

Westmoreland Planning Board

June 17, 2024

Westmoreland Town Hall

Approved Minutes

Attending: Lauren Bressett Tim Thompson, Liana Capra, Bruce Smith, Bill McGahie, Kristen Riley, Alison Fissette, Alternates John Stronk & Larry Siegel,
Lauren Bressett opened the meeting at 6:30 pm

Review of minutes- 5/20/24

Bruce Smith made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Alison Fissette seconded that motion. All voted in favor.

Todd Horner of SWRPC

John Snowdon noted that he is attending the meeting as director of Southwest Regional Planning Commission, and will not be responding as a selectman. He wants it noted on the record that he had no previous conversation about the topics that would be discussed.

Lauren Bressett mentioned that the Planning Board board would be interested in contracting someone to look over the zoning ordinances and help reorganize them. Todd Horner said he looked at the current zoning ordinances. He said there are too many listed under "general regulations." Lauren Bressett asked how much it would cost to have them look through the ordinances and reorganize. Todd did not have an answer for this and will have to get back to the planning board with that information. He said that there is an opportunity under "Invest NH," which would look at ordinances, and look into current housing. The deadline for the grant is September 30. He said that if the town received the grant, it would give \$30,000-\$50,000 toward ordinance and some master plan work. There would be no match requirement. The town does not have to commit to housing growth, but they have to explore it, which can be done at community forums. The master plan would do this as well.

Kristen Riley suggested that the board look at the minutes from the last time the SWRPC came to speak about this grant. There were reservations then, which could still be relevant now. Lauren Bressett asked Kristen Riley if the master plan committee would be open to the conversation of getting outside help. Kristen explained that the master plan committee is close to having their first draft of questions and would then be ready to meet with the planning board. Lauren Bressett said the planning board should meet with the master plan committee at the first of next month to discuss if they think this grant would be of use. A Monday or Tuesday in July at 6:00 pm.

Todd Horner informed the board of other things they are working on that are relevant to Westmoreland. Their field crew will be looking at culverts and stream crossings. They will assess the state of these culvert crossings. They have also been discussing the River Road bridge.

Lauren Bressett asked Todd if there is any information on what the best practices for communicating with the public are. Todd said live streaming is something some towns have explored. He does not suggest social media which comes with many complications for municipalities.

Lauren asked if there has been any research about the number of people working remotely. Todd suggested that the master plan ask who is working remotely in the master plan. Lauren also asked if there are things that the board should be aware of that SWRPC can provide as part of our membership. Todd said they can assess road safety and develop a plan for maintenance. There is an upcoming funding round for their complete streets program. Lastly, they will be announcing an ADU design competition. They will be inviting property owners who

plan to develop ADUs to submit information on their plan and their must haves for their ADUs. This will be used to help designers come up with new concepts. They also offer grant application coaching.

Solar Discussion

The planning board agrees that utility scale solar is not something they feel is right for Westmoreland. However, accessory use solar makes sense with the changing technology and availability of battery storage.. Larry Siegel asked, if the property changes owners and the solar is no longer an accessory, what happens? Lauren said she will ask the NHMA about this. She will also ask about bonds. However, it is likely it is no different than other things done on private property.

Lauren Bressett mentioned that with the changing state landscape regarding land uses and more things being suggested, it may be time for Westmoreland to have a permitting process. This means sorting out who is responsible for the permits, the term for the various permits and frequency of renewal.

Bruce Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting. Liana Capra seconded that motion. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm. Recorded by Kristen Riley.