction Background Next Steps Impacts to the Town Availability of Town Services Summary

Background

- Brookline Residents became aware of a proposed 80-unit development on February 18, 2021.
- Brookline voters immediately filed Petition Warrant Articles on February 22, 2021
 - One of the proposed Articles includes a Moratorium and another creates a Study Committee.
- After much public discussion, the Selectboard scheduled a Special Town Meeting on March 28, 2021 at 1pm to take up the Petition Articles
- Residents requested a meeting of the Planning Board to discuss the availability of Town Services for this
 proposed project

Next Steps

- Presentation to the Planning Board of significant issues related to Town Services for this 80-unit development.
- Request the Planning Board to issue a recommendation for the proposed Moratorium based on a Planning Board finding of the Town's inability to provide adequate services, most specifically related to the schools
- Town meeting to take up the Petition Articles on March 28, 2021 at 1pm.
- If passed by Special Town meeting, the Selectboard would appoint a Study Committee to begin a year long initiative to address Town Services and provide recommendations related to large scale developments.

Historical Data

- Brookline's Current 7-year growth
- NRPC Regional Housing Needs Assessment 2019 Update
- 2010 Population (4991) vs. 2017 Population (5190)
- Brookline Growth over 7 years 199 residents

2010 - 2017 Population Growth in NRPC Region								
Community	2010 Census	2017	Numeric Growth	Percent Growth				
Amherst	11,201	11,241	40	0.38%				
Brookline	4,991	5,190	199	3.99%				

• Brookline population growth from this proposed project

• 80 Units x 3 people per unit (RSA 674:58*) = 240 - Exceeds 7 years of growth in one project

*RSA 674:58 ""Workforce housing" also means rental housing which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area..."

Historical Impacts on Town Services

<u>Brookline Services Impacts from 2010 – Current</u> (199 Resident Increase 2010 2017 - NRPC 2019 Update)

- Police
 - Brookline has added 2 additional Police Officers (2016 and 2020) Added by Town Meeting specifically to address an increase in service calls.
 - Brookline is adding 1 additional Patrol Vehicle (2021) to provide the appropriate resources to our increased Police workforce.
 - Brookline made an addition to the Safety Complex (2012) to meet the increase staffing levels of the Police Department.
- Fire
- Brookline has replaced a fire truck to continue to meet town service demands and replace aging equipment.

Historical Impacts on Town Services

<u>Brookline Services Impacts from 2010 – Current</u> (199 Resident Increase 2010 2017 - NRPC 2019 Update)

- Ambulance
 - From 2010 to current, Brookline has had an increase of 15.5% of service calls.
- Department of Public Works (DPW)
 - Brookline's DPW cannot fully support the current need for Town services. The DPW is already relying on subcontractors and vendors to meet current demands.

Impacts to the Town

Population Impacts from Proposed Project

- This proposed development would <u>conservatively increase Brookline's population by nearly</u> <u>5% (4.62%, 3 people per unit) in a short period of time.</u>
- Of the 13 Communities within the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC); Brookline would be the 5th most impacted community amongst all the potential options within our regional planning area.

• As an example, this same project in communities such as Merrimack and Hudson would be a population increase of .94% (5x lower impact). In Nashua this project would result in a population increase of .27%. (17x lower impact).

Availability of Town Services

Brookline School District Impacts

- Brookline does not have the ability to provide school services for ANY increase in student population beyond the current New England School Development Council (NESDEC) projections and even that will require some creative problem solving.
- According to the NESDEC projections through 2025-2026 school year, the K-6 projected enrollment in Brookline will go from 572 to 638 (increase of 66 students). Assuming the grade level projections are accurate, this may require 3 additional classroom sections.
- Looking into next school year, some of our projected class sizes are greater than the specs in policy IIB and other projected class sizes are just below the specs. (Meaning we have just about maxed out class sizes in all grades.)
- After discussing available spaces within our existing elementary buildings, we would have to re-evaluate how
 our specials are taught. We would have to consider options such as taking back the computer labs, the music
 classrooms, the art classrooms and STEM Lab. The curriculum would have to be taught within the classroom
 rather than in a separate space. (This means using carts to roll in required materials including but not limited
 to, music instruments, computers and other related curriculum-based needs.)

