

PRESENT: Vadney, Chairman; Sorell, Vice-Chairman; Bayard, Secretary;  
Flanders; Finer; Kahn; Bliss; Granfield, Alternate; Touhey, Alternate;  
Edgar, Town Planner; Harvey, Clerk

### **1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC HEARING – ZONING AMENDMENTS**

Chairman Vadney called the Public Hearing on the Proposed Zoning Changes to order at 7:00 p.m., at the Inter-Lakes High School Auditorium.

We are here this evening to discuss some changes to the Zoning Ordinance. We did a master plan and called it the Community Plan that was signed in 2003. We worked on that for about 3 years and this kind of ties together issues that were raised in developing the Community Plan. You've probably seen the Community Plan and we welcome your comments. What you'll see here tonight and in a moment I'll give you a short briefing on the slides, but you'll see here tonight, you will find that in most of the Town, we've made no changes at all. In the Chemung area really no change, in the bulk of the Residential, little or no change. Really, the changes focus on the downtown. There's a great deal of pressure on the village as you see changes coming down the hill from Parade Road, down into the village, you've seen the changes along the way in the last few years. We have very little real estate, real useable real estate. We have a lot of lake, which is nice, but you can't build on it of course and a lot of wetlands. The amount of really useable real estate is quite limited and so we're looking at how do we get the best bang for the buck so to speak in the core downtown and open up as much as we can, a little flexibility to open up some of the Business & Industry and general commercial kind of areas which we are really quite restricted on as far as land mass. To that end, the bulk of what you'll see here tonight focuses on land along Route 3 from the Laconia Town Line to the Center Harbor Town Line toward The Mug, on Route 25 going up toward the High School, but not quite that far and on the Main Street and going out on Waukegan Street a short distance. In that core is really what we're talking about and that's the bulk of the changes that we are recommending to you this year. We have come up with a couple of new titles so to speak for zoning areas, one is Village Residential and one is Village District. The Village District - We will come to this in a minute on the slides, but that is a business area and we're saying that when you start, for instance, at the Laconia Town Line and come up Route 3, it's a commercial area, but you don't want the same kind of development along that long strip that you would want on Main Street or by the Town Docks. On the same note, you have the residential areas that are in close to Town where the people can walk into town very easily and get to the convenience stores and stuff in the village and it's more walker friendly so those are the areas we're going to focus on. At any rate, I'll get now to the slides and John Edgar is going handle the slide projector and cover some objectives here. First, we are using the basic zoning framework. We haven't done a lot of changes to the outlying parts of town and even the parts in town, they sound probably bigger than they are. One of the reasons we undertook this project in the first place was to eliminate if we could some of the terminology, keep in mind that the

current Zoning Ordinance, the original zoning ordinance was passed in about 1971 and in the 34-35 years since then, there have been probably 20 or more different changes from Town Meetings that have modified it. Some of those as you may know, you might often times when you're modifying one section of a book, you don't realize how it impacts another part of the book and that's what we've run into, some confusing terminologies and some conflicting parts of the ordinance. As I mentioned, we're trying to distinguish now the village, the core of the village from the outlying parts of town and recognize that with the development pressure we have and I won't list them here, but you all know that the number of major commercial developments we've had in say the last six years, recognizing those that have come and those that could come, we are now looking at this core area a little differently. Always in the back of our mind is how expensive it's getting to live in Meredith and we've done a couple of things in some terminology and definitions and permitted uses that we think might help increase some opportunities for work force housing. I mentioned before the Business & Industry and Commercial. We're very restricted in the amount of land that we have that can be used for Commercial and Industrial kinds of things so we're looking at changing some of the permitted uses and definitions to make that a little more flexible and you might say aim at using that land for the highest value possible. Throughout this, we have really tried to avoid any major changes in the zoning. The zoning has worked well for 35 years; we think it will keep working well. These are really some improvements we hope to focus on the village. I mentioned before the Community Plan, many of the things that we've done as we approached this zoning changes have been based on what was developed in the Community Plan which was developed through some meetings where we had 250 or more people committed to workshops and tell us what they liked about the village and what they wanted to protect about the village. Things like when you enter Meredith, you don't start seeing strip malls and strip development all the way along. We use as much as we can buffered zones so businesses and things can be behind rows of trees so you still get a rather scenic approach and if you think of all the major ways in, coming in from Center Harbor, you're are coming by the Moulton Farm and some nice farmland and on 104, you still have woodlands and swamps and the like and we're trying to protect that and so that you come to Meredith and when you get here, you know because you're in a core village and that is kind of the focus of the entire project. This is the current zoning map. You see the brown area off to the left, that's what we call Chemung and it's the Forestry/Conservation District. We made no major changes in Forestry/Conservation. All of the Shoreline, we made no changes, that's the yellow. The green is Forestry & Rural and we've made some very minor changes on that. The light green is Residential and we made some minor changes in that, some small area changes. No real changes in definitions on that, it will be minor border changes, boundaries. Edgar – While we have this map up on the screen, I just want to point out a couple things that are coming into play in a couple minutes. The current zoning right now, this is the Center Harbor line and if you follow that blue, this is the Jenness Hill Road area, DPW and then it comes down the Route 3 corridor into the 3 and 25 intersection and we have the same Central Business

District designation down to where Parade Road intersects. This is all one big commercial district right now and then it merges into something called Commercial Route 3 South so we effectively have commercial zoning from the Laconia line down towards Weirs Beach all the way up through the village and all the way up to Center Harbor. Although this is not the best quality map because of all the parcel lines that are on here, you will notice that and you'll see this in a minute that there's not a big distinction between the Main Street and up towards The Mug, for example, or the Main Street and say down by Route 25 so from a zoning point of view, the Zoning Ordinance doesn't make distinction that we have basically a village in the middle in terms of the uses and so one of those objectives in the Master Plan was to working with the current zoning that we have to try to create that identity. Are we in a crisis, no we are not in a crisis, we've faired pretty well, but it's part of the overall updating of the ordinance that was an opportunity to address that particular issue. I just wanted to draw this to your attention with the current zoning use because you are going to see a couple tweaks in there. Vadney – We've seen the current zoning map and we'll now take a look at the proposed zoning map. You will see there are a couple of additional colors in the downtown region that was really what popped up on the screen. The next slide will really show you at a larger scale. This shows in the close-up what John was just talking about. Currently, you have Route 3 Commercial to about here and then you've got Commercial all the way up to the Center Harbor line. We have carved out, that right there is the new Community Center, so if you start at the Community Center, come down and that right there is approximately at the railroad bridge, that's what we're calling the village core, the Village District, which would be a commercial area, it then wraps around up that way, that would be the Water Treatment Plant at the edge of Lake Waukegan at the end of the Wickes property and this is Route 25 up to just above the Mobil on the Run gas station. That is the core of what we're talking about, carving that out and then taking the blue part that remains up here from the Community Center and that's Philbrook Avenue, following that up to the Center Harbor Town Line, that zone and this zone are really the same and that would be a Commercial District, it would remain Commercial, but it wouldn't be of the same focus that the downtown part would be. Although you may have noticed what looks like some changes is the slide flipped around there, there are really no changes at all in any of the boundaries in this region. The whole boundary zone change is right along that strip. A couple more slides will show you some very, very small boundary changes right in the Village. Edgar - In the purple color is the current Business & Industry zone. If we go back to the current zoning, that district in the middle we are speaking to, one of the objectives that we're dealing with is trying to create more opportunities within the commercial areas that we have and the B & I District is one where there is a potential for some additional development. It's also positioned in the watershed of our water supply so we have to be careful about it, but we will be able to speak to that so the purple area in the dead center of the map on the Route 104 corridor basically remains unchanged in terms of location and we'll be speaking to some of the use issues a little bit later. Vadney – Now we are in the proposed Village District. Again, that's the water treatment plant, that's the railroad bridge, that's

just above the Mobile on the Run and that's the Community Center. This takes in one property north of the Community Center and that's Philbrook Avenue. In a minute, we'll explain some residential changes, but that is the zone we're talking about being Commercial. There are some small boundary changes in the Village. Right here is the Humiston Building, that's the little red house, that's the Library, that's the church and that's the Price house. Currently, these three are in the commercial, that home and Humiston Building in a residential area. We are proposing to put those in the Commercial zone and across the street from the Humiston Building, you have the Masonic Hall and that would go into the core business area as well. Edgar – As Herb was saying, the core of this proposed Village District is basically taking the Commercial zone that we have which we currently refer to as Central Business and truncating it on the north up by the Community Center, the easterly boundary out Route 25 is exactly the way it is today and then truncating it at the area of the railroad tracks heading south and then with two exceptions, it is basically all the existing central core of the highway commercial district that we have running through the \_\_\_\_\_. Vadney – Another change is on Plymouth Street. Currently, the east side of Plymouth Street is zoned Commercial. The west side of Plymouth Street from basically the dentist office north is zoned residential. We are recommending here, we put the west side of Plymouth Street into the Commercial zone as well. Edgar – This was something that we had looked at last year and a lot of small properties on that street and with a longer view to looking at how that neighborhood rehabilitates itself over time, there may be small scale opportunities to do some type of Village Commercial activity and all of the residential areas that are there currently would remain as permitted uses so nobody would become grandfathered per se, but its recognizing that we do have Commercial zoning across the street, partial Commercial zoning on Plymouth Street and in a village context, not highway commercial context, but in the village context, there may be some small scale commercial opportunities that might not add to the village and represent an opportunity for the property owners as well. Anything that does redevelop in any part of our Town, whether it's on Plymouth Street or anywhere else also has to go through one if not several reviews by the Planning Board and possibly the Zoning Board of Adjustment review so even though we talk about the zoning uses in all these districts, any non-residential development still has to go to public hearing at least in front of the Planning Board and in some instances in front of the Zoning Board. Vadney – I mentioned earlier that through the past few years, the Planning Board has seen a number of people come in with proposals, recommendations of things they want to do in town and some of these require special exceptions, they go to the Zoning Board and the Zoning Board says sure no problem and we recognize that there's really no need on many of these to continue the special exception so we put some things into permitted use so they will no longer have to go through that approval. There are a few things that we put in the other direction, where it could be in there now with a special exception. There are minor changes like that. Herb had mentioned, we start with the core, we added that one strip along Plymouth Street and then we looked at the Humiston Building, the Price property on High Street behind it and then across the street from the Humiston

