

Draft

Starksboro Planning Commission

Minutes 10/19/17

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Dennis Casey
Minutes taken by Amy McCormick

PC Members attending: Dennis Casey, Norman Cota, Jeff Keeney, Hugh Johnson, Dan Nugent,
Dan Harris

Others Present: Susan Jefferies, Koran Cousino

Adjustments/Minutes

Minute review moved to end of meeting

Visitor's Business and Adjustments to Agenda

Susan Jefferies and Koran Cousino discussed with the board the reclassification of Brown Hill East/West, Mason Hill and Perry Sweet Road.. They were looking for advice on classifying these roads as trails, no motor vehicle or atv access, starting with 75 Brown Hill East, 95 Brown Hill West and Mason Hill. Landowners (Audy & Farr) have spoken to the Selectboard with concern about the motor vehicles that are constantly trying to access this road and getting stuck. They have repeatedly pulled cars out from getting stuck. Atv's are constantly tearing up the road. Mud season is especially trying. GPS tells the drivers they can access the road right through and this is where they become stuck and the need for the surrounding land owners to pull them out. The select board members want the board to know that they are only on a fact finding and advice mission. They are not all in agreeance with turning this road into a trail. If it was classified as a trail this would give the landowners the right to put up a gate to keep out the unwanted traffic. Atv's would find a way around them and create their own. There would be no advertising as a trail and the town would maintain their ROW. VAST also had concerns and the maintenance that they do.

Jeff stated he did not think this was a good idea to "throw up the road" because it would be to hard to change it back to the original.

Dan H. asked what came up to start this change?

Susan stated that Peter Marsh said the GPS states you can go through to connect to the other side and signs have not deterred anyone from going through.

Sheldon and Tom Ball claimed a trail would mean more hikers, bicyclists, more trash from them.

Dan H. asked what would stop it?

Koran stated that the landowners would gate it. But the 2 different roads require 2 different actions.

Dan N said leave as is and then let landowners gate it?

Susan said people will still be able to access the road because gate cannot be locked if road is not changed to a trail status - however would be nice to "gate" it during mud season. Atv's would still find a way around it and use surrounding land to get where they want to.

Denny said we need better coverage for atv traffic - game warden, sheriff?

Susan stated that they can't hire anyone to enforce this due to the atv's ability to out run any law enforcement because they usually are in a vehicle and they can't go where the atv's go.

Jeff, Denny, Dan N claimed they don't want to "throw it up" - no. Mason Hill advocating to leave as it is, Brown Hill too many landowners use atv's on this road for their own use. Gates or fences will not stop atv's - they will find another way around and on other land owners property.

Koran also stated that the previous owners had several issues with the traffic flow and had complained about what they could do about it.

Norman asked if there was any state aid for class 4 roads?

Susan replied - no. If we turned the road into a trail, the Farr's would agree to the ROW of where it is now. It would not be a costly situation to change - QC, survey. The Farr's changed the road to where it is now, moved it for logging purposes (old road is not useable). We have not met with the Conservation Committee yet but will make a point to do so.

Koran also wanted us to know that Rebecca Elder has been updating the Town website with links to minutes/agendas and was looking for more info from the Planning Commission as to members, years on committee, more personable, instead of just an explanation as to what they do per State Statue.

Susan also wanted to let us know that they have not Advertised for the Zoning Administrator position. She asked what the PC was looking for from them in their advertisement - same as what the ZA did for them or 2 separate positions. 24 hour work week and possibly share with New Haven as before.

Denny stated 2 separate positions but the clerk would take the minutes and put the agendas together and other things that the board may need. Also looking to make sure the ZA can write grants or maybe the clerk could.

Norman/Dan N - want 1 ZA/Clerk the same person. Very valuable when the ZA attends the meeting and gives opinions and tells them the rules/by-laws that they need to consider during their meetings.

Dan H liked having the ZA at the meetings, kept things flowing and was great to have for by-laws and rules.

Koran said the biggest concern for the ZA - to be present, participate and take minutes/clerical work during the evenings all in one.

Jeff stated they should be present to help with the interviews

Koran was able to get a copy of Bristols advertisement for us to use and would advertise the position as 2 but can be combined.

Dan N said Dave brought a lot to the table - info from both Towns was extremely helpful.

8/17/17 minutes - Jeff Keeney made motion to approve Dan Nugent 2nd - approve -4, 1-abstaining - Hugh Johnson

9/7/17 minutes - Jeff Keeney made motion to approve Dan Nugent 2nd - approved 3 -yes, 2 -abstaining - Norman Cota, Dan Harris

10/5/17 - Renewable Energy Workshop with Brandy Saxtons

PC would like clarification of a few things before approving minutes - such as question 1 - State or Northeast - greater than average where?

PC stated they needed more hand outs and the hand outs were unclear as to where the numbers came from.if

Dan H said the visitors didn't grasp the total concept with the info that was provided. If Brandy gave examples with how much energy was used for people to see it would have been better to understand.

PC discussed big solar arrays and wind turbines - on where they should be - but no one wanted it near them. Stated it takes about a 2 mile swath for a wind turbine and for no homes to be near it. Decibels is a concern and timing as to when you can hear it. The point of the workshop was to be shown where it would best for us.To purchase solar or electricity (pymt wise). People living in Mobile Homes - how efficient would they be. Where is the energy put when captured?

Batteries give you the efficiency to store it.

PC also talked more about the Zoning Administrator candidates and how hard it may be to find one person to do it all. Adm Asst maybe more useful to set up agendas and take minutes. If you are the ZA it hards to participate and keep track of the minutes. ZA wrote up Findings and

Decisions, helped the applicant with the application process, spoke on their behalf (interpret what they wanted). Previous ZA had no prior experience in this field - His expertise was Forestry, Land Use and worked for Hannaford Career Center - It may be hard to find someone with any experience and may be looking at starting over and retraining.

Norman Cota motioned to adjourn meeting at 9:15 - Dan Nugent 2nd

Next Meeting November 16 at 7pm