Availability of Town Services

Brookline School District Impacts

- Trying to accommodate more than the NESDEC projections would require vastly different considerations. A facilities committee could be established to conduct a study to determine the best way to proceed. (Meaning we have no more existing physical space to add children).
- Plan to meet current projections; eliminate the following dedicated Specials classrooms.

STEM Classroom	Computer Lab
Art Classroom	Music Classroom

Availability of Town Services

Brookline School District Impacts

- Brookline has existing transportation (Bus) issues mostly related to driver shortages. Brookline's projected student population growth will further impact this existing issue. Growth beyond the current projections will have even further impacts to the Town's ability to provide bussing for children.
- In Amherst, a thorough study was completed to analyze similar needs (https://jfac.sau39.org/). The end result includes two building projects: the construction of a new PreK-5 school with a price tag of \$66 million, and a complete overhaul of the middle school with a price tag of \$31 million.

Availability of Town Services A message from the Amherst School Board to Amherst voters (dated Jan 27, 2021)

"During the hearing, on January 13, we presented a proposal for a <u>bond article asking for approximately \$97</u> <u>million to construct two major school projects</u> – a new Clark-Wilkins Elementary that would span pre-K through fifth grade (\$66 million) and a complete overhaul of Amherst Middle School for grades six through eight (\$31 million).

<u>These two projects were the result of nearly three years of work by the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee</u> (JFAC). Made up of myriad community members, board members, and administration, the committee spend countless hours researching the history of our buildings, the current issues we face, and what our future needs are going to be. With their research complete and presented to the board, we asked for and you approved \$150,000 on the 2020 ballot to hire an architectural firm to come up with solutions (with projected costs) for these

schools. These two building projects are the results of this cumulative work. (Emphasis added)

After listening to presentations by JFAC in the fall of 2020, these two school projects were approved by the school board for the 2021 ballot." (This project has been moved to the 2022 ballot due to multiple, mostly COVID related reasons)

Availability of Town Services

Amherst problems are not our problems.....Yes they are.

Brookline's current projections for PK-6 forecast a 66 student, 11.5% increase in student population. Amherst projections reflected only a 43-student, 4.4% increase.

Projected Enrollment in Grade Combinations*									
Year	K-3	4-6	K-6	PK-6	5-8	6-8	7-8	7-12	9-12
2020-21	307	250	557	572	336	256	166	560	394
2021-22	324	261	585	601	348	265	182	557	375
2022-23	320	264	584	601	385	286	200	542	342
2023-24	321	268	589	607	379	297	195	529	334
2024-25	342	258	600	619	389	302	217	566	349
2025-26	322	296	618	638	394	305	215	573	358
2026-27	343	287	630	651	415	294	202	598	396
2027-28	353	285	638	660	412	335	210	600	390
2028-29	341	275	616	639	416	330	251	649	398
2029-30	342	301	643	667	437	323	234	640	406
2030-31	342	317	659	684	414	312	194	624	430

Availability of Town Services

Amherst problems are not our problems.....Yes they are.

Brookline's current projections for PK-6 forecast a 66 student, 11.5% increase in student population. Amherst projections reflected only a 43-student, 4.4% increase.