Building, the former Masonic Temple that is a commercial use currently and so one of the concerns that was raised last year was the whole Stevens Avenue, Lang Street, South Main Street area and last year when we had brought this to the community, we had looked at extending commercial zoning through all three of those streets and with that commercial zoning would come some possible uses that could generate a lot of traffic and a lot of impact. So the Planning Board responded to that by pulling back and basically looking at that for what it is, which is a residential neighborhood. It's a residential neighborhood that is clearly the dominant use. There is a smattering of mixed uses on a couple of streets on South Main Street; we have a couple offices and what not. We have the Children's Museum and some multi-family on Lang as well so there is some non-residential uses in there, but the bulk of that area is residential so the Planning Board in response to the constructive criticisms that were raised a year ago is not being looked at as a commercial area, it is being looked at under this proposal as Village Residential and we will get into some of those uses in a minute. That's not part of the Village District in the sense of it being commercially orientated. That was the focus of a lot of discussion last year. Vadney – That's the traffic light at Route 3 and 25. This is Main Street and this is Stevens Avenue right there. That's the intersection that goes out toward Waukegan or to South Main and on up to Ladd Hill. What we are now recommending as new permitted uses would be studios, personal service businesses, temporary vendors and special retail. Those are things that are currently either special exception or not allowed. The new uses that will be allowed by special exception would include conference centers and health clubs. The facilities that would not be allowed in that mauve colored area would be auto sales and service and supply yards. Anything that is currently there would be grandfathered and could stay. The reason for that is those are businesses that require a lot of real estate and we have such a limited amount of real estate for Commercial and Business & Industry, we are trying to focus on things that would be a higher value per square foot. Service and repair and building materials and supplies will be included in Business & Industry. We are now saying such businesses would no longer be able to be started in this area, they would be able to be started in Business & Industry. Eating and drinking establishments and retail fuel sales will continue to be permitted in this area and 3 or 4 unit multi-family dwellings and accessory apartments are currently allowed by special exception and they would be allowed as permitted uses. Residential development would not be governed by conventional density and lot size. Instead, it would be controlled by other parameters that are currently in the ordinance, such as setbacks, lot coverage, building height, off-street parking requirements and the like and that allows a little more flexibility in general. The landowner would then have a little more flexibility in what he could do with his property. There are a great number of very small lots in there and we think that would help. Edgar – In the Community Plan, there's a fairly lengthy discussion about some of our housing concerns and on the one hand we don't want large-scale projects all over the community but on the other hand, there's probably an opportunity to gradually fuse a number of rental units into the village in a way that doesn't have any major impacts. Currently, the current zoning requires 10,000 sq. ft. per dwelling unit or

think of it as 4 to an acre and for anybody that's done housing development work would probably admit that  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre really represents a barrier to any kind of affordable housing. I'm not talking about subsidized housing; I'm just talking about making a project viable in terms of business sense. Within the last couple years and maybe John or Jack of the ZBA could speak to it, in the last several years we've had in response to the need for housing, we've had property owners seek relief through the Zoning Board of Adjustment for density variances, not huge projects but a unit here and a unit there, two or three come to mind in that South Main Street/Stevens Avenue area. The property owners have asked for it, went through the Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing process and relief was granted so on one hand you might say that the process works, but the other side of the coin is what we're doing is we're effectively zoning by variance. We have enough of a demand for that kind of a land use in a part of Town where it makes sense, but yet in order for it to play out, we're going through a zoning variance process and from a land use regulatory point of view, that's kind of a no no. You really shouldn't be zoning by variance; variances should be unique and kind of odd and shouldn't reflect in a sense what the community's demanding. We are trying to respond to that by not going with the quarter acre control in these two village districts, which are almost entirely served by sewer and water, recognizing that we have other regulations that would still come into play. We have lot coverage, how much of the lot can be developed. The percentage is spelled out in the current ordinance and there would be no change. We have front setbacks, side setbacks, rear yard setbacks, we have wetland setbacks, we have driveway permitting, we have architectural controls and we have building heights. We have all kinds of other safeguards that would ultimately shape a development project to keep anything crazy from happening as well as just a series of reviews by one, not two Boards so the feeling was that if you have a small lot and wanted to create a second unit or have two units and wanted to put in a third and the zoning was a problem at that 10,000 sq. ft. per unit level, then why don't we try to not utilize that form of control in the Village, recognizing that we have a litany of other controls and hearing processes that would ultimately determine the shape and configuration of a project. So that's in response to several recommendations in the Master Plan and general recommendations by trying to create more opportunities for housing in general, but also specifically looking at the Village. The Village, if you think back on how the Village is positioned in our zoning ordinance, the philosophy of the zoning process has been for as long as we've had zoning, basically it puts all the eggs in the Route 3 corridor and the Meredith Village basket, that's the basket for higher densities, for rental units, for commercial opportunities and so a far majority of the town is zoned residential and so we always have to look forward on how we can improve the viability of the commercial areas because they are so limited in terms of their acreage. Even though we have a fair amount of successes in the Village in terms of public investment and private investment, anybody can just drive down the streets and see there's still a lot of vacancies and we still are having ZBA relief requests and so forth. We are not in crisis, we're doing OK, but because of the relative importance that's placed on the Village, we continuously need to look at our zoning to make sure that the zoning isn't a barrier in that we're

providing opportunities within the context of the general goals that the Master Plan has articulated. Vadney – This is the proposed Village Residential and what we're saying here is, the residential area which has always been the same whether you were right beside Main Street or somewhere in Meredith Center, say up in the Windsong area, a good portion of Meredith Neck and other things where there were residential areas so what we're saying is that in close area, it has a different density already, it needs a different density and some different rules to magnify so we're breaking out these four little parts that were plain residential and we're calling them Village Residential. The proposal would re-designate portions of the existing Residential District as the new Village Residential District in four areas: (1) the Waukegan Street, South Main Street, Lang Street area, (2) the southerly end of Red Gate Lane, Highland Street, Caverly Street and St. James Street area, (3) the Circle Drive area southerly to Meredith Bay Village and (4) the northwest end of Pleasant Street including Morrison, Mudgett and Gould Avenue areas. We are recommending that those would be the in-close residences that would be walkable into the village. In addition to residential uses, we would include limited commercial use in that area that is appropriate with the residential character of the neighborhood and that would not generate significant levels of traffic. That is one of the things we try to do here is some commercial could go into that zone, but we wouldn't want heavy traffic generation and any noise type things. Offices are currently allowed in that area by special exception, they would be permitted, however, offices are defined in a somewhat limited way, it would exclude medical and dental offices that tend to have a high generation of traffic and those are covered elsewhere in the ordinance. New uses allowed by special exception in this Village Residential would include Arts & Crafts, Galleries, Specialty Retail Shops and Studios. Special exceptions are determined on a case-by-case basis pursuant to the special exception public hearing process. Things that I just mentioned would have to go through ZBA approval. Several uses currently allowed in the Residential District would not be permitted in this new Village Residential District, such as Convenience Stores, Private Schools, Hospitals and Private Ambulance Services. Those are things that would more appropriately belong in the Village Residential District (mauve area). Accessory Apartments would be allowed as a permitted use and residential development would not be governed by conventional density and lot size would be controlled by the other requirements mentioned earlier, such as building setbacks, lot coverage, building height, parking, etc. Edgar - An accessory apartment is an accessory use and in zoning language that means that you have a primary use and in this case, a single-family home, that if you wanted to have what people often refer to as a mother-in-law apartment, a small little separate apartment attached to your dwelling, currently they are allowed throughout the zoning in Meredith, but by special exception meaning that we have about 10 or 12 controls in the ordinance, such as things that have to be satisfied and then that's presented to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. I think without exception, I think that all of those that have been requested have been granted and so when we were looking at the zoning as part of this overall update, we were saying why do we needlessly require ZBA approval, we haven't had a controversial apartment request over many years.

These are small apartments that can't be more than 25% of the size of the building, they have to have adequate septic, they have to have adequate off-street parking and the like and so one change that we recommended throughout the whole ordinance is that the same criteria be maintained, but not requiring that it go through the public hearing process. It is something that would be addressed by the zoning administrator, still subject to appeals if there was an aggrieved party, but we wouldn't be going through the hearing process. Although that applies in this Residential District, it would also apply for all the districts. If someone wanted to convert part of their house into a small accessory apartment, we would want to encourage that. Here again is another fairly innocuous way of increasing on a small-scale basis additional rental opportunities. Vadney – Keeping in mind accessory apartments under the current rules and also remaining under the proposed rules, the owner of the property has to live in one or the other of the units. He doesn't have to live in the big house, but the owner has to be on the premises. That's just one of the controls to keep it from becoming just a duplex type of situation. The proposed Commercial Route 3 District. This is the district that has two parts. This is down toward Funspot and the Laconia Town Line coming up through and stopping at the railroad bridge and then starting again at the Community Center and going to the Center Harbor Town Line toward The Mug. Edgar – In essence what happens is that when we create the Village Districts, particularly the Commercial one (mauve) effectively you have a piece of Commercial zoning north of the village and a piece of commercial zoning south of the village up to Parade Road which is currently Central Business so the question is, what do we do with that? When we took a hard look at the commercial zoning that goes down to the Route 3 South area, currently it is a separate district, we realized that with a couple of exceptions, they were very similar. They are predominantly highway commercial districts and so what this proposal does is combine those two remnants of the CB District north and south of the village with the current Route 3 South District to create one Commercial Route 3 District. In other words, if you are not in the village and you are on Route 3, there's a Route 3 commercial district so it's an attempt to simplify the ordinance a little bit by creating one highway commercial district. There are some different setback controls for the north area from the southern area recognizing what the original zoning was so we tried to maintain the setbacks and so forth from the districts from which these pieces came to try to minimize any hardship that way. In terms of the uses, we tried to kind of merge Central Business with 3 South into just one Route 3 Commercial District. Vadney – The permitted uses in that area would be Boat Sales, Service and Repair, Equipment Sales, Rental and Repair and Low Impact Outdoor Recreation and we do have a list of definitions if you have any questions. A lot of the uses Herb's relating to are just highlights of some of the changes that the full zoning packet that we have and we could get into that if anybody wants to, it's much more expansive. A lot of the zoning that's not changing in these districts, there's a whole litany of commercial uses that would continue in these areas and so when we're highlighting some of these uses, it's just to highlight where the changes that we're going to be adding to or deleting as opposed to trying to enumerate all 20 or 30 uses that might be potentially viable in any one district.



Vadney – I mentioned boat sales and the like. Just about a year ago, we did have a change in this region, the old Jade Island now sells docks, trailers and peripheral equipment mostly for boating and outdoor sports. Uses allowed by special exception in this area would be Building Trades, Nursing, Convalescent and Assisted Living Facilities, other forms of Recreation, Amusement, Conference Centers and Convenience Stores. The density and dimensional regulations are preserved from each of the previously existing districts that contributed to this district. Edgar – One of the things that we found along the way here is to revisit the Purpose Statements in each of these districts. Here again, the fundamental concepts would be the same, but what we've done on the Route 3 District in the Purpose Statement is to acknowledge that it's also a gateway approach into the village, whether you're coming in from Center Harbor or coming up from Weirs Beach or coming in from Parade Road, effectively these highways are gateways into the community. As you may recall, we recently acquired a Conservation Easement on the Long Ridge Farm area which is in this core so even though it's a commercial core, the way we've articulated it in the Master Plan and in the Zoning Ordinance is to try to emphasize as best we can and within the context of it being in a commercial corridor, that it's done looking at ways that are sensitive to some of the aesthetic and cultural aspects of development in Meredith. It's going to be a challenge to do that because it is commercially zoned, but we are flagging that in the Purpose Statement and so as development occurs, there will be a lot of attention to detail to recognize that it's part of the Scenic By-Way and these highways all lead into the village. Vadney – The proposed Route 3 District results in two former commercial areas being rezoned to Residential, one is on Jenness Hill. In the past, currently this whole area along here up to the Center Harbor Town Line on Jenness Hill is zoned commercial. It has been like that for some 30 years. Very little commercial has occurred in that area. This area here is the Transfer Station and Department of Public Works. It doesn't really matter how that's zoned because it's owned by the Town so we've put that into this Forestry/Rural area and then included these residences with one or two business, but the rest is all currently residential and we're saying since it hasn't had commercial pressure in 35 years, the likelihood is somewhat low so let's make it official and put it into Forestry/Rural. Edgar – That area does not have utilities to support higher development and a portion of that area drains into the Town's water supply so for all those reasons and the fact that we've had no commercial development up there, we don't have utilities, we don't have plans to extend utilities up there and the fact that a portion of that drains into the Town's water supply just seemed to make sense to swing that down over to Route 3 so the Route 3 District would include district properties that actually front on Route 3. Right where Jenness Hill Road comes into Route 3, you see a little bumpout in that bright blue, that's an area where we already have commercial developments in those properties right in there so we tried to maintain that. The area that is going be rezoned into the Forestry/Rural already abuts Forestry/Rural and if you look on the current zoning map, we have a hunk of that bright green area up in that part of town and so we are just recognizing that area probably should be zoned into residential fashion consistent with basically what's actually happening

