

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission meeting
Minutes of May 20, 2021
Unapproved

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Dan Nugent, Brad Boss, Jeff Keeney
Unable to attend: Dan Harris, Rodney Orvis, Denny Barnard
Others present: Kris Perlee (ZA), Carin McCarthy, Rebecca Elder

The meeting was called to order to 7:21 p.m. by Chair Dennis Casey. The meeting was in person at the Town Garage and conducted via ZOOM video/teleconference.

Visitor's Business – none

Current Business

RiseVT/Proposed Town Center:

Carin gave an update.

- About ten people took a tour of the site
- There is plenty of support for the project
- They would start with a pavilion by the garden
- They relied on some free resources from ACRPC to get things moving
- Project aligns with the town plan
- Possibly build the pavilion this summer
- Would rely on volunteers for site work and construction

Rebecca echoed Carin feelings about the project

Brad discussed his seat on the steering committee and voiced his concern that he doesn't have time right now. He suggests they form a fundraising committee and said he supports the project.

Denny felt that this project could be done with minimal site work and was concerned that this project has grown from building a pavilion to a larger project. He is concerned that this project was starting to look like the Art and Soul project that really didn't help the town. Was concerned about the ROWs around the paths and not sure landowners would want to give the ROW to the Town. Concerned it will become over-engineered and too expensive.

Carin said that they have decided not to chase grants for this project because they all came with too many strings attached. She feel that this project should be done the "Starksboro Way"

Rebecca stated that no engineers have been used

Brad feel that this could really help build community spirit, especially after that past 16 months of Covid restrictions.

Dan felt that a site visit would be helpful. He feels that there is enough experience on the PC to help guide this project.

Jeff concerned that this project could become another Schoolhouse project.

Carin and the PC agreed to do a site visit on Sunday 11:00 am

Role of PC in Future Town Projects

Town Plan and Zoning all set so the PC began to focus on projects. The PC feels that they should be brought into the loop sooner concerning town projects. Concern that projects are becoming too bureaucratic and becoming a hindrance to the planning process. Feels projects need to be brought back to a local level.

Jeff was concerned that the Selectboard is not listening to concerns. Feels PC should be involved in projects that involve town land.

Carin feels that there needs to be more communication with the boards.

Brad suggested a flow chart to clarify how a project should move through the town boards.

Dan will continue to work on a document to present to the Selectboard to help clarify the PC roles.

Jeff concerned that committees are getting too focused on their project and are losing focus on the big picture.

Rebecca clarified the Village Center Designation and the information sent to the PC. Explained this was a suggestion by the ACRPC. Was not recommending either way. PC doesn't feel the town needs to do this at this time.

Discussion of Land Trust involvement in the town. Brad suggested looking into right of first refusal on certain properties that could be deemed important to future growth. Discussion that the school closure has brought town growth to the forefront.

Substantial Deference:

Jeff said there has been no update.

Zoning Bylaws update:

This has been tabled until the next meeting

Meeting Minutes:

Jan 13. Dan Moved to approve, Jeff 2nd. So Voted

Mar 4. Jeff Moved to approve, Dan Second. So Voted.

Motion to adjourn at 8:02 p.m.: Dan Nugent moved, Brad Boss second.

Motion was approved unanimously.