ASD Enrollment Projections

slide22 upporting Data Tables FY20-FY24

			FY20			E	(21				FY22			FY23			FY24	
Building	Grade Level	Students	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	First Day	<u>10/1</u>	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio
_	Pre-School	39	2	19.5		_	19	2	0.0					_				_
	Kindergarten	97	5	19.4	142	125	109	7	20.3	139	7	19.9	125	7	17.9	123	7	17.6
	Grade 1	142	7	20.3	141	102	104	6	23.5	148	7	21.1	145	7	20.7	130	7	18.6
W	Grade 2	128	6	21.3	141	141	144	7	20.1	146	7	20.9	152	7	21.7	149	7	21.3
	Grade 3	140	7	20.0	137	127	126	6	22.8	147	7	21.0	151	7	21.6	158	7	22.6
	Grade 4	139	6	23.2	154	141	143	7	22.0	141	6	23.5	146	7	20.9	155	7	22.1
	TOTAL	685	33	20.8	715	636	645	35	20.4	721	34	21.2	719	35	20.5	715	35	20.4
			FY20	-		F	Y21				FY22			FY23	-		FY24	
Building	Grade Level	Students	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	First Day	10/1	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio	Projected	Teachers	Ratio
	Grade 5	138	6	23.0	135	134	131	6	22.3	159	7	22.7	146	7	20.9	155	7	22.1
	Grade 6	154	6	25.7	149	138	138	6	23.0	140	7	20.0	163	7	23.3	150	7	21.4
AMS	Grade 7	168	8	21.0	188	190	186	8	23.8	182	8	22.8	184	8	23.0	195	8	24.4
	Grade 8	163	8	20.4	173	167	166	8	20.9	191	8	23.9	195	8	24.4	172	8	21.5
	TOTAL	623	28	22.25	645	629	621	28	23.04	672	30	22.40	688	30	22.93	672	30	22.4

Availability of Town Services

Amherst problems are not our problems.....Yes they are.

Key Issues identified at Clark (Amherst Elementary)

- Inadequate number of classrooms (RMMS and CSDA)
- Improper egress
- Non-secure entrance sequence
- Inefficient exterior envelope (siding and lintels in masonry)
- Mechanical systems at end-of-life (RMMS Multiple Residential Boilers)

• Poor air quality (due to older mechanical systems) resulting in highly variable temperatures in many rooms (RMMS)

- Limited access to electricity in education areas
- Lack of Special Education space (CSDA nearing limit of available space)
- Lack of ADA accessibility in many areas (RMMS Lower level)
- Lack of ADA accessible restrooms and clearances throughout
- Undersized classrooms
- Constrained site not allowing for significant expansion (RMMS None)
- Lack of storage areas
- Lack of staff work areas
- All mechanical systems are at end-of-life, and need to be replaced (RMMS)
- All plumbing systems are at end-of-life, and should be replaced with code-compliant systems (RMMS Water Supply/Heating System)
- All electrical systems are inadequate for a modern technology rich school environment, and should be replaced (RMMS)
- Emergency electrical systems are inadequate, as there is no generator (RMMS)
- Lighting is at end-of-life, not energy efficient, and should be replaced (RMMS Some needs currently being evaluated)
- Two buildings cost more to maintain and staff (RMMS and CSDA)

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Summary

Brookline School District has <u>no ability to meet any additional student population</u> demand beyond current projections.

Police, Fire, Ambulance, and DPW have all been impacted by the organic growth of the town over the last 7-10 years, which has required significant upgrades and investments. The Town would be required to address a 7-8 year population growth all at once. These impacts may require significant research and study.

Summary

Given this unprecedented and highly unusual circumstance, I am respectfully requesting that the Planning Board make a recommendation for the Moratorium at Special Town Meeting with a finding based on the Town's inability to provide adequate services, most specifically related to the schools and that it requires prompt attention to our Town plans to address these issues. Further, for the Planning Board to recommend a course of action, such as the proposed study committee to immediately address the town service impacts and subsequent actions that may be necessary to rectify any such impacts.