on the ground. Vadney – This is a Town-owned property, for the most part pretty undevelopable anyway and then right above it, this land here, nothing to do with tonight's proposal, that has already come to the Planning Board and there's a proposal before us to subdivide that. Some of it is in the Shoreline District, but the back lands are in that Forestry/Rural. Edgar – The second that would get rezoned to residential is Philbrook Avenue. The current zoning on the left-hand side of that road is Residential and the right-hand side is Commercial and we have about half a dozen homes on that right-hand side of the road. Philbrook Avenue is not going to become a commercial center for the community. There is a junkyard out there that is a grandfathered use that's not affected by the change and it basically is to bring the zoning consistent with either side of the street so we don't have Residential on one side and Commercial on the other. It doesn't have a real huge significance in terms of what's on the ground other than making the zoning reflect a little bit of reality of what's out there. Vadney – There are no zone changes in the boundary in the Business & Industry District. Building Trades, formerly permitted by special exception would become a permitted use. Newly permitted uses include Caterers, Conference Centers, Direct Marketing/Mail Order. New uses to be allowed by special exception under this proposal include Commercial Food Preparation and Processing. Equipment and Truck Repair would be expanded to include all vehicles and Equipment Sales and Rental. Fabrication has been added to this group as being a type of light manufacturing and that has come before the Board and before the ZBA as far as where does fabrication fit into the picture and we are adding it to this B & I. Building Materials and Supplies would continue to be a permitted use formerly referred to as lumber yards and Trucking Terminals, Parking Facilities, Towers and Restaurants would not be permitted in this zone. Edgar – Part of the intent here and this is certainly an area where we would welcome feedback is we have (tape change) It's not a mixed use zone. In other words we do not allow, nor have we allowed residential development in this zone and there's one large parcel and a handful of small parcels that haven't been developed yet. A fair criticism that has been raised about the current zoning is that it's fairly restrictive and so we're trying to look at ways where we can loosen up the uses in that zone in a way that does not threaten the village in terms of the village objectives. We don't just want to create commercial highway retail strips out there or big box retails and that type of thing. but there may be ways to include Equipment Sales and Auto Service Repairs and several others and the things that would go with vehicle repairs that could be permitted in the district so we are trying to maintain the visual effects that are in the current Zoning Ordinance to try to not just create all kinds of strip zoning and do it in a way that doesn't threaten the viability of the village, but in the same tone, it gives more opportunity for folks that might want to develop or locate in that district. Vadney – You've seen the map and you know the boundaries now. Roughly, no changes are proposed in district boundaries for the Forestry and Conservation District, the Meredith Center Commercial, Meredith Neck with Shoreline Districts, minor changes in Residential, the bulk being just downtown corridor. All uses provided for in each district are now defined in our proposal and we've eliminated a number of conflicting and hard-to-understand portions. The

portions of the ordinance not impacted by proposal will continue to be governed by such things as overlay districts, general provisions, we're not changing those things and the dimensional requirements for the districts don't change. The only difference on the densities is what we explained regarding Village and Village Residential. Accessory Apartments currently allowed by special exception would become permitted uses in all districts except Business & Industry, there's no residential allowed there. Existing criteria for special exceptions become general provisions, they used to apply to each of the portions of the document and open space, cluster developments currently allowed by Special Exception and we are recommending that those become permitted uses in all areas except the Forestry & Conservation District where a special exception requirement would be continued. Edgar – One thing I want to make clear at the outset is that we're in the process of updating the whole ordinance. The whole ordinance is about 150 pages long and what we're really looking at are Article V and Article III. Article V are the districts and district uses which we pretty well covered and then Article VIII are the definitions and one of the big problems that we've had in the ordinance over the years that have been problems for my office and the zoning administration of the ZBA is that we have a lot of uses that had no definitions and so a use would be floating around the ordinance, but what does it mean and what it might mean to you as a property owner, might mean something different to a lawyer, it might mean something different to the Zoning Administrator and that's just not good zoning. So we made a very concerted effort with these adjustments not only to tweak a few things here and there, but to provide some illustration or some definition for each use in the ordinance. If you think of a 10-article ordinance and we're dealing with Articles V and in some of the amendments Article VIII, there are still a lot of general provisions and a lot of other things that we simply are working on that aren't ready for this form of dialogue. One of the important things and we'll have the next steps slide in a second, but this is a big chunk of the rewrite and the update, but it's those pieces that we've articulated tonight and it's a work-in-progress so there'll be additional work that will be done. We've already started on General Provisions and all kinds of other aspects of the other articles that we're not dealing with tonight. This is a portion of the update but it's certainly not all of it. Vadney – We've told you the changes we're proposing and now we are going to show you a little bit about the procedure that we have to go through and why we're asking for your comments tonight. We'll take your advice, comments, criticisms or anything else tonight, the Board then take that under advisement. We'll have a couple meetings in the next few weeks as a Board and we'll determine first how to go forward, if to go forward and whether any changes need to be made in our proposal based on your comments here tonight. If there's substantial and not more than an administrative type nature or fairly minor things, if they are substantial, we'll schedule another public hearing near the end of the month. We will then decide whether or not to place this on the warrant for consideration and vote on March 14<sup>th</sup>. This is a couple portions of the ordinance, there are several more and we will continue working on this. I want to publicly recognize that John and I, Bill Edney and John Mack have worked on this along with several others, but we got tired and so for the last month

or so, Lou Kahn came in and gave us a great hand in pulling some of this together because we had looked at it so much we were starting to see double. That's it and really the reason we're here is to hear your comments. Kim Weiland - Are Bed & Breakfast Inns in either the Village Residential or Village District and how are they treated? As special exception uses or permitted uses? I know they weren't addressed. Edgar - They are still permitted uses. They are permitted today and they will remain permitted. Warren Clark - Is the role of the Planning Board in items that are permitted uses, are some of the proposed developments still going to the Planning Board even if they are permitted uses? Vadney - All commercial and all multi-family come to the Planning Board even if they are permitted they come before us and we do a site review and site planning on those. Yes, any commercial planning would come before us. Cluster housing will be a permitted use under this new proposal. Edgar - Multi-family housing is defined as three or more so in any event that's a site plan review process with a public hearing because even though people live in the units, it's technically, from a legal point of view, considered commercial and so as a commercial use, three or more units is multi-family. In the event we have a cluster subdivision which isn't necessarily the same thing as multi-family, if we have cluster it may be multi-family if it's condominium form of ownership, but it also constitutes a subdivision because you're creating separate dwelling units and so if you had a multi-family cluster subdivision, you would have both site plan and subdivision so depending on the facts, the answer is you're still looking at Planning Board review. Sandy Price - If you have a question about where the line comes for instance on Jenness Hill and you really wanted to keep something that's already commercial kept as commercial not changing to Forestry/Rural, how do you go about it? Do I come to you or John and say I really want to see that line stay further up where it is, how do I do that? Vadney - Is it up in the middle of it or right on the edge? Price - The Transfer Station is going to be in the Forestry/Rural section so I'm talking about keeping the Transfer Station in commercial and maybe up to a couple properties beyond that, specifically the lot I own. There are a couple of small residences directly across from the Transfer Station so we would have to look at the lots. Edgar - If that zone kicked up a little bit to include a few more properties, it's probably not a problem, the fact is they are fairly small lots. One of the effects of this though is that it does create different setbacks. I guess I would want to know if that had more setback possibility. Vadney - Where we draw that line is an arbitrary decision. I would have to go look at the lots, I'm not sure, we'd have to look at how far up it goes. It is important that we hear these kinds of requests or observations tonight because of the requirements for posting of the notice for another hearing. Vadney - For tonight's meeting, we'll take it under advisement and decide which way to go and whether or not an additional public hearing is required. Ralph Pisapia, Harris Road, Meredith - I just have an observation to see if it's an oversight or you purposely didn't want to address this, but it has to do with the Shoreline District. I was reading the General Purpose of the Shoreline District and also the General Purpose of the Meredith Neck District. There seems to be, I think, an inconsistency in the ordinance. For the Shoreline District and speaking specifically about the Shoreline District on the Neck, it says that the

purpose of this is to provide housing and recreation for a substantial number of seasonal and year-round residents who prefer to live in single-family, detached housing with access to lake waters. It goes on to say that unless otherwise indicated on the Zoning Map, the district boundary lines shall extend from the shoreline approximately 300' in depth to the lot boundary line or the centerline of the street. My concern has to do with again on the Neck and you look at, John if you could bring that map, it would be helpful so I could explain my concern and comment and see if you are willing to address it now. As I understand the Shoreline District, it allows for more dense development than the Meredith Neck District which allows for more housing units and more properties to be developed and my concern is related to traffic on the Neck and getting off the Neck, especially in the summer time. This time of the year I don't have any trouble getting off the Neck, but I can tell you in June, July and August, there's a heck of a traffic problem getting off the Neck and onto Route 25 and if you notice down at the end of the Neck, there's certainly a large portion of the Neck that's in the Shoreline District that could be within the Meredith Neck District, thereby increasing the lot size and reducing the number of potential housing units out there and potentially reducing traffic that's coming off of the Neck. My question really has to do with this if you're willing to consider making a change to that district? Vadney – The short answer to that is we didn't overlook it, we ignored it. That's something we really didn't want to tackle. Yes, there is a possible problem that you described. It's something we should probably look at in the near future, but as far as the hearing here tonight and as far as what we've done, that was out of scope of what we thought we could get done for this year. John, do you want to add any general comments to that? Edgar – I think, as a general statement, that is correct and that one of the mistakes we made last year was in trying to rewrite the whole ordinance was looking at all the things that could stand improvement and when you do that, it gets not only monumental, it gets beyond a staff person being able to present or the public's ability to comprehend so this particular proposal is intended to break it down into a manageable chunk and right, wrong or indifferent, that was the decision for this purpose so Herb is correct in that we didn't decide to go up or down in density all over the place so with the exception of the village, we consciously decided to leave all other densities the same. Every time we do something that's innocuous, it has an effect on people's property rights and the Board was very sensitive to the fact that it has to be manageable and we have had a conversation before, Ralph, and if the neighborhood on Meredith Neck wants to line up and go to the 5 acre zoning or something like that to decrease the build out, then we need to hear from a lot of people who's property rights are being effected to line up and say we want to give up some of our property rights to go to a lower density. From a planning point of view, clearly the Meredith Neck peninsula's one big dead-end and the more it develops in the peak of the summertime we have more traffic problems and we acknowledge that the Shoreline District also feeds into that on Meredith Neck, but for purposes of this proposal we purposely did not monkey around with any of the densities other than the stuff in the village that was talked about, so that we could try to get consensus about a piece of this moving forward, but that does not foreclose, in my view

