

Minutes

Pittsfield Planning Board

Meeting of December 14, 2020

The Pittsfield Planning Board met at 7:00 pm on December 14, 2020 at the Council Chambers at the Pittsfield Municipal Building, 112 Somerset Avenue, Pittsfield, Maine.

Members present were: **Morris Pollard, Royce Sposato, Cory Verrill, Brent Newhouse** and **Ron Watson**. Members Absent: **Tom Cote, Mark LaGross and Simone Engelhardt**. Also, present were: Nathaniel Picard, Town Manager Kathryn Ruth and Building Inspector Steve Seekins.

1. **Open Meeting/ Pledge of Allegiance**

2. **Authorize Associates to vote if members are absent.**

Chair **Royce Sposato** authorized associate member **Cory Verrill** to vote due to the absence of **Tom Cote, Mark LaGross and Simone Engelhardt**

3. **Adoption of the Minutes:** of the Planning Board Meeting of November 9 2020.

Motion by **Ron Watson** and seconded by **Morris Pollard** to accept the Planning Board Minutes of the November 9, 2020 meeting.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

4. **Public Hearing: None**

5. **New Business:**

- a. Map 4 Lot 24 request by Nathaniel Picard for approval to create a gravel road (impervious surface) 2100 feet by 10 feet.
- b.

Royce Sposato opened the discussion by asking Nathaniel Picard if he would like to make a statement. **Nathaniel Picard** said that he wanted to access the back of his property, so that is why he would like to put a road in. **Steve Seekins** asked him to explain how he was going to treat the soil. **Nathaniel Picard** stated that he discussed it with an expert and that he plans to lay down landscape fabric and then cover that with eighteen inches of gravel. **Ron Watson** asked what his plans were since he mentioned changing plans from earlier. **Nathaniel Picard** stated that he may build a house back there at some point but for now it is just for access. **Royce Sposato** led a review of the Finding of Facts document and all items were found to be sufficient and in-order.

After a thorough review of the Site Plan Review Application submitted by going down through the required items, the Board by consensus agreed that a public hearing was not necessary. The application was found to be in order and that no further information was required as a result of the review.

Motion by **Ron Watson** and seconded by **Morris Pollard** to accept the application.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

6. Old Business:

a. Cianbro's request for Traffic Directional Signs

Royce Sposato opened the discussion stating that he did not have the original request from Cianbro. **Steve Seekins** pointed out the type of signs requested, located on the common table. He then relayed the State's view from a meeting that he had. The State says that if they went through them, they and others would have to have a standard sign. If they want a sign on a non-state road, then local ordinances may require change. The local ordinances require that a sign be located on the actual business. To have a sign on a state road, in the right of way, Cianbro would have to enter into a lease agreement with the state. They do think that it would work out better going with the state. **Ron Watson**- to Nathaniel Picard- Is there a reason that Cianbro went with these signs rather than a standard state road sign? **Nathaniel Picard**- Yes, the property office decided to go with these road signs because they match the font and color of the Cianbro branding. **Steve Seekins**- My thought is that we bring the results of that state meeting back to Cianbro and see if they want to make any changes based on that. **Nathaniel Picard**- I can bring it back to them and I am sure they would consider it. **Steve Seekins**- I invited Harold Sherwood to this meeting. **Royce Sposato**- Some of the original signs were big but I am only seeing this one that is fifteen inches. **Steve Seekins**- I have one that is going on the corner of Main and Somerset Ave. **Royce Sposato**- That is almost seven feet tall by four feet wide. The signs used by the state are small. **Nathaniel Picard**- I think that the area of the most confusion was down near Route 100 and Detroit St. where people didn't know how to get to the yard. Also, most truckers get off the interstate and come up Somerset Ave. They get to the corner and see the signs on the corporate building. So how do we give them directions so that they don't spend an hour and a half driving around looking for the yard? **Steve Seekins**-That is why the state wants Cianbro to use those. We will have to change the ordinance to allow it on non-state roads, which will take a while. **Royce Sposato**- We can change our rules but I don't think that the state will change their rules. Let's go back to Cianbro and take it up at our next meeting. **Morris Pollard**- So Cianbro won't be able to put up signs where they want to? **Royce Sposato**- unfortunately they want to put up signs where we don't have the authority. Somerset Ave. and Main St. are both state roads. They will have to work with the state as well as with us at the town to put it all together. **Ron Watson**- I don't see any motion that we can make at this time. I think that Cianbro needs to decide which way that they want to go and come back to us. **Morris Pollard**- I think that Cianbro should be doing this leg work and not be relying on the Planning Board to meet with the Maine Department of Transportation. They should be doing that. **Steve Seekins**- I set up a meeting with Cianbro and Bruce Mattson and Susan Merriman with MDOT but Cianbro wasn't available for that because I didn't give much notice.

