

February 6, 2018 Planning Board

Present were: Regular Members Tom McCue, Aline Boucher, Lori Langlois, Greg Estrella, Richard Cassidy, Naomi Levesque, Christina Lefebvre, Ex-Officio Member Lucie Remillard, and Ex-Officio Member Bryan Chevarie.

Member Helene Rayborn was excused for the evening.

Others Present: Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director; Michel Salek, Building Inspector; Lane Strahan, public

Public Comments – No one spoke

Approval of January Minutes

Ms. Langlois proposed that the wording of the second sentence of the third full paragraph of page two needed to be amended. Mr. McCue suggested that the sentence be changed from, "These bids will remain open..." to, "These bids can be submitted until..." as it is a sealed bid process and it could potentially be misconstrued as currently written. Ms. Levesque made a motion to approve the minutes as amended with a second by Ms. Langlois. So moved, the motion carried.

Project Updates

Ms. Laflamme noted that the 2018 Winter Olympics are about to begin and Sarah Hendrickson will be participating in the ski jump competition. There was a small gathering of supporters of the Nansen Ski Club at the local ski jump to show their support for Sarah and to promote the club. Mr. Cassidy said he has heard that NBC will televise a segment focusing on the Nansen Ski Jump and Sarah's road to recovery as part of their coverage of the event.

On February 22, 2018 there will be a public meeting regarding the planned development of the new skatepark. Spohn Ranch will be in attendance and will be fielding suggestions from the community regarding what type of park items are most desired. Ms. Lefebvre asked if we are already promoting the event. Ms. Laflamme explained that the City is currently spreading awareness of the event on Facebook and plans to advertise in the Berlin Sun when the date of the meeting is closer.

The spring planning conference will be held on Saturday, April 28, 2018. Ms. Laflamme noted that registration for the event opens in a couple weeks and if any Board members are interested they should let her know so they can coordinate scheduling.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is rolling out a major shift in their wetlands policies and rules. Ms. Laflamme explained that they are hosting hearings across the state regarding these changes, including an event scheduled for Wednesday, March 7th in Lancaster. The City often relies on NHDES' regulations and input in their decision-making process and will be monitoring and evaluating these changes.

The twenty-one member food co-op steering committee held a meeting recently and established various sub-committees. Ms. Laflamme noted that other, already established, local co-ops have been very supportive of our endeavor, with Littleton offering to pay for our first year of membership in the New England co-op. Northern Community Investment Corporation will be the fiscal sponsor of the co-op. This will be beneficial when applying for grant funds.

February 7th will be the date of the first meeting of the hawkers and peddlers steering committee. City Council has selected a group to look at the particulars of altering the existing regulations regarding these activities. Their recommendations will then come to the Planning Board if relevant.

The Riverwalk project is moving forward, however, the City must adhere to the procedural steps established by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Progressing through each step of the project will necessitate DOT's approval, suggesting the construction completion date will be later than originally anticipated.

The North Country Growers' greenhouse development project is on track to begin sometime in April with construction starting shortly after. Their financing appears to be in place after a holdup earlier in the process.

Ms. Laflamme explained that the City has a bid package available for the welcome sign. The intent is that the project will be started as soon as weather permits.

There are several requests for proposals (RFP) that are ready to be posted. These requests are for replacing the current light bulbs in the street lights in the City with energy-efficient LED lights, heated Main Street sidewalk feasibility study, and a study for determining the City's options regarding installing an elevator or lift in City Hall. There is also an RFP to study the effects of combining EMS and Fire Department roles.

Ms. Laflamme explained that she is working with a group of municipalities from New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, and New York in order to plan a symposium of outdoor recreation. It is common for various issues to arise as towns and cities expand their outdoor-recreation lifestyle. Part of this symposium will touch on the best practices municipalities can adhere to in order to minimize these negative effects.

Other – No one spoke

Public Comments – Michel Salek asked if he could see drawings of the welcome sign if they have been submitted. Ms. Laflamme said she will send them to him.

Member Comments – None

Planner Comments – None

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Remillard, moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Cassidy. All in favor, the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:10 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bryan Chevarie