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**Town of Pownal
Planning Board Minutes
Wednesday, November 15, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Todd Mellin, Marcia Bowen, Mercedes Pour- Previti, Orion Breen, Bill Schmidt, Thomas Ursia, Town Planner, Ginnifir Giddige, Code Enforcement Officer, and Recording Secretary, Alison Purinton

Members Absent: Excused Brian Stornelli Matt Altieri

Guests: Becky Taylor- Chase, Town Administrator, Steven Graverman

Call to Order at: 6:05 pm by Todd Mellin

First item of business is the Secretary's Report.

Secretary report: Approval of meeting minutes of October 18, 2023

Todd- I move that we accept the minutes as amended for the October 18th meeting. Marcia to second, All in favor 3-0 Motion carries.

Old Business:

Status of Final Conservation Ordinance & Review of Public Hearings and Special Town Meeting

Marcia- Explains it was presented to the Selectboard on Monday and it was presented with few corrections. It was voted on to place a warrant. Northstar has already prepared the warrant. Rather than breaking it down into sections it will be one article for the entire ordinance. Next step in the timeline are 2 public hearings. Dates for those are December 11th and December 18th, 2023 at 6pm. Special town meeting will be January 22nd, 2024. Heidi Richards did make some suggestions of which were tabled because it has to do with the definitions of dwelling units that will be corrected when the Planning Board tackles ordinance changes related to LD 2003, planned for 2024. .

Orion- Do we want to have a power point presentation like we have in the past?

Todd- That is a question that I have on my list. I have never been to a public meeting like this. I presume we would present the idea of the ordinance of whoever happened to be there. I think we should plan on that. I also think we should have someone speak as well.

Orion- I agree with what you said earlier is always good for backup. Having anyone there to clarify if questions arise.

Marcia- I will ask Jon, if they can allocate time for a presentation.

Steve Graverman- Asks to speak, the power point is a great idea and even post it to the town website so that people may view it. I think regular citizens will be unlikely to look through the whole ordinance.

Orion- We have the slides already on the website however they are not easily accessible. One thing we talked about was creating a small you- tube video for people.

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Becky Taylor- Chase- It will start at 6pm and will open with the land use ordinance for the Planning Board. Once that is closed, we will then open the Selectboard public hearing for the warrant. If you are going to make a presentation it would make sense to have it then. You could use this equipment for your PSA if you choose. The signing of the warrant will happen on January 22, 2024 at 7pm in this room.

Todd- Can we come by sometime to record?

Becky- Absolutely, If you want to use your own as long as it is on a thumb drive and in a MP4 format I can upload it. We can also share screen if you want to. I have a new staff member on Monday, so my help maybe limited.

Orion- I can share it with folks. I need to update it with the correct dates.

Todd- If you want to share that it would be awesome.

Marcia- Northstar has prepared the ordinance with the redline. We are not going to be printing the ordinance however it will be available on the website. Sam adds that she has been working on consolidating the ordinance into sections that will be affected by the changes. It's approximately 37 pages.

Becky- State statue says if the exhibit is more than 10 pages, we are not required to print it but we could have a digital copy. That's why I asked Sam to isolate the sections so we could print those for the warrant. She will work on that for the next Selectboard meeting.

Orion- Would we be printing the redline version?

Marcia- I think we have to or people won't know what was changed.

Todd- The public hearing will be before the next planning board meeting between; you tube and Sam we should be good to go for that.

Marcia- I will check with Jon to make sure we can have a few minutes in advance of the vote.

Todd- Ok

Real estate form for the proposed purchase of town owned property.

Marcia- There are two pieces of town owned property that the Selectboard has received requests to purchase. All boards and committees are asked to comment on whether they agree or disagree with moving forward. There is also a section for comments. Once the Selectboard obtains all those comments they will need to decide if the sale of town property goes on the warrant. The applicant has mentioned mobile home park as a possibility for these properties. The first step is to determine whether(as written on the response form) "I have no objection, or I object to the sale of the property." That is what we as a board need to vote on and comment on. Matt had a comment via email he wanted to add. Marcia reads the comment while the maps are being passed around. "If the town is going to sell the property for use as a mobile home park it should do so with a restriction on how the property is used and to maintain to minimize the impact on the surrounding areas and increase the number of residents. I am not against the development given the housing crisis but if it is done it should be done very carefully."

Orion- How does a mobile home park relate to a subdivision?

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Todd- At this point we are just saying whether we object or have no objection to the sale of the property as a board.

Orion- What is the mobile home park and is it different to the subdivision if you are putting in multiple units.

Marcia- I think if you read the mobile home zoning regulations you still have to go through the subdivision's ordinances. I don't know the answer to that. There are additional requirements that one must go through.

Tom- This is premature to talk about, and hugely different than the conservation ordinance. Mobile home parks are much different. I would have to use the word hugely different with a capital H. We may want to look at the ordinance to see where they are conflictual.

Todd- The discussion even with Matts comments is putting the cart before the horse. We are talking about regardless of the outcome the town is talking about selling a significant chunk of land. They are asking us to object or not object. It is really that simple. We are not going to take comments.

Steve- I'm afraid my comments relate to this decision.

Todd- Personally as a resident I say I object. As a chair of the Planning Board, do I really have an objection to the town selling land? I am not sure. What are people's thoughts.

Bill- You said the town is talking about selling. Someone has asked to purchase it.

Todd- Yes, an individual is asking for the town to sell them the property. I think Orion has gone through the before?

