

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

October 5, 2021

7:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT: Harvey Austin, Derek Chretien

PUBLIC PRESENT:

None

• **QUORUM:**

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

2) **MINUTES OF THE September 21, 2021 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:**

Motion by Matt Smith to approve the September 7, 2021 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 2-0-2. (Stephen Gould & Jeff McCabe abstained)

3) **SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION:**

None

4) **ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:**

None

5) **COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

6) **NEW BUSINESS:**

A) **Discuss upcoming joint Planning Board and Selectmen meeting scheduled for October 19, 2021 @ 6:00 pm.**

Stephen Gould said that it appears the Selectmen would like to discuss the use of the Municipal Parking lot so that should be on the agenda for the meeting. Jeff McCabe said at the last meeting it looks like Jason Gayne mentioned updating some of the town's

ordinances so that should be brought up at the meeting. When he had watched a recent Selectmen's meeting the Animal & Fowl ordinance was mentioned so that is one, they should look at. Steve St. Pierre said they should also check with Bryan Belliveau about any other ordinances that should be looked at and possibly updated.

Steve Conley said that they should discuss with the Selectmen future developments in town and maybe coming up with some sort of graduated zoning to help protect property owners. They have had a lot of people come forward looking for some sort of zoning when it comes to the solar arrays being built. This should be something discussed with the Selectmen. Stephen Gould agreed that Skowhegan is getting big enough that they should look at possible zoning. Joel said if you are looking at zoning you can make it pretty flexible to still allow people to be able to use their property. He said the Comprehensive plan can also make recommendations as far as determining possible zones.

Jeff McCabe suggested talking about the 2nd bridge possible locations and the next steps of the process. Steve St. Pierre said they have had a public meeting to discuss the proposals and now he believes they are looking for more feedback from the tax payers. Joel said it has currently come down to 2 options which include a bridge beside this municipal building that connects to Route 150 or a location further down the river by the Eddy. An eco-study is what they are working on now. Stephen Gould said they can still discuss it with the Selectmen.

Steve Conley said that if Bryan has items to discuss he would like him to let them know before the meeting so they can be prepared. Cindy will make sure he does.

Steve Conley mentioned talking to the Selectmen about acquiring properties when they become available. Instead of allowing the private sector scoop them all up the town could work on creating nice living and/or commercial spaces which in turn would help encourage growth and tax base. Joel agreed because if there were investors looking into places in Skowhegan then that would provide some leverage and opportunity for the town as well as it would help with planning for the future of Skowhegan. Steve Conley said if the town had some foresight for the future, then the Public Safety Building could have been built where Whit's End because there was a time when that spot was for sale before they had done all of the upgrades to it so it would have been a lot more cost effective for the town to purchase it back then. Stephen Gould said that SEDC has purchased property in the past but a lot of those structures have just been torn down. Steve St. Pierre said that we need another sort of committee that would work on this because instead of just tearing down buildings they should have a plan in place for the property first.

7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Steve Conley asked to put the Charter School Parking Plan on the agenda for the November 2, 2021 Planning Board meeting.

8) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE:

A) Housing section review

Joel said they had looked at this section at the previous meeting and he just wanted to see if anyone had anything to add to it or change in it. Steve Conley said that they had talked about focusing certain areas for residential development previously. He said that a lot of people are moving here from other states right now and it would be nice if there were some nice residential areas. Joel said if you are looking to make certain areas for residential

homes then in essence you are talking about having zoning. However, they could suggest certain potential areas for residential growth in the plan.

Jeff McCabe said there is also a need in town for short term rentals whether it be for hospital personnel or people that need a temporary place while they are buying a house.

Steve Conley mentioned it would be nice if someone would buy the island in the river that is for sale and somehow develop it or somehow tie it in with the Run of River. Stephen Gould said if people want to do things now is the time because there is a lot of money out there to be had.

9) ITEMS BY:

- **SELECTMEN:**

- **DEPARTMENT HEADS:**

- **MEMBERS:**

Steve St. Pierre mentioned that Darryl White from Lake George is working with Main Street and other entities to create a downtown design committee. Steve said he is hoping that this group will bring all of these other groups together to help plan for the future development of town. Joel said that he has been asked to be on that committee.

Jeff McCabe said it would be nice that if people come and speak at their meetings that they state their name and also who they are representing. Sometimes when they step up to speak it is hard to tell who they are speaking on behalf of. Steve Conley said he can start asking them when they step up to speak.

Stephen Gould said he went through Burger King and the work they have done up there is really nice. However, because of their shortage of help they have had to change their hours and are only open 11am-7 pm. Steve Conley said he has seen it in other towns also and a lot of places are closed certain days of the week now.

- **CHAIRMAN:**

- **STAFF:**

Joel said he had an inquiry about another potential solar array up by the bowling alley. He directed them to the new solar ordinance and they contacted him back saying it shouldn't be a problem to meet the ordinance.

Cynthia reminded them the November 2, 2021 Planning Board meeting will be held at the Recreation Center due to voting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Stephen Gould to adjourn at 8:15 p.m., Seconded by Matt Smith.

Motion passed 4-0.

Minutes approved on October 19, 2021.

Chairman
