

WESTMORLAND PLANNING BOARD

January 21, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order, Seating Members

Present: Lauren Bressett, Bruce Smith, Tim Thompson, Alison Fissette, Larry Siegel, Elaine Moore-Alt, Frank Reeder-Selectman Rep.

Lauren called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Review of Minutes of December 17, 2018

Tim moved approval of the minutes as written. Seconded by Bruce Smith. All in favor.

Lauren opened the Public Hearing on proposed ordinance changes at 6:38 pm. Two members of the Alternative Energy Committee were in attendance: David Wirth and Pamela Clark. Lauren briefly reviewed each proposed change. NOTE: Attached are the changes being proposed by the Planning Board.

Discussion on changes ensued. David Wirth felt strongly that large systems including Solar Farms should also be presented in the Ordinance Changes. He feels that anyone desiring a larger system should be allowed to seek a special exception from the Zoning Board. Members of the Planning Board explained there was not enough time for the Board to review possible parameters that might be needed with larger systems and these would need to be in place for this to be brought forward for a vote. For example, with larger commercial entities such as cell towers a bond is required to guarantee removal if they were no longer operational. Pam Clark asked why that would be needed for solar. Lauren responded that the life of solar systems is finite and the town would not want to be left with the cost of removal of an abandoned commercial system. The board felt that looking at any needed criteria for systems was part of what the committee should have provided. The board felt that honoring the work the committee did do by going forward at least with guidance for smaller systems was appropriate and this is why the ordinance was proposed as written. The committee could then focus on larger systems and make a proposal for those next year. David Wirth stated if the Board did not propose the solar ordinance with an included option for a special exception through the Zoning Board he would contact townspeople and ask them to vote down the solar ordinance as written.

Lauren closed the public hearing at 7:20.

The board then did a final review of the proposed changes for any adjustments. Tim Thompson pointed out that in Section 426 Line two we should delete the word "and" to be replaced with "or". The board agreed. Under table 505 we had voted to delete items 8 Community Center, 9 Membership Club House and 10 Private Club from the list for Special Exceptions but it wasn't shown in the changes. The board agreed to delete them.

Section 432 Solar The board discussed whether to continue to propose the ordinance. Larry Siegel suggested just indicating that this was for small systems and larger systems would be considered in the future. Lauren pointed out there was no way to do this as an ordinance. Either something is or is not proposed, we can't say coming soon. Larry suggested under purpose to remove **renewable energy source** to something that indicated this is just for home systems but the board didn't feel this made it any clearer and would actually remove small business systems as being permitted. After much debate it was suggested to perhaps use the term **as an accessory use** so that non-accessory uses could be added next year. Tim Thompson made a motion to approve the wording change, seconded by Bruce Smith... All in favor. So moved.

Tim Thompson then moved to keep the proposed solar ordinance on the ballot, Bruce Smith seconded. Vote passed with Alison Fissette opposing.

If there is a significant change in the proposed ordinances presented at the public hearing, a second hearing must take place. The date for this hearing is set for February 4, 2019 at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall.

New Business:

Terms of Membership: Bruce Smith's term is up for renewal in March.

Allison Fissette has been appointed by the selectmen as a regular member, instead of an alternate. Larry Siegel was appointed by the selectmen as a temporary fill in to the board to cover the other vacancy until March.

Two Letters from DES were received. One is regarding sale of the Westmoreland Quarry Site and the seconded regarding change of ownership at George Graves Excavation Site. These documents will be placed on file.

Lauren presented a draft Planning Board Annual Report for the Town Report. All approved as written.

Motion made by Tim Thompson to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bruce Smith. All in agreement.

Lauren Bressett closed the meeting at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine Moore – Clerk

THESE ARE UNAPPROVED MINUTES TO BE APPROVED AT THE FEBRUARY 2019 MEETING.