

Community Development Connection

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 26, 2014

Office of Community Development Department
Town of Amherst



Route 101A Corridor— New Design Guidelines!

Inside this issue:

Meeting Results	2
DES Warns of Snow and Ice Damage	3
Welcome Mystic Images Salon & Spa	3
NRPC Live Maps	3
Design Guidelines	4
CIP Volunteers	4
2014 Ballot—Zoning	4
Vacant Buildings Tour	5
NRPC Update	6

VOTING DAY

March 11, 2014

6:00 am to

8:00 pm @

Souhegan High School

The Planning Board kicked off a new project at their February 19, 2014, worksession to create Design Guidelines for the Route 101A Corridor. The project is supported by a \$10,000 iTRaC project grant through the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC). The iTRaC Program is NRPC's approach to community planning that focuses on integrating transportation, land use, and environmental planning. The program was developed to assist communities in dealing with the challenges of growth in a coordinated way that sustains community character and fosters a sense of place.

Through the Master Planning process, Amherst identified the need to maintain and enhance Amherst's community character and sense of place. Achieving this goal can be particularly challenging in high visibility commercial and industrial corridors such as Route 101A. This will continue to be a challenge for the Planning Board as development and redevelopment opportunities present themselves along Route 101A. The Planning Board would like to proactively address this issue through the development of design guidelines for commercial and industrial properties along and adjacent to the corridor, specifically addressing mobility and accessibility issues through access management, multi-modal opportunities, and low impact development. *(Continued on Page 4.)*



Many stores share this parking lot that has only one access point to the road.

Did You Know? Wildlife Habitat Plan Underdevelopment

The Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC) has begun developing a wildlife habitat management plan in an effort to better incorporate wildlife habitat into its ongoing land and water conservation activities. While wildlife has always been an interest and consideration in the Commission's forest and meadow management programs, its land acquisition and trail development efforts, and its wetland protection responsibilities, a specific focus on inventorying and conserving the wildlife habitats present in Amherst has been lacking.

To aid this effort, the Commission applied for technical assistance from the "Taking Action for Wildlife" program, a joint effort of the NH Fish & Game Department and the UNH Cooperative Extension. The Commission was specifically interested in inventorying the habitats and species existing in the Town. The Cooperative Extension accepted the Commission's application in January and has started this initiative by providing Amherst with maps depicting wildlife habitat land cover specific to the Town, and a ranking of these habitats by ecological condition. These maps are derived from the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan and are just two of a multitude of wildlife planning tools developed by the State. Not surprisingly the wildlife habitats present in the Joe English conservation lands are among the Town's highest ranked areas, but so are the unique habitats lying along the Souhegan River valley corridor crossing the Town's southern border.

This wildlife habitat planning process when completed will provide the ACC and the Town a more quantitative means to understand the habitats that presently exist within the Town's limits and to more intelligently conserve Amherst's open space for the future.

Meeting Results:



Each month this column will bring you a quick update on the results of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, and Historic District Commission's deliberations:

Zoning Board (ZBA)

The ZBA postponed their public hearing from February 18th to February 25th due to (another) snow storm. The Board heard two applications:

Case #PZ 4750-011014 – Special Exception — Susan M. Cormier, 20 Pine Top Road, PIN# 007-058-000, requests a special exception from Section 4.5.C.7 to allow an accessory dwelling unit in the Northern Rural Zone.

The application was approved as presented.

Case #PZ4768-011714 – Variance — Denis Vaillancourt, 14 Clark Island Road, PIN# 008-106-000, requests a variance from Section 4.3.D.3 to allow a generator within the Residential/Rural Zone side setback.

The application was approved as presented.

Planning Board (PB)

The PB postponed their February 5th Public Hearing to February 19th due to (another) snow storm. At the February 19th Public Hearing, the Board heard one application and accepted a petition.

Case #4401 – Peg Bennett – NRSP Amendment – 14 Cross Road, PIN# 002-145-000: Temporary lighting of Bean Field.

The application was tabled from the December 4, 2013, meeting in order for the applicant to obtain a lighting plan from a professional lighting engineer that will allow for minimal impact to abutters and enough lighting for safe athletic activities. The applicant submitted a request to withdraw the application without prejudice. The Board unanimously accepted the request for withdrawal.