7. Discussion items:

a. Continue to discuss the development of subdivisions and changes to the subdivision ordinance to encourage development.

Town Manager Kathryn Ruth provided the following to board members: Copy of a memo from her entitled "For Your Information dated 12-14-2020", Copy of "State of Maine Chapter 187 entitled Planning and Land Use Regulations" and "Model Subdivision Regulation for use by Maine Planning Boards" by Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission. The Town Manager advised that this package would be helpful for members in reviewing land use in general and subdivisions specifically. The Town Manager provided a brief review of specific items of interest in the documents relating to subdivisions. While the Model Subdivision Regulations from the Planning Commission is a few years old, it has model language tied to specific State Subdivision requirements so it is very helpful in providing background information. The Planning Board members will review the materials prior to the next meeting. The Town Manager will now work on some specifics in the Town's Subdivision Ordinance around end of the year work.

Ron Watson- We have discussed a lot last year about the Comprehensive Plan and whether it needed to be updated or addressed. I think that the conclusion was that the Comprehensive Plan was in good shape, that it didn't need to be looked at, and that it wasn't ready to be updated yet. We also talked about meeting with the Town Council about sections that needed to be addressed or specific sections where we could take action to move things along. The Planning Board should be addressing those here, correct? **Royce Sposato**- We write the Comprehensive Plan. We should be referencing it when we write an ordinance. If the Comprehensive Plan is out of date, then we don't have to follow it exactly. When you read it, a lot of it

is boilerplate. Is it every ten years that we have to update it? **Town Manager**-Yes, although the state has it at every fifteen years. **Royce Sposato**- We don't have to re-write it, we can just update it. **Ron Watson**- After reading it, I don't think that there is anything that we have to update necessarily. Steve put together a document that listed where we are with regards to each section. I was wondering if there were sections where we have little done and we could get ahead by putting together a zoning ordinance, a land use ordinance, etc. **Steve Seekins**- That document had things that weren't done because they weren't feasible or they would change, so we could review it at our next meeting. **Royce Sposato**- The Comprehensive Plan is not written in stone. If there is something in there that is not to our benefit, we can go in another direction. Starting on page 120 there is twenty pages of recommendations. We have done some of it. We are looking at the subdivision ordinance and that should be our priority right now. **Steve Seekins**- So do we want to review that document at our next meeting? **Ron Watson**- If you can send the document to everyone via email we can take a look at it. **Royce Sposato**- We updated some of the ordinances. The problem with new ordinances is that they take up to six months to put them into place. The problem with the Comprehensive Plan is that it has to be approved by the state and we have to have lawyers look it over, etc. I think that it took all of 2013 the last time that we updated it. **Morris Pollard**- Maybe we could go through it and choose a half dozen sections to update and then find someone to take responsibility for them. I looked at some of the earlier plans and there is no way to go from point A to point G. There is no steps B, C, D, etc. listed. There are no milestones. There is no "We are going to do this in 2022, and this the next year." Over fifteen years we could go from point A to point G but when we don't focus on anything then we aren't going to have anything down the road. We could focus on 2 or 3 things every year. Without the money it is just a dream, that is all that it is. **Royce Sposato**- That is not what it is. It is a wish list. We may be able to re-write it in a few years. It is a nice thing to read. We can add recommendations to it. When we go out into town and see something that needs to change, then we can do that regardless if it is the Comprehensive Plan or not.

8. Adjournment:

Motion by **Morris Pollard** and seconded by **Cory Verrill** to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: UNANIMOUS AYE

Minutes are a synopsis of a meeting. For more detail, please go to www.pittsfield.org and click on Town Meeting Videos to listen to videos of Planning Board Meetings and other Board/Committee Meetings. Also, more details can be obtained in the Finding of Facts Documents.

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:

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Dial by your location

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+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

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