

**TOWN OF SUNAPEE**  
**PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP**  
**MARCH 16, 2023**

**Chairman White called the meeting to order at 7:12 PM.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT BY VIDEO:** None

**MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE MEETING ROOM:** Suzanne Gottling, Chairman Peter White, Joseph Butler, Randy Clark, Gregory Swick.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Richard Osborne and Robin Saunders.

**ALSO PRESENT IN THE MEETING ROOM:** Michael Marquise - Town Planner.

**ALSO PRESENT BY VIDEO:** Jeff Claus

**1<sup>st</sup> Order of business: Work Section**

**MASTER PLAN: "Discussion on 2 departments on Sunapee School District".**

**First discussion: Russell Holden, Superintendent of Sunapee School District**

Mr. Holden commenced by saying that he will walk the members through potential capital improvements moving forward which may fit in to the Master Plan. He handed out documents which are historical and projected enrollment. He said that they are available on the school's website. He also said that further in the discussion he will give a good understanding of that projected enrollment, which goes back 10 years. From a capital improvement outlook, the passing in completion should be recompleted. The elementary school project was put over the last few years, and with that partially done, Mr. Holden said that the school still needs a lot of work for the educational classroom space and for the fields and parking lots. He added that the 2 big things that are remaining in the school are the safety issues of the parking lot and the playground, and the ability to move the parking lot in the back to the front and to move the playground from the front to the back in order to separate the children from the cars. He said that they did manage to remove that so it is no longer a street. There was a quote about the pavement part worth \$95,000. Mr. Holden said that they plan to do some fundraising, also they have to think of some sort of easily accessible pathway up to the top field. That is one of the big safety concerns he would like to address. He pointed out that they are not asking for money for that transformation; in fact, he said that \$95,000 they currently have and some of the money they raised is enough to cover the front parking lot and can fundraise for the playground; safety being priority there. For the last part, Mr. Holden mentioned that an upgrade in the classrooms for the elementary school is also needed. This includes windows, plumbing in the bathrooms, new electrical outlets, better electrical service for the building, potentially new flooring and the last piece is built ins. He said that that is the elementary school educational space renovation that has been started. Concerning the windows, he continued that there are 89 windows in the building, roughly \$1,000 a window to replace those. It is a \$90,000 price tag. They were hoping that at this point they would have a lot more data on the biomass plant that was installed. He said that unfortunately, with the supply chain and the installation issues that

have taken place, they are still unable to get the biomass up and running. He repeated that they do not have good data to be able to say that it is a very efficient way to heat the schools. He added that the Department of Energy has the biomass grants every 2 years for which they have applied. He said that it is something that the CIP Committee has to make a determination on.

Mr. Holden asked if there are any questions or concerns regarding the issue.

Mrs. Gottling asked whether they are going to keep the teacher's parking.

Mr. Butler answered that it is the parking-playground switch. It will be used for parking of various sorts of vehicles such as school buses and fire trucks, it will be also available for teachers and visitors such as parents.

Mr. Butler asked about the structure of the playground.

Mr. Holden said that it is a metal and wood structure that has been inspected and there have been some improvements made to it. But they need a new one because wood is no longer used in the present day, and they are trying to make a new safe and natural playground.

Chairman White said that from a Planning perspective it sounds like the middle high school and the elementary school are pretty much committed to where they are for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Holden agreed to Chairman White's conclusion and said that the Community gave them \$5,000,000 to renovate the school. He added that they have made the investment, the Town has approved making other investments and is committed to the schools and keeping them up and running.

Chairman White then said that from a Community standpoint just to have that viability as a part of what they perceive as a core of the Town is a wonderful connection.

Mr. Holden said that he is grateful that the Town was willing to put money into that, knowing that it is a centerpiece of the Community. He mentioned that they are happy that the Community supported them with \$5,000,000. He also added that they invested in those buildings because they mean something to the Community and suggested to continue to invest and maintain them.