Historic District Commission (HDC)

The HDC held a site walk on February 15th and a public hearing on February 20th for one application.

1. **Case #4788-013014 – John Marino, 123 Amherst Street, PIN# 005-033-000** – to repair and remodel fire damage to home.

The HDC made the following findings:

It is a non-contributing property. This is a visible property from the front. The work being done will be in keeping with the original home. The new windows will match the construction of the remaining windows. The siding will remain the same.

Upon a motion duly made/seconded (BF/TV), the HDC unanimously approved the application as presented, noting that the propane tanks will be fenced and located against the house in the back on a pad to stabilize them.

DES Warns "Snow & Ice Can Damage Fuel Storage Tanks"

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Service (DES) is warning municipalities, homeowners, and businesses that snow and ice can damage outdoor heating oil/propane/natural gas tanks and the piping connecting the tank to the building.

Damage to tanks, filters, and associated piping can result in gas leaks and heating oil spills. Gas leaks are an explosion/fire hazard; and costly heating oil spills must be cleaned up to protect property and the environment.

- Snow and ice that has accumulated around tanks, filters, and piping should be carefully removed for accessibility and safety.



- Snow and ice damage can be avoided and prevented by removing it from roofs and overhanging eaves where tanks are located below.
- When removing snow and ice from roofs, care should be taken to avoid dropping it onto tanks, filters, piping.
- Temporary and permanent covers can be used to protect tanks and piping from snow and ice damage.

For more information, contact NHDES at 271-3577, or your own fuel dealer.

Welcome to Amherst!

Mystic Images Salon and Spa recently opened its doors at Salzburg Square, at 292 Route 101 in Amherst!

Check them out on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mysticimages, for information on their team of talented professionals, and unique deals on services and products. Please join us in welcoming this new business to Amherst!



Don't Forget to Check out NRPC Live Maps!

The app features the NRPC GIS database including parcels and road inventory, as well as a number of regional overlays such as water resources, flood hazards, soils, and land use. It also features integrations with Vision Appraisal and Patriot WebPro online property record cards, as well as Bing Bird's Eye aerials and Google Street View.

To get started, visit www.nashuarpc.org and click on the Live Maps Button.



Zoom in, zoom out, pan around, turn on and off basemaps and overlays, or click on particular parcels. Use the Search Properties to query particular addresses. Please don't hesitate to contact Sara Siskavich, GIS Manager, at saras@nashuarpc.org with any questions.

Route 101A Design Guidelines (continued)

The intent of these guidelines is to improve mobility, safety, and accessibility while ensuring compatibility with the corridor as future development and redevelopment opportunities present themselves. The Town's land use regulations do not adequately address design features to foster community character and a sense of place. This project will aim to formally address this issue by creating a visual Design Guideline document that will accompany the Town's update of the Non-Residential Site Plan Regulations. NRPC will develop the design guidelines and the Community Development Office staff will update all relevant town regulations, as approved by the Planning Board.

The project aims to achieve the following goals:

- Improve access management and safety and identify opportunities for multi-modal access;
- Enhance and maintain the Town of Amherst's community character and sense of place along the Route 101A Corridor;
- Protect the aquifer below the corridor via low impact development and landscaping techniques;
- Create design guidelines for land along and adjacent to the 101 A Corridor; and
- Implement the Master Plan.

The Planning Board's next worksession on this topic is scheduled for April 16th. Do you have a vision or ideas for the designs you would appreciate along the Route 101A commercial corridor? If so please contact the [Community Development Office](#) to participate in this exciting project.

FY2016—FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Volunteers Needed!

The [Capital Improvements Plan \(CIP\)](#) is a program authorized by State law to link local infrastructure investments with master plan goals, land use ordinances, and economic development. By bridging that gap the fiscal realities of improving and expanding community facilities are realized. The CIP is designed to be updated and adopted annually to provide timely tool to the Board of Selectmen and School Boards in long-range planning of municipal expenditures.

To initiate the process, a CIP Committee will be formally appointed in the Spring of 2014 by the Board of Selectmen. If you are interested in becoming a Citizen Volunteer on the committee, please contact [Sarah Marchant](#) or [Torrey Demanche](#).

