

Town of Starksboro  
Planning Commission meeting  
Minutes of January 22, 2022  
Draft

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Board members present: Dennis Casey, Brad Boss, Denny Barnard, Dan Nugent, Rodney Orvis, Jeff Keeney  
Unable to attend: Dan Harris

Others present: Kris Perlee (ZA), David Schmidt, Eric Lemery (GMP), Zach Casey (GMP), Steve and Monique Thurston

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The meeting was called to order to 7:15 p.m. by Chair Dennis Casey. The meeting was in person at the Town Office and via Zoom

**Visitor's Business** – David Schmidt was here to sit in on a PC meeting since he is running for a seat on the PC. He stated that he moved back to the area and would like to become more involved in the town.

### Current Business

#### **Green Mountain Power Discussion**

D. Casey explained that GMP had been invited to discuss infrastructure and solar. E. Lemery gave an overview of GMP's strategy to meet VT's carbon goals. He discussed the upgrade of the lines from Downingsville Road. He explained that they prioritize upgrades based on reliability. He explained that three phase power stopped part way down States Prison Hollow Road. The village area has 1 and 2 phase. E. Lemery said that a small solar project could run on single phase. He was not aware of any large projects being proposed in Starksboro. Z. Casey stated that GMP is now focusing on carbon reduction more than solar. This could include solar, but also looks at electric vehicles and charging stations, heat pumps, and community solar projects. Z. Casey discussed Tier 3 projects. He explained that the GMP would help offset the cost of projects if they could show a reduction in carbon footprint. J. Keeney asked if GMP planned on updating lines in Starksboro. E. Lemery stated that they have done some upgrades. He said that reliability is the focus right now. He said that if demand was to rise, GMP would look to see if it should upgrade. There is no plan right now to add more 3-phase. J. Keeney asked if project could drive upgrades. E. Lemery said yes, but it can be challenging. D. Casey asked for confirmation that no 3-phase upgrades until needed. E. Lemery confirmed. J. Keeney asked what is the source of electricity. E. Lemery spoke about getting to 100% carbon neutral by 2030. He listed sources such as HydroQuebec, Kingdom Wind, and solar. Z. Casey then discussed batteries and the incentives GMP is offering for batteries. M. Thurston asked what the source will be and what is GMP's goal. Discussed failures in Europe. Z. Casey discussed batteries, making the backbone more reliable, and home upgrades are part of the strategy. D. Casey asked if heat pumps could be connected to existing heating systems. Z. Casey said no. D. Casey asked if GMP could give estimates to upgrade to 3-phase. Z. Casey said yes, but would need details. E. Lemery gave ball park number of \$160,000 to upgrade from Tyler Bridge Rd to Big Hollow Rd. D. Casey asked about mobile home parks. E. Lemery said there are a few options like community solar, but should focus on upgrading the homes first. E. Lemery said that if the PC wanted more info on future plans to meet state goals they should pull together a series of questions and send them to him and he will get answers. GMP left zoom call. PC discussed that the info provided was encouraging. The cost to upgrade should not hamper the planning that has been being worked on.

#### **Approve January 06, 2022 Minutes**

Motion to approve with corrections by D. Barnard, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Keeney. So voted (6-0)

#### **PC Roundtable**

Due to time spent on GMP the was not done.

#### **Discussion of MAUSD Merger Plans**

D. Casey discussed a petition about how Starksboro citizens are unhappy with the merger study group's actions and behavior. There was a discussion that more letters are needed from the public. The board looked at the Save Our Schools as more of a fringe group that a true representation of the citizens. The SB should have their report from their consultant by January 25.

Next meeting will be **February 3, 2022**

**Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.:** B. Boss moved, R. Orvis second. (So voted 6-0)

