



# TOWN OF ST. JOHNSBURY

Planning Commission  
Tuesday, 3/15/2022  
Public Hearing 6:30pm  
7:00pm PC Meeting  
**Both Zoom Meetings**  
***Minutes***

Confirm Quorum of Members Present:

Jim Brown, Chair ☒ Ben Copans, Vice chair ☒ Ed Behr, Clerk ☒ Larry Dolan ☒ Open ☐

Others attending: Paul Berlejung, ZA; Chad Whitehead TM; Matt Racenet and Aleha; Susan Cherry.

## **Public Hearing**

1. Convene meeting 6:38
2. Reading of proposed definitions and bylaws. Read by Ben Copans, vice chair.
3. Discussion and comments. Jim Brown made mention of the process and time in bringing these changes to a public hearing. Noted the 1 difficult point, concerning the word, "taxation," was removed. These were needed because there were no definitions and bylaws concerning these items, and adding them would make it easier for DRB and ZA to make decisions.
4. Final comments. None.
5. Close meeting. Larry motion, Ed 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed. 6:50.

## **Planning Commission meeting**

1. Convene Meeting. 6:51pm
2. Agenda changes. Added Susan Cherry to the #12 agenda item.
3. Public Comment. Matt and Aleha Racenet informed the PC of their commitment to this community, along with their current position with opening a retail cannabis shop in St. J. 166 Railroad St is a possible property to place the retail shop. That is a DCD and mixed use zone. Discussed possible variance and DRB conditional use permit. More discussion was directed to agenda item #13.
4. Further discussion concerning public hearing. Motion to move changes to SB public hearing. Ed motion, Larry 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed. Jim Brown would notify SB chair, Frank Empsall, and TM, Chad Whitehead.
5. Minutes approval, 2/15/2022. Motion by Larry, Jim 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed abstained. Motion passed.
6. Manager's Report. Chad Whitehead. New SB members, Steve Isham, Tracy Zhou. Final amounts for the bike pathway have been obtained. Art installations being worked on for honking tunnel area. ACCD meeting here June 9<sup>th</sup>. Talk concerning flagship farmer's markets here in VT. Downtown priorities mentioned, with a possible large celebration of new businesses. along Railroad St.
7. ZA Report. Time spent on E911 numbers increased, due to new businesses opening, old Calderwood building. More parties interested in buying 560 Railroad St. More calls and emails in regard to retail cannabis shops. FEMA meeting April 8, 2022.
8. Bylaws regarding sign lighting, DCD, updating the details. Possible changes to bylaws. Updates and clean copy. Next steps. Ed would provide updates at our April 19 meeting.
9. Nuisance structures update, Town Manager input. Hold off on more additions of this item to PC agendas. Waiting for the State of VT.
10. NFIP, FEMA related updates, more work to be done. April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, names of persons to attend from St. J.
11. Hazard mitigation. Produce an updated revision. Chad working with fire chief, DPW, police chief on updates. More info at PC April 19 meeting.
12. Homelessness. (7:45pm) Zoning. Susan Cherry. Many community meetings regarding this matter. Lots more agreement, positive attitudes, that St. J. needs to properly care for the homeless population. More info from VT State and local agencies to be coming. Consider zones for places for homeless and all needed agencies to be together in one place.
13. Cannabis retail sales, bylaws related. CCB update. Recent info from ZA mail list. Need to define differences between Schedule 1 use of cannabis v. recreational use. Look at probable zones for cannabis retail shops. More info from Matt Racenet concerning retail sales will be sent to the PC. Provisional license request to VT State begins March 16, in order to ascertain the possible market.
14. Other business. None.
15. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn by Jim, second by Larry. Motion approved. 8:35pm.