

Town of Voluntown

Planning & Zoning Commission

Voluntown Town Hall

Thursday December 19, 2019

Special Meeting (rescheduled from the 17th)

unAPPROVED

Chairman Scott Davidson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Members Present: Scott Davidson, Bob Panko, David Neminen. Tom Sweet and David Hartman were not present, John Savage, Max Hollowell and Judith Halik. Chairman Scott chose to "seat" Max and John as full member's tonight's meeting.

Public Hearing:

Order will be 1) Presentation from Jim Larkin re: POCD, 2) Presentation from Staff, 3) Questions from the Commission, 4) Citizens comments, 5) Questions from the Commission, Chairman Scott noted that this meeting's notice was publicized twice, once on Dec, 3, and 10th 2019

Jim Larkin from NECCOG presented a very detailed and lengthy description including a very detailed slide show of the ins and outs and workings of our POCD with some suggestions included for improvements and updates.

Citizens Comments:

Jack Wessel Chairman EDC 844 Pendleton Hill Road spoke thanked the Commission members for all their hard work and expressed some concerns with addressing what can be done to bring more revenue and tourism into town, and also with our need to partner with the State with some small Hydro units possibly at some of our dams to see about using some of that to power our municipal buildings.

Jim McBride from 150 Bennett Road spoke thanked the Commission on their hard work and was pleasantly surprised that some of the issues he brought up on our last revision were addressed this time (re our natural resource waters).

Juliet Hodges 622 Pendleton Hill Road spoke of "huge concerns" after receiving the "draft version" months ago for any comments in her position as it pertained to a neighboring town and understood that were late in getting this done, but wanted the Commission to consider letting her rewrite the Plan and ask the State for an extension to do so. Tracy spoke to this issue and noted that our current plan indeed had expired and grants were in jeopardy and being denied because of this. She spoke to the fact that she felt the plan was a very negative one, was poorly written and had no vision. She was concerned with 2 Brothers and other businesses closing in town, She felt as though the plan did not "sell itself" to the ones that read it. She questioned & encouraged NECCOG to get current data when reporting things like people permits etc. She asked that it be changed to incorporate visions and goals that she felt it needed.

Tracy Logan, Our First Selectman spoke thanking the Commission for their tireless hours and years of working on the POCD and commended them for their dedication to it, also commenting that she was disappointed that very little public involvement was had during the process.

Mark Simmons of 84 Hightop Hill spoke of the Economic Development portion and noted that it did not mention what kind of business that the town was looking for and it should be. He also noted that it did not address any recreation portion specifically in regards to maintain or improving the facilities which in his opinion are in poor condition and suggested getting a renovation plan.

Commission remarks:

Judith raised a concern that the population issue was not addressed, and wanted to know what our vision was to fix it. She felt that it should address that we are an exciting place to live, a place that young families would want to come to live, etc. etc.

Chairman Scott thanked all for their patience and input and wished all a Merry Christmas and asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing, David Neimenan made the motion to close the Public Hearing @ 8:15 and it was seconded by Max Hollowell *Motion passed.*

New Business and possible action on the 2020/2030 POCD:

Chairman Scott acknowledged the points that were brought up during the Public Hearing and wished that they had been brought up 3 years prior. He spoke of a few grammatical errors that needed addressing and the task of updating the members list to include our newly elected members. He spoke of the different adoption options. David asked for some clarification on where we actually stand with the grants being denied. Jim spoke of the legalities of the amount of Public Hearings and what can and cannot be adopted and how. Scott spoke for the issue of adoption tonight and wanted to encourage anyone that wanted to help in the future to revise or rewrite to do so. Bob Panko commented that he thought the public hearing should have been held a year ago, he noted that this plan can be amended in the future and he thought we should get a committee together to do so. Judith noted her concerns with the grammatical errors and encouraged us to get them handled. Various Commission conversations were had as to what grammatical errors and corrections and Jim was to get them done.

Chairman Scott asked for a Motion to adopt the “*2020/2030 Plan of Conservation Development*” Motion was made by Max Hollowell, 2nd by David Neminan *Motion Passed.*

Motion to adjourn and close the Special Meeting @8:45 pm was made by Max Hollowell and seconded by Bob Panko, *Motion Passed*

Scott Davidson, Chairman

Marc R. Ledoux Sr. Recording Secretary