Peter said this is the request of the Board at this time and he would hope that the Planning Board would consider it. **Peter** thanked the Board for their time. The Board thanked Peter for the presentation. **Peter** said he is waiting for a letter from the superintendent as verification on the school information as soon as he gets it, he will forward it to the Board. Brendan said he appreciates the time Peter put into this presentation. You spoke about the DPW department not being able to meet our current needs he would just like to remind everyone that we went from a Road Agent structure where everything was subcontractors and venders to a Department of Public Works. In 2020 we added a second person so in the process we are bringing thing back into town, but we are still using contracts and vendors for various things like paving etc. Brendan said in this presentation you stated the town services can't support the normal growth of the Town. Are you suggesting that they stop all development or just this proposed development? Peter said he was surprised at the answers from the school administration. Once he received the letter from the Superintendent that states the capacity of the schools now, he believes that the Planning Board will need to look into this sooner rather than later. They are at a tipping point in the schools if you take the numbers, they have reviewed in his presentation he is not sure if they can still create subdivisions, they maybe in need of what Amherst did. He believes the Study Committee and the moratorium is appropriate. Not doing this right will be a detriment to the community. **Peter Cook** asked if this would have any affect the developments of ADU's. Peter said no this would not address ADU they have been a huge help to affordable housing costs in town. Eric Pauer said you stated this will affect Pre-K through 6 but it will eventually also affect the High School. There will probably be some big impacts there. Hollis already has workforce housing and it has already affecting Hollis Pre K-6 now. We just expanded our Emergency management facility and we have paid our director a little bit more due to the increase in workload. Peter said he has more information on the impact but wanted to limit this conversation to the articles. Peter said the intent of the warrant article is to deal with the workforce housing and not pull the ADU's into this. The Planning Board could recommend including the workforce housing only and the warrant article could be amended at Town Meeting. Mathew Royce thanked Peter for all the research and work he put into this presentation. He would like to know legally if these warrant articles are binding. He has read that a lot of things related to workforce housing are dependent on the town meaning, the determination for the need for workforce housing is put on the town. Peter said when they talk about the need for workforce housing, they are referring to the housing stock assessment which is defined by RSA 674:59 3 however, that isn't appropriate for this discussion at this time. Graham Loff asked if the developer could speak at town meeting. Brendan said the moderator would ask the assembled body to recognize them so they could speak. Eric said just so everyone is clear, the petition warrant articles aren't specific to any application that has or has not been submitted to the Planning Board. Steven Saccaoccio said the developer has

the ability to go in front of the superior court. Does anyone know if they would be able to fight a moratorium? **Alan** said anyone has the right to go to court if they have a grievance against the town, it would be within their right to do that. He believes before going to court they may have to go through the appropriate town channels first.

Alan moved on to the 2nd Petition Warrant Article:

2.) (By petition) Shall the Town of Brookline vote to establish a Study Committee for the review of the Town's compliance with RSA 674:59 or any other business related thereto? The Study Committee would consist of 5 members (1 member from the Planning Board, 1 member from the Selectboard or their designee, 1 Member from either the Police or Fire Department and 2 Registered Voters who do not hold an elected position within the Town). The Members of the Study Committee shall be appointed by the Selectboard. The Study Committee shall, at a minimum, review the Town's compliance with RSA 674:59 and specifically determine if the Town meets its compliance under the provisions of RSA 674:59 III and to determine any and all necessary changes to the Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance related to any development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing for compliance with RSA 674:59 including the repeal of such ordinance. The Study Committee shall file its recommendations at a date and time as determined by the Chair of the Study Committee with enough time for a Zoning and Land Use Ordinance change to be placed on the 2022 Annual Town Meeting Warrant in accordance with RSA 39:3 and RSA 675:4?

Peter said this is not related to the moratorium because they don't know if the moratorium will be passed and if it does, they will need to adjust the language of this article at the town meeting.

Alan moved on to the 3rd Petition Warrant Article:

3.) (By petition) Shall the Town of Brookline vote to direct the Planning Board to enforce Reasonable Standards and Conditions of Approval in accordance with RSA 674:59 IV, including but not limited to Environmental Protection, Water Supply, Sanitary Disposal, Traffic Safety and Fire and Life Safety Protection on any development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing under the Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance?

Peter said he believes the Planning Board would ask for this information anyways. The RSA states these five things should both have reasonable standards and reasonable conditions of approval. He has full faith and confidence in this Board, but he believes that the developers should know that the towns people are concerned about these things. This gives the voters a means for their voice to be heard.

Alan moved on to the 4th Petition Warrant Article:

4.) Shall the Town of Brookline vote to direct the Planning Board to not approve any development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing under the Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance if the Town meets its fair share of the current and reasonably foreseeable regional need for such housing under the provisions of RSA 674:59 III?

