

PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING, OCTOBER 25, 2023 at 7:01 pm

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Members present: A. Hipps, Chair Bartlett, K. White, D. Berheide, C. Maron, and R. King

Code Enforcement Officer present – Codes Officer Hainer

Planning Board Secretary: Catherine L. Simmer

Guests Present: Michael Tyler, Marc Duclos, Nancy Page, and Bill Johnston

First Item –

Call meeting to order – 7:01pm. A full quorum is present. Invited the Board and guest to introduce themselves.

Second Item –

Motion to approve the August 23th Regular Meeting Minutes by K. White, second by D. Berheide. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

- **Resolution 2023-38 Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 23, 2023**
Resolved: Accept the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 23, 2023 as submitted.
Moved by: K. White
Seconded by: D. Berheide
In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.
Opposed: None

Third item-

Fairground Updates by Bill Johnston and Nancy Page

The Planning Board Chairperson recognized that Bill Johnston and Nancy Page are present to update the Planning Board on the proposed new building project for the Essex County Fairgrounds. The proposed project is being funded by a USDA Grant and Covid funds. The board was given a copy of the proposed building plans. Nancy noted that the elevation is off by one quarter of an inch. A few things that should be noted: the proposed building will have a walk out basement, a retaining wall for grade alteration, the building will be smaller than the original plans, and the kitchen has been reduced from a commercial kitchen to a teaching kitchen and is situated in a remote part of the building. A few concerns to note include: connecting the two building, excavation, the ramp, the site does not lend itself to a walk out basement, the building is in an historic district, NYS SHPO commented on the previous drawings from the previous firm, more changes once the project goes out to bid and the grant funds are under a time constraint. The plans are not finalized, there will be a public hearing to allow for public comment, the project will not need to go before the Westport Planning Board, consideration is being taken for the buildings location in an historic district. The Board would like to invite Anna Reynolds to the next Planning Board meeting to update them on the SEQR process. Chairperson Bartlett thanked Bill and Nancy for the information and their time and energy devoted to following this proposed project.

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C. Maron asked if he wanted to write a letter as a private resident whom should he address the letter?

Bill Johnston suggested the Essex County Board of Supervisors with a cc to Anna Reynold, Director of Community Resources; James Dougan, Highway Superintendent; Michael Tyler, Westport Supervisor; and Michael Macarenas, County Manager.

Fourth Item-

Smart Growth Grant, merits of Comprehensive Plan, and Zoning Updates

D. Berheide provided the Board with handouts regarding: the NYS Office of Planning and Development Consolidated Funding Application 2023-2024 Environmental Protection Smart Growth Program- Community Planning and Zoning presentation printout, 2019 List of Community Smart growth Grant recipients, Financing Waterfront Resilience, Drinking Water Protection Program, Drinking Water Protection Program by numbers, and Additional Adirondack Community Clean Water Projects for Wastewater Treatment Plants and Sanitary Sewer System Needs on the 2020 Environmental Facilities Corporation Intended Use Plan.

We need to ask ourselves where are we as a town, where have we been and where are we going. My recommendation would be to move towards a Comprehensive Plan.

Smart Growth Grants will fund up to \$130,000.00 for Comprehensive Plans and up to \$300,000.00 for transformative projects. The larger community and the Town board will need to be included. We need to know the interest of the community.

C. Maron noted about Green Communities.

Chair Bartlett asked if A. Hipps could speak to this subject.

A. Hipps said we need to begin with Anna Reynolds and the Department of State to get on their radar. We will want community feedback. There is a great deal of funding out there. I have never seen so much funding in community planning. We need to take advantage of this funding while it's available. We will need someone with the skills of Anna Reynolds office.

Chair Bartlett stated the project will need a strong lead. The success of the project depends on the organization of the person running it.

A. Hipps noted the last time this was done was December 1994 for the Land Use Law.

Chair Bartlett our Town does not have a comprehensive plan, we need to set the vision for the community and figure out what the community values. I believe the Merits of a Comprehensive Plan have been covered. We need to reach out to Anna Reynold, discuss again with the Planning Board and then present our recommendation to the Town Board.

Fifth Item-

MaryLou Fitzgerald Retirement

Chair Bartlett presented the board with MaryLou Fitzgerald's retirement letter. MaryLou has served on the Planning Board for over 20 years. We owe her a great deal of gratitude.

R. King motioned to accept MaryLou Fitzgerald's Retirement. K. White seconded that motion. No further discussion. Passed unanimously.

- **Resolution 2023-39 MaryLou Fitzgerald**

Resolved: Accept the retirement of MaryLou Fitzgerald.

Moved by: R. King

Seconded by: K. White

In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.

Opposed: None

K. White motioned to approve a Years of Service Plaque and letter of appreciation for MaryLou Fitzgerald's Retirement and a letter of appreciation for Robin Severance. R. King seconded that motion. No further discussion. Passed unanimously.

- **Resolution 2023-40 MaryLou Fitzgerald Plaque and Letter and Robin Severance Letter**

Resolved: To approve a Years of Service Plaque and letter of appreciation for MaryLou Fitzgerald's Retirement and a letter of appreciation for Robin Severance

Moved by: K. White

Seconded by: R. King

In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.

Opposed: None

A. Hipps motioned to recommend to the Town board to appoint Cheryl Phillips as a member of the Planning Board. C. Maron seconded that motion. No further discussion. Passed unanimously.

- **Resolution 2023-41 Recommend Cheryl Phillips as a member of the Planning Board**

Resolved: To recommend to the Town board to appoint Cheryl Phillips as a member of the Planning Board.

Moved by: A. Hipps

Seconded by: C. Maron

In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.

Opposed: None

Other Business-

Marc Duclos is present. He has submitted a letter of interest to become an alternate member of the Planning Board. He shared his extensive background, qualifications, and experiences with the Planning Board.

C. Maron motioned to recommend to the Town board to appoint Marc Duclos as an alternate member of the Planning Board. D. Berheide seconded that motion. No further discussion. Passed unanimously.

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- **Resolution 2023-42 Recommend Marc Duclos as an alternate member of the Planning Board**

Resolved: To recommend to the Town board to appoint Marc Duclos as an alternate member of the Planning Board.

Moved by: C. Maron

Seconded by: D. Berheide

In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.

Opposed: None

Other business (continued)-

A. Hipps received a letter from the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation regarding the Wadhams Grange Hall being put on the National Registry. Kate will forward the letter to the Board.

Discussion about Open Meeting Laws and best practice for asking/ answering questions from the board when not in session. All questions should be directed to George directly and not include the entire Board. Questions can also go through Kate.

R. King noted the State Police may be looking for a location for a small substation in Westport. Elisha suggested to going directly to George for possible available locations.

D. Berheide motioned to adjourn the meeting. K. White seconded. There was no discussion, and all were in favor.

Adjourn at 8:58 pm

- **Resolution 2023-43 Adjournment**

Resolved: To adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm.

Moved by: D. Berheide

Seconded by: K. White

In Favor: K. White, Chair Bartlett, C. Maron, A. Hipps, R. King, and D. Berheide.

Opposed: None

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine L. Simmer, Secretary