

**Town of Starksboro  
Planning Commission meeting  
April 5, 2018  
Approved Minutes**

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**Present:** Denny Casey, Jeff Keeney, Norm Cota, Dan Harris, Hugh Johnson

**Others present:** Rebecca Elder (ZA)

**Unable to attend:** Denny Barnard, Dan Nugent

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The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. No visitors were present.

**Minutes of 2/15/18**

**Motion:** Norm moved and Jeff seconded the motion to approve the minutes of 2/15/18

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

**Addition to the agenda:**

- Election of officers

**Election of officers**

**Motion:** Norm Cota nominated Dennis Casey for the position of Chair. Jeff Keeney seconded the motion.

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

**Motion:** Hugh Johnson nominated Jeff Keeney for the position of Vice Chair; Dan Harris seconded the motion.

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

**Motion:** Jeff Keeney nominated Hugh Johnson for the position of Secretary; Norm Cota seconded the motion.

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

**Town Plan Review**

The group discussed the schedule for next steps after the final review by the PC. A hearing will be scheduled 30 days from the next meeting plus 4± days for the processing. Jeff will not be here for the 4/19 meeting. Plan to have revisions back from Brandy for the 4/19 meeting and hope for approval and resolution so that the plan could be sent out to neighboring towns and interested parties as soon as possible. Rebecca will be out of town the week of April 23.

The interim zoning bylaws expire in October. The group discussed the process for review and approval by the Selectboard and the town residents.

Denny asked about the comment in the minutes of 2/15/18 re: p.9, Policy 3 in the Energy Plan – “Provide walking/biking paths in large developments” - What did this refer to and do we need to change anything? Jeff asked if the group wanted to take this out of the energy plan. Dan: It doesn't make sense in the large development section; it is not about transportation.

- Change to “Provide walking and biking paths.” Strike “large development”

- p. 5 – Change: Hinesburg zoning changed - **10 acre** not 2 acre
- p.7 – Change: “more than **2,000** feet above the lowest point in town
- p.10 – E.Coli – Denny asked about this; thought that the water had been clean
- p. 15 – Rearrange sentence under 3.2.03 Community Facilities to read: “In 1892, Starksboro Village School was constructed as a one-room building and then in 1941 was enlarged into the two-room Robinson School.”
- p. 19 – Change: “The town’s subdivision and zoning regulations are....” to “The town’s **unified bylaws** are...”
- p. 20 – Changes to last paragraph on p.20 and top of p.21 to read:  
“In response to these concerns, when Starksboro adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1993, much of its upland forestland was placed into a zoning district where year-round homes are a conditional use. Public comments heard during this most recent plan revision suggest that public sentiment remains essentially the same – seasonal homes should not be converted and few to no year-round homes should be constructed in area characterized by difficult access and sensitive resources. Now the town regulates a seasonal use based on a standard that includes ownership of a primary, year-round residence elsewhere. (per interim bylaws)
- p. 23 – insert “Enhanced Energy Plan in Appendix 1”
- p.30 – Change “the Town Hall” to town buildings
- p. 32 – insert “and currently serves as the town library.”
- p. 42 – O2 – STRIKE Continue to use a permit cap to limit.....
- p. 47 – note the ref. to lines and also on p. 52 – P65

Dan noted that the “cost effective” piece is subjective – it is hard for the DRB to argue that it is cost effective. Dan – feels that the one on p52 should be mandated – big overhead transmission It is transmission – there is no benefit to the town – P65 backs up P33 – If you are going to do it, you are going to bury it.

If Velco needed to run transmission through here, upgrades would be needed.

This is referring to the BIG – transmission means from transfer station to the next transfer station.

Denny went around the table to see what opinions are:

Avoid is fuzzy. “to the greatest extent feasible”

Hugh – can you bury under a wetland?

Yes, you can dig underneath....

Norm ok with the language – prob won’t make a difference

Denny but our job is to plan.....next change could be 8 yrs from now....

Dan doubt this will happen within 8 yrs....would likely be in the pipeline already

Would need an Act 48 permit.....if our town plan says we don’t want it then that helps.

Dan would hate to see it, would be a very narrow corridor, could have a huge impact.

Construction of new overhead transmission lines should be buried.

- p.62 – What about this capital program and budget? This discussion started back in the 90s and it was determined to be a monumental task at that time. Now more of the information is available. Jeff noted there is a lot in the plan about the capital budget and potential, impact fees, etc. Denny said much is older information. The group discussed the possible benefits of a capital plan. Dan asked what the determining factors were in the decision not to pursue a capital plan in the past. Denny said the Selectboard

ultimately doubted that a capital budget would not help Starksboro. Particularly now that the town doesn't own the school, there is little need beyond roads. Jeff noted that you can't have impact fees without a capital budget. Hugh also pointed out that the language is "should" not "must" and is also about how to develop a capital budget if needed. As long as we are pushing and exploring avenues to address needs expressed in the plan, then we are essentially moving forward. Jeff asked if the language was removed and then the town wanted to pursue a capital budget, would the absence of that language hinder the progress? Dan suggested this might not be a policy but rather an objective or goal.

p. 62: Change: **P123 change to a goal – new G35 to be moved to p.55-6** – renumber policies under 4.9.04 to P123 and P124 (first policy removed; keep text and final should have only two policies instead of three)

### **Feedback on maps**

- More contrast between colors would be helpful. Some are hard to read.
- Rebecca to look for the energy maps – full/large scale maps of everything in the town plan – to have at the public hearings!!!!

The Energy committee requested an electronic copy of the draft plan.

**Subdivision parcel valuation** discussion to be continued at a later date if needed. Norm confirmed that land that remains in the same name and stays in the ownership will continue in that ownership and taxed as such until parcels are sold and developed.

### **Ideas for future agendas:**

Power line discussion – GMP speaker – explore the town's options. What is GMP's plan for this area long term? When we do invite the GMP representative, the Energy Committee would like to attend and listen. Dan asked what kind of questions we'd be asking? Policy? Technical? Challenges? Talk about what state is requiring of us? Given the infrastructure we have, is it possible? If not, what do we do and when might it become possible? Jeff said it might be useful to look at our energy plan vs. other towns like Lincoln, which has very little included (3 pgs)

- **Action:** Rebecca to compile edits and send to Brandy. We need these back ASAP.

**Motion to adjourn:** Norm Cota moved and Hugh Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn.

**Vote:** All in favor (5/0)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder  
Zoning Administrator