

**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**Benjamin Eddy Building, 6 South Killingly Road**  
**Wednesday: November 20, 2019**

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**A. Call to Order**

Anthony Renzi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**B. Roll Call**

Planning Board Members: Anthony Renzi, Chair; Warren Ducharme, Vice Chair; Helen Hardy, Secretary; Mike Carpenter, Lisa Johnston, David Paolissi

Staff: Jennifer Siciliano, Planner; Joanna Achille, Solicitor

Members of the public: Lynn Rider; Patti Moreau, Tax Assessor

**C. Approval of Minutes**

1. November 6, 2019

Anthony Renzi tabled the minutes until the December 4, 2019 meeting.

**D. Correspondence**

Jennifer Siciliano provided a November 2019 spreadsheet of all current subdivisions and their stages of progress.

Jennifer Siciliano and Mike Carpenter developed a spreadsheet for Future Agenda Items procedure. The Planning Board reviewed the items on the spreadsheet and ranked them by priority or when they would be in front of the Planning Board and worked on a system for accounting for the progress of each item:

Capital Budget – 12-18-2019

(1) Blighted buildings on Rt. 6

(2) Wind Turbine Ordinance

(3) Special Use / Variance Ordinance

(4) Revise prohibited uses

(5) Review GBM

(6) Farm/Forest accessory uses (March)

3-18-2020 Road & Bridge maintenance

Mike Carpenter moved, Lisa Johnston seconded, to move the Solar Ordinance to the next item on the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

**F Proposed Draft Solar Ordinance – Review & Recommendations**

There was general discussion on setbacks, landscaping, corner installations, and final approval after meeting all conditions. Mike Carpenters present a PowerPoint article on “Distributed Generation” which detailed all the conditions required.

Changes made to the solar ordinance since the November 6, 2019, revision were reviewed.

Patti Moreau, Tax Assessor, met with Seth Handy, attorney for Green Development on November 11, 2019, regarding the lawsuit he is bringing against the Town of Richmond regarding taxation on their solar installation. The lawsuit contends that no taxes should be paid to the town on any property owned by the solar company because they see themselves as a public utility “manufacturing” electricity and should be exempt from taxation. Patti Moreau suggested that because of the Richmond / Green lawsuit, the moratorium on solar installations should be extended until it is resolved. Ms. Moreau explained that she needs to give the town an idea of how much money will be available for budget considerations for the Financial Town Meeting in May and this taxation amount would be critical for her estimation.

Mike Carpenter moved, Lisa Johnston seconded, to pass the amended solar ordinance.

Motion passed 5 – 1. Warren Ducharme voted nay.

Lisa Johnston moved, Warren Ducharme seconded, to recommend that the Town Council continue the solar moratorium for six months more.

Lisa Johnston moved, Warren Ducharme seconded, to amend the motion to apply to major installations only.

Amendment passed 6 – 0.

Main motions passed 6 – 0.

Planning Board Minutes  
November 20, 2019

**E. Planning Board Responsibilities, Rules & Regulations**

Warren Ducharme moved, Lisa Johnston seconded, to table this item until the December 4, 2019 meeting.

Motion passed 6 – 0.

**G. Blight on Route 6**

The Planning Board have sent two letters to the Town Council asking that the Blight Ordinance be enforced.

Lisa Johnston suggested inviting the Zoning Official and the Enforcement Official to come to the Planning Board to receive encouragement on enforcing the Blight Ordinance.

Joanna Achille suggested creating incentives for individual property owners to take action.

Mike Carpenter suggested committing money to the Economic Development Committee. He explained that Jon Restivo had written an incentive program for the EDC but that the committee has no funding and no budget.

Joanna Achille explained what legal possibilities are available to the town that would allow owners to maintain their businesses while removing derelict buildings and signs. Jennifer Siciliano said she could set up a joint meeting with the Planning Board and the EDC.

There was further discussion on possible solutions, including asking that each Town Council member receive the letter regarding blight enforcement and to read the letter aloud during public comments at the Town Council meeting and ask that it be on the agenda, also to extend the EDC to fund incentives and enforcement.

**H. Adjournment**

Warren Ducharme moved to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Hardy, Secretary