

TOWN OF STAMFORD
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
January 3, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)

Planning Commission: Debra Burchard, Chair, Kurt Gamari, Daniel Potvin, Aaron Malachuk, Carolyn Brooks, and Sheila Lawrence.

David Saldo, Jenifer Hughs, John Dupras, and Annemarie Potvin were not present.

Visitors: Karen Kuranda and Beth Phelps.

Jim Sullivan, Bennington County Regional Commission.

Lori Shepard, Secretary.

Deb Burchard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

BYLAW MODERNIZATION GRANT

Jim Sullivan provided a pamphlet of the various grants that could be available by creating a village district and updating the Zoning Bylaws along with some maps of districts created by other towns. He said there are fifteen other designated centers in the Bennington County Regional Commission's area. The state requires that the size of the village district be kept tight around the center of the town and the state will not approve a district designation if it is too large; the town will have to reduce the size in order to receive state approval. Along with deciding the physical area of the new village district, the Planning Commission will have to change the By-laws to allow for higher density housing and/or greater flexibility on how the land can be developed in the village center district. Jim Sullivan suggested the board could change the current two acre minimum building requirement to one acre or less and allow mixed-use development within the village district. He suggested the board consider what areas in town people would want to walk to and where people would want to open small businesses. He noted that grants could be available for sidewalks, building improvements, and public water and sewer systems. Both Sheila Lawrence and Kurt Gamari questioned the flood hazard areas and the impact the state's environmental regulations would have on the development. Carolyn Brooks questioned how residents, especially within the district, could give their input. Jim Sullivan said ARPA funds could be used to hire a civil engineer to do a planning study on a public water system for perhaps one hundred connections of existing homes and potential development to learn the cost and how the system would be paid for over time. The Bennington County Regional Commission will bring maps to the next Planning Commission meeting to help the Planning Commission realistically envision and define the village district. He noted that the board could ultimately decide not to create a village district and not update the Zoning By-laws. Although he reminded the board that if the town does not follow through with making any changes, it will lose its \$1,000.00 commitment fee.

MINUTES

MOTION by Aaron Malachuk to accept the regular meeting minutes of November 1, 2021 as written.

SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

NATIONAL FOREST LAND TRAILS

Aaron Malachuk hopes to have the National Forest District Ranger come to the next meeting in March to talk about developing mountain bike and cross country ski trails on National Forest land.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to adjourn. SECONDED by Sheila Lawrence. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on March 7, 2022.

Debra Burchard
Planning Commission Chair

DB/las