

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission meeting
Minutes of July 7, 2022
Draft

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Brad Boss, Dan Nugent, Denny Barnard, David Schmidt, Jeff Keeney
Unable to attend: Dan Harris, Denny Barnard
Others present: Rebecca Elder

The meeting was called to order to 7:16 p.m. by Chair Dennis Casey. The meeting was in person at the Town Office and via Zoom

Visitor's Business –

Zoning office update

There was a staff change and Rebecca will be helping to provide support to the zoning office and the PC and DRB in the interim. The Selectboard will follow up with the PC chair about planning for filling the ZA role.

Current Business

- Discussion of recent permit issued; issued after the fact. House design did not meet High Density district standards. Rebecca sent the PC a photo of the house that is under construction on Robert Young Rd. and the permit application with drawings.
- Discussion of precedent and what sets precedent – Brad and David think that if the town doesn't take action on the enforcement of permit to avoid precedent. Jeff said more details are needed. Dan will follow up for more information as it pertains to DRB.
- Roof pitch – Denny C. thought the bylaws do not regulate residential roof pitch. Board did not intend to and should not be regulating design.
- Design standards are about pitch and a "must have" – Dan Nugent. Group discussed
- Said applicants don't need to submit a design plan. Conflict in the Bylaws because the HDRC special design standards do apply to both commercial and residential and should be applied to the "maximum extent feasible" and allows the DRB to modify as needed. Dan said that language was put in the bylaws because the community asked for more regulation for the high-density village standards and in South Starksboro. PC will look at the language.
- Dan – it is up to the town to decide if there is enforcement action that is needed.
- Jeff – The town cannot go back on an approval.
- David – What did the permit app look like? Discussion about what is required from applicants for ZPs. Footprint, setback info, site plan. Was it warned to neighbors?
- Rebecca – There is no penalty in Starksboro for an after-the-fact permit. Suggests it be added to the bylaws and the fee schedule. Warning period didn't take place since it was issued after construction began.
- Dan – If the community wants to take this specific design language about roof pitch and other requirements, it would affect all new construction including commercial. It is in the bylaws because it was requested in the 2016 revisions.
- Dan noted that the DRB was completely unaware of this permit situation and the discussion about roof pitch.

Meeting Time Change

Brad requested the group consider an earlier start time for meetings. The group agreed to shift to a 6:30 p.m. start time. Starting with next meeting on July 21, 2022.

Approve June 16 Minutes

Motion: J. Keeney moved to approve with corrections. D. Schmidt second.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously.

Current Topics

- Discussion about water in the village and how added infrastructure would help support future village residential growth. If each lot did not need a well, there would be more opportunities, smaller lots would be acceptable, well protection zones wouldn't be needed.
- Invite Jeremy Revell from Lincoln Applied Geology to a future meeting to continue discussion. Looking at opportunities for village expansion in the HDRC
- Discussion to continue about south part of village corridor and smart growth planning.
- Continue talking with ACCT about improvements in the mobile home parks and possibilities for changing layout as septic systems and infrastructure are updated.
- ARPA funding and proposal opportunities
- Substantial deference – Pete Antos-Ketcham contacted Denny about continuing the conversation about seeking this designation. Jeff said the PC provided the Energy Committee with their comments and questions and points to address. The PC has not received responses that will advance the conversation. PC will consider once that information has been provided. Jeff – why does the EC think this is a valuable move for the town? There are risks for the town. Dan asked who would represent the town if we had Sub. Def – It is likely a rep. from the Selectboard and PC but this needs to be confirmed. GMP attended a PC meeting and stated they have no plans to upgrade infrastructure in Starksboro, therefore this is limiting. The grid here cannot handle a large solar farm.

Discussion of MAUSD Merger Plans

D. Casey gave update on the current conversations and summarized the discussion from the last Starksboro Selectboard meeting and MAUSD meetings, which he attended. After consultation with several attorneys, it was determined that the MAUSD is responsible for the ratification vote on August 9 with the request from Starksboro to be released from the school district per the withdrawal vote.

Village Area Planning

Brad said the board needs to solidify the plans they are proposing. Potential to create a parallel road to 116 to allow and additional area for residential development. Communication with immediate landowners is needed to explore what the options are. Maps from past discussions are needed to continue the planning. Denny will locate for the next meeting.

Next meeting: **July 21, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.**

- Continue mapping work 6:30 - 7
- Discussion on south village development opportunities 7 – 7:30
- Invite Jeremy Revell 7:30 - 8

Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.: B. Boss moved, J. Keeney second.

Vote: Motion approved unanimously

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder