

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

June 15, 2021

6:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT: Stephen Gould, Secretary, Brady Chapman

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Bryan Belliveau, Code Enforcement Officer
Dave Pelton, KVCAP
Dana Littlefield
Dan Black
Ryan Senatore
Leah Rachin, Drummond Woodsum

Michelle Prince, KVCAP
Gail Gibson, KVCAP
Will Savage
Nathan & Stephanie Vansoest

Steve Conley, Chairman opened the public hearing, at 6:00 PM, to hear any comments or questions on the proposed Site Plan Application submitted by KVCAP for the property located at 26 Mary Street.

Dave Pelton from KVCAP gave a brief presentation of the project.

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

-Gail Gibson said that she is very much in support of this project. She had lived in Skowhegan for 30+ years and she now lives about one mile from where this project is happening in Norridgewock. Gail said she also just became a member of the KVCAP Board. She said she is really excited about this project and we definitely need quality work force housing in this town.

No other questions or comments were received. Steve Conley closed the public hearing at 6:03 pm

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.

Motion by Harvey Austin to table the organizational voting until the next meeting when everyone is here. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 4-0.

1) QUORUM:

Planning Board Meeting called to order at 6:10 P.M. Quorum was present.

2) MINUTES OF THE June 1, 2021 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:

Motion by Matt Smith to approve the June 1, 2021 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 4-0.

3) SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION

A) Discussion and decision on the Site Plan Application submitted by Kennebec Community Action Program for the property located at 26 Mary Street (Assessor's Map 8, Lot 52 B-4). The proposed project will consist of renovation the existing office-use building into 16 residential units and constructing a new 3-story building with 24 residential units in it.

Steve Conley asked if the Planning Board members had any other questions before they voted on this project.

Joel Greenwood said that one discussion that has come up per Greg Dore's memo is the potential for KVCAP contributing to construction of a sidewalk along Norridgewock Avenue.

Steve Conley asked if Joel had any suggestions of what could be asked of KVCAP regarding this sidewalk. Joel said it would be within reason per the ordinance to ask for KVCAP to put aside a certain amount of money in an escrow account to put towards the construction of the sidewalk. He said that he doesn't think that KVCAP should have to pay for it all.

Harvey said that he would rather see a certain footage of the new sidewalk be required instead of a certain amount of money because of inflation.

Joel said he spoke with Greg Dore regarding the price of sidewalks. The proposed sidewalk to go from Mary Street down to the Margaret Chase Smith Library would be a distance of 2250 feet. He said Greg gave him a price for the whole sidewalk of around \$300,000. Joel also figured out the cost of a sidewalk that would go from 26 Mary Street to the end of Mary Street and that would be approximately \$86,000. Joel said he doesn't really see a need for a sidewalk on Mary Street for the development. Harvey agreed. He said he would rather see one on Norridgewock Avenue instead to provide more safety for pedestrians.

Jason Gayne asked if this money would be placed in a separate escrow account for the Mary Street project or if it would end up in the general fund for the town to use on any sidewalks. Joel said it would need to be marked for this sidewalk only. Jason also asked if this will be asked of any future development to contribute money towards sidewalk construction. Harvey said it would depend on the project because this one will increase the pedestrian traffic on this road tremendously and this is being asked for safety purposes.

Motion by Harvey Austin to have KVCAP contribute \$100,000 towards the construction of a sidewalk along Norridgewock Ave. No Second. Motion failed.

Motion by Steve St. Pierre to have KVCAP contribute \$80,000 towards the construction of a sidewalk along Norridgewock Ave. between Mary Street and the Margaret Chase Smith Library. Seconded by Jeff McCabe. Motion passed 3-2. (Matt Smith & Harvey Austin opposed)

Dave Pelton asked if the money would have to stay in the escrow account for a certain amount of time. After some discussion, Steve Conley said that they can put a time limit on the condition of approval so if the town does not use the \$80,000 within the time limit the town would lose that money from KVCAP.

Motion by Jeff McCabe to add a 5-year limit from the time of occupancy to use the \$80,000 from KVCAP to construct the sidewalk on Norridgewock Avenue. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 4-0.

