

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**June 3, 2024**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Planning Commission: Daniel Potvin, Chair, Alden Finney, Kurt Gamari, ex officio member, Lisa Gramlin, and Sheila Lawrence.

Peter Greenbush, Maura Hawkins, and David Saldo were not present.

Visitors: Sally Bohl, Jedidiah Gramlin, Sheila Pecor, Beth Phelps, Debra Righi, and James Righi.

Daniel Potvin called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**HEARING OF VISITORS:**

None.

**MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Lisa Gramlin to accept the regular meeting minutes of May 13, 2024 as written.

**SECONDED** by Alden Finney. All in favor. Motion **APPROVED**.

**DISCUSSION:**

1. H. 289, an act relating to the Renewable Energy Standard, was discussed. While this bill has currently been vetoed by Governor Phil Scott (5/23/24) we should be prepared for its passage. The bill would require Vermont electric utilities to get 100% of their power from renewable sources by 2035; Green Mountain Power would be required to meet this deadline by 2030. This has moved the date up since the Town Energy Plan was written which had set the deadline at 2050. Changes that might be expected, including the infrastructure needed for increased renewable energy and related consumer costs, were considered. Alden Finney stated that the current grid cannot handle this demand. Lisa Gramlin noted that the cost of improving the grid will be passed on to consumers. Kurt Gamari believes that Green Mountain Power already gets a lot of their power from Hydro-Quebec and that most likely no more dams will be able to be built in Vermont. Dan Potvin pointed out that while hydroelectric, wind, and solar are considered renewables wood is not and is worried about people being dependent on the grid. Alden Finney suggested nuclear as an option. The discussion turned to personal home heating. Kurt Gamari believes that there is something on the House floor now dealing with fossil fuels and home heating generation and that the state will be making a push to get rid of oil.

2. H. 687, relating to Act 250, is also expected to be passed in some form in the near future. This has been a battle between environmental concerns and the need for affordable housing. Both the House and Senate have passed this bill but the Governor is not yet on board. Lisa Gramlin thinks that a lot of the changes would most likely not affect Stamford. H.687 proposes to break Vermont into a tier system, with tiers 1a and 1b dealing largely with areas that have municipal septic and water systems. Towns could apply to be exempt from Act 250 in these tiers. Tier 2 is

mostly “status quo”. Tier 3 deals with protecting the environment and natural resources. Lisa Gramlin interpreted this to mean that the law would loosen restrictions in tier 1 to allow for the building of more housing, especially in the villages, while tightening restrictions in tier 3 for environmental reasons. Kurt Gamari agreed that most of the changes to Act 250 are for big developers to get bigger units in more compact areas in the cities. Lisa Gramlin pointed out that 100% of Stamford is highest priority forest.

Kurt Gamari stated that S. 213, the “Flood Safety Act” recently passed (5/30/24). This regulates wetlands, river corridor development, and dam safety. Dan Potvin expressed concern that the government is trying to get people off of the land and into the center of town. Kurt Gamari countered that it is more an effort to prevent sprawl and fragmentation and wouldn’t take away from property rights. The idea is more along the lines of a planned unit or “cluster” development in order to preserve resources.

The Planning Commission will revisit this issue next meeting.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

##### Emergency Preparedness and Self-Sufficiency Documents

Daniel Potvin is concerned with creating a plan for resilience in town. He is in the process of sending out a letter to the townspeople outlining some resources. In addition, he is working on creating a small conference in town to bring in experts on various topics such as: solar, seed saving, heating, self-defense, etc. to speak. Kurt Gamari suggested people look into CSAs (community supported agriculture). Lisa Gramlin suggested getting someone to teach canning/food preservation to the community.

Alden Finney brought up the issue of septic overshadowing. While Dan Potvin believes all septic is regulated by the state, the board will look into it further.

MOTION by Daniel Potvin to adjourn. SECONDED by Lisa Gramlin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Lisa Gramlin  
Planning Commission Clerk