Orion- I put a request to purchase a ½ acre of land to make my lot more conforming. It was an interesting process. Unless there is something specific that we can point to in the ordinance why we would be against it then we should say we have no objections.

Todd- I can't argue with Orion's point. Does anyone else have any comments?

Bill- Should we or other committees consider the land for the future facilities communities, to look into a fire station or future schools. I would not see that going anywhere for a while.

Todd- I agree whole heartedly those ideas. Do we have an objection from a planning board standpoint?

Bill- From a planning perspective future school use or future facilities use?

Mercedes- I did not realize that we had to provide comments tonight. Is this something we have to decide tonight or can we talk about it and decide in December.

Marcia- Yes, we need to decide tonight.

Mercedes- Did we object to the last sale in the Lawrence area?

Todd- No for the same reason.

Orion- This is the start of the process. It would still come before the town to vote on.

Steve- I would like to speak because I think we are basing this on some incorrect information.

Todd- Go ahead-

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Steve- I believe it is not the sale of the land but the purpose stated. I think you are being asked to comment on the sale of the land for the use purposed.

Todd- It is a proposed use. They are saying that is what they want to use it for that may not be the outcome. I don't see how we can vote one a purposed use.

Steve- Why is it on the request?

Orion- That zone is an accepted use for the request. It doesn't mean it is going to be built, they still have to go through the zoning approval process and town feedback.

Steve- That is all the planning board is for, is if it is zoned or not?

Orion- Pretty much, at this moment.

Todd- That area is zoned for mobile homes.

Steve- Ok.

Todd – I propose the Planning Board does not object to the sale. All in favor 3-0

Marcia- I will provide you with the town forms to sign.

New Business

Todd- We are asked to give something for the newsletter.

Marcia- I thought I could write about the conservation ordinance and the special town meeting. There is a Board of Appeals Meeting on November 30th for a variance of a 33 acres parcel in the Pownal Pines area. I don't know where that is. I think it is a building permit for one resident.

Ginny- You are referring to the November 30th meeting. I am not definite on what parcel that is. I do know it is something for a variance with a switch of an easement. There are many questions that need to come up at that meeting.

Marcia- Is this anything the planning board should be a part of?

Ginny- Not that I am aware of currently. It came here first then the selectboard.

Marcia- What is the Pownal Pines plan?

Ginny- I am not definite. I have not seen that yet.

Todd- Is it something we ruled on.

Becky- Since I took the notes for the Selectboard meeting, I can say that in the 80's the owner came before the planning board to subdivide in 3 or 4 lots. When he did that the land in back doesn't have the road frontage anymore. More details will come on November 30th. The minutes are on line.

Todd- Thank you Becky, Lets go over the 2024 schedule.

Marcia- This schedule is based on last year's. If this is approved it will be posted on the website.

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Orion- I have a question about the June meeting, marked Town Holiday. Becky said that we may still hold the meeting even if the Town Office is closed.

Todd- I don't see any issues with the dates. The schedule was approved. Marcia thought it would be a good idea to review the mobile home ordinance. I reviewed section 604 and picked out things that I thought were important. The mobile home ordinance is different than what we have been working on. A mobile home park will still be reviewed under Section 900 and section 800. They would have to follow the same as sub- divisions for as maps and steps in the planning process. There are additional requirements for ground water impact for waste disposal. Types of waste disposal system that will be used. There is a provision for traffic estimates and a legal document that would restrict the sale of individual sites. It stays as a single property throughout the lifetime of the mobile home park. Lot sizes depends on the type of wastewater disposal system and density was capped at 20,000 square feet. There is a provision depending on the type of wastewater disposal system they could get it down to 15,000 square feet but it is still capped. Even though the lots are smaller they would be required to have the same set- backs as any other home would have. There would only be one entrance/exit to the park. There is a 50-foot-wide buffer around the entire park and the first 25 feet is required to put in a buffer of some type. Those are the key points I saw.

Marcia- It's good to know that there are ordinances, and they have to comply with subdivisions ordinances as well as mobile homes ordinances and they are fairly complex.

Bill- Section 4 legal documents. This doesn't say anything about a road maintenance agreement. Is that because it would be covered under some other private road agreement? Details are needed for other maintenance, snow removal, road repair funding, parking for each unit will it be a parking lot or each home. 200 Amp service for solar down the road. These are some things I have thought about.

Tom- Site planning can be creative, complicated or both. That is why you have planners to examine it at pre- application state. The way these are currently written makes it more complicated because there is a lack of clarity. That is one of the multiple planning design issues that are worked out in the early stage, given that I am on board now. The pre-application stage is critical.

Orion- We have been working with Northstar to have consistency with language across the ordinances. That has been a long process and an important one. We chose the subdivision ordinances because that was the community feedback. We will not change anything tonight, but we can look at the future,

Sam- I think this is a good discussion for potentially next year.

Marcia- I think next meeting we should prioritize what we need to work on. LD2003

Sam- We are already working on LD2003.

Todd- Do we have anymore comments?

Other Business

Marcia- A checklist is on my to do list that I will look at once the ordinances are reviewed.

Discussion

Next Month Agenda

Todd- For the month of December and with the public hearings do we need to have a meeting in December?

Becky- We received a second real estate form that I sent out yesterday

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Marcia- We will be signing that one and the other tonight.

Todd- We will plan on having the meeting unless there are no agenda items.

Adjourn

Marcia- I move that we adjourn the meeting. Todd to second. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:38pm

Respectively submitted,

Alison Purinton

Planning Board Recording Secretary