anyway, future discussion about other densities in other parts of town. If we accept everybody at the same time, we are never going to move forward with any updating of the ordinance. Quite frankly, there's a lot of things on this zoning map that are quirky and if I had my way if it wasn't a matter of upsetting a whole bunch of people, there are several things that I would advocate that we change. There have been some changes in the Shoreline District, we did indicate in the zoning proposal that if we have subdivisions on islands, we may be taking a real hard look at the public parking facilities because all of the facilities are chock full and on some lakes we don't have public facilities. We are starting with the Master Plan dissipating, we are starting to see development pressure in some of our smaller water bodies and if some of the islands on these develop, we may or may not have adequate parking so that's been mentioned in the rewrite. We've beefed up a little bit of the language in the shoreline and we've cross-referenced that back to the erosion control plan that Bill has to review so we've made a couple subtle changes, but we've not addressed any changes in the densities other than the village stuff. It's by design in that context that I just explained. Not to suggest that it's a bad idea, but it's just not an idea for this particular hearing. Vadney – You will note that the yellow up there, you have areas on some parts of the lake where the Shoreline District is barely 100' wide and other parts where its very large and another control that we have on this regardless of what our rules are, is there are a number of wetland ordinances and other type overlays that play into this that help control that. The other thought on something that John just said, you can see now why I think it's 10 different zones that we have and if you start looking real specifically at it, you could end up with 55 zones and nobody would be able to figure it out so we have struggled to keep that number down. Rick DeMark – First, I have a point of clarification, Herb, one of the last comments that I thought you made, am I correct that zoning as a permitted use is expanded to all those except Forestry and Conservation, was that a correct statement? Edgar – The open space cluster subdivision. DeMark – Oh, you said cluster. So that's a new provision? Edgar – The ordinance is on the books, there are cluster provisions in the ordinance except it requires a special exception and the Planning Board's view, my view and shared by the Planning Board is that if its done correctly, an open space cluster design can be a good technique in terms of layout, not only for the community at large, but for the folks living in a particular subdivision and so the feeling is that by and large why do we need to have a special exception for something that makes sense and so we've recommended that be shifted from a special exception to a permitted use in all districts but one. DeMark – Okay, then my question would be did you consider different types of permitted clustering depending upon the objective of the zone? Edgar – No, we haven't and its sort of like Ralph's question, part of the rewrite that we've started on, one of the other provisions is the cluster ordinance. Right now, the cluster in our current zoning is a paragraph and I think the Planning Board and Zoning Board would agree that there needs to be more clarification to make sure we get exactly what we think we ought to be getting through this design alternative and so the work that we've done with the consultants and the community over the last year or two has started to address that and here again that could be a 5 or 6 page document all by itself and

we're not there yet. This may seem pretty basic to a lot of you folks but this is a tremendous amount of work to look at 9 or 10 districts and 31 years of amendments to try to sift through all that and to polish it up a little bit without upsetting the applecart and so this needed to be a critical first step. Clearly, there is an interest on the staff's side as well as the Planning Board's side to look at the cluster provisions and I think the idea of looking at cluster techniques that might be or a certain parameter that might be applicable to specific districts within the overall framework of cluster may be very appropriate. We just haven't gotten there yet. DeMark – But you're anticipating getting there sometime. Edgar – We anticipate, hopefully, coming back with that a year from now. Ginny Lovett – Some of us were disappointed with the first district you were talking about from Laconia to the Center. Some of us were disappointed when the auto dealer went in and with this it looks like we could have backhoes, car dealers and garages on that whole strip and that does concern me that that is the entrance way coming into town. Are there architectural designs or other things in place that could have an impact on keeping this a beautiful area coming into town along that strip. Vadney – You're talking about along 104? Lovett – I'm talking about Route 3 from Laconia coming into Meredith Village with auto dealers in there now and some of us were disappointed when the dealerships came in. Vadney – That is always a struggle that we have making sure we don't walk too heavily on some people's property rights and at the same time try to negotiate the kinds of things we get, but that strip from the Town Line coming up, it's mostly one lot depth deep going along that road. We do have some extra buffering areas and set things back from the road. There's no question, some are mistakes and some are just that we're painted into a corner. Edgar – We do have architectural controls and I would like to speak to that briefly. We're not Williamsburg, VA, we're not Amherst, NH, we don't have a lot of clear continuity of architectural types and patterns, but having said that, we have a land use pattern in our village that is very identifiable so we've created an architectural design review that has resulted in some projects that I think are much more compatible to the community than they otherwise would have been. Are they perfect? No. Probably in the eyes of some it's never going to be perfect but the Harley Davidson building is a 45,000 sq. ft. box. You can look right down to its girders and it could have come out differently. The Volvo Dealership, notwithstanding the use question, they originally had the major portion of that proposed as a cinder block, flattop wall. The ordinance kicked in and had an effect on the finished product there. The Johnson & Dix Convenience Store on Route 25 clearly is not what came in the front door the first time around. More projects on Main Street, the Village Perk is an example of more of a Main Street restoration so we do have a very flexible architectural review ordinance in effect and in this particular corridor, Ginny, the Trailer/Dock place, not the prettiest building, but it would have been a lot worse had we not had the architectural ordinance so we are able to work that building design a little bit, recognizing the intent of the property owner but to try and get something that would blend in a little bit more, at least more so than the restaurant, which gave us a lot of latitude. So we do have architectural controls in the Purpose Statement of the district, we make it very clear that it is a gateway and we've made public investments in the

farms and other properties along the way that are conservation so that's what I mentioned before that when you have a conservation property in a commercial corridor, it's a joke, there's no sidestepping that and so we want to flag the importance, it's also part of the Scenic Byway that goes around Lake Winnepesaukee and we want to flag the overall importance so that we can use that to work with developers to massage their projects to get the best that we can. Relative to equipment and that kind of stuff, I guess the bottom line is the whole Town can't be the village core in terms of where you have hotels and that kind of thing and so there's a need to have some graduation, some flexibility when we start getting out on the highways. Do we have the balance just right, that's for you all to give us the feedback on. If you're specifically saying that with architectural controls it would be OK if someone wanted to sell or rent equipment or are you saying it's the wrong use for the district and so we need that clarity so we understand what you're asking or what you're criticizing or suggesting and I mean that in a constructive way. so that we can within this one month window we need to know if your concern is with the architecture of the building or do you really think fundamentally that if we had a business that sold or rented equipment on Route 3, backhoes or boats or something like that it is just fundamentally at odds with. Lovett – I think it's fundamentally at odds and it seems like that would be nice if we put that maybe at the other end of town where there already are car dealers or already were car dealers there, but that's just my personal opinion. I think coming into town, it ought to reflect that we have a great little town and it should reflect that. Vadney – On Route 104, for example, we have a little better situation because there are still trees out there and we can buffer things a little better. Along the Route 3 thing, it is a little tough to buffer and so things are more visible. Our hands are pretty much tied on that. Edgar – They are and they aren't, I mean the uses are going to be whatever they are going to be at the end of the day. We have to look at what's going there currently, which is what is already on the books, but one of the things that we tried to do in the Purpose Statements because the Zoning Board refers to them and of course the Planning Board deals with a lot of discretionary aspects on projects, it's always important, John probably acknowledges too, we spent a lot of time looking at these Purpose Statements because all of our Boards go back to them, what is the purpose of the ordinance? And so, I just draw your attention to the very end of the Commercial Route 3 Purpose Statement. It reads as follows: "The southerly portion of the Route 3 corridor is a segment of the state-designated, Lakes Region Tour Scenic Byway. Sites developed within the Route 3 corridor should be of high quality, complimentary to the corridor's sensitive features and serve as a suitable introduction to Meredith's village core". So we can flag that as the intent of the district and then as development comes along, the idea is to utilize the controls, including architecture and try to manage the projects as they come along so with that said and I guess the question back to you, Ginny, is that if fundamentally, you think equipment sales, rental and repair is just fundamentally at odds with the purpose of that district and then that's what this Board would need to hear because they are going to have to react to your observation and determine whether or not they agree with some of it. Lovett – I would say, yes. Don Weigel



– First of all, what a difference a year makes, I really want to commend the Board and staff for listening to all the input from last year and truly coming up with a plan that seems much more palatable than perhaps the whole pizza last year. This affects a lot of different taxpayer property rights and to avoid some misinformation that happened last year, is it possible that a simple mailing go out to any property owner who is in any of these districts that are going to have a change stating this is your current district, this is what it will change to, a simple page saying this is what is permitted now, and this what is permitted, maybe something that's revised from the handouts to avoid last year's misinformation that the world was ending and the sky is falling and we were going to have lit signs all over town. That way I'm in hopes that changes will be forwarded little by little. Edgar – Last year, as you know Don we did a mailing and last year we didn't rewrite this from Sanbornton to Center Harbor. It was focused almost exclusively on some of the downtown village districts and one of the concerns that we kicked around at the staff level is literally that the full packet that we put together, every district has something happening to it. Whether it's a clarified term or new term or something from the special exception to the permitted use so there's something in here for everybody so if you took that to its extreme, it's a town wide mailing so that's one logistical problem. The other one is that if we looked at the village districts, what we have prepared here and hopefully it was picked up in the media, it was provided to all the media outlets and I think that's some pretty hefty coverage. But we had very detailed charts, we had 14 different charts of before and after. Any district that you're in and any district that you might end up in, here's before and after details of every use, new term, old term, there's 14 scenarios of all the before and afters that we do have. Maybe what we could do is to get it up on the website. It's a little easier to do it that way and we certainly can do that and if we were to try to do all of that in anticipation of another hearing in a week or two, it might be iffy. We certainly can get that information up on the website so that everybody that intends on voting in March would have several months to study the before and afters so maybe there's something towards that end that we can improve upon. I appreciate the message. Rusty – I'd like to second that this is a much better program than last year. The clarity is better, it takes into account what's on the ground already and gives you guys a lot more flexibility so also kudos, I think it's a much better job. There are two little areas, one that John's sick of me talking about, but that's signage. I would hope that you would look at that again for this year. I know you do an awful lot of jaw boning about signage and we're going through it now and it would seem to me that the little bit of development pressure we're under, signage is something that really needs to be looked at, and then there's one other small anomaly I saw and that's Chris Williams building. That seems to be the only building on Route 3 that has a lot of Route 3 frontage that's not in a commercial district and it seems to me that it should be. Vadney – The Chris Williams building we can look at without a problem. The signage issue and I'm glad you brought that up because there's an example of one, it's a very good example of the kind of things we ran into dozens of similarities when you start looking town wide and last year, we brought signs forward, but how do you do it if you don't have the right zones so think of it this

