



# Town of Carlisle

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Office of

PLANNING BOARD

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MINUTES MEETING OF SEPT. 13, 1993

Chair Ernstoff called the meeting to order at 8:09. Chaput, Duscha, Hughes, Evans and Yanofsky were present; Colman arrived shortly after. On a motion by Hughes, seconded by Yanofsky, the minutes were approved, Duscha abstaining. Bills were approved as submitted.

**Ballantine Common Driveway Special Permit Extension:** The public hearing opened at 8:22. Based on a written request from John Ballantine, Chaput moved and Duscha seconded that no testimony be taken and the hearing be continued to Oct. 4, 1993, at 8:45. The vote was unanimous.

**Master Plan: Rurality discussion** M. P. Chair Chaput opened the discussion at 8:30. The Carlisle residents in attendance then or later were: Marilyn and Ken Harte; Wanda Milik, Phyllis Nei, Ralph Anderson, Selectmen; Mark Duffy, Lois Surgenor, Dale Ryder, George Lohrer, Howard Hensleigh, Sylvia Sillers, Sarah Andreassen, Bill Holland, Hal Sauer, Ruth Toscano, Steve Hamilton, George Foote, Abby Adams, Tom Carney, Sal Borrello, Jim Davis, Derek Engquist, and Dave Stewart; also attending was Paul Cohen, Executive Secretary.

Chaput welcomed the group, and made a brief presentation describing the value categories into which the Board had grouped the goals approved at 1993 Town Meeting. She then described the subject of this meeting, the refining and synthesis of the goals grouped under the heading **Rurality**. Hoping to stimulate discussion, Chaput suggested that it may be the perception of rurality which should be discussed, rather than the actuality, because Carlisle is not, in 1993, rural. After all present had identified themselves, she invited them to move around the room and view the photos on the walls, and then to characterize the photos as rural or not rural, and to explain why they were judged so.

The first photo and the second photo to be discussed were chosen at random, and provided the basis for a lively two hour discussion. Some of the oft repeated comments made clear that, at least for this group of Carlisleans, the perception of rurality includes stone walls, fences, meadows, agricultural fields, trees, roads which are narrow and winding, and houses which appear quite old, and are grouped together in a farm like unit. Not rural were curbs, manicured lawns, removal of trees and undergrowth, and heavily disturbed land. Causing disagreement were perceptions of unrelated houses set close together near and visible to a road, woodland (wilderness or rural?), and whether the group was discussing the perception only of passersby or also of the home owner looking out.

The issue of whether ground based photos could show enough land to encompass a meaningful segment of land and its uses was raised. Most agreed that context, how a piece relates to its surroundings, is an important factor. Should some parcels become not rural in order to preserve others as rural? Is a glimpse of rurality as we walk, bike, or speed by in cars, the best we can hope for? The issue of actual rural uses of land, as opposed to appearance of rurality, was raised. Some expressed the desire to accommodate the hiker and wildlife; whether this is best done by continuing outright purchase of land while maintaining 2 acre lots on unpurchased land, or by preserving larger connected pieces of land within subdivisions through cluster at less cost to the Town, was debated. Cluster related concerns which arose were: that remaining parcels are too small to be cluster developed because of water quality, that cluster allows the development of small parcels that would otherwise not be developed, and that cluster does not allow enough privacy. In contrast to these concerns were the recognition that the Town may feel it can't afford to keep purchasing and that standard 2 acre subdivision does not preserve large enough contiguous pieces of land to provide habitat for wildlife.

Suggestions for the Board included: aerial photos, thorough and amicable discussion with landowners, a trail system plan which could be shown to developers and landowners, the encouragement of small scale well detailed houses, and a traffic circulation system which allowed more through roads so that the burden of traffic could be shared with the few through roads we have now.

The concept that open space is important in itself, but also, when in close proximity to roads, is important as a way of achieving that perception of rurality, seemed to be supported. It was also suggested that rurality in New England stems not from the age or location of buildings, but from the creation of a group of buildings as a unified work of art, one which demonstrates caring individualized detail, the exact opposite of the cookie cutter approach. The idea that created landscape is not good was discounted by one commenter, who asked the Board to consider what good landscaping can do to provide buffers between uses or buildings.

The Board suggested that participants may be able to help by coming up with specific natural resources which could be added to the list of those which are considered in the subdivision rules and regs even for "By Right" developments.

The participants were asked to summarize, and the following list was generally agreed to be desirable:

- \* Roads: No curbs; not wide; not straight; walls and fences along them.
- \* Housing: Variety of style and size; variety of setback; variety of open areas and usage (i.e., straight residential, agricultural, other?)
- \* Maintenance in an undeveloped state of large connected parcels for wildlife corridors and trails.
- \* Protection everywhere of unique natural or historical features.
- \* Maintain overall 2 acre density.
- \* Protect off-site perception of passersby on major roads.
- \* Encourage and protect agricultural use.
- \* Protect the historical, social, and aesthetic qualities of the Town center.

The Master Plan discussion was ended at 10:35. At that time, the Chair announced that he would entertain a motion to close the public meeting and call an executive session for the purpose of considering a recommendation to be made to the Selectmen on the purchase, sale or exchange of real estate, as such discussion, held in open meeting, might have a detrimental effect on their negotiating position, and to adjourn immediately afterward. Colman moved and Hughes seconded the motion. The roll call vote was as follows: Chaput: aye. Yanofsky: aye. Duscha: aye. Evans: aye. Colman: aye. Hughes: aye. Ernstoff: aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 11:40.

Sandy Bayne, Planning Assistant