

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission
Minutes (APPROVED)
May 21, 2026

Members Present: Dennis Casey, Luke McCarthy, David Schmidt, Dan Nugent, Dan Kuzio

Members Unable to Attend:

Others Present: Steve Rooney – Zoning Administrator

Visitors: Lexi Thompson

Meeting called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:32pm

Visitors Business: L. Thompson asked about Regional Planning and what input the PC had with the creation of the Future Land Use maps. What we asked for and where we currently stand. Members explained that ACRPC initially proposed almost all land outside of village areas as forest conservation and the PC pushed back and insisted only the town forest and state wildlife management areas should be designated conservation. ACRPC agreed and that's where the current map stands. Discussion ensued regarding how the FLU maps differ from Starksboro Zoning maps, but that the two are wholly separate documents and do not need to agree. L. Thomason suggested coming up with a way to re-zone areas that get subdivided to better reflect the land use post-development. Also suggested having a discussion on AI data centers and how we want to address that in zoning and the town plan.

PC Current Business:

1. Approve any outstanding minutes

MOTION: D. Casey moves to approve the 5/7 minutes. D. Nugent seconds.

VOTE: All in favor.

2. Bylaw edits:

- a. S. Rooney stated that he heard back from the zoning consultant regarding what the town can and cannot regulate regarding group homes. It must be allowed wherever a single-family home is and cannot be only allowed if already existing in the FC district.

MOTION: L. McCarthy moves to synch the language in the zoning bylaws with state regulations, and edit the language to reflect a group home in the FC. D. Nugent seconds.

VOTE: All in favor

- b. Lengthy discussion of open space requirements for PUD's and intention of the 60% set aside rule. Discussed alternatives and reviewed past zoning regulations. Former versions of the bylaws have the set aside land as a calculation of building rights. Reviewed the 2006 regulations and PC agreed this was a clearer requirement than the 60% rule. D. Nugent to review section and edit to ensure new language is carried throughout the section.

MOTION: L. McCarthy moves to revert back to the 2006 zoning regulations regarding set aside land in a PUD. D. Kuzio seconds.

VOTE: All in favor

- c. Discussed an issue with the 2-acre minimum for non residential use in the density charts. Section 251.B may be in conflict of the 2-acre rule. Extensive discussion on what 251.B means, why

there is a distinction between residential and non-residential, and why section 251.B exists. Discussed using existing residential densities for non-residential uses, however changing the word “dwelling unit” to “principal building” for non-residential uses.

MOTION: D. Kuzio moves to add non-residential densities to the density chart and strike section 251.B. D. Schmidt seconds.

VOTE: All in favor

- d. Brief discussion of noise and whether or not to revert back to the current noise standard as opposed to the new one proposed in the bylaws. After extensive discussion of pros and cons, as well as discussion regarding enforceability of zoning standards and DRB decisions, it was decided to leave the noise standard as currently presented in the working draft.
- e. D. Casey spoke about the Appendices that were approved last meeting and suggested a few changes. Suggested changing #15 to read “infrastructure” as opposed to current language. Also remove “as well as detailed plans” from #7. Soften language in #17 to read tree lines, and strike architectural sites from #18.

MOTION: L. McCarthy moves to accept the proposed changes to the Appendices. D. Nugent seconds.

VOTE: All in favor.

3. Town plan revision (if time allows)
 - a. Time did not allow
4. PC Roundtable
 - a. No business

MOTION: D. Schmidt moves to adjourn. D. Nugent seconds.

VOTE: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:45

Tentative Next Agenda:

1. Minutes
2. Review open space language & vote
3. Final review of proposed bylaws & vote
4. Discussion of warning process and timelines
5. Town Plan Review (if time allows)
6. Roundtable

Minutes submitted by L. McCarthy