

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN  
PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

August 16, 2022  
6:00 P.M.

Municipal Building, Council Room

**PRESENT:**

Steve Conley, Chairman  
Steve St. Pierre, Vice-chairman  
Stephen Gould, Secretary  
Jeff McCabe  
Matt Smith  
Dan Luce, Alternate  
Jessica Cobb, Planner  
Cynthia Kirk, Recording Secretary

**ABSENT:** Harvey Austin, Derek Chretien

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

Bryan Belliveau, CEO  
Brittney Krebsbach, Novel Energy Solutions, LLC  
Patricia Reid  
Amos Reid

**The Board shall organize at its first regular meeting after the annual Town Meeting, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary each shall be elected by a majority vote, who shall serve until the next annual meeting.**

Steve Conley opened the discussion on the nominations.

Steve St. Pierre nominated Steve Conley for Chairman, seconded by Jeff McCabe.

Motion passed 5-0.

Stephen Gould nominated Steve St. Pierre as Vice-Chairman, seconded by Matt Smith.

Motion passed 5-0.

Stephen Gould nominated Jeff McCabe as Secretary, seconded by Steve St. Pierre.

Motion passed 5-0.

**1) QUORUM:**

Planning Board Meeting called to order at 6:00 P.M. Quorum was present.

**2) MINUTES OF THE July 19, 2022 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:**

Motion by Stephen Gould to approve the July 19, 2022 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Dan Luce. Motion passed 5-0.

**3) SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION:**

**A) Discussion of the Site Inventory & Analysis submitted by ME Skowhegan Reid CSG, LLC for the proposed 350 kw solar energy production facility to be located at 59 Norridgewock Ave. (Assessor's Map 31, Lot 8).**

Brittney Krebsbach from Novel Energy Solutions, LLC gave a brief description of the proposed project.

Jeff McCabe asked if the snowmobile trail that runs along the back of this property will be able to still be used. Ms. Krebsbach said that she wasn't aware that there was a trail there.

Patricia Reid said that every year the Snowhawks contact her about being able to use the back of her property. She has always allowed them but isn't sure if there will be enough room now with the solar array. Brittany said that she would have to take a look at where the trail is located. Even if they had to move the fencing for the solar array back a few feet to allow for the trail it shouldn't be an issue. After looking at the plan, Brittany said there is 25 feet from the property line to where the fencing is located. She said they may be able to add an additional 5 feet if they move the fencing a little.

Ms. Krebsbach had mentioned during the project description about not being able to have the visual impact study completed in time if they want to be able to have the public hearing and review done at the September 6, 2022 Planning Board meeting. She said that after speaking with Joel Greenwood, in order to meet that deadline, they would have to submit their full application by tomorrow. That study is being worked on now and won't be ready for tomorrow. She asked if they would be able to submit the visual impact study after the application.

Steve Conley asked if this is possible. Jessica Cobb said that she had spoken with Joel Greenwood about waiving the visual impact study as part of the application completeness and he had told her it can't be waived. Therefore, in order to determine the application complete, that study has to be included in it. Cynthia said that there are certain timelines for the abutter's notices to be mailed and the public hearing to be posted. She said she can't start those until Joel determines that the application is complete. It doesn't look possible that they would be able to have the public hearing and review this project on the September 6, 2022 Planning Board meeting. Steve Conley said they would probably be looking at reviewing it on September 20, 2022.

**4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:**

**None**

**5) COMMUNICATIONS:**

**None**

**6) NEW BUSINESS:**

**A) Discussion of LD2003- An act to increase housing opportunities in Maine.**

Bryan said he put this on here to continue discussing it since more information seems to be coming out about it. He said that they still don't know the full implications of this bill but it's pretty clear that municipal government is going to be given more and more work if this goes through. He said it will impact how the town regulates future development. Other code enforcement officers are saying that there is a lot of negative aspects of this bill.

Jeff McCabe said he read through all of the material and there are some good points in it but there is also a lot of negative things as well. He said when a piece of legislature is kind of rushed through there are a lot of unforeseen consequences that they find out after the fact.

Bryan said that we don't currently regulate things such as short-term rentals and accessory dwelling structures. These have certainly caused issues in other communities and that is well documented. This is something they might want to look into. Another issue with this bill is

that they don't know how this would affect their current infrastructure such as our sewer system. We are still working on our sewers right now to get them all separated from the storm water system. Bryan also said minimum lot sizes would be affected to what we have now.

Jeff McCabe said that they should definitely bring this up at the joint meeting with the Selectmen next month.

Jessica Cobb said that all of the other towns that she deals with are pushing back against this bill as well as MMA. She said a lot of this bill isn't realistic or feasible not to mention how this would even be enforceable as well. She also said that the time frame that they are looking to have this in place is not even possible.

Bryan said this is something they are going to want to keep a close eye on.

**7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**None**

**8) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE:**

Jessica said she hasn't had a chance to start on the natural resources chapter yet. She is hoping to get started on it next week. Now that they have a new director at KVCOG her and Joel should be freed up more to work on it.

**9) ITEMS BY:**

- **SELECTMEN:**

- **DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

Bryan said the Appalachian Trail project on Malbons Mills Rd. has to make about an 8-foot adjustment to the road location because of ledge that they have encountered. He said they are going to have it surveyed as built. He is able to approve this minor change but he will certainly keep them updated.

Bryan said he was at the KVCAP housing site last week with Brent Dickey and Rick Labbe. There were some questions about the sewer tie-ins. He said tomorrow he has a meeting to discuss combining the KVCAP sewer work with the CSO 3.6.1 town project that is going out to bid.

He said that on the Eaton Mountain Solar project, Revision has sold the project but is still very active in the project such as with the buffering. He said that Nate Niles has been in touch with both of the abutters and is close to having an agreement with Travis Bickford regarding buffering. Bryan said that as far as Dan and Kim Gray are concerned Nate has provided them with 3 options in regard to the buffering. Those options include the original buffering plan which the Gray's don't want or moving the plantings onto the Henshaw property which Revision would not like because it could shade the project. The last option would be to pay the Gray's a monetary sum and allow them implement their own type of buffering they want on their property. He believes that Kim and Dan Gray seem to be in agreement with the last option. He has told Nate Niles that a Certificate of Occupancy cannot be issued for this project until this is settled.

Steve Conley said it would be great if they could get a map showing where all of these solar arrays are located in town so they can see how much area these are taking up in town.

Steve St. Pierre said that they might want to also look at the fees that the town is charging for these projects as well. Bryan agreed that the fee scheduled should be reviewed for these building projects. It was decided to add that to the agenda for the joint Planning Board and Selectmen meeting.

- **MEMBERS:**

Jeff McCabe said he was reading the minutes from the last meeting and someone had submitted a letter regarding pedestrian safety on the Southside of town. He said that if not at the joint meeting coming up, but at some point, having the Planning Board members be more involved with other committees in town such as the sidewalk committee since this is tied into what they do.

Steve St. Pierre asked if they should follow up with the sidewalk committee regarding the sidewalk on Norridgewock Avenue and the KVCAP housing project. Bryan said KVCAP doesn't plan on being ready to occupy those buildings until 2023 and they are still working on setting up the escrow account that was required.

- **CHAIRMAN:**

- **STAFF:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion by Stephen Gould to adjourn at 7:03 p.m., Seconded by Steve St. Pierre.  
Motion passed 5-0.

**Minutes approved on September 6, 2022**

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**Chairman**

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