year, we're trying to align it with the proper zones and if that gets approved, then we'll have a better idea of how to write the sign ordinance. But when we didn't really know what the zones were, now it's obvious that when we were downtown walking, you need more small signs than you do when you're out on the highway and you can have billboards. The way the Town was laid out, we really couldn't write a town ordinance last year and we weren't smart enough to know that so we tried and it didn't work. Edgar – We have spent a lot of time on signs and I won't get into all of that because it really is not what's in front of us, but we did a lot of inventory work and tried to catalog all signs and we're trying to figure out what is it about one sign that functions well and is attractive and the other sign arguably it doesn't function as well and it doesn't complement the community so Bill and I have done a fair amount of analysis to try to not just shoot from the hip on some of these things, but to try to have a better sense as to what works and why. There's always going to be a level of subjectivity and we're trying to minimize that. One of the things that we have learned with the signage is that it's largely a function of travel speed and the size that you need to do a sign if you're going 55 MPH on 104 is a lot different than going 20 MPH on Route 3 as you approach that intersection so travel speed is the piece that we're probably going to try to introduce into the mix as we try to get a better handle on that. I would, and it's not my decision ultimately, but I know from a staff point of view clusters are a priority and signage's are also a high priority to come back. Hopefully, next year with some good product and I think as a practical matter, I'm learning from my mistakes that in both those areas, we need to probably find a way to have some public work sessions, public forums to get everybody's views aired out in the spring, summer and fall, long before we get to this point on something that's going to be as sensitive as the sign issue and, hopefully, now that we've done a lot of the leg work on both those, not that they are ready for tonight, but we've done a lot of leg work and hopefully time is in our favor to allow us to present something publicly and get a good balanced product. ??? – I have a couple questions and that will base my comments on your answers. First of all, I understand the focus is to change the downtown area to increase the commercial \_\_\_\_\_ by changing the residential to Village Residential, am I correct on that? So there are residential areas that will have commercial purposes in the future? Is unemployment a problem in Meredith? Edgar – One of the problems, we don't have unemployment data at this level. It's only done at the County level so I don't know what the unemployment rates are, but it's generally 3 or 4% and is generally running around the County averages for our area. What we do have and this also ties back to the B & I District. What we do have are low wages. When you have a service economy like we have that started to evolve since 1850 when tourism started and the hotels we have aren't new, it's not like we haven't had hotels in town and it's not like we didn't have tourism for the last 100 some odd years, but as the economy has been more dependent on service jobs and tourism is the subset of that, there generally are lower wages than you would find in the manufacturing community or if you go into a corporate area in the southern tier, you are going to have a higher wage base in the southern tier of New Hampshire than you're going to have in a tourist area so up in ski country, the Lakes Region and in some cases

the seacoast generally have lower wages because of the nature of their economy so it is an issue. The difficulty is what do we do about it? There is a reality to the fact we are a destination area and that we heavily rely on retail and so towards that end, I'm all ears as to what we can try to do up in the B & I District in particular where it wouldn't necessarily have to be retail tourism, but could be opportunities for job growth because if we can improve economic opportunities, the job opportunities for people in Meredith, that's one of the goals that's articulated in our plan. So for instance, how do you do that in a largely tourist retail community. It's a sticky wicket so if you have some suggestions on land uses or places for those zoning uses that could be introduced into the community that are realistic and given our population and so forth, I think those would be \_\_\_\_\_. And we're expanding our rental base in the Town which I understand is fairly tight at this point, is there going to be a limit on the number of rentals vs. owner-occupied properties within the Village Residential Districts and I see that as an important consideration because once you have a lot of rentals you lose pride of ownership and the village changes its complexion a lot which brings me to the Village Residential areas that you have now on Waukegan and Pleasant Street. By changing those residential areas, particularly on Pleasant Street, and those areas on the Pleasant Street side from 25 down to the lake, the only access to that area is going to be from Pleasant Street because there's no access off of Mudgett or Gould or any of the other streets. With the traffic issues that Meredith has, particularly on Pleasant Street and Meredith Neck, my suggestion would be to not take that section and turn it into Village Residential until the traffic problem into the town in the summer time and through town, even sometimes this time of year, has been alleviated in some way if it's possible to alleviate it. I can see that happening over on Waukegan a little bit, but they've got more than one way to go, whereas Meredith Neck doesn't because if you're coming down off Barnard Ridge, you can't even turn left to get into town that way because of the traffic so if you are going to convert all that to Village Residential and open it up to commercial development even though it's low impact, it is still going to have an impact on traffic. Edgar – Part of the thinking and I appreciate the observation, I don't necessarily disagree with you, part of the thinking is to look at some of these uses that would be very small so there's really nothing that's going to support a larger scale development. We are talking about small-scale stuff, if anything, and that possibly might tie into foot traffic in part, not exclusively.

In that scope of work, we're going to be working in the context of the community, the social context, the natural resource context and historical context all of which got missed the last time around. As it relates to intersections, we will be looking at the Barnard Ridge intersection, we will be looking at the Pleasant Street intersection, we will be looking at all of the intersections to see if there's a way that can improve, not just the flow for people going through the community, but the flow for the people like us who live here that also have to navigate through there. Do I have a silver bullet, no, but we are going to be revisiting all of those intersections to see if we can't make some improvements, not necessarily all physical things. One of the things that we worked pretty hard with was the view that we have to be

looking at out of our region. We just can't expect this one island to be the end all for people going east/west in Central New Hampshire so the scope of this project at the Town's insistence was expanded to include more of a regional view of how people do or could get around the region and maybe take a little pressure off us so we have a very broad scope, we are looking at a lot of high technology stuff and you'll be hearing a lot about it in the months to come. We are about ready to execute some contracts at the State level and it has everything to do with public participation setting the tone as to what matters in the community because that becomes a benchmark against which all of the projects would be looked at. John, my second comment is the conservation areas that are on Route 3. I think they should be formally excluded from C3 so down the road there can't be discussions whether or not to develop them. Edgar - There are two big ones, the Storer Forest and Hodsdon Farm. The Town of Meredith owns the development rights vis-à-vis a conservation easement to Long Ridge Farm. My understanding is that and maybe Ralph can back me up here, I believe it is permanently protected no matter what the zoning is even if some clients in the future want to zone that farm whatever, it can't happen. Basically, it will be allowed to continue as an agricultural and forestry operation, but I think the Town of Meredith owns the development rights in the form of a conservation easement so I don't believe that particular property can be developed. The Storer Forest is a little bit different in that and your points well taken on that one. The Storer Forest is just at the crest of the hill just past Energysavers, the big hunk of woods up there and that is owned currently by a group called New England Forestry Foundation as a memorial forest for the Storer family. They have not yet put it in permanent protection. There is a management plan for the property but its not permanently protected. We might offer to have some discussions with them about how to get it permanently protected, but at this point that has not yet happened. I guess, if I'm understanding you correctly, its to try to jiggle those lines so that they are not even zoned commercial and then do what, some residential zone. No, conservation. Conservation means that it can't ever be built on (cannot hear, no microphone). Vadney - Won't that to a degree be taken care of by something like the conservation overlay? Edgar - Like I said, Longridge Farm is taken care of because its permanently protected. I'd have to think about how we would look at doing that. I don't think we can just create a district with one property and call it a Conservation Property District. (No microphone) The best answer I can give to that is for us to push restriction on the property because forever is a long time and when you have these perpetual easements, I think that's the language they use isn't it Ralph, so we have here some form of permanent perpetual restriction on the property. That is it as far as anybody can tell and one of those properties has that permanent protection already and one does not. The gentleman from the Conservation Commission is right behind me, maybe that's a dialogue the Town needs to have with the New England Forestry Foundation to impress upon them the relative importance of that property to the flavor of that corridor and to try and encourage them to put that in permanent protection. Linda Johnson - It's not really a question, it's more of a comment. As an employer, the question came up as creating more rental units. We have over 70 employees and there's only a

handful that can live in town. They travel from Sanbornton, Bath, they travel anywhere from an hour to work for me and there's no place to rent in town. If there's one rental unit that comes up, there's half a dozen people or a dozen people that want it and they'll pay any price and some of the houses aren't worth the \$600 - \$800/month for just two bedrooms. There is a critical need for rentals. Edgar –One of the things that, I've been doing this long enough and heard enough in these hearings, not from anybody in this room of course, but a lot of folks have a fundamental stigma against rental housing, affordable housing or multi-family housing. A lot of folks will be concerned about the impact on the schools because rentals tend to have maybe more kids than a \$400,000 single-family home and what we tried to do with this density thing is to recognize that if we can get another unit here in Meredith and in many cases as Bill just pointed out, they are going to be residences that are owner occupied. It's not like we're just creating a project somewhere where there's several hundred units of rental stuff. The examples I was using before, one on South Main Street, one on Stevens Avenue, maybe one on Waukegan Street where either the secondary unit or accessory apartments were allowed to go in after it went through all the ZBA relief and there has been no complaints, there all owner occupied, but they needed zoning relief. So if we can slowly and carefully and gradually introduce a relatively small number of rental units into the village mix, it doesn't needlessly raise flags, create political problems, but starts to address the issues that Linda, as a business owner, has been speaking to for a long time and that is we a service economy and we don't have the housing to support it. We don't have to solve everybody's woes in the whole region, but I think we have a fundamental responsibility to take a look at that and these are, we have two housing proposals built in this, one is making accessory apartments a little bit easier and to make that extra rental unit on somebody's property a little bit easier and I think that over time that will allow property owners to generate a little more income which is not a bad thing and at the same time start to address in small steps a little bit of the rental issue that we have in ways that don't create high volumes of traffic. Lynn Montana – My concern is and this is a lot of work and you've done a great job. You've done a great job and it's been a great presentation and I commend you for that. I grew up traveling over to Kennebunkport in the 70's and 80's and the 90's. What I saw happening over 20 years was that the commercial downtown district of Kennebunkport kept expanding the commercial zone and that's a little village that has a lot of the same issues that we have. They are kind of cramped between a river and the ocean and it really didn't have any place to expand. It was a lovely village with a lot of old colonial buildings and in-town residences and that was part of the appeal of that village which is what we still have, I think, to a large degree is the residential aspect of our community with citizens living in a downtown area where they do walk around and they still live in the core village. Little-by-little Kennebunkport expanded the commercial zone and the commercial capabilities and they made it more flexible for business to come in and develop now the whole downtown of Kennebunkport is all commercial. The people in the area feel like they've lost their village. I'm concerned that this tendency to expand commercial capabilities of the residential zones to allow for more retail stores and galleries,

