

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission meeting
Minutes of February 17, 2022
Draft

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Brad Boss, Dan Nugent, Rodney Orvis, Jeff Keeney

Unable to attend: Dan Harris, Denny Barnard

Others present: Kris Perlee (ZA),

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 –

Current Business

Approve January, 2022 Minutes

Motion to approve with corrections by D. Nugent, 2nd JR. Orvis. So voted (5-0)

D. Casey appointed R. Orvis chair for the meeting

PC Roundtable

J. Keeney presented data surrounding carbon emissions in Vermont (see attached). The numbers were broken to show Starksboro's impact. Discussed that if Starksboro was 75% forested, the town could double in population and still remain carbon neutral. R. Orvis asked if the PC should bring anything to voter. J. Keeney stated that there was nothing right now and just wanted the PC to have the information. More discussion occurred around Vermont's carbon neutral goals and what Starksboro is doing and might need to do in the future. J. Keeney suggested that the PC should invite the legislative representatives to a meeting in the future for updates.

D. Nugent gave update on the schoolhouse and fire station project. He gave overview of the DRB meeting and some of the issues surrounding the fire station building. He presented his drawings that he will be presenting to the DRB to review. If the DRB likes the drawings, they will forward these to the schoolhouse committee for their review. A discussion occurred around need for a station in South Starksboro.

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. He stated that there are about 180 signatures at this point. He has been trying to attend most of the meetings. The School Board received the report from their consultant around merger and closures. The report stated that the cheapest solution is to merge and close schools but warned that this happens there are hard feelings that last for a long time. It also stated that only about 10% of mergers actually happen. It also said that the boards that are in place at the time of the merger have usually moved on and the communities are left to deal with the fallout. The report also suggested that towns should still have the right to vote on mergers and closures. The Merger Study Committee was discussed. It was explained that they are a separate entity. They will send their report to the State, not the School Board. The State reviews and if they agree this is the right course, the school districts involved will vote. D. Casey also discussed the School Board meeting February 16. The School Board spent most of the evening amending their action statement. They added that the Superintendent should try to keep all 6 schools open.

Other: D. Casey thanked R. Orvis for his years of service on the PC and all members echoed this.

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

Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.: B. Boss moved, D. Nugent second. (So voted 5-0)

Starksboro Contribution to Climate Change

World Carbon Output 35,735,305,000 Tons

US Total 5,287,400,000 Tons 15%

VT Total 5,900,000 Tons

VT % of World Total = .00165%

Trees to offset carbon

730 Trees to offset carbon use per person

Average 400 trees per hectare

1 hectare = 2.97 acres

Trees per acre = $400/2.97 = 135$

Starksboro Population = 1973

Number of Trees to offset carbon use = $1973 \times 730 = 1,420,560$

Starksboro land Area= 45.7 sqmi.

1 sqmi = 640 acres

Land area in acres = 29,248 acres

Amount of Forested Land to Offset carbon = $1,420,560 / 135 \text{ Trees /acre} = 10523 \text{ acres}$

% of forested land required = $10,523/29,248 = 36\%$