

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

September 7, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

Steve Conley, Chairman
Steve St. Pierre, Vice Chairman
Stephen Gould, Secretary
Harvey Austin
Jeff McCabe
Matt Smith
Derek Chretien
Joel Greenwood, Planner
Cynthia Kirk, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Justine Drake, Haley Ward
Bryan Belliveau
Kate Drummond

Matthew Carter, Haley Ward
Jason Gayne
Christine Almand

Steve Conley, Chairman opened the public hearing, at 7:00 PM, to hear any comments or questions on the Site Plan Application submitted by Haley Ward on behalf of the Town of Skowhegan for the new proposed Public Safety Building to be located at 14 Dunlop Lane (Assessor's Map 4, Lot 4-2).

Justine Drake from Haley Ward gave a brief presentation of the project.

Steve Conley asked if anyone from the public would like to comment or ask questions.

Jason Gayne said he has concerns about the pre-bid process and how it was done which has made him wonder if this whole project will be rushed through without the public knowing what is happening. He said the public notice for the pre-bid meeting went out late then the meeting was a day or two after the notice which doesn't seem like a lot of time to allow different contractors to know about it. Jason said it seems like this whole project has been more behind the scenes then out in the open. Mathew Carter from Haley Ward said that isn't their intention. He said this project was advertised in the Bangor Daily News, the Kennebec Journal and the Morning Sentinel on Saturday. He said their normal bid practices are to have the pre-bid meeting within the first week. Jason said he understands they want to get thing moving on this project but it seems to him that this project is not being very transparent in what is happening and wonders if that is how it is going to continue. Mathew Carter said there isn't any behind the

scenes things going on. He said the construction documents are available here in the town manager's office and it will be a public bid opening as well. Harvey Austin asked Jason Gayne if he was referring to the ranked choice voting that took place when the location was chosen. Jason said he isn't referring to that right now. Harvey said the only way that this even got approved was because they used the ranked choice voting to get it to pass. Christine Almand stated that the bid specs were provided to the Selectmen weeks before and they also have been in her office as well. She said in addition to that they in fact had 11 companies attend the pre-bid meeting.

No other questions or comments were received. Steve Conley closed the public hearing at 7:08 pm

- **QUORUM:**

Planning Board Meeting called to order at 7:08 P.M. Quorum was present.

- 2) **MINUTES OF THE August 17, 2021 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:**

Motion by Jeff McCabe to approve the August 17, 2021 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Harvey Austin. Motion passed 6-0.

- 3) **SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION:**

- A) **Discussion and decision on the Site Plan application submitted by Haley Ward on behalf of the Town of Skowhegan for the new Public Safety Building to be located at 14 Dunlop Lane (Assessor's Map 4, Lot 4-2).**

Jeff McCabe said that 72 parking spaces seems like a lot and was wondering where they got that number from. Justine said that is what is required within the Site Plan Ordinance for this size building.

Stephen Gould said that they haven't asked for any waivers however they aren't paying any fees for this application which is in the ordinance. Should they have asked for a waiver for the fee? Joel said if the fee had been required and paid, it would in fact have been the town paying itself. Typically, with town projects that is why the fee is automatically paid.

Harvey stated that for the first time in 25 years he feels that this entire project has been biased. He said first of all rank choice voting is the most crooked way to have something voted on. Also, he feels that is putting this new fire station on a hill is completely wrong. He said that sooner or later there will be blood on the town's hands because of this location on a hill and how things are going to happen at that intersection. Harvey said he does not want to have anything to do with that and that is why he is abstaining from voting on this project at all.

Steve Conley asked if there were any other questions. There were none.

Motion by Jeff McCabe to approve the Site Plan application submitted by Haley Ward on behalf of the Town of Skowhegan for the new Public Safety Building to be located at 14 Dunlop Lane (Assessor's Map 4, Lot 4-2). Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. 3-0-3 (Harvey Austin, Stephen Gould and Derek Chretien abstained from voting)

Motion by Jeff McCabe to forego having Joel Greenwood read the Conclusions of Law. Seconded by Derek Chretien. Motion passed 6-0.

Joel Greenwood read the Findings of Fact for the Public Safety Building project. Harvey commented that in the FOF it should state that it will change the traffic flow at that intersection. He said the everyday traffic will change because the lights change there automatically whenever an emergency vehicle is going through them. Steve Conley said he doesn't really agree with that. He said the additional traffic will be small compared to the amount that already goes through there. Steve also said that even though they will have 72 parking spaces, they won't always be completely full all of the time unless there is a special event. Harvey said that not including emergencies, those police cruisers will be constantly be going up and down through there and that light will be red more than it is green on Madison Avenue. Steve Conley asked Bryan if there were any concerns when the Staff Review Committee met regarding the traffic. Bryan said there wasn't. Harvey said that he doesn't care if it changing the traffic or not but it should not say in the FOF's that it isn't going to affect the traffic at all.