they all sound wonderful now but has there been any real future thought as to what this is going to create down the road. Housing in the downtown core is going to become expensive because it's now going to be pressured by commercial development. Edgar – From a tax point of view, the public should be aware that there is an RSA on the books currently that does allow property owners that if you are in a commercial area or industrial area and your use is residential to seek tax based upon the residential value not its highest and best commercial use. There is an RSA 71:11 that addresses that concern you've raised if we expand the commercial district to a point where people would be taxed commercially and taxed out of their property. There is a process that's currently on the State statutes that requires the Selectmen if residential uses in commercial districts seek redress to the Selectmen that the Selectmen are required to assess them at the residential value. I want to point out that I don't necessarily disagree with your general observation of Kennebunkport and Bill, John and Herb and the Planning Board and a lot of others have heard me speak in public engagements, I'm the first one to point out that we can't get so cute with the downtown that we lose its appeal to everybody that uses it as a village for all the folks that live here. We can't get so cute that the village has no appeal to people that live here. The things that we sell just can't all be specialty items, they have to be normal things that everyday consumers would want to buy and so it's important that we don't zone only for retail and that we allow for other employment opportunities which also creates more consumerism in the downtown for people to do things. We certainly are trying to advocate a mixed-use district. My guess is that if you look at the Kennebunkport zoning, you'll find it's probably all retail zoning. What we've been focusing on is trying to look at the longer cumulative viability of the downtown, because as we said, we're not going to create tax base out on 104. We are not going to create commercial cores all over the place and so the viability of that and the maintenance value and the town's future in the long range is really embedded in the Route 3 corridor and the village and so what we are trying to articulate is to come up with ways in which we can help the long view of the village to remain viable and create some opportunities here and there, all of which are low impacting but also recognizing that we don't want to get it so specialized that it has no appeal to local folks. Montana – According to this, these brown sections which are going to supposedly if we vote for this become the Village Residential District. You are going to be allowing retail shops in that Residential District. Edgar – Very small ones, owner occupied. Montana – Then why don't you use the word "home occupation"? Wouldn't that be better than retail? Everything sort of balloons, you know it starts small, it starts with the best intentions. It's like we had a good sign ordinance in this Town and I've watched it grow to the point where the signs are huge, there's tons of signs on one building where we never would have allowed that by the old sign ordinance so something happens, maybe it's called progress, I don't know. It's like you started small and it gets away from you and that's what I'm saying happened in Kennebunkport and I think when you start allowing retail, galleries and shops and things in your residential zone, it's going to get away from us and you may not even be here, John, when that finalizes it, I hope you are. You know, things change and people move on and we are going to

be stuck here and we're going to watch our village turn into a big shopping area. It's already happened in other places, what's to prevent it from happening here? What are you doing to prevent it from happening here? Because what I see up there is what started Kennebunkport, what started Rockport, what started Camden, Maine. What are we going to do to prevent it from going overboard, that's my question? Jack Carty – As I understand it from the lights north to the Community Center is part of the Village District, correct? In that particular strip, there are four automobile repair facilities, one car wash, one tractor repair facility and an auto dealership, which would not be permitted as a new application. Is that correct? This is a substantial portion of the frontage on that particular strip, so I gather the intent of this proposal is to change the character of that over the long term. Two comments. One is I read the history of Meredith and there were lots of little entrepreneur auto repair facilities sprinkled throughout the town and you might consider, I don't think anybody's advocating a 6-bay VIP super store, but you might consider within that Village District if there were to be a small entrepreneur type auto repair facility. The second thing as I read the proposal, it permits gas stations and I don't see anything that would prevent you having gas stations wall-to-wall from the lights to the Community Center under the existing proposal and I don't think that's exactly what you're trying to arrive at. Vadney – To a degree, I'd say Jack is correct that it is a bit of a conscious decision to change the complexion of that route from the traffic light section to the Community Center, I think most of that decision was made when people voted to put the Community Center there and it is a change in that neighborhood so yes, there is a number of those types of businesses right now. They can stay there, they are grandfathered, but is it something you want to see continued there and I would offer you this, change happens, one of the changes that's good, much different than it was when I was a boy, you can buy a car today and never take it back to the dealer. Forty (40) years ago, you bought a car and went back to the dealer probably six (6) times the year you bought it. You don't need an auto repair store on every corner anymore so that's part of the answer, I'm not saying it's a good excuse, but it's part of the answer. Edgar – If I can answer that, not just the 2002 Community Plan, but plans prior to that have long advocated some changes in what has historically been referred to as gasoline alley and as Herb indicated the uses that are there will continue. With respect to smaller scale mom and pop auto shops, we recognize that everybody has a need to get their cars fixed, get a hose fixed, flat tires and all that kind of stuff and so from a long-range point of view as the village evolves, is that what you would want to continue to dominate that part of the village core or are there other places in the community where we could have those services provided that would be equally sufficient for us local folks and so one of the changes to the B & I District is to expand the uses there that would now permit all aspects of vehicle service and repair so that is sort of the startup businesses and the entrepreneurs and some of the things in Mike's shop, some of the small businesses that have started up on Foundry Avenue and the same thing can happen around Enterprise, Hemlock and Commerce Court on the other side of the highway. We realize that there is a day-to-day need for auto service and repair, the question is do you want new ones to propagate the core of the village

or would we be better off trying to encourage that growth in another part of the community. We recognize the entrepreneurial side of the question is where would new ones go and our feeling was that we were also trying to create more opportunities in the B & I District and that would be a good place for it. On the fuel, what we were just trying to do in the zoning is to distinguish that we have retail fuel sales, not necessarily the full-blown gas stations, but retail fuel sales are certainly the trend in a lot of these places is to tie this to convenience stores and so we've articulated that as a practical matter, retail fuel is something that we need to be available in the village for obvious reasons with the traffic volumes that we have and so forth. So that needs to be maintained. It's not a problem and it's clarified that that would continue and any of the uses that are already here bordered by highway or the prime wetland in the back, we did a tally at one of the work sessions and I think we had 9 or so services and repair facilities in town so if these became grandfathered, yeah they couldn't expand into the highway, they couldn't expand into the swamp, they couldn't expand laterally, but they are pretty well established already and then the question is at the end of the day, do you want another car dealership in the downtown. One of the concerns that was articulated to me was what if a car dealership went into the Meredith Shopping Center. If we were criticized by folks that Ginny was suggesting that the Volvo Dealership was maybe out of step, I can't wait to hear what would happen under the current zoning if all of a sudden the almost completely vacant shopping center transformed into a car dealership. Some people would say it's great and other people would suggest it's the failure of planning and so we recognized that auto service and repair is more a day-to-day function that needs to be provided for the community. When it comes to the once every so many years interval that you buy a car, there's plenty of car dealerships in Plymouth, Gilford, Laconia, Tilton, Concord and Wolfeboro and plenty of other places that are close enough where maybe to the extent we become selfish about large expanses of land becoming car dealerships and maybe that's a judgment call we can make comfortably. We think we've provided for the entrepreneurial opportunities in B & I, we have provided for the retail gas sales and clarified that and we made effectively a judgment call on the issue of future car dealerships. Vadney – One additional thing on the gas. As far as how many dealers go along there, if it should become nothing but gas stations the entire length, we can't say you're only allowed three gas stations in a zone. They are either permitted or not permitted and if business people want to open 22 along there and they are permitted, that's something beyond our control. That technique could be called a dispersion requirement. The slippery slope there is you could probably zone dispersion requirements for every land use, but when you start drawing that line, it gets pretty murky and it's probably one that the market would address hopefully in a way that's not objectionable. Vadney – One thing we have to keep in the back of our minds is that entire strip was one time swamp. Gerald Brooks - You said that this is a critical first step and I believe it's taken you two years to get to this point and you're suggesting that in March the town will vote yes or no and I would propose that the townspeople have a little more time to look at this before we vote. You say you're going to be able to put this up on the internet that we can look at the



before and after and maybe we can e-mail you and give you our suggestions. In order for people to vote yes or no on this in March, it doesn't give us enough time to comprehend what it took the Planning Board two years to come up with. I live just off Waukegan Street and as you said, I see your proposal turning where I live into a commercial district. I plan on living at least another 20 years and I hate to see my house being taken by eminent domain as they did in Connecticut to put up a hotel right on the lake. I don't like it being changed and I would like the people to have a little more time to comprehend just what's going forward and not rush it in a couple months what's taken several years. Craig Moriarty – I have to second what Gerry said before me. Given all the time the Planning Board's been working on this in the paper I have not seen an awful lot of information. The first real information was the published notice on December 22, 2005, and then I rushed downtown to pick the ordinance to try to read it. I think it's a lot better than last year. Last year at this time we had a meeting and one of the final things said was from one of the Planning Board members, perhaps Herb said maybe we should leave the Route 3 from the traffic lights north alone and I thought that was a good plan. You are making so many businesses non-conforming and I have to question whether the fact that we did vote for a community center directly voted those businesses into non-conformity. I don't think there's any correlation except a very few people who might have the vision to see it that way. The majority of the people either voted for the community center or they didn't. I'm disappointed to see also that there won't be any area from my understanding of the ordinance for an auto dealer sales or motorcycle sales. As I understand the ordinance, MacDonald's is non-conforming. It seems so many places are being turned into non-conforming uses, I think its just treading on what this town has evolved to and perhaps let the economics of growth dictate where the town will go within reason. It almost seems minutely directing this town to micro-managing it and perhaps after much consideration, this is a much better proposal and I applaud this effort. It is well done, but there's still some fine-tuning, some definitions, a drive-in restaurant, I don't see that, there was a Refreshment Stand; I didn't see that in the ordinance. I still can't understand why in the whole town there cannot be any further drive-in restaurants. We can have drive-in banks, but are we looking for the health of the community where we have to worry about drive-in restaurants. I hope you reconsider your definitions especially. Edgar – If I could just maybe address part of that, Craig, one of the things that we've done under eating and drinking establishments is we maintain a current distinction in the ordinance which identifies drive-thru windows, drive-thru's as being excluded in some cases, that's already on the books. There was an old use called a drive-in restaurant which didn't make much sense so we've eliminated the references to drive-in restaurants, drive in meaning you drive in, get something and then go sit down outside and that's not in our view enough of a distinction to carry forward in the current zoning so a restaurant's a restaurant and the only exception would be the drive-thru's which is a provision that is basically in the current zoning, it's been on the books for a while. I suspect that the drive-thru provisions have more to do with the fact that they are high-trip generators and in some districts they are allowed, and some they are not and I think a good example, which can get to be a little bit

much is something like, it's largely a function of site layout, but the Dunkin Donut ones. For example, how much volume is generated by a drive-thru so the distinctions have been made in the ordinance and the ordinance because of because of one of the criticisms raised last year about the drive-in issue is we eliminated the reference to drive-ins and that's because a restaurant's a restaurant, but do we drive in and eat on the outside or drive in and eat inside so we didn't see a need to continue that distinction. We tried to simplify the ordinance by just leaving restaurants as being restaurants. Kahn – In Route 3 South we specifically have allowed for motorcycle sales. Moriarty – What would you call Tamarack? Edgar – Under the current zoning, it would be considered a restaurant. Vadney – I'd call it in Laconia, but that's beside the point. Edgar – It probably met the old definition of a drive-in, but we didn't see a need enough to make that kind of distinction between something like the Tamarack or Flurries. I think it was Mr. Goren who brought this to our attention last year and there just didn't seem to be a need to differentiate as a practical matter so we eliminated that to make it a little more user friendly and simpler. Restaurants are permitted. So we've lined it out as a term that will no longer be used. That's why it's lined out and then the definition that's provide for is eating and drinking establishments that is written broadly enough to include what you're referring to as a drive-in restaurant. We didn't see a need to have several definitions of restaurants so we consolidated them into one. Vadney – We will take another look at that to make sure there are no conflicts in what we've written. Chris Wells - The brown area on Pleasant Street going out on the Neck. Now that is the north side obviously because the south side is all shoreline. You are now allowing mom and pop businesses in there and so forth. There's absolutely zero parking on that stretch. Edgar – The current zone allows all kinds of high impact commercial uses in the residential zone by special exception and we're proposing to eliminate all of those high-traffic generators, convenience stores, hospitals and several other types of uses that are currently allowed in the residential district, those would be taken out and are being replaced in favor with low generators so we're still providing some opportunity for some very limited commercial development that will still have to go through Planning Board review, but is of a magnitude and scale that is a whole lot less intense than some of the other uses that are currently in the zoning. Wells – So you are saying right now as the zone stands, that's considered commercial? Edgar – As the zone stands meaning today? Wells – Yes. Edgar – Today it's residential, but in the residential chart of uses, there are some uses that are allowed by special exception: ambulance services, hospitals, but there are several higher trip generators, things that typically generate more traffic in the residential areas that we're proposing to not allow and in essence replace those with some things that would be a little more pedestrian orientated that might be more appropriate in this core area. Bayard – Public and private schools were permitted, we have rental cottages, mobile home subdivisions are permitted and by special exception we have non-profit recreation areas, hospitals, water recreation and storage, mobile home parks. Cluster development, private ambulance service, group homes, stables and riding academies. Edgar – So, Chris, the question again to make sure we've answered it. Wells – Do these have to be owner