There was a brief discussion about whether a school is an option now.

Mr. Marquise mentioned that 2 years ago there was a lot of discussion about needing a second entrance into the school through Veteran's Field and asked whether that had gone away.

Mr. Holden confirmed that it is no longer necessary.

Chairman White brought up the question that, as a school district in a bigger Community, whether it is going to focus on or support some new opportunities.

Mr. Holden said that they have done a lot to expand interest for children; meaning they have many different programs.

There was a brief discussion about online learning.

Mr. Butler asked whether they are concerned about safety.

Mr. Holden said that safety is their priority, they are taking care of the children's basic needs, one of them being safety. They are making sure that children in the building are being safe and are aware of who is coming or getting them out of the building. Also, he said that the children are trained in case of a fire. They also have surveillance cameras inside and out of the building.

Mr. Marquise asked regarding the short-term rentals from a past discussion, that every time a property converts to a short-term rental it takes the ability for someone to live there full-time, which means school teachers can not afford to live in Sunapee, whether Mr. Holden sees that as a problem in terms of, does that increase the density of housing?

Mr. Holden answered that 11 years ago the majority of the staff lived in the Town, but nowadays most of the staff are not necessarily looking to move there. He added that accessibility to housing does not come as a problem for the staff.

There was a brief discussion about the school fields.

Chairman White asked whether there are any questions, since there were not any, he announced the second discussion.

### **Second discussion: John Galloway, Fire Chief of Sunapee Fire Department**

Mr. Galloway started by saying that there are 29 members under the Department now and hopes that in the future it will become a full-time Department. He said that the Department was built in 2006, but the building did not pass the first year. So, when it got built, the Department lost 2 bays on the garage. One bay they have now is a drive-through; one has 3 pieces in it. He said that the building is structurally good; they did some renovation 2 years ago. The concrete epoxy floor has some cracks in it and is rather expensive to repair it. Other than that, he said that the building needs air-conditioning and at least one bathroom upstairs. Mr. Galloway also said that the Georges Mills Station costs them about \$4,000 a year to have it, that is heat and electric; it houses 1 engine. He said that he does not see many big plans for that building other than maintenance. They have a 1997 truck that is in Georges Mills Station now, then engine 2000 that is used for rescue, engine 2002, the ladder is 2005. The newest engine is 2011 and the tanker is 2015. He explained that what is relevant about the years is that the insurance is going to replace the value of a truck in case of an accident, which means that if a truck is over 20 years old the insurance gives a value for it, not a replacement. He added that they have 4 trucks that are over 20 years and are outworn.

Chairman White asked how many members are in the Department, Mr. Galloway reminded him that there are 29. Mr. Butler followed up on that and asked whether the members are familiar with the equipment and use it properly.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Fire Department calls, how they deal with the technical part and what types of calls they receive.

As the discussion developed regarding the fires they are dealing with, Mr. Holden brought up that the dry hydrants in the Town need to be replaced, because they have some difficulty using them since they are old. He explained that back in the day when they were built, people made them with metal pipes, so he suggested the modern solution for replacement could be plastic or other materials.

Chairman White asked whether there are any other questions.

Mrs. Gottling wondered about the 4 towns that are cooperating on the equipment and whether that is something that they can never come to terms about. There was a brief discussion regarding Mrs. Gottling's question.

Mr. Clark asked whether there are volunteers in the Department that go in town.

Mr. Butler confirmed.

Towards the end of the Planning Board Workshop, they all discussed briefly regarding the volunteer's issue.

Mr. Marquise said that there are a couple of announcements; that all the minutes are going up on the website for this year, and asked the members of the Board to take a look at them.

**Mr. Swick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 pm. All voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.**

Planning Board

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Peter White, Chairman	Suzanne Gottling
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Joseph Butler	Robin Saunders
_____	_____
Randy Clark	Richard Osborne
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Jeff Claus	