

Starksboro Planning Commission  
Minutes of 1/2/2020  
Approved

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**Board members present:** Denny Casey, Rodney Orvis, Denny Barnard, Dan Harris, Brad Boss, Jeff Keeney, Dan Nugent  
**Others present:** Rebecca Elder, ZA

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Dennis Casey.

Changes/additions to the agenda:

1. Add Jerusalem Community center proposal in advance of Selectboard discussion

#### Review of minutes of 12/5/19

**Motion:** Denny Barnard made a motion to approve the minutes of 12/5/19 as amended. Jeff Keeney 2<sup>nd</sup>. Delete the biomass bullet

**Motion carried.**

#### Current Business:

**Update on Bylaw approval process:** The Selectboard approved the proposal amended Bylaws as presented to the public at the hearing on December 17, 2019.

- Rebecca will make copies of the new bylaws for the PC, Selectboard, and DRB.

#### Continuation of discussion about community engagement ideas and future planning

Ballfield challenges at Cota field continue to be a problem for spring baseball and softball. The PC has discussed ideas for possible alternative spring practice and game field locations.

- Is there town land that could be used? Perhaps a portion of the fields near the solar array behind Robinson School. Parsonage Road would be a limiting factor due to the narrow entrance to Route 116.
- What pieces of property in the village area would the town be interested in seeking a “right of first refusal” for future town planning? Perhaps the parcel north of Parsonage Road.
- Discussion continued about field house idea, where one might go and how the town can continue supporting community-based sports

#### Jerusalem Schoolhouse

Jeff Keeney asked about the status of the Jerusalem Schoolhouse/community center project and what the Selectboard meeting discussions were so far. Rebecca summarized the last presentation from the JCC committee. The PC board members reviewed the information about the JCCC proposal that was provided to the Selectboard.

The planning commission’s role is to think about long-term planning for the town including how to be as efficient as possible with town funds and how to support any future efforts to focus on a town center. There was concern expressed about \$1M being proposed on a building/community space that is not in the village center near other town buildings.

The planning board did a cursory review of the proposal. After reviewing the report and survey results, the PC members had the following concerns and therefore strongly recommend a DRB site plan review before public warning:

- Incompatible mixed use – The combination of a public community space and a fire station/emergency response building will result in ongoing safety issues. The fire station needs its own space for safety and access.
- Parking – Adequate parking is needed for the two different uses—reserved spaces are required for the firehouse; all parking proposed is in the public right-of-way, which is not permitted. See Bylaws Sec. 313/Parking Areas.
- Setbacks – from the preliminary site plan A0.1, there appear to be other setback issues in addition to the rear property line for which a waiver would be required.
- Septic setback requirements need to be addressed
- Future usage assessment needed
- Architectural requirements and design standards outlined for the High-Density district must be met (Bylaws Sec. 223.A – Architectural Standards/HDRC)

Per the Town's zoning regulations, a Site Plan review is required; the PC recommends site plan review prior to a public warning to address the above concerns.

The board asked Rebecca to send the above statement to the Selectboard for consideration.

Rebecca is talking with Linnea Oosterman from the United Way tomorrow and will report back to the group about a date for meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.: Dan Nugent moved, Denny Barnard second.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder, ZA