occupied? The owner-occupied provision, we built that into the specialty retail line so that we would try to keep on that small-scale side of things so relative to the specialty retail, that provision would kick in but not for other things. Wells – The only other question I have is how far up Pleasant Street does that go? I see it's past Mudgett. Edgar – If you're heading out, it would be three properties past, it's the limit of the current residential zone. Wells – Is that about where Deer Run is? Edgar – Yes, it's probably just before. Wells – The property you see at the line is Deer Run. Edgar – I don't know that for a fact, but we're real close to that and so each of these brown areas is taking from that shade of green which is residential and in that residential district currently there are hospitals and some other things, convenience stores and small grocery stores and some things that are allowed by special exception and those things would come out altogether and some other lower impact things would potentially go in. Wells – That scares me to death because in July and August the traffic will be backed up to Deer Run if there are any businesses there at all. Edgar – The parking thing is looked at as a practical matter all commercial development that goes through Planning Board reviews is looked at and if you have adequate parking, you do. If you don't, you don't so it's not a given that in the areas where the zoning permits something that it is appropriate or suitable. It is then done as all of you know on a case-by-case basis to make sure that you have adequate utilities, parking and the like, so just because the zoning is there, it doesn't mean that every property would transgress into a different change of use. Do they still have to go to the ZBA because it's something that... Edgar – At a minimum through the Planning Board for site plan approval and if it's one of these that's called out for special exception, it would also need a trip to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Vadney – All commercial activity has to have an approved site plan and one of the things we always look at is parking and access so that's part of the answer. I think you can see the way the ordinance is currently written, we're lucky that some of the things that could happen, haven't. Bryan Holland – John, you made a comment a while back about this being necessary for the viability of the village. Edgar – It's helpful to work that objective. Holland – If we did do this, would that be saying the village area would not be viable. Edgar – No, I didn't say that. This would contribute towards its future viability. As I mentioned at the outset, we're not in a crisis mode, this is in the context of the zoning update so we are not responding to a crisis, but those that have focused on the village for a while realize that it's not completely healthy either and here we are in the peak of the Christmas season and we have 6, 8 maybe 10 storefront vacancies. We have a need for housing in the downtown and in the community; it's not being met. The view isn't that we're reacting to a crisis and if this whole thing never goes forward, are we going to have a crisis on March 14<sup>th</sup>, absolutely not. I don't want to leave that impression with anybody, but on the other hand, the village is to a large degree the focus of the community from an economic point of view and taxpayers point of view and to the extent that we can look at how we can foster development or redevelopment or encourage wise use of land to sustain property values and all those kinds of things, the village is important as an economic indicator, as well as a residential entity and so if we can make improvements to the zone that enables certain things that provide

opportunities in the areas of economic development or housing that are compatible with why you live here, why people have their businesses here and that is to try and move that forward to provide opportunities for that long view of the village. If none of this passes, are we going to have a crisis, no, but we'll continue to compound the housing problem and will continue to see other aspects of the village struggle. I don't want people to think that we're responding to a crisis, but I think we're obligated to look at ways in which we could allow for future improvements in the village. Vadney – I agree with John that it's not a crisis that we do this, but I'd also remind you that about 14 or 15 years ago about the only thing at Exit 20 was a restaurant and a tractor dealer or something like that and now its basically chuck-a-block full with everything you can imagine and if you want to go back 45 or 50 years, I can remember when Milford was a sleepy town and things like that so all that is moving north. One thing we have here are some good bad examples south of us to watch and so some of this is intended to organize it a bit and not go where some of them did. Rick DeMark - I have a comment based on my earlier question. First off, I applaud the placement of cluster as a priority and a provision to help the Town of Meredith meet the goals of its Master Plan and the purposes of the various zones. However, from a little bit of experience, I know that cluster zoning can be very complex and misapplied in some cases. Because this proposal is primarily focused on the village and because clustering can be very complex because it is stated that the goal is within a year to come back to the Town with a cluster zoning proposal that will help meet the purposes of the various zones and because it's been said that our cluster zoning ordinance is only a paragraph long, I believe it might be unwise to remove the special exception provision at this point in time and leave it as a special exception until that time that a full proposal can be proposed to the town. Edgar – Mr. Chairman, we do have one written letter that I need to acknowledge. This is an e-mail correspondence that I received today at 4:31 p.m. from Marc Abear.

John,

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Below are my comments on the discussed portions of the proposed changes to the Forestry and Conservation District section of the Zoning Ordinance.

I have reservations concerning the proposed changes to the Forestry and Conservation District changes. I realize social and economic forces continually influence our community, and that our individual and collective interests are best served through understanding, preparedness, participation, and planning. To that end I hope you will consider the following comments.

The existing General description plainly recognized that the F/C Dist is remote from the town center and from the town's ability to provide services. The proposed change removes that specific acknowledgement from the ordinance. This is an error. It is an error because the transportation system in the Chemung has not been brought up to current standards in the 30 years since the institution of zoning

in Meredith. The transportation system continues to be substandard. Other services and infrastructure are non-existent. Acknowledgement of this fact is inappropriate.

The area because it is served by substandard transportation and infrastructure is plainly not ready for development. This is specifically addressed in the current wording in the ordinance. There is specific wording in the ordinance stating the premature development in the area is to be discouraged. The wording should stand.

It needs to be recognized that the area one that feels the pressure for development. "Our natural resources are more than breathtaking; they are fundamental to our long term health and prosperity. The richness and diversity of our natural resources define the character of our landscape and compel us to live, work, recreate, and invest here. With these resources comes individual and collective responsibility to act as prudent stewards." That's what the Community Master Plan page 21 has to say.

"The long standing environmental preservation and conservation ethic within the community will progress to an unparalleled level. Critical natural resources such as significant wetlands, undeveloped shoreline areas, scenic vistas, wildlife corridors, groundwater supplies, large forested areas, and agricultural soils will be conserved." It also says on page 10.

The changes proposed cave into the pressure to allow incremental growth. The changes proposed tonight embody the Challenges of Growth. Specifically, it represents support of Incremental Growth in advance of infrastructure development. Incremental growth provides the greatest challenge to us in recognition of its negative impacts. It is the very scattered and premature nature of the development that is the crux of the issue.

It needs to be note the Capital Improvement Budget contains no funding of projects in this part of town. Inviting development without responsibly funding the requisite infrastructure improvements is asking for issues. Ones that can and should properly be avoided.

Finally, the Zoning Ordinance allows for Cluster subdivision development by special exception. This is a non-conforming use. It should not be allowed even by special exception. The reason it should be eliminated from the ordinance is that it promotes scattered and premature development. As such, it would be contradicted in the Land Regulations and the Community Master Plan. These very reasons are valid reasons for the Planning Board to disapprove an application for a subdivision.

The proposed changes before you tonight are not without need of some significant revision and will be subject to scrutiny and review.

Sincerely, Marc Abear

Vadney – OK, do we have any new subjects? Edgar – The Town's website is [www.meredithnh.org](http://www.meredithnh.org). Depending on the outcome of this, if something needs to go for a second hearing or to the voters, we'll try to get this on the website. Basically, when you go to that website, a lot of the major stuff that we have, we put on the home page. The only place where we are providing for any setbacks are in these two village districts because they have new district titles so we had to restate the setbacks, but the setbacks in the Village District are the setbacks from that commercial zone that it came from and the setbacks in the Village Residential District are the same setbacks from the residential district from which it came and all the other setbacks in all the other districts we haven't touched. Here again, we are trying to, there are setbacks that need to be adjusted in my view, some of them are probably excessive, but here again we couldn't start to address that and have something manageable so this is only the Purpose Statements, the Use Tables and the Definitions primarily and we had to articulate what the setbacks would be for the new districts which we basically just mirrored what we had in the districts from which they have come from. Warren Clark – I had a thought relative to the Route 3 corridor. As I've been sitting here thinking about that, I look at each of the businesses that's currently there and while they are not particularly beautiful in some cases, they don't particularly bother me, but they would if they were right next to each other and just made a solid corridor and I'm wondering if there is some way in the zoning ordinance, probably in next year's version to somehow put some sort of restriction on this area that only a certain amount of the frontage can be covered so that if you want to put in an auto dealership and you have 500', you can have your dealership showing 200' but if you have 1,000' you can have it showing 400', you see what I mean and somehow make a requirement that a certain percentage of the land and frontage along Route 3 has to be blocked by trees or greenery. Just a thought and maybe a suggestion for the future if it's not already in there. Dawn Dever – I just want to say personally thank you for all the work that this Board of volunteers and its staff have done for this. I think it's very clear what is being said and anything that wasn't understood has been explained. I just want to say thank you. (applause) Vadney – I should point out that this 7-member Board at any one time would probably have somewhere between on any particular issue, 18 to 20 different things, it is a struggle, but we get a kick out of it. Lynn Montana – I just have one question. You had said this handout states new uses allowed by special exception and then several uses currently allowed in the residential district would not be allowed. Is this a complete list? I thought it was not a complete list. Edgar – That is not the complete list. Montana – How can we get a hold of the new list of what's allowed by special exception. Edgar – We had them when we posted the ad a couple weeks ago and we have information packets and we would be happy to give one to you. A lot of the folks that have come here tonight grabbed them in advance of the meeting in response to the ad

and the stuff in the papers and what they look like are these kinds of spread sheets where all the uses are in the left-hand column, then you have the current zoning in the right-hand column as proposed so on one sheet you can track the changes. We have some here tonight if you would like one. Vadney – Those will be on the website with the zoning ordinance. Edgar – Yeah, if we decide to go forward I'll try to get as much of that out there. Montana - A year ago there was a proposed propane sales company to go in and back up against Pleasant Street. That didn't come through. Vadney – We don't have enough time to discuss it tonight, but you won't be seeing it. Edgar – They voluntarily ended their grandfathered status, it's gone. Montana – And that won't be allowed in any of these village area districts. Edgar – You won't see fuel distributorships in any of the chart of uses anywhere and we'll probably be criticized for that. Vadney – Any further questions. If there are no more questions, I'm going to close the public portion of the hearing and we now have to hold a Planning Board meeting and you are welcome to stay. Thank you for coming.

