

**TOWN OF SKOWHEGAN
PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

October 6, 2020

7:00 P.M.

Council Room, Municipal Building

PRESENT:

Steve Conley, Chairman
Todd Smith, Vice Chairman
Stephen Gould, Secretary
Harvey Austin
Kris Laney
Joel Greenwood, Planner
Cynthia Kirk, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Brady Chapman, Steve St. Pierre

PUBLIC PRESENT:

Bryan Belliveau, Code Enforcement Officer
Dave Pelton, KVCAP

1) QUORUM:

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

2) MINUTES OF THE September 1, 2020 PLANNING BOARD MEETING TO BE APPROVED:

Motion by Stephen Gould to approve the September 1, 2020 Planning Board meeting minutes, as written. Seconded by Todd Smith. Motion passed 3-0-1. (Harvey Austin abstained)

3) SITE PLAN / SUBDIVISION

A) Discussion and decision on the requested Site Plan approval extension submitted by KVCAP for their Mary Street project.

Dave Pelton from KVCAP stated that they are requesting an extension to start this project. The site plan that was approved will not be changing at all. He said this is merely a funding delay that has caused them to ask for this extension. He thinks this should be resolved with the funding source within the next 3 months as long as it isn't delayed with covid again.

Harvey Austin said that he doesn't support issuing an extension because whenever they have in the past on other projects it has always caused issues.

Joel Greenwood said that the Planning Board can grant extensions in 6-month increments and KVCAP did meet the deadline for submitting the extension request within the year from when the Site Plan was originally approved. He doesn't see in issue with granting an extension.

Stephen Gould asked if the funding that was detailed in the original application still the same funding that has been delayed at this time or a different source of funding. Dave Pelton said it is the same funding source.

Harvey said that what they should do is go back and once all of their funding is in place then come back to the Planning Board for approval. Dave Pelton said that unfortunately that wouldn't work because the funding source that they are waiting on which is Maine State Housing requires the Planning Board approval first before they will give them the funding.

He also stated that the funding for this project comes from many different sources and all of the other sources other than Maine State Housing is ready to go.

Joel asked if the 6-month extension would be enough time for them. Dave Pelton said it would.

Stephen Gould said one of his concerns would be if the State laws changed between now and when they are ready to start construction in the Spring and they require different things for the funding. Would KVCAP then not be able to get that funding from them. Joel said that from what he understands is that they would be grandfathered because the plan is already approved.

Kris Laney asked if by granting this extension for this project would that take away from anyone else being able to develop in that area as far as sewer capacity and other resources. He said he doesn't want to tie up property when other things could potentially go there. Todd said the only problem he has with this is the time of year. KVCAP is only asking for a 6-month extension which would pretty much be through the winter months. He said he doesn't think anything else would be developed there in the winter months.

Stephen Gould asked what they would need to have done if they were to get the extension to be acceptable. Joel said that they would need to make an earnest start to the project. Bryan explained that there really are 2 parts to this project. They could definitely start on the renovation of the existing building even if the roads are still posted in March.

Dave Pelton offered that if they are not able to get started on this project within the timeframe of the extension then they would come back to the Planning Board with a whole new Site Plan approval process again.

Kris Laney asked when the extension would start and end. Joel said it would start from September 17th when the original plan was approved and end 6-months from that date.

Steve Conley said that from what he remembers from when this project was originally approved is that the sewer system will actually be improved by KVCAP so they really don't have to worry about them using up the resources in that area for other developments to happen. Bryan Belliveau agreed. Steve Conley said he doesn't see any reason why they shouldn't grant the extension.

Motion by Harvey Austin to not approve the extension for KVCAP. No second. Motion failed.

Motion by Stephen Gould to approve the 6-month extension for KVCAP for the Mary Street project to begin. Seconded by Todd Smith. Motion passed 3-2.

4) ITEMS BY THE PUBLIC:

Bryan Belliveau said he had received a call from Kim Gray regarding the solar array projects in town. She had stated to him that she was concerned about the joint meeting that was supposed to happen with the Planning Board and the Selectmen back in March not happening as of yet. They were supposed to be discussing solar arrays at that meeting. Bryan said they just want to make sure they are being heard on these projects as abutters. Cindy explained that this goes along with the communication they received from Travis Bickford as well because they are both referring to the Eaton Mountain Rd. solar project. Steve Conley said that this would make 3 abutters that are concerned about this project on Eaton Mountain. The other one is his son.

