

Tinmouth Planning Commission
February 15, 2024
Regular Meeting
Minutes

Members present in-person: Michael Fallar, Vito Macaluso, Larry Carabeau, Judy Gilmore, and Andy Gilmore

Members present via Zoom: Bob Lloyd, Kim Harbaugh, and Pat Psholka

Others: present in-person: Jeremy Gildrien – RRPC; and Gail Fallar Secretary;

And via Zoom: Sherry Johnson, via phone Lance and Jenny Somers

Michael called the meeting to order at 7:11pm, and welcomed everyone. Introductions all around for virtual and in-person presences.

Members reviewed the agenda, no changes.

Minutes of 1/18/24 - Bob moved, Larry 2nded, to approve, all voted in favor.

Lance and Jenny presented a simple plot plan to subdivide their 86 acre parcel on Mountain View Road into 2 lots, running east and west. Members inquired about proposed driveways – they already have a driveway permit for the southern lot – which they intend to keep, and there is room on the north lot to also access Mtn. View Road. It was noted that about half of the property that lies to the east is in the Protection Zone – where agriculture and forestry are the only allowed uses – due to being a wetland and close to the Channel. After brief discussion, Judy moved and Vito 2nded to allow them to go forward and prepare a formal application for consideration. All voted in favor. They were provided the minor subdivision checklist, and will contact a surveyor.

The record button was not clicked until this point in the meeting – oops!

Jeremy was present to continue the discussion about an enhanced energy plan, whether the new Town Plan to be updated for 2025 needed to have its energy section meet the EEP standards. He noted he had briefly reviewed the existing town plan's energy section – goals, policies and actions could be kept – will need new maps and data points, the state's standards have changed some, not too much, only need to address wind and solar – not biomass and hydro – and equity.

There was much discussion: about the need to make it enhanced, what that would provide; about data points – the data is to be used as an estimate – the PC can include a statement in the Plan about the data being used were assumptions to show trends (the Public Utility Commission (PUC) will not look at the numbers; how the town deals with energy; how the town can meet town "obligations" for energy conservation – by example; the maps Bob prepared for the 2020 update – RRPC will update those – which shows where there are constraints for industrial energy projects (like conserved land); whether a 'preferred sites' map would be better; methodology used for data points – numbers; etc.

Discussion then turned on whether to apply for MERP mini-grant (up to \$4,000) to hire RRPC to assist the town in its energy planning – pros and cons – RRPC will do all the data collection, mapping, and provide technical assistance – the TPC will review that and reach out to the community for input. There was discussion about the contract with RRPC – would the town have to adopt it or can it decide from the data that it does not want to go the whole route of an enhanced energy plan? Depends on how the contract is written and what is required by the grant. Is the EEP a free-standing document – no – it would still be part of the Town Plan. The Town Plan has to have an energy section. This grant would only be for the energy section. The Select Board now has a policy that all committees and

commissions have to request SB approval before applying for grants. Vito moved and Larry 2nded to apply for the MERP mini-grant, the vote was 7 in favor and 1 opposed. The motion was approved.

Members discussed energy equity, how it needs to be addressed, Jeremy will send the PC information to regarding definitions. For their next meeting the PC will review the standards and goals and policies to see what to keep, consider what the town wants to meet them.

Kim inquired about wind development – where to put it in Rutland County – noted that the last regional plan did not support ridgeline wind. It needs to be clear that industrial wind is not to be allowed. Members were encouraged to participate in the RRPC's survey regarding what county residents want for the future with updating the regional plan.

The upcoming Needs Assessment questions were briefly discussed – could not read the version that was provided – how should affordable housing be addressed – affordable to who was the first inquiry; it should not just be low income – lot size – it was noted that many people move to Tinmouth as they like to have space between neighbors – it was also noted the bringing more jobs to the area will create a market for more houses. Aesthetics were discussed – what can the Town do to encourage landowners to work on hedgerows, tree lines and stone walls to make the town more pleasant to drive through?

Rainbow Squier submitted an email that she was stepping down – does not want to be re-appointed to another term. She was thanked for her time serving on the Planning Commission. Andy and Pat both indicated that they would like to be re-appointed. PC members have staggered 3 year terms.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Next meeting is March 21, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Fallar, Secretary