The committee's work will start in the spring and end in the fall. The ten member committee will meet largely over the summer months on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays to evaluate the projects submitted by Department Heads and applicable groups to create the FY2016-FY2021 Plan.

Final Zoning Ordinance and Building Code Amendments for Ballot

The final proposals to amend the Zoning Ordinance and Building Code, in support of Zoning Warrant Articles #42 - 50 are available at:

- Town Clerk's Office
- Amherst Town Library
- and online at: http://amherstnh.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/2014-ZoningChanges_FullText_1401132.pdf

Or use the QR Code Scan to go the online version!

For more information please contact Community Development Director Sarah Marchant at 603.673.6041 x 206.





The Milford Improvement Team
and
The Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce
Present
A Self Guided Tour of
Available Commercial Properties in Milford and Amherst
Saturday, March 29th
9 am to 2 pm
Event Starts at Chappell Tractor*
454 Route 13 Milford NH

- 9 am to 10am— Light Breakfast and Panel Discussion with Milford and Amherst Community Development Directors, Fire Department and Building Officials, and Commercial Lenders about Opening or Re-locating your business to Milford or Amherst.
- 10 am to 2 pm— Self-guided Tour of Available Commercial Properties in Milford and Amherst
- 10 am to 2 pm— Raffles and Giveaways by realtors/owners at their sites
- 10 am to 2 pm Tour lunch specials at area restaurants listed in the tour program.
- Attendees will receive a map of locations and printed brochure with space details. Real estate agents and/or owners will be at the sites on the tour to answer your questions and show you the properties.
- Tickets can be purchased on-line at www.souhegan.net and are \$15 for 1, \$25 for 2, so bring a friend!
- Questions? Email: Director@milfordimprovementteam.org or Tracy@souhegan.net.

Community Development Department - Town of Amherst

2 Main Street
PO Box 960
Amherst, NH 03031
Phone: 603.673.6041
Fax: 603.673.4138
E-mail: smarchant@amherstnh.gov



WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.AMHERSTNH.GOV

The Community Development Office strives to effectively manage community change in accordance with the Master Plan and the Town's ordinances and regulations by providing professional advice and technical expertise in a consistent and fair manner to citizens, boards, commissions, departments, and regional agencies on the implementation of land use ordinances, regulations, and policies for both the short- and long-term physical, natural, and economic development of the Town.

The Community Development Office is comprised of the Building, Zoning, Planning, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development Departments. The Office provides support to the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Amherst Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Heritage Commission, and the CIP Committee. The office provides a one-stop location for all land development processing in the Town.



NRPC UPDATE



NRPC REGIONAL PLAN DISCUSSION

The Town of Milford Planning Board will be hosting a meeting with **neighboring Planning Boards on Tuesday, March 4 at 6:30 pm** to discuss the Regional Plan.

NRPC will be on hand to present some of the data and input we have received so far, and to facilitate a discussion regarding your thoughts about the future of the region.

NRPC will present an updated regional build out analysis that looks at current conditions, what development we may see by 2040, and what the region might look like at complete build out. The discussion will focus on topics such as:

- Is the build out in line with your Town Planning Board expectations for future development?
- Are there assumptions your board

has for future growth and development that we should look at?

- What are some future growth trends you would like NRPC to test?
- What indicators would be valuable to the town to understand the impacts of growth on the region/town in the future?

Please let me know if you are able to attend the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact me at kerried@nashuarpc.org.

DRAFT EXIT 36S EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT NOW AVAILABLE!

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) in conjunction with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) received federal funding

through the Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation Program (TCSP) to conduct a study assessing the effectiveness of a southbound off-ramp at exit 36 on the F.E. Everett Turnpike, near the New Hampshire and Massachusetts border. The study will evaluate traffic flows and potential economic benefits to businesses in the area and will ultimately complete planning analyses in support of the development of a southbound off-ramp on US Route 3 at Exit 36 in Tyngsborough Massachusetts. Click here to view the draft Exit 36S Existing Conditions report.

For more information, visit the NRPC Exit 36S webpage at <http://www.nashuarpc.org/exit36/> or contact Camille Pattison, Nashua Regional Planning Commission Principal Planner, at camillep@nashuarpc.org