

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission
Minutes (DRAFT)
October 2, 2025

Present: Dennis Casey, David Schmidt, Luke McCarthy, Dan Kuzio, Dan Nugent
Others Present: Steve Rooney (Zoning Administrator), Brenda Torpy (Consultant)
Visitors: Robert Turner, Marcus Denice (Zoom)

Meeting called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:3pm

Visitors Business: None

PC Current Business:

1. Meet with Community Housing Trust Consultant
 - a. The Planning Commission met Brenda Torpy, the consultant hired to execute the work as a part of the Community Trust feasibility study grant. D. Kuzio and R. Turner have had several meetings with B. Torpy to date, and they are working on putting together a bibliography of resources. Next steps include more community engagement and outreach.
 - b. The typical structure of a Housing Trust board consists of 1/3 homeowners in the trust, 1/3 community leaders, and 1/3 other people in the community. The board must arrange everything from initial purchase of land/homes, construction of new homes, legal matters including leases, deeds, and real estate transactions, etc. Ideally the board will have individuals on it with expertise in these areas that can donate time, otherwise this must all be contracted out to third parties.
 - c. The Community Housing trust owns the land and leases it to the homeowner, and homeowner builds some equity from the structure, however there are legal agreements and covenants in place outlining resale formulas and other considerations to limit “profit” when a property changes hands. This allows for community control and permanent affordability.
 - d. There are grants available to push the project further. The VT Housing Conservation Board, various federal programs, and there are foundations and ideally land donations. Discussion ensued about grants, grant writing, and the time and effort it takes, which would be one more thing for the board to handle.
 - e. Discussion about the relationship between the municipality and the non-profit entity operating the Housing Trust. Relationships vary from Trust to Trust, and it all depends on how involved the town wants to be.
 - f. PC agreed that it would be a good idea for B. Torpy to put on a joint presentation with the PC and SB so that everyone is aware of the concept of the Housing Trust, and how it would work in Starksboro.
2. ZA Updates:
 - a. General discussion about how to move forward with all of the ZA’s suggestions for editing the bylaws. Will need to set aside a future meeting or two to formalize all the requested changes and send to SB for review. Public waring process will need to be followed.
 - b. Discussed the formatting of the new bylaw document and specific edits that are still needed to improve consistency and flow of the document.
 - c. Conversation about the use tables and whether or not a column for the ROD was needed.

3. Approve minutes
 - a. Minutes of the 9/18 PC meeting were reviewed.

Motion: D. Nugent moves to approve the 9/18 minutes. D. Kuzio seconds.

Vote: All in favor

4. PC Roundtable
 - a. D. Schmidt and D. Casey to attend next SB meeting to answer questions about bylaws.
 - b. D. Casey spoke with ACRPC about the specific questions PC had about the ROD. Regional Planning doesn't think the ROD poses any issue.
 - c. Additional discussion on Future Land Use Maps. After the PC's request last meeting ACRPC revised the FLU maps to show only State and Town forests or Management Areas in the Rural Conservation area. There is still a question as to why some parcels are in Rural General and others in Rural Agriculture/Forestry. Presumably this has to do with the size of the lot vs. the location of the lot. Discussion about how to include more parcels in the Rural General category. PC asked ACRPC to code any parcel that has access to a town road as Rural General.
 - d. D. Casey had a conversation with Silver Maple Construction regarding the Jerusalem Community Center Project. The plan is now to raise the Schoolhouse off its foundation and replace it.

Motion: L. McCarthy moves to adjourn. D. Schmidt seconds.

Vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:45

Minutes submitted by L. McCarthy