

Town of Berkshire

Chartered in 1781

4454 Water Tower Road, Enosburg Falls, VT 05450

Phone (802) 933-2335 Fax (802) 933-5913

MEETING OF THE BERKSHIRE PLANNING COMMISSION

Unapproved minutes of October 26, 2022

Present: Margo Sherwood, Walter Elander, Joshua Grims, Jay Tremblay, Russell Ford and Claude Charron. Absent: Kristine Koch. Special Guests: Emily Klofft (NWRPC)

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Margo Sherwood.

New items discussed are as follows.

- 1) Discussion of Pleasant Valley Farms and Amanda St. Pierre's request for Planning Commission (PC) letter of approval for their proposed methane digester and refiner and waiver of 45 day review period,
- 2) Review of updated Land Use and Development Regulations regarding 3 categories previously approved by PC: a) on-farm businesses, b) historic reuse of structures, and c) expansion of home occupation language,
- 3) Discussion of an application for a Municipal Planning Grant that is due by Dec. 1.

1) Amanda St. Pierre request; general discussion:

- PC believes that the information meeting on Oct. 13, 2022 was not a properly warned public hearing and therefore did not provide adequate opportunity for public input,
- PC is not prepared to write letter of support and/or waive the 45 day review period which follows the submittal by the applicant of the petition to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC),
- PC is aware that Development Review Board (DRB) and Select Board (SB) have written letter of support
 - Margo will ask Town Clerk for copies of those letters
 - *As of this writing on Friday Oct. 28, Margo has obtained a copy of the SB letter but not the DRB letter.*

Motions made regarding this item:

Motion: Russ Ford proposes motion that PC decline to sign the draft letter of support from Amanda St. Pierre dated Oct. 5 requesting PC support of the project and waiving of the 45 day review period. Motion seconded by Jay Tremblay. Motion passed by unanimous vote

Motion: Walter Elander proposes motion that PC will request PUC to call a properly warned public hearing to review the project. Motion seconded by Russ Ford. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Motion: Jay Tremblay proposes motion to request that NWRPC support the PC's request to PUC for a public hearing. Motion seconded by Walter Elander. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Emily Klofft will meet with NWRPC members on Monday October 31, to review the motion directly above. If NWRPC agrees, Emily will draft the letter to PUC requesting the public hearing. PC will meet with SB at their next meeting (November 7) to review these minutes and the draft letter to PUC. At that meeting PC will ask SB for their support in requesting the public hearing.

2) Review of updated Land Use and Development Regulations; general discussion:

- Emily presented several final clarifications to the 3 categories. All PC members are in favor of those clarifications. Emily will make the changes to the Regulations and send to PC around Nov. 14.
- PC will submit draft final revised Regulations to SB for their review.
- Public hearing for adoption of revised Regulations will be same time as Town Meeting in March 2023.

3) Application for a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG); general discussion:

- PC agrees to proceed with application for a grant for a master plan for the Town Forest
- Emily will assist with filling out the application and soliciting a proposal from a planning firm
- SB will need to sign the application at one of their meetings before Dec. 1.

Motion: Josh Grims makes motion to work with NWRPC to submit application for MPG for Town Forest Master Plan. Motion seconded by Margo Sherwood. Motion approved by unanimous vote.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:00 PM, seconded and approved by all.

Respectfully recorded and submitted by Walter Elander.

The next PC meeting will be November 15, 2022, at 6 pm. Lindsey Wight of Mississquoi River Basin Association will be invited to attend.