

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

August 4, 2020

7:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

Steve Conley, Chairman
Todd Smith, Vice Chairman
Stephen Gould, Secretary
Steve St. Pierre
Kris Laney
Joel Greenwood, Planner
Dena Rich, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Brady Chapman, Harvey Austin

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Bryan Belliveau, Code Enforcement Officer
Nate Niles, Revision Energy
Jamie Swett

1) QUORUM:

Planning Board Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M. Quorum was present.

2) MINUTES OF THE July 21, 2020 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:

Motion by Stephen Gould to approve the July 21, 2020 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre.

Todd Smith asked if when they approved the Maine Water project at the last meeting, did they mention vinyl siding being prohibited in the motion. Steve Conley said he remembers them discussing vinyl siding but not sure if it was in the motion. Joel said that he is sure that the motion was typed up as it was made and he doesn't remember vinyl siding being in the actual motion. He said they can amend the minutes but can't amend the motion and approval of the plan.

Motion by Todd Smith to approve the July 21, 2020 Planning Board meeting minutes, with an amendment to the minutes stating that it was clearly discussed that they do not want vinyl siding to be used on the exterior of the new Maine Water Building. Seconded by Steve St. Pierre. Motion passed 4-0.

3) SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION

A) Discussion and decision on the proposed revision to the Bigelow Ridge Subdivision VII.

Jamie Swett explained that he purchased this land about 40 years ago and created this subdivision. He said over the years many of the lot lines have been changed to accommodate the neighbors. He is now in the process of selling his house and has offered

to sell the abutting neighbor a piece of his lot to allow him to have more area around his garage. That is why they are looking to do this subdivision revision.

Stephen Gould asked if Mr. Swett's house is still part of the 27-acre lot or if it's separate. Mr. Swett said it is part of the lot. He is selling the house and all of the acreage. Stephen also asked if the remainder of his property is a subdivision lot. Mr. Swett said no. Stephen asked if it is a numbered lot. Joel said he isn't sure. He said they should probably look at the original subdivision plan to see how this changes it. Stephen said they can't really judge what is being done based on the drawing they have in front of them. He asked Bryan if they could get a copy of the original plan.

Steve Conley asked if it is an issue with what Mr. Swett wants to do. Stephen Gould said there isn't however what they need to decide is if the plan that has been brought to them is sufficient enough to show the 2 changes that are being done. The change to the 27-acre lot owned by Mr. Swett and the change to the abutting landowners' lot. Joel said they don't want to cause any issues with deeds or title searches in the future. Mr. Swett said he believes the surveyor that drew up this plan did it this way so that they were able to see the proposed change clearly instead of having it very small on a plan that would show all 27-acres on it.

Stephen Gould questioned what will happen to the remaining 27-acres once this portion is removed. Steve Conley said it is just going to remain the same lot # because the piece he is selling off is going to be absorbed into the abutter's lot. Steve said he doesn't really see any issue with this revision because it is not creating any new lots and is only changing an interior lot line. Joel said the amendment they do today will supersede the original plan so it should be fine.

Motion by Todd Smith to approve the revision to the Bigelow Ridge Subdivision VII. Seconded by Kris Laney. Motion passed 4-0.

B) Discussion of the Site Inventory & Analysis submitted by Revision Energy for a proposed solar array project to be located on Eaton Mountain Rd. (Map 10, Lot 47).

Nate Niles from Revision Energy presented the proposed solar array project on Eaton Mountain Road. They have acquired the option to lease up to 35 acres in a hay field across from 328 Eaton Mountain Road. This would be an approximately 26-acre ground mounted solar array project. He said this would be about twice the size of the one they are constructing on East Ridge Rd. right now. Nate said they are going to be going through the entire plans review process with this project because of its size. This will include doing a site location & development permit with DEP as well as the review with CMP. He said the timeline they are looking at for beginning construction would be no earlier than April 2021. This site will be similar to the East Ridge Rd. project in terms of appearance including 7' perimeter fencing and rows of 12' tall solar panels with a gravel road for access to the site. He said since they are in the middle of a hay field there aren't any natural resources to worry about.