Jason Gayne stated that with the future plan of adding several new businesses to the shopping plaza located at the same intersection, someone is definitely going to need to look at that triangle intersection in the future to help prevent a situation with traffic like they have in the downtown area.

Steve Conley asked Harvey what he would like to change on this. Harvey said it should be changed in the FOF that this project will change the traffic flow.

Motion by Jeff McCabe to approve the Findings of Facts with removing the statement regarding there are no changes in traffic flow. No 2nd was made. Motion failed.

Steve St. Pierre said he doesn't see the need to remove that statement completely. He said they could just state where the estimate of the trips per day came from. Harvey said it should be removed.

Motion by Jeff McCabe to approve the Findings of Facts as read. No 2nd was made. Motion failed.

Motion by Jeff McCabe to approve the Findings of Facts with the change stating "There is no significant increase in traffic from this proposal and although there will be a change in traffic flow, there is still adequate capacity to accommodate the additional traffic generated by the development." Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 4-0 (Harvey Austin and Stephen Gould abstained).

4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:

None

5) COMMUNICATIONS:

None

6) NEW BUSINESS:

A) Discussion and decision on the Flood Hazard Permit Application submitted by AC RVA, LLC for the property located at 942 Waterville Rd. (Assessor's Map 14, Lot 19) for the Loon Cove Campground.

Bryan explained that there has been an amendment to the originally approved Flood Hazard permit for this project and that is why they have come back to the Planning Board with this. Since the amendment to the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance was approved, they have now been able to change to minimum size of the campsites.

Motion by Harvey Austin to approve the Flood Hazard Permit Application submitted by AC RVA, LLC for the property located at 942 Waterville Rd. (Assessor's Map 14, Lot 19) for the Loon Cove Campground. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 6-0.

B) Discussion and decision on the Flood Hazard Application submitted by Michelle and Bryan Ouellette for the property located at 72 Woodcock Ln. (Assessor's Map 39, Lot 9).

Bryan explained that this permit is for shoreline stabilization. He said that everything in this permit application meets the ordinance.

C) Motion by Harvey Austin to approve the Flood Hazard Application submitted by Michelle and Bryan Ouellette for the property located at 72 Woodcock Ln. (Assessor's Map 39, Lot 9). Seconded by Stephen Gould. Motion passed 6-0.

7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

8) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE:

Joel asked if anybody had any questions or comments regarding the housing section that he provided to the Planning Board at the last meeting. Jeff McCabe said he had a question regarding temporary housing and long-term or short-term rentals. He asked if there is a certain point when a short-term rental such as at the motels turns into more of a long-term rental. Bryan said the town does not currently have an ordinance that regulates those.

9) ITEMS BY:

• SELECTMEN:

None

• DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Christine Almand said she was all set.

Bryan Belliveau said the Plumbing Code will be changing to the 2021 edition at some point. He also said he will be meeting with Main Street coming up regarding the housing crisis in Skowhegan.

- **MEMBERS:**

Harvey said he had a friend ride their ATV from their home in Norridgewock to Waterville, have dinner and ride it home. He said the town of Skowhegan is missing the boat on this one and there is no reason why we shouldn't be cashing in on this activity. Stephen Gould said that the ATV club they have created for Skowhegan meets every 4th or 5th Tuesday each month to discuss this.

Stephen Gould asked if we have gotten any more information about the Charter School's parking plan. Bryan said they have not heard from them yet. Joel said he will follow up with them. Stephen said it is just frustrating that after all this time they still haven't met the conditions of approval. Stephen St. Pierre said maybe we need to send them a letter with some real consequences if they don't comply within 30 days. Bryan said he can issue a notice of violation if they want him to and it is approved by the Selectmen. Steve Conley said we can invite Travis Works to the next meeting to discuss this further. Steve St. Pierre also asked if they could get copies of any agreements that the town has with any other businesses using the municipal parking lot. Cynthia said she will send those to them.

- **CHAIRMAN:**

- **STAFF:**

Joel said that the next chapter he will be working on with be the agricultural/ environmental section. He also mentioned that the Sappi Mill is giving tours that he will be going on shortly.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Derek Chretien to adjourn at 7:02 p.m., Seconded by Stephen Gould.
Motion passed 5-0.

Minutes approved on September 21, 2021.

Chairman