Motion by Steve St. Pierre to approve the Site Plan Application for the KVCAP affordable housing project to be located at 26 Mary Street with the following condition:

-That the developer provides an amount of \$80,000 to be placed in an Escrow account with the town of Skowhegan to be used exclusively for the construction of a sidewalk along Norridgewock Avenue from the junction of Mary Street to connect to the planned sidewalk at the Margaret Chase Smith Library. This money shall be held for five (5) years from the time of issue of the certificate of occupancy and must be used during this time period or be returned to the developer.

Seconded by Jeff McCabe. Motion passed 4-0.

Planning Board recessed from 6:35 pm – 6:52 pm to sign documents for KVCAP.

4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:

Nathan and Stephanie Vansoest presented an issue they are having with parking requirements at their new business to be located at 10 High Street. They will be doing speech and language pathology services at this location. They are having issues with coming up with enough required parking for their services. Another issue they have run into while trying to figure out the parking is a conflict with Holland's Variety Drug. The drive-thru for Holland's Drug takes up approximately 8 feet of their property in order to operate which means the drug store was not placed in the right spot when it was constructed. Nathan said what they are looking for is a variance and to be able to use some of the spaces within the town parking lot for their clients. Stephanie said they really want to be able to open this clinic soon because there is such a wait list for children to get access to the services they will be providing.

Joel said that there is a provision within the ordinance to allow any businesses in the downtown area to use the municipal parking lot. Harvey said he has no issue with them using it.

Steve Conley said he understands that Holland's Drug had some sort of agreement with the previous owner of 10 High Street to use some of that property for their drive-thru. Bryan said that agreement was never made legal. He said his recommendation is to allow them to use the municipal parking lot for the spaces they need. He said the only legal agreement made with a business to use the municipal parking lot is with Maine Grains. All of the other businesses in the downtown just use it as they wish. He suggested that the Planning Board can make a recommendation to the Selectmen to allow them to use the spaces they need. Steve Conley said he would support that.

Motion by Harvey Austin to recommend to the Selectmen that they allow Nathan and Stephanie Vansoest to use the necessary parking spaces they need in the municipal parking lot as they have been used by the previous occupants of the 10 High Street property. Seconded by Jeff McCabe. Motion passed 4-0.

Jason Gayne said he has been dealing with the Selectmen the past few weeks regarding use of the municipal parking lot. One of the issues he has had is in regards to allowing a mobile unit being able to park in the lot on weekends during the summer. He filled out the parades and processions form and submitted it to the town. He was then told that that wasn't the correct form and the town doesn't even have a form or fee schedule for this type of use.

Jason said he would like to have the Planning Board look into maybe coming up with some sort of ordinance or fee schedule that would allow a business to be able to set up in the lot for a weekend to help promote their business.

Steve Conley said that if there is no ordinance or law that prohibits this from happening in the town parking lot then whose to say why it can't be done then.

Jeff McCabe said he does think this is something they should work on. He said he has seen that parking lot on the weekends and it is mostly empty so he doesn't see why this couldn't be done. They might want to have some sort of time limit on how long a business could park there to promote their business. Steve Conley said maybe the town could have some sort of business exposure plan to allow this for new businesses coming to town to try it out.

5) COMMUNICATIONS:

None

6) NEW BUSINESS:

A) Bryan- Discussion about the Property Maintenance Ordinance.

Bryan said he would like to have the Planning Board look at the Property Maintenance Ordinance to see if we might be able to put some more guidelines in there regarding dilapidated structures. He has come across a lot of structures within town that are in need of serious repairs or should be torn down. With these types of structures, it can bring infestations of rodents and other issues. Harvey said he agrees but as a landlord he doesn't want to be held responsible for his tenant's structures that he doesn't own.

Steve Conley said he doesn't want this to allow the town to go after people who are poor and can't fix up their properties. He said we have an aging community and a lot of them can't afford to do the repairs and he doesn't want to force them out of their homes. Steve St. Pierre said they could then have the opportunity to direct the homeowners to services that are available to help them if need be. Bryan said he doesn't want to be able to just walk into people's homes, but he wants to have some sort of ability to be able to handle things like rat issues that are starting to effect abutting neighbors. Jeff said in the past there have been many services available through the town to help residents with repairs and he thinks those services are still available.

7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

8) ITEMS BY:

a) SELECTMEN:

None

b) DEPARTMENT HEADS:

c) MEMBERS:

d) CHAIRMAN:

e) STAFF:

9) ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Harvey Austin to adjourn at 8:02 p.m., Seconded by Matt Smith.

Motion passed 4-0.

Minutes approved on July 20, 2021.

Chairman