Joel said that they have gone through only Site Analysis with this project and are still waiting on a full application to be submitted.

Steve Conley said it might be a good idea for the applicant to get in touch with these abutters before they come to the Planning Board for approval to see if they can come up with a plan to have some sort of buffering installed. Joel said that Revision worked well with the

abutters on their other project on the East Ridge Rd. so he thinks they will be willing to work with these abutters. Steve Conley said they should also do a site visit as well.

5) COMMUNICATIONS:

A) Letter from Travis Bickford regarding the Eaton Mountain Solar Project.

This was discussed under Items by the Public.

6) NEW BUSINESS:

A) Discussion and decision on the Flood Hazard Permit submitted by John Lynch from Lynch Landscaping on behalf of Gary & Janice Davis for 530 Whittemore Hill Rd. (Assessor's Map 11, Lot 16A).

John Lynch said the owners have owned this property for sometime and they now the shoreline has had a lot of erosion over the years. They are looking to stabilize the shoreline by installing rip rap and securing it back up. They have already received their permit by rule from DEP for this project. Harvey said this makes total sense to him to be proactive and fix the shoreline before it gets worse.

Motion by Harvey Austin to approve the Flood Hazard Permit submitted by John Lynch from Lynch Landscaping on behalf of Gary & Janice Davis for 530 Whittemore Hill Rd. (Assessor's Map 11, Lot 16A). Seconded by Todd Smith. Motion passed 4-0.

B) Discussion and decision on the Flood Hazard Permit submitted by Brookfield White Pine Hydro LLC for 28 Weston Ave. (Assessor's Map 26, Lot 76).

Bryan explained that the river has taken out a lot of the banking from under the canoe portage behind the Federated Church on Island Avenue and it has become very dangerous for people to use. He said they are looking to shore up the bank and replace the steps for the portage.

Motion by Todd Smith to approve the Flood Hazard Permit submitted by Brookfield White Pine Hydro LLC for 28 Weston Ave. (Assessor's Map 26, Lot 76). Seconded by Stephen Gould. Motion passed 4-0.

7) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

8) ITEMS BY:

a) SELECTMEN:

None

b) DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Bryan Belliveau said that Joel and himself had a pre-application for another solar array project on Route 2 on the Skowhegan/Norridgewock line by Poulin Tractor.

c) MEMBERS:

Stephen Gould said that himself and some other people have formed an ATV club here in Skowhegan. They are trying to put together some sort of trail system in Skowhegan. It isn't going to be easy but they are trying.

Harvey said they all got a notice in with their tax bills regarding the proposed public safety and he doesn't like the fact that it appeared on the notice that you couldn't vote no on this proposal. He feels they should be able to use the upstairs and have a public meeting about this proposal. He feels in was underhanded what they put on the notice.

He said the other thing he wanted to mention was the vote coming up for choosing either appointed or elected for the town clerk and the road commissioner. He stated that this has gone to the voters 4 times already and it has failed every time. He said the town manager and the Selectmen have appointed several fire and police chiefs over the years but we have only had one clerk and one road commissioner over the last 20 years or so. He feels that this is happening underhandedly right now because we can't meet in person right now because of covid.

Todd Smith said that Maine will be entering stage 4 as of October 13th so he doesn't see any reason why the Selectmen meetings can't be open to the public now. He hopes that will be changing soon. Todd said he doesn't think that they should have people voting rank choice for the public safety building at the same time as having them voting for the bond for this project. It should have been done separately.

Todd said he thinks they should also be looking at the victualer's ordinance as well because it doesn't make sense to charge businesses to be able to have seating for their customers.

d) CHAIRMAN:

e) STAFF:

Joel said that the executive director at KVCOG has left so right now he is the interim executive director, community planner there as well as the only planner there at the moment so he is quite busy right now but he remains committed to covering Skowhegan.

He said he has been talking with Joel Lambke regarding the old KVI lot downtown and they will be coming to them probably this winter with their plans for the site.

9) ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Stephen Gould to adjourn at 8:08 p.m., Seconded by Todd Smith.
Motion passed 4-0.

Minutes approved on October 20, 2020.

Chairman

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