

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**December 9, 2024**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Planning Commission: Daniel Potvin, Chair, Alden Finney, Kurt Gamari (ex officio member), Peter Greenbush, Sheila Lawrence, Marta Miller, David Saldo, and Jim Stimpson.

Lisa Gramlin and David Tatro were not present.

Visitors: Debra Righi, James Righi, and Diane Saldo, and Lori Shepard.

Dan 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 Peter Greenbush to accept the regular meeting minutes of November 11, 2024 as written SECONDED by Marta Miller. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

**DISCUSSION:**

**1. SIGN BYLAWS**

Marta Miller and Jim Stimpson explained that they, along with Lisa Gramlin, have been meeting and working on the rewriting of the sign bylaws. The rewrite is nearly complete and a draft should be ready to present to the Board for the next Planning Commission meeting for all members to give their input. David Saldo and Jim Stimpson discussed their different interpretations of the exemption for the town and the Right of Way.

**2. BCRC HEARING UPDATE:**

Dan Potvin attended the regional meeting in person and was proud that several people attended and represented Stamford. He informed the board that the Planning Commission will be notified about future meetings regarding the Regional Plan going forward. Dan also told the Board that the BCRC stated that there is nothing binding on the town about their guidelines or recommendations. He also questioned how turbines could be constructed on the ridgeline as much of the land is federally owned. Pete asked about the new setback of half a km (rather than 1km). The BCRC is saying that is sufficient. Kurt reminded everyone that our plan still says 1km. Dan suggested that the next meeting we are notified of we make known to the town so people can attend if they choose. Dave told the board that route 100 has been designated a scenic, historic highway and thus gets special protection. Kurt agreed; we can't have billboards so why would we allow turbines? However, Dave admitted that nothing is set in stone or final. Pete believes that many of our bylaws in town are vague and we need to tighten them up. Dave suggested that we look at the rules regarding the scenic highway in regard to signage. As a final point, Dan relayed that he brought up biomass (wood, pellets) as a form of renewable energy and was reassured that this is still considered a viable form in Vermont. Kurt feels it

would be difficult to go against the use of wood in Vermont, although he feels that pellets will be more prevalent in the future. He added that mountaintop windmills are not producing enough for a lot of companies and they are beginning to back away from them. He added that turbines would only be profitable for the town if they are on private property, not in the National Forest.

### 3. LAND USE:

Alden Finney asked about overshadowing and where we are on this. Kurt reminded the board that it is state regulated. Dave believes perhaps increasing the lot size requirements and having studies done to how quickly water transfers in the ground in high water areas would help curtail overshadowing issues. Kurt felt focusing on road frontage would be more effective. It was agreed that this is an important issue to keep in mind as we continue to focus on water. Kurt mentioned that the board may want to reconsider the fact that at the last zoning bylaw rewrite the town moved the Forest District out of conditional use into permitted use. Do we really want free reign in the Forest District? He feels we should be aiming for slow and steady growth. Many wells in the center of town are currently contaminated with e-coli. Dan and Kurt debated the science of hydrology. Jim thought we may need some sort of water containment system in the future. We're at a crossroads of how we want our town to develop in the future. BCRC is pushing toward more central, high-density building. Jim stated that he'd like to see Stamford have a sewage treatment center and water but also would like to see it kept rural. He feels if we can control the facilities we can make our town affordable. Kurt feels roads are the biggest current concern and have the greatest impact. Sheila Lawrence would like the Planning Commission to put out a survey to put out around Town Meeting time.

Jim Stimpson brought up the idea of building a solar array in town to defray taxes. There was discussion of possible locations and contingency funds as well as possible federal funding. Marta acknowledged that change in town is difficult and Pete thought it would need to be a substantial benefit for townspeople.

MOTION by Peter Greenbush to adjourn. SECONDED by Marta Miller. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:49p.m.