



**TOWN OF STOWE
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
May 1, 2023**

The Town of Stowe Planning Commission held a meeting on **Monday May 1, 2023**, starting at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was held at the Stowe Town Office with remote participation available via Zoom. The meeting began at 5:30 pm.

Members present included Mila Lonetto, Bob Davison, Brian Hamor, Neil Percy, and Chuck Ebel. Also present was Sarah McShane (staff), Ken Belliveau (planning consultant), Billy Adams, Will Dodge, Harry Shepard.

The meeting was called to order by Chair M.Lonetto at 5:30 pm.

Adjustments to the Agenda & Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Staff reported that she had one adjustment to the agenda to add- discussion of revised plans for the AT & T antenna near the corner of Pond & Depot Streets. Members agreed to the adjustment and decided to hear the agenda item following review of the meeting minutes.

Review Prior Meeting Minutes [04/17/2023]

On a motion by C.Ebel, seconded by N.Percy, the meeting minutes from the prior meeting were approved as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

Proposed AT & T Antenna -Pond & Depot Streets

Staff provided a brief overview of the proposal and explained that an AT & T representative, Will Dodge, was present to answer questions on the revised proposal. The revised proposal includes an ornamental post approximately 43' in height and off-set the corner of Pond and Depot Streets. The antennae and equipment would be concealed within the post. The Commission had previously reviewed and commented on the project and recommended AT & T consider alternate designs/locations. B.Davison noted that he felt the revised designs were an acceptable compromise. Will Dodge explained that they are willing to reduce the height of the light fixtures, as requested by HPC, to be consistent with the light fixture height of others within the village. There was discussion related to working with the Stowe Electric Department to remove the existing utility pole on the corner. Will Dodge explained that AT & T will be tenants of Stowe Electric Department on the new ornamental pole. H.Shepard added that he believed it would be possible to have underground utilities at this location and noted there may also need to be a pad mounted transformer. Will Dodge reported they will work together to figure out utility and communication needs. H.Shepard noted that there are no other viable village options. M.Lonetto shared that she felt the revised plans were an improvement from the prior proposal. C.Ebel and N.Percy were both in favor of the revised proposal. B.Hamor added that he felt it was a right solution. Will Dodge explained that the antenna is needed to handle cellular traffic, not coverage and the most cellular improvement will be felt in the center of town. The Selectboard is expected to discuss the proposal during their May 10th meeting. The Commission agreed to support the project. Staff will provide a written statement of the Commission's support to the Town Manager.

Election of Officers

Staff explained that per the Rules of Procedure each May the Commission is required to elect a chair and vice chair to serve for a one-year term. She briefly explained the roles of the Chair and Vice Chair and asked for nominations. M.Lonetto added that she is happy to continue to serve as the Chair through the zoning amendment process for the coming year. B.Davison made a motion to nominate M.Lonetto as

Chair and B.Hamor as Vice-Chair. C.Ebel seconded. No other nominations were made. The motion passed.

Members briefly reviewed the general ground rules for meetings and emphasized the importance of listening to each other and members of the public. Members reviewed the Rules of Procedure. Staff highlighted several areas which need administrative updates and were not substantive. Members agreed to accept the changes identified by staff. Staff will make the necessary corrections.

Annual PC Work Plan

Staff explained that the Selectboard recently asked for each board and commission to provide an update on their intended work plan and any policy decisions expected to be advanced to the Selectboard in the coming year. Staff provided the Commission a draft letter outlining their planned projects. Members agreed to the plan; Staff will provide a copy to the Town Manager on behalf of the Commission.

Continued Discussion- Bylaw Modernization Grant

Planning Consultant Ken Belliveau was present to provide a summary of the zoning amendments discussed by the Commission thus far as part of the Bylaw Modernization Grant. Members reviewed K.Belliveau's draft presentation and provided feedback. Members discussed the different areas within the village and lower village and the vision and goals for the areas. Members reviewed the dimensional requirements and ideas to consider. M.Lonetto added that the Commission previously agreed to consider developing criteria determining when covered parking would be considered not feasible. B.Adams asked if the Commission was aware of the current housing bill being considered by the state legislature and requirements to allow additional building stories. Members discussed setback requirements and the build-to line in the VC-10 district. Members mentioned that the build-to line and the articulated entrance requirements go together. N.Percy added to emphasize requiring multiple stories and pitched roofs. Members discussed simplifying the number of parking spaces per bedroom and how density was not found to be a necessary barrier in the designated downtown. Members discussed how there is not a single solution or identified barrier that inhibits housing development, it's multiple considerations. M.Lonetto added that affordable housing projects often need a certain number of units to make the project viable. Members discussed what it means to be affordable in terms of area median income and dwelling unit equivalents. Members were encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to the next meeting where K.Belliveau will present the amendments to consider and solicit feedback.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 15th.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director