

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission meeting
February 20, 2020
Approved

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

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

No visitor's business.

No changes to the agenda.

PC Current Business

Review of minutes of 2/13/2020

Motion: Jeff Keeney moved to approve the minutes of 2/13/20 as amended. Dan Nugent second.

Motion carried.

Discussion re: Town projects and process for review

The board discussed how town projects are brought forward, how they are vetted through the selectboard, and what systems are currently used to evaluate various proposals for municipal projects. Dan Nugent brought the Common Grant Application as a point of reference. He framed the discussion with the type of questions and checklists often used for grant applications of any kind. He proposed the Town use a similar model to help evaluate future project proposals.

The Planning Commission agreed that the following would be useful for establishing a standard process for municipal projects:

1. Standard questions for any town committee or group to answer when bringing a proposal to the Selectboard for consideration.
2. A set of criteria for review includes information about project scope, funds requested, work/activity that requires funding, and a point of contact for the project.
3. Agreement about how funds are requested and disbursed.
4. Process and mechanism for informing town residents about ongoing projects.

Similar to a "project review" summary that is submitted for any State-funded projects, it would be helpful for the Selectboard to receive a project summary at the outset of any proposal to help the governing body evaluate the request and identify the other town entities or committees who may need to be involved in the project going forward.

Town meeting appropriate requests, for example, must be submitted to the Town Clerk and approved by the Selectboard. For town projects, a similar process could be used to ensure information is shared across the municipal boards and there is an opportunity for questions and input.

The PC also recommends a standard checklist of questions to aid in communication and accountability.

Dan N. will bring more information to the next meeting for further discussion and consideration.

Community Engagement

Starksboro sports fields: Dennis Casey attended the last Selectboard meeting and asked the board for permission to explore the potential for an alternate sports field area in town. Cota field has suffered from flooding for the past few years and the sports program has been unable to hold baseball and softball

games at the field on a regular basis due to the wetness of the fields. There are also significant drainage issues affecting the fields and the parking area. The Selectboard gave verbal approval for exploration of potential alternate sports fields on the 14 acres behind the school.

The group discussed a variety of ideas and made a list of questions to explore regarding the land. Jeff Keeney will assemble some information and bring to the next meeting (topo map, septic capacity, soccer and ballfield layout specs, etc.) Jason Barnard offered assistance with land use planning and possible surveying as well.

Sugar on Snow planning:

Rebecca will find out what sort of space will be available for municipal groups and the board will discuss ideas at the next meeting.

Delinquent Tax issues

Dennis Casey, Amy McCormick and Rebecca Elder met after the last PC meeting to follow up on the delinquent tax issues and the problems the town has in collecting taxes from residents in the ACCT owned mobile home parks. Amy and Rebecca will help draft a letter to the local Addison County legislators seeking assistance with the situation in Starksboro.

The PC will extend an invitation to the legislators to attend one of their meetings in April.

Motion: Dan Nugent moved to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Jeff Keeney second.

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder

Next meeting: 3/5/20 at 7pm