Kahn – I've kept a tally sheet of some changes that were brought up for us to consider. We will consider everything, but I kept a tally sheet of things I thought we could deal with without throwing the whole thing into the wastebasket. When I think that this was worked on for two years should count for something rather than say OK, now we're going to let it sit for another year, I think it was considered long and hard last year, we threw out all of the stuff people objected to and it's too bad we got to it so late in the year. But when you have given it a lot of publicity and I think the stuff here is not earth shattering. The comment that we move the lot line for Commercial Route 3 up Jenness Hill a bit. That's the first one. Another comment was that we somehow eliminate commercial uses on Route 3 South. To me I think that the purpose statement about how Route 3 South is a gateway gives us a lot of control over site plans as they come in on Route 3 South so I don't mind moving the line up Jenness Hill Road, but I don't think I would play with Route 3 South. I think the Purpose Statement deals with that. We were asked why Chris Williams building wasn't zoned commercial. I don't know but I don't think it matters, does it? It's there. Vadney – It doesn't matter from that standpoint. I'd have to get the map to see how close it is to that. Edgar – It's zoned residential. Office uses are allowed by Special exception and my recollection is that they obtained a special exception years ago and that's what allowed them to go. We had several comments to the effect that that little area north on Pleasant Street is going to create problems with traffic. I don't know about John, but my own view on that is that's small, it's a long walk from the downtown area and I move we scratch that from the Village Residential area. We had a number of people who objected to that. Bliss – Just a comment on that comment is, was that one of the areas too that there already were a lot of property permitted uses that can already happen there and I don't think they realize that a lot of them were cut out and a little bit tighter regulations were put in there so I feel we should leave it in as proposed. Vadney – My gut feeling is the people would probably be better off and fewer things could happen there. Bliss – One of my concerns also that came up is, is this critical? No, right now its not critical, but when it is critical is when you are one

of the abutters and an issue comes into the Planning Board and we have to go by the rules and regulations that are on the books now and we have to go through this whole process again. It's critical if you are an abutter. I like the way it tightens up and some of the stuff that's permitted now is taken away. Vadney – And it does, if they are coming in for a commercial use, we get the site plan anyway. Bayard – What district would we propose it to be? Kahn – My own view is leaving it residential. Given there are some uses in residential that probably would create more traffic there, I certainly don't feel very strongly about it. If I could continue, there was a comment that the way we've written the Village District, you could have wall-to-wall gas stations in the village. On that, retail fuel sales would be permitted in the Village District. In Route 3 South there is a special exception requirement so the Zoning Board of Adjustment has a certain control as to whether or not there's going to be wall-to-wall gasoline stations on Route 3 South. My own view, John, would be to make it a special exception in the Village District as well. Retail fuel sales – special exception. My own view again is that the economics of the situation is there isn't enough land for one wall-to-wall gasoline station, but make them a special exception and we don't have to worry about it. Vadney – We would treat them the same everywhere. Kahn - Another comment was that we not change from special exception clusters to permit.. We left the special exception in the Forestry & Conservation District. Again, my own view is that cluster if properly handled, is good not bad and that part of our subdivision approval will be to see to it that we get good clusters. On the other hand, I think that the ordinance does need a little bit of work in terms of improving the cluster conditions, but whether or not we change it from special exception next year or this year, to me that doesn't matter, I think we have to exercise some control over quality of clusters that we are going to be facing, but that's on my list of changes that people had suggested. The last one I have, although it kind of wandered a bit was this letter regarding the general purposes in the Forestry & Conservation District. There were a number of things sort of put in here, I think dealing mostly with a pending application for cluster development out there, but the one I was able to refine from it was that the writer objects to deleting the reference to premature development of land in this area in the Forestry & conservation District should therefore be discouraged because of the lack of town facilities and services and the difficulty and expense of providing them. Edgar – The zone today is not the way it was 30 years ago. We've upgraded Upper New Hampton Road its entire length, we've upgraded Chemung Road its entire length, and we built a substation for the Fire Department so the fact is that what used to be way out there is not as far out there as it used to be. I think some of that language was written at a time when things were a little bit different. Does that mean there aren't examples where there could be premature development out there, No, there's certainly potential for that because of the substandard transportation system and that's why we carried forward that in the preamble. The preamble to that district specifically references the fact that a lot of the roads are substandard so I think we've got it covered, but if the Board feels that it would benefit from some reinforcement that there may be areas where it possibly may be scattered and premature depending on the nature of the project, I don't think it's a problem to put something like that back in but I think there's at



least some practical acknowledgement that was intended that what used to be way out there isn't half as way out there anymore just given the development and some infrastructure improvements that have been made to the two arteries going into that neighborhood over the years plus the substation. If we were to put some clause back in there, it doesn't upset me terribly as long as everybody's acknowledging somewhere along the way that we have upgraded the two principle roads going into that neighborhood and we have built a fire station to serve it. Vadney – I would add to that the phrase itself “scattered and premature” probably wouldn't stand up in any court, it's really a phrase apparently from the past and there was a time when there were parts of New Hampshire that may fall into that. We had a good example in the Ducharme project when one of the ladies that lived down the road and didn't want it to occur commented something about there are very few children out there, the bus comes by and there's only a couple kids on it and one of the things that would determine that some things are premature is that the school bus can't get there. In this case, its already going there. Edgar – I think that the key that the author speaks to and I don't think he's really wrong on this is that we do have a transportation network out there because we historically have not had a lot of subdivision development activity and Roger you can speak to this if you want, but basically we haven't had a lot of development activity in the last 5 or 10 years. We've had a lot of houses go up, but we haven't had a lot of subdivision activity, but we have a lot of roads that don't even come close to meeting any kind of specs so compared to other parts of town, the transportation system, because it's our lowest density district, and hasn't had the kind of growth and development is substandard and I think the author is basically trying to speak to the point that we may have projects come forward in the future that can't be supported by the infrastructure and that may be part of the argument, not so much scattered because we are supporting that neighborhood, but possibly the prematurity argument does come into play because a project may proceed in the timeline that is more aggressive than our ability to make infrastructure improvements. I don't have a problem if something like that did go back in and then it's case-by-case as to whether or not it really has any effect. Flanders – The one thought I had is that on cluster subdivision, it says we acknowledge next year we're going to try to do a more comprehensive look at that and maybe we shouldn't change it at all this year and wait until next year when we've got the whole package to put forward. It would give us one more level of control over cluster subdivision. Edgar – From a staff point of view, I don't have any objection to that and here again, the intent was to just to try to deal with the uses in one swoop and as a practical matter and in light of the testimony and everything, maybe that's one we can back off on and then once we have the ordinance figured out, then look at making the path a little easier. From a strictly staff point of view, that makes sense. Bayard – And I would second that just because like you said we don't have a strong ordinance on that so to expand it forth without a strong ordinance may be premature in itself. Vadney – Is there anyone who thinks we should keep the proposal in there to make clusters permitted.

Kahn moved, Finer seconded, - I move that we move the line on Jenness Hill up the hill to a place determined by the Chairman and the Town Planner, that we make retail fuel sales in the village by special exception, and that we revert to clusters as a special exception. Voted unanimously.

Bliss – I would just, those are changes to what we proposed. When are we going to accept the whole proposal. Vadney – I'm not sure this list is all inclusive, but I think all 3 of those are valid points so what I was going to do is vote on those 3 and then we don't have to worry about those anymore and then see if anybody has anything else that they wanted to bring up and then we'll vote on all that. We have a motion and a second to accept those 3 recommendations by Lou. Those 3 modifications will be made. Finer – Will those require another hearing? Edgar – I need to check on that the first thing in the morning because the fact that we are changing the map might trigger that. Vadney – But what we are doing is lessening the impact. If we were putting something into a new zone, but we are actually leaving that stuff in the zone its already in. Vadney – Does anyone have any other comments on anything they heard tonight or something they thought of on their own? Bliss – I don't have anything about the proposal, but one of the things that came up as far as letting more of the townspeople know what's going on sooner rather than later and I don't know if the Town could do a half-page ad as opposed to a 4 x 4 little box that said what we were talking about, as well as putting it on the website. Flanders – I think there's some validity to what Pam says although I would suggest that we prepare a press release and release it to the papers. A lot of people read the Daily Sun. Vadney – I think we are going to see substantial press, we had a fellow from The Daily Sun, Mike Kitch and Bea Lewis here from the Citizen and the Meredith News as well so I think the three papers of importance to the Town will be covering in more detail than we could. Bliss – I don't think we need to baffle them with details, but we should let them know where this information is available. Vadney – The overall criticism of not having enough time to look at it although it is somewhat true, we discussed our progress at Planning Board meetings which are open meetings. Actually even the working sessions are open meetings if someone wants to come. All of this stuff is developed in public and then state law requires that we have this hearing and possibly another one, but the best we can hope, I think, is to get good news coverage. Bliss – My point is on the whole thing is that was one of the suggestions that came up from one or two people so I just think we're taking our responsibility as Board members to once more to listen to what they say and try to incorporate it. Kahn – I agree with Pam. We already did a press release, John released to the newspapers a very detailed Memorandum. I think it would be a good idea to publish something and put it on the website as to where to find the supporting documents. Flanders – One of the things that we've got going for us on this Planning Board meeting is that camera right up there. This is going to be on the public access channel for a couple weeks and you would be amazed the number of people that watch that so we don't normally have that at the Planning

Board and that tape will reach more people than ads you place anywhere. Edgar – I just wanted to go through my list to make sure I have everything. I'm not advocating these positions just checking my notes. Ralph Pisapia had suggested changing densities in shoreline on Meredith Neck. Vadney – Good point, can't do it this year. Ginny Lovett had suggested that equipment sales and retail is fundamentally at odds with the purposes of the Route 3 District. Do you agree with that change. Vadney – We've got to have it somewhere. Flanders – No. Lynn had several comments and had made among the comments a suggestion that the retail component in the Village Residential be limited more to the home occupation standards as opposed to straightup retail even though its capped at 1,000 sq. ft. so that was one comment that I got on that. Vadney – It seems that with site plan review requirements, we get as much control as we would through almost as much if we went through home occupation. Bliss – I think when you read this specialty retail proposed definition that's in the back, it limits a lot of things. I think it's pretty straightforward. Edgar – There was another suggestion I think Craig's suggestion that we should provide for auto dealer sales perhaps somewhere in the community and that there were too many businesses that were becoming non-conforming. There was a suggestion that we look at perhaps in the future, Warren Clark's suggestion of looking at maybe limiting the Route 3 frontage to a portion of the frontage that could be developed. Edgar – Then you had two of Lou's items that weren't put in his motion, but one was whether or not to eliminate the Pleasant Street portion of the VR and whether or not to reinstate some language about the preamble to the Forestry & Conservation District. Bliss – I would like to see the Village Residential stay as it's proposed.

Flanders moved, Bliss seconded, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion that we accept these changes as they are presented with the 3 exceptions that we've already voted on. Voted unanimously.

The motion to accept the changes would be to advance it to the Town Meeting Warrant, but not withstanding the double check on whether or not we need a second hearing on the changes. We'll check with counsel so if the answer from Counsel is "no", then with these changes, it would go forward to Town Meeting and we would work to get it on the website and get the word out about where all the detail is that's been out there and if they are substantial enough, we would be scheduling the second hearing and letting you guys and everybody know when it will be held.

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lee Harvey  
Administrative Assistant  
Planning/Zoning Department

The minutes were reviewed and approved at a regular meeting of the Planning Board held on \_\_\_\_\_.

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William Bayard, Secretary