

Starksboro Planning Commission

Minutes of Sept. 15, 2022

Unapproved

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Jeff Keeney, Brad Boss, David Schmidt, Denny Barnard, Dan Nugent

Unable to attend: Dan Harris

Others present: Rebecca Elder (ZA), Alexsys Thompson

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:30 p.m.

Visitor's Business: none

Changes/Additions to agenda: Zoning update

Brief zoning update:

A formal complaint has been received from Steve and Jane Cooper regarding the wood processing business on Jerusalem Road. This has been an on-going complaint that 3 zoning administrators have handled over the past 3 years. The Coopers came to the Selectboard seeking action and were referred to the ZA for the process of filing a formal complaint. The ZA has researched, done site visits, and has composed a response. The Coopers have the right to appeal the decision of the ZA and the matter would be referred to the DRB for review.

The ZA informed the PC and shared the specific complaints pertaining to sections of the current bylaws regarding smoke emissions, odors, sound trespass, and other areas related to conditional use and site plan review criteria. The PC will take this information under consideration as they continue review of bylaw revisions.

Zoning Bylaws & Planning Goals

1. Review discussions about village water systems, energy goals and use reduction, housing and development goals and needs
 - Board reviewed information from last discussion with Rick Davis and Jeremy Revell (Lincoln Applied Geology) about potential improvements and future expansion of the village water system. This is a key component to future planning for village development and capacity to support more residential units in the main village corridor.
 - Denny C. will follow up with Rick about next steps for evaluating capacity. Denny will arrange for conversation with a local plumbing supplier about what will be needed for the assessment and improvement planning.
 - Invite both Rick Davis and plumbing supplier to next PC meeting.
2. Continue discussion of specific areas of bylaws for review
 - Rebecca provided a list of current areas of the bylaws that have been identified for review and improvements. (attached) Discussion included whether to consider use of an external consultant for these items and if the town should apply for a community development grant to support that work. While there are grants available for bylaw improvements, what is being considered isn't a major rewrite but rather a refining of language, clarifying areas that are vague or contradictory, and simplifying where possible.
 - Group agree that the document format will be changed to include consecutive page numbers for easy navigation and locating information.
 - No other major formatting changes are needed. Some new/improved diagram example could be incorporated for clarity.
 - Next steps are to focus on specific sections identified and edit text

3. Review survey draft and date for distribution
 - The board reviewed a draft of the survey based on the previous conversation focused on 4 questions. After further discussion, the group agreed that the information they most want to gather from the community pertains to density requirements (i.e. how many lots can be developed in a given area/zone) and uses of land (i.e. what uses are allowed in the various districts and what type of review is required for permitting).
 - Lexy Thompson offered to work with Rebecca on revising the draft language and writing an introduction to include with the survey to help folks understand what the planning commission is looking for and why.

ARPA Committee Update

Jeff summarized the recent ARPA committee meeting where 4 applicants came to present their request to the town. These included: town records archiving, broadband access, and two proposals related to housing and support services in Addison County. The committee will continue to accept proposals through Dec. 31, 2021. One is expected from the Library for an improved heating and HVAC system and another is expected from the Village Water Co-op.

Review of Minutes

Motion: Jeff Keeney made a motion to approve the minutes of 9/1/22. Denny Barnard seconded.

Motion approved unanimously.

PC Roundtable

Discussion of the zoning issues in Middlebury regarding the small airport and neighbor complaints. State ruled the airport cannot be expanded.

Motion to adjourn:

Brad Boss moved at adjourn at 9:10 p.m. Dan Nugent seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder, ZA