

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
Benjamin Eddy Building, 6 South Killingly Road
Wednesday: February 19, 2020

A. Call to Order

Chair Anthony Renzi called the Planning Board to order at 7:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call

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

Staff: Jennifer Siciliano, Planner; Joanna Achille, Solicitor

Town Officials: Patty Moreau, Tax Assessor

Members of the public: Martha Thoman, Paul Allen, Charlie Chase, Mark Oteau, George Sackal, Joe & Audrey Carey

C. Approval of Minutes

1. February 5, 2020

Mike Carpenter moved, Bob Moreau seconded, to approve the minutes of February 5, 2020.

Motion passed 6 – 0 – 1, with one abstention by Warren Ducharme who was not in attendance.

D. Correspondence

1. Planner Jennifer Siciliano included a priority list in their packets.
2. Information on solar was presented by Paul Allen.
3. Lisa Johnston advised the board that she would be resigning.
4. Anthony Renzi reported that he gave the Town Council the Gloucester Zoning Ordinances regarding abandoned buildings.
5. Mike Carpenter suggested that the Planning Board appear at the budget hearings to advocate for a full-time Planner, a full-time Building Inspector, and for funds needed for the Economic Development Committee. Patti Moreau said that the first thing to do would be to meet with Treasurer Kelli Russ.

E. Proposed Solar Ordinance

Anthony Renzi read the Purpose, Definitions and text of the Solar installations.

Discussion:

Item (e) Solar Installation, (c.) “The planning board may waive requirements of the land development review process upon written request of the applicant at pre-application.”

Bob Moreau moved and it was seconded to have it say “may not” waive. It was decided to leave it in place as is. No vote taken.

(e.) (5) Landscaping Plan

George Sackal of Snagwood Road expressed concern about the removal of topsoil. Paul Allen also expressed concern of removal of material and topsoil and about enforcement. Mr. Sackal asked why we have to allow solar at all. Further discussion regarding rights of property owners.

Helen Hardy moved, Robert Moreau seconded, to add “f. Movement of topsoil off-site is prohibited.”

Motion passed 4 – 2 – 1. Anthony Renzi abstained. Lisa Johnston and Warren Ducharme voted no.

(9) Security fencing, a. “A fence shall surround the perimeter of the installation of no less than six feet in height and shall be black, green, brown, or another natural color that blends into the vegetative surroundings.”

Mike Carpenter moved, Bob Moreau seconded, to make the fence no less than “eight” feet high.

Motion passed 6 – 1. Warren Ducharme voted no.

Discussion on emergency access: Providence Water Supply Board recommended using grass or crushed stone for the access road. Wording left unchanged.

(13) c. “A cash or surety bond to cover the cost of removal...”

Mike Carpenter moved, Bob Moreau seconded, to remove the words “cash or”.

Motion carried 6 – 1. Warren Ducharme voted no.

Joe Carey said that no work should be allowed until the site plan is marked out and approved by the Zoning Official before work can begin. Joanna Achille said that before final plan approval, the Zoning Official must certify that the plan has been followed. Mike Carpenter suggested requiring a GPS site map. Warren Ducharme said that you can require a disinterested third party “peer review” engineer that the town can call on and be confident of for an opinion.

Jennifer Siciliano said they are putting in for an engineering consultant. The applicant pays.

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Paul Allen suggested that 40 acres is too much, and that they allow no clearing before approval of the permit. He further stated concern about setbacks and suggested 200 feet, and he voiced concern about chemicals leaching from panels. He also stated that solar should be prohibited in some parts of the town and that the town is not getting much revenue from them.

Lisa Johnston moved, Bob Moreau seconded, to approve the solar ordinance with the changes that were agreed upon tonight and submit it to the Town Council.

Motion carried 6 – 1. Warren Ducharme voted no.

*Lisa Johnston moved, David Paolissi seconded, to move Item I to the next position on the agenda.
Motion passed 7 – 0.*

I. Allowing Accessory Use Agricultural Structures in AR Zone

Discussion: putting up a structure in an A/R zone, such as a maple sugar shack, without a residence. Structures such as a barn, garage, or place to put equipment.

Joanna Achille suggested that “ancillary agricultural” be allowed by Special Use Permit.

Mike Carpenter said this should be considered with care; it could benefit the town through services.

Martha Thoman pointed out that A/R is conjoined: agriculture must have residential as its primary use.

Joanna Achille and Warren Ducharme explained that the agricultural use is subsidiary to residential.

Charlie Chase stated that wants to buy a piece of land in Foster to build a sugar shack on the land and make it a tourist attraction. It would not be a home.

Warren Ducharme stated that you can put up a commercial building and could have 95 guests and 5 employees.

Martha Thoman asked about the differences between a variance and special use permit.

Joanna Achille explained that the zoning ordinance doesn’t allow a use in zone but commercial agriculture is allowed with a site plan review by the Planning Board. Special Use Permit in zoning can do this in this zone and planning board can allow a Special Use Permit that could be with the property but with conditions.

This topic will be researched and put on the next agenda.

F. Wind Turbine – Possible Prohibition

Anthony Renzi would like to prohibit. Three towns, Richmond, Hopkinton, and North Kingstown have prohibited wind turbines (commercially) above a certain number (100 kilowatts).

Lisa Johnston moved, it was seconded, to prohibit any and all commercial wind turbines over 100 kilowatts in all zones.

Motion passed 6 – 1. Mike Carpenter voted no.

G. Revising Prohibited Uses in Zoning Ordinances - *tabled*

H. Allowing Special Use with Dimensional Variance - *tabled*

I. *Moved to before F*

J. Change to Planning Board Schedule - *tabled*

K. Future Agenda Items

- Budget discussion
- Planning Board Responsibilities and Rules - Presentation
- Review Uses in GBM
- Farm Forest Business Accessory Uses
- 2020 Road and Bridge Plan, review and update
- Finalize Comprehensive Plan Update

L. Adjournment

Lisa Johnston moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Helen Hardy, Secretary