

**I - Call to Order**

PC Members attending: Dennis Casey, Chair, Norm Cota, Hugh Johnson and Dan Nugent.  
Others attending: Maurice and Lisa Trayah, Robert Turner, Scott DeBaise and Dave Wetmore.

7:00 PM –Dennis called the PC meeting to order.

**II- Addition and Deletions**

None

**III - Review of Minutes**

Review of 4/16/2015 minutes- Quorum not present, no action. PC will approve next meeting  
Review of 6/18/2015 minutes- Quorum not present, no action. PC will approve next meeting

**IV - Visitor business and discussion of PC information items:**

PC is meeting throughout the summer only on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of June, tonight July 16 and August 20.  
These meetings are to discuss the proposed unified Bylaw and to receive comments on them.

**V- PC Business**

PC invited those attending to ask questions and provide comments on the draft Bylaws.

Lisa Trayah- asked about what the term unified referred too? Dennis explained that presently the Town has separate zoning and subdivision regulations, the history of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment and Development Review Board (DRB) and their respective duties. The merger of the Zoning and subdivision regulations cleans up discrepancies between the 2 documents and provides the DRB with a more consistent and clear bylaw and review process. Dan Nugent noted that the present Bylaws leave a lot of room for interpretation which has not always served the Town well.

Lisa asked about the “special district standards” which seem quite strict. Hugh and Dave spoke about these sections which are outlined in each district. The term “strongly encouraged” is not “shall” which is much stronger. The point of these standards are to guide development which is “in character with the surrounding neighborhood”. These standards are not meant to be an obstacle to development.

Robert Turner- asked how the development of this proposed Bylaw was guided by the Town Plan? PC disused the Town Plan goals around conservation of agricultural resources, cluster development, protection of the Towns infrastructure. Additionally the Forest Conservation district uses has remained unchanged. PC shared the concept of density based zoning (DBZ), building rights and the flexibility that DBZ provides to property owners. Robert made the point that the DRB has the final say and their decision is subject to the Boards leanings. Dan noted that this is true however the stronger more comprehensive bylaw being proposed will leave less room for DRB interpretation. Robert suggested that the PC provide examples of how density based zoning, if implemented, would compare to a SD under the current regulations. PC agreed and noted that there are some examples in the Bylaw but that more specific examples would be helpful.

PC presented and discussed at length site engineering and resource protection standards that seek to protect water quality, erosion and storm water control and Town infrastructure. Robert asked if these

standards address water quality standards provided for in recently passed H-35. H-35 had not been passed at the time the Board was drafting the Bylaw and we are unsure if the rules have even been written yet. However, the Bylaws provisions around storm water and erosion control are stricter than the States rules currently in place, which is a good start. Robert stated that even the Towns will be required to comply.

PC outlined the provisions for home occupations, home businesses and on farm business opportunities. Starksboro does not have a significant commercial aspect to its economy but there are many Starksboro residents that work from home or farm operation. It was clear from past forums, that residents strongly support at home and farm based employment opportunities. The PC feels that this Bylaws supports home based opportunities and the agricultural community’s efforts to diversify. Currently, agricultural enterprises are exempt from zoning as they are compliant with the Acceptable Agricultural Practices. Most agricultural business don’t feel that is enough so this Bylaw seeks to provide more agricultural and forest based business opportunities.

Dave mentioned that the Bylaws include mobile home park standards. It was noted that Addison County Community Trust did not help to develop the standards but were asked on many occasions to participate in this discussion or to provide guidance. Robert asked if they have looked these over? Dave indicated they were not sent a copy. PC suggested that they should be sent a copy and that the Towns attorney and ACRPC should also be sent a copy for their review, especially in light of H-35. Dave will do.

Scott Debaise- stated that he had not read the Bylaws yet and was here to listen to the discussion. He did ask about the quick stop that was proposed many years ago cross from his residence. Denny noted that the Zoning Board did not act because the application had been withdrawn.

Zoning District changes- Dave outlined, using the projector, where the present district boundaries are and the proposed changes. PC noted that the changes reflect development patterns that have been made even before zoning was adopted . Specifically, the PC has proposed;

- shrinking the High Density and Commercial (HDRC) district in South Starksboro
- expand the HDRC to Tatro Road south of the Village.
- adding a Medium Density Residential and Commercial (MDRC) district in South Starksboro and north of the Village on Rte. 116.
- Eliminate the Heavy Industrial district currently owned entirely by the Town and replace w/ASRR
- remove small pocket of Agricultural Scenic and Rural Residential (ASRR) along Rte. 17
- add to Forest Conservation (FC) district on east side of Rte. 17
- add Low Density Residential and Commercial (LDRC) along Rte. 17 Jerusalem Road and Gore Road

Robert asked if there was any prime agricultural soils proposed in the HDRC expansion to Tatro Road. PC responded that it had not been checked. PC observed that much of this expansion is currently developed and agricultural units are fragmented. PC hopes that infill opportunities along Rte. 116 and 17 in the HDRC and MDRC districts might lessen development pressure on the Towns class 3 roads. Robert noted that there has not been much development in the present HDRC districts. This is true but as in all land use decisions it is largely based on the present ownership objectives. The only thing the Town can do is guide development in appropriate directions. PC suggests that direction should not be encouraged along our class 3 roads if possible.

Robert- pointed out an error in section 332.E., remove “stormwater” at end of 1<sup>st</sup> sentence.

**VI- Future agenda items**

Provide prime agricultural soil overlay where HDRC changes are proposed. Provide copy of proposed Bylaw to Town Attorney and ACCT.

PC thanked those in attendance for coming out tonight.

**VII- Other business/ public comments**

**Please note- Next meeting–August 20, 2015 at Town Office- 7:00 PM.-**

**VII- Adjournment**

Norm moved to adjourn at 9:15 PM, Hugh 2nds. Motion carried 4-yes and 0-no