

Town of Starksboro
Planning Commission
Minutes (DRAFT)
April 3, 2025

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

Others Present: Claire Polfus – VT DFPR

Visitors: Robert Turner (Zoom), Marguerite Gregory (Zoom), Cecilia Elwert

Meeting called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:31pm

Visitors Business:

None

PC Current Business:

1. Open discussion with C. Polfus
 - a. C. Polfus is the Recreation Program Manager at the VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. She spoke about Move Forward Together Vermont, a Statewide initiative to improve outdoor recreation across the state. Also spoke about how DFPR has an interest in facilitating and encouraging regional recreational opportunities, in-community opportunities, and emphasized making people feel welcome when they engage with the recreational opportunity (i.e. ample parking, signage, facilities, etc.) Spoke about NEK Rides, a newly formed Vergennes Recreation Department, and how other industries in a Town can flourish with the increased recreational activity.
 - b. M. Gregory asked about the use of Lewis Creek WMA and potential for trails.
 - The State WMA's are managed by Fish and Wildlife and are predominantly for the purpose of wildlife management. Any trails would have to be coordinated with them.
 - c. D. Kuzio asked about how other Towns incorporate recreation into Zoning Bylaws.
 - Fayston has a definition for "recreational business" and has incorporated some rules. Bolton may have also.
 - d. R. Turner talked about collaboration with surrounding towns and a potential organization to coordinate recreational opportunities.
 - e. D. Nugent asked about resources in the event someone would want to create an outdoor recreation business.
 - The Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance and Agency of Commerce and Community Development are good resources.
 - f. D. Casey asked if issues surrounding land use, and more specifically Act 250 come up a lot.
 - It depends on the size and scope of the proposal, but possibly.
 - g. D. Kuzio asked about suggestions for E-bike regulations and suggestions for trail use.
 - State law states that – on a roadway – an E-bike is considered a bicycle. But the statute also allows for trail managers to decide their use. The State is not seeing any conflicts resulting from their use at this time.
 - h. R. Turner spoke about possibilities of collaborating with the 5-Towns such as Town Forest Scavenger Hunts.
 - i. C. Elwert spoke about the need for adequate trailhead parking, citing the Jerusalem Trail as an example, and asked about leash regulations for dogs.

- Starksboro has a policy where all dogs must be on a leash when “at large.”

2. Review Outstanding Minutes

Motion: D. Nugent made a motion to approve the 3/20 minutes as written. D, Kuzio seconded.

Vote: All in favor

3. Compile By-Law Edits

- a. Will use the noise regulations from the Hinesburg Zoning bylaws and delete the proposed bylaws.
- b. Extensive discussion regarding the definition of recreational trail and commercial use vs. private use. If commercial or for-profit trail use is moved to the definition of Commercial Recreation, then a definition for a private recreation may not be needed. If left in the use tables, it will trigger a permit process.
- c. Noted that the description of symbols in the use table is misleading. As written the (-) symbol appears to denote the use is allowed.
- d. Current language in bylaws states that if a use is not listed it is not allowed. Discussed changing it to read that if a proposed use is not listed it is an automatic conditional use review.
- e. Additional discussion tabled for next meeting

4. PC Roundtable

- a. None

Motion: D. Nugent moved to adjourn the meeting. D. Kuzio seconded.

Vote: All in Favor

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm

Minutes submitted by L. McCarthy.