Additionally, to further direct the Planning Board to not approve a development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing under Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance if, when combined with the current housing stock, the development would exceed the Town's fair share of the current and reasonably foreseeable regional need for such housing under the provisions of RSA 674:59 III. And to

Additionally, to further direct the Planning Board to require a report acceptable to the Planning Board from an applicant of a development that is intended to qualify as workforce housing under the Town of Brookline, NH Zoning and Land Use Ordinance demonstrating that the Town's existing housing stock is not sufficient to accommodate the Town's fair share of the current and reasonably foreseeable regional need

for such housing under the provisions of RSA 674:59 III. Such report shall include all the available options of workforce housing in the Town's existing housing stock as defined under RSA 674:58.

Peter said he thinks this is important for the Planning Board. He has learned a lot over the last week the school information was staggering. There is no maximum only a minimum and the law said we need our fair share, but we don't have to go beyond our fair share. If we do go over our fair share, we will need to figure out how to provide services and as it is right now, we are already having a hard time providing those services. This is again another opportunity to have the voters voice heard. This information is advisory, and they are not trying to tie the Board's hands.

Valérie said ADU's cannot qualify as affordable housing. They can't verify the income and the workforce housing income must be verified. They also cannot verify how much they are renting the ADU's for. **Peter** stated that the income of the people that are living there, as its related to single family type dwellings, would qualify depending on the value of it and not by what someone makes. Under RSA 674:59 the workforce housing is defined by who it is affordable to and not income levels of the individual. Pelham New Hampshire addressed this very issue, there may be some interpretable language there.

Steven Saccaoccio are those income figures household, head of household or combined. **Peter** said HUD determines the number and it is based on a family of 4. A Single-family home has to be affordable based on 100% of the area median income. So, whether you make \$113,000 or not, for a house to be affordable, to has to be affordable to someone who does make \$113,000 and can afford it. If you look at NRPC housing assessment you will see housing assessment 29 update and they qualify a home being under \$329,000 as affordable. Those numbers are not subject to opinion this is based on the HUD number. These are the numbers they must use. That is what the law has established. **Eric Pauer** said they would use whatever standard would qualify whether they are selling or renting. **Peter** said the RSA's states affordable housing uses a 30% income threshold and workforce housing rental use a 60 % income thresholds and single-family home use a 100% area median income threshold. Workforce and affordable housing are two different things. **Eric Pauer** said when they are assessing the town, they would need to look at all the assessment they have for all the homes or units, would they use the Equalization Ratio (market to assessment) for the planning Board to get a number as to how many of the units would qualify to the thresholds that Peter has just mentioned. **Peter** said if the moratorium failed the Planning Board and the developer would still need to address the housing stock.

Anthony Chase said he is concerned about the water in this area and he also wonders if they can really sustain an 80-unit development in Brookline. Can our community take care of all those people? **Alan** that is the background to all four of these warrant articles. It points out the need for more additionally studies for all of the growth in town what the outcome will be. It is not specific to one development; it really goes over the spectrum of the entire town. **Peter** asked that the Planning Board to consider placing this on the Planning Board agenda for the 18th of March. **Alan** thanked Peter for all his hard work on this.

Brendan said the regular Town Meeting is scheduled for Saturday March 27, 2021 at Captain Samuel Douglas Academy on Townsend Hill Road at 10:00am. they will be holding a special Town Meeting on Sunday, March 28, 2021 at 1:00pm at Captain Samuel Douglas Academy for the 4 Petition Warrant Articles.

There will be tents set up. the chairs in the gym and under the tent will be set up for social distancing and please wear a mask.

Please pick up a town report at the Town Hall or at the Post Office. It is also online at the town website. Make sure you are registered to vote because you will not be able to register at Town Meeting.

<u>Adjourn</u>

Eric made a motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Brendan seconded. Roll call vote Alan, Brendan, Eric, and Ron all voted yes. 4-0 yes.

Alan Rosenberg, Co-chair ______

Ron Pelletier, Member _____

Brendan Denehy, Selectboard Representative _____

Minutes submitted by Kristen Austin Next Scheduled Planning Board Meeting is March 18, 2021