Todd Smith asked what the length of the lease would be. Nate Niles said it would be a lease of 25-35 years.

Steve Conley said they understand that on the other solar project on East Ridge Rd. Revision worked well with the abutting landowners to come up with a tree planting agreement to help buffer the view of the solar panels. He asked if they would be willing to do the same thing with this project. Nate said they would definitely be willing to work with them on that.

Joel asked what the capacity is looking like now in the area with all of these sites going in. Nate said since they are all pretty much limited to 5 MW then there is still plenty of room on the grid for this one. They will also be upgrading the power on this road from single phase to 3-phase which will be an added bonus for the homeowners.

Kris Laney asked if they mow the site periodically or use herbicides on them. Nate said they only mow the site occasionally. They are allowed to use herbicides per their DEP permit.

Joel reviewed the requested waivers on this project. Steve Conley said he read through them and they are all common sense waivers.

Motion by Kris Laney to grant all waivers as documented in the Site Analysis & Inventory. Seconded by Todd Smith. 3-0-1. (Stephen Gould abstained).

Joel said that if the Planning Board would like to do the site visit, they can.

4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:

5) COMMUNICATIONS:

None

6) NEW BUSINESS:

7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A) Update on the Public Safety Building

Joel said that Cindy was told that the last Public Safety meeting is available online for people to view. Steve Conley said he was not at the last meeting but from what he understands there are 3 sites that will be presented to the townspeople and one of the sites will be the current location of Whitt's End Restaurant. Stephen Gould said the other sites are East Madison Rd and downtown beside the Municipal building.

B) Update on the mobile seafood truck business.

Bryan stated that Cindy checked on this matter and was told that this has been brought up to the Selectmen and there isn't anything they can do since these trucks are located on private property. He said these businesses have their mobile permits from the state so they are all set. Steve St. Pierre said it isn't any different than the hot dog stands in town or the people selling vegetables down on Route 2 by the Eddy. Kris Laney said it also isn't any different then out of town contractors coming into Skowhegan, doing work and then leaving. They can't regulate everything that happens in town.

C) Charter School parking plan update.

Joel said he had gotten the response from Travis Works back in March but it was right when the whole corona virus hit so he had forgotten about it. Todd said it sounds like they want to police it themselves. He said he remembers that they were suppose to have a parking attendant in place by now. Steve Conley asked if anybody knew of any problems with parking right now. Nobody had heard that there were any issues at this time. Steve Gould asked if they should invite them in along with the Police Chief to see if there are any issues at this time. Bryan said that when he goes through there in the morning it is a nightmare with the school traffic and the trucks at Maine Grains. He said most of the school parking is being used by parents dropping off their kids. Steve Conley said they will send a letter to the Police Chief and see what has been happening back then. Joel said that Jason Gayne at

the Chamber of Commerce commented on Facebook live that they get a lot of complaints in his office.

8) ITEMS BY:

a) SELECTMEN:

None

b) DEPARTMENT HEADS:

None

c) MEMBERS:

Steve Gould asked about the fireworks ordinance. Joel said the public hearing will be on August 18th. The Selectmen will decide to put it on the town warrant for town meeting at that time. Steve Gould said he has a problem with the draft that they are presenting to the townspeople since it was the original draft from Joel and they never really worked on it. Todd Smith asked if the public hearing will be in person or virtual. Bryan said it will be virtual only. Steve Conley said that is too bad. He said it should be in person for reviewing ordinances. Joel said it isn't ideal but that is what most towns have been doing at this time.

d) CHAIRMAN:

e) STAFF:

Joel said that there was another 2nd bridge meeting he attended. They are still just reviewing the 3 options. Steve Conley asked what the options are. Joel said basically up river, in the downtown area or down river. That's about all he could really say. He said there will be a couple more municipal meetings and then there will be another public meeting.

9) ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Todd Smith to adjourn at 8:19 p.m., Seconded by Steve Gould.
Motion passed 4-0.

Minutes approved on September 1, 2020.

Chairman
