

Town of Pownal
Monday, December 18, 2023
6:00 pm Public Hearing

I. **Call to Order** by Chair Morris at 6:00 pm

Members Present: Jon Morris

Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

- **Public Hearing**

- i. **Planning Board: Conservation Subdivision Ordinance**

Orion Breen (a member of the Planning Board) recapped the ordinance for those in attendance. All in attendance had seen the presentation at the previous public hearing. He, along with Todd Mellin (Vice-Chair of the Planning Board) clarified that there would be a longer road setting the houses back. Lot sizes could be smaller. A major subdivision would be different from this ordinance. Marcia Bowen stated 60% of the parcel is reserved for open space. 60% is non-buildable. Chair Morris commented that the Conservation Commission may have a role with the town and town planner in coming up with trails etc. on the open space. The HOA (homeowners association) and the Town would have an agreement. Mr. Breen stated we (the Town and Planning Board) would have more oversight with the new ordinance. Mark Vachon asked with smaller lot sizes has there been any thought on how water and sewer will be taken care of? Mr. Mellin stated that will depend on many factors including the size of the lots, soil tests etc. Mr. Breen stated they could only approve smaller lots if it worked with the soil and terrain. Mr. Vachon asked if there was a minimum acreage size for this ordinance? Mr. Breen answered the minimum would need to be 10 acres. The proposed ordinance uses the restrictions under the current ordinance but expands it to have open space. Janet Lynch stated there would be less driveways leading into the main road so that would be less traffic congestion. Congestion comes with sprawl. Chair Morris stated that every town resident can weigh in at the public hearings and then vote at the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Mellin used the Merrill Road project as an example of the difference. That project has houses in the front and open space in the back. The new ordinance would reverse that. Mr. Vachon stated he is concerned about being like Yarmouth and Freeport. Mr. Mellin stated that we can't take people's right to build away from them. We are trying to create guidance to help with development. Mr. Breen stated they intentionally crafted to not look like Yarmouth. Matt Altieri (Planning Board Chair) gave a brief history of what led them to work on the ordinance. A few years ago, a lot of applications were coming in front of the Planning Board. They were concerned about the rate of growth. They explored a building moratorium but there were not enough issued building permits to support this. They looked at many aspects as they drafted this ordinance. They cannot prohibit subdivisions. Ms. Lynch commented that this proposed ordinance preserves wildlife habitat. Mr. Breen stated it is not perfect but better than existing ordinance and is a step forward. The Planning Board is using forward thinking.

The public hearing for the Planning Board concluded.

ii. **Select Board: Special Town Meeting Warrant**

Chair Morris opened the public hearing for the remaining articles on the special town meeting warrant. He read the warrant and added a brief explanation to each article and its intended function. He opened the floor for questions and comments. Brian Stornelli asked if there was a Credit Enhancement Agreement with Estabrooks? Chair Morris answered with not at this time. He then took a minute to explain how a Credit Enhancement Agreement works and how it can be used for expanding infrastructure. Mr. Vachon asked if there was commercial zoning. Isabelle Oechsle with IOV Community Planning answered that it is not specifically zoned for commercial. It does allow some specific commercial uses. We are not contemplating a zoning change. With no further comments or questions Chair Morris closed the public hearing.

iii. **New Business**

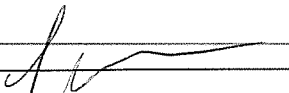
- **Edits to Warrant if needed.**

None needed.

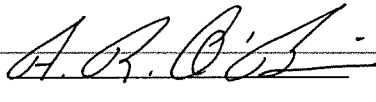
iv. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm

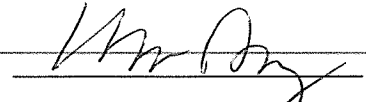
Respectfully submitted,
Becky Taylor-Chase
Town Administrator/Town Clerk



Jon Morris



Andy O'Brien



Kate Day