

MINUTES
Workshop Meeting
Sanbornton Planning Board

Meeting Date and Time: Thursday, January 18th, 2018 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Place: Meeting Room, Sanbornton Town Offices

The meeting was called to order by Don Bormes at 7:00 PM

Roll Call

Regular Members present: Don Bormes, Dick Gardner, Selectman Karen Ober, Will Ellis, Justin Barriault

Alternate Members present: Jody Slack

Others present at the meeting: Town Planner Greg Jones

Approval of draft Planning Board minutes from 12/21 – Selectman Karen Ober made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 12/21. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

a. Public Hearing - Boundary line adjustment: Mr. Richard Grant & Mr. Frank Dalton, Bay Road/Poplar Drive (Tax Map & Lot 16/72, 18/26, 18/25) – Surveyor Dean Clark explained that this simple boundary line adjustment will make Mr. Grant's lot more conforming. He also stated that the right-of-way for these properties will not change after this boundary line adjustment is made. Dick Gardner made a motion to accept the application as complete. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Selectman Ober made a motion to accept waivers 5, 15, 16, and 19. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Dick Gardner made a motion to approve the boundary line adjustment as presented. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Public Hearing – Town of Sanbornton draft *Solar Energy Ordinance* proposed for addition to the Town of Sanbornton's 2018 Zoning Ordinance update in accordance with RSA 674:17(I)(j), and the purpose outlined in RSA 672:1-III-a, as amended – Don Bormes explained that this proposed ordinance will be on the ballot for Town voting in March 2018. Town Planner Greg Jones noted that the Board is looking for the public's input to edit this draft and that there will be a second public hearing to finalize it. Neal Shartar asked if the full ordinance will be on the ballot. Town Clerk Marla Davis stated that it will be a Yes or No question on the ballot and there will be easels with the full ordinance available for the public to see before entering the voting booth.

Neal Shartar stated that the 5-kilowatt maximum outlined in the draft is arbitrary. Dick Gardner stated that this is a standard for home solar energy systems. Ian Raymond explained that this threshold is antiquated according to State legislature and can provide this information in writing to the Town Planner. Andy Sanborn stated that he would like the 5kW maximum stricken from the ordinance entirely and explained that the State allows for 50% of roof area for solar panels to meet fire safety standards. Dick Gardner stated that the ordinance was written as such to prevent homeowners from banking solar power and selling to the grid. Andy Sanborn responded that this would be regulated by the utility companies so it is a moot point. Michelle Jackson stated that her December Eversource bill had a note stating that 1 megawatt for residential use is acceptable.

Andy Sanborn asked if a required Site Plan for ground-mounted solar is standard in other towns' ordinances, and Planner Jones stated that it is. Mark Larocque stated that ground-based systems are considered a structure, like a shed. Don Bormes noted that a Certificate of Zoning Compliance permit is needed for rooftop and ground-based solar energy systems. Ian Raymond suggested that any group net-metering approval be submitted to the Town from the utility company and that this could be a requirement of an applicant. He also suggested that the 10-foot maximum for ground-

based installations should be higher, possibly a 20-foot maximum, as a tracking system would need room to move. Mark Larocque requested that an additional section be added in the ordinance to state that the Town requires copies of compliance letters from any federally-funded solar vendor. Justin Barriault stated that the funding source should not be mentioned in the ordinance as this could change.

Michelle Jackson requested that site plans require wetlands to be shown, as now the ordinance only mentions water bodies and water courses. She also noted that this draft says rooftop systems “may be of any size”, and Dick Gardner suggested eliminating that language. Michelle Jackson asked if there is a reason to not restrict entire areas in this ordinance and stated that some areas are inappropriate for solar; she would like to see commercial solar energy systems excluded in certain zones. Planner Jones responded that the Board had voted to exclude the Historic District from solar but that he wanted to see what the public thought about this. Ian Raymond noted that the elementary school is in the Historic District which could be a viable building to use solar energy.

Andy Sanborn noted that, in general, Sanbornton needs to be more flexible in terms of development and that its current growth pattern of having building after building on the side of roads leads to higher taxes. He noted that diversified infrastructure will save money for residents. Bob Bryant stated that he is not against solar power but is concerned about any large power lines being put in the Historic District to transport that energy. Debra Schneckloth noted that she retired to Sanbornton because of its rural character and is pleased that there will be an ordinance in place for future solar projects. She stated that she would be worried about a large solar farm’s impact on home values and her health.

Public hearing closed at 8:15pm. The Board discussed updating the existing draft using the input from the public. Town Planner Jones will make edits to the draft which will then be available to the public before the next required public hearing on Thursday, February 1st. He will check on the State regulations that were mentioned by the public during the hearing. Secretary Audry Barriault will revise with further changes and distribute if needed after the next hearing.

Other Business

a. New Town Planner position – Selectman Ober stated that the Board of Selectmen will be offering a Planning Assistant position to an applicant. The job title of Town Planner does not apply as the applicant does not meet its education requirements. She explained that the Planning Assistant job description needs to be voted on by the Planning Board. Dick Gardner made a motion to approve the job description as provided. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Selectman Ober also explained that Town Administrator Katie Ambrose has reached out to LRPC regarding using Dave Jeffers again in the interim, and learned that he is available to do so. Justin Barriault made a motion for the Town Administrator to pursue using Dave Jeffers until the new Planning Assistant is trained. Dick Gardner seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 1st at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Audry Barriault