

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 6:30 P.M.

Present: Michael Costello, Dave Thompson, Robert Bayer, Phil Ruck, Ashley Case, Christa Schwintzer, John Beckett

Absent: Lisa Buck, Judson McIntosh

Town Staff: Kyle Drexler, Jessica Chadbourne

Acceptance of the Agenda

Board Chair, Phil Ruck asked for a motion to accept the agenda.

Motion: John Beckett

Second: Dave Thompson

Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to accept the agenda passed with seven in favor, none opposed.

Approval of the Minutes of the February 15, 2022 Planning Board Meeting

Mr. Ruck asked for a motion to approve the February Planning Board Minutes.

Motion: John Beckett

Second: Dave Thompson

Corrections to the minutes were noted, and Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to accept the minutes passed with seven in favor, none opposed.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Item A: A proposed amendment to Article VIII of the Land Use Ordinance, Floodplain Management, to repeal and replace the article with updated Floodplain Management standards

Mr. Ruck asked Mr. Drexler to provide the Board with an overview of the proposed amendment. Mr. Drexler explained that FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program. When Flood Insurance Rate Maps are updated by FEMA, Municipalities update their ordinances accordingly, using model ordinances supplied by the State. The amendment is to repeal the current Floodplain Management ordinance and replace it with the new ordinance language provided by the State of Maine in order to keep Orono in compliance with current FEMA Floodplain Management standards.

He directed the Board's attention the first section of the new ordinance that discusses following the new flood insurance study and maps, which will be updated from the study and maps from 1978 to the new study and maps that will take effect on July 19th of 2023. He also highlighted additional changes and additions to the ordinance language based on the new standards.

The current maps are not yet available on the State of Maine's Floodplain Management Office website, but they will be made available before the proposed open house in May, at which point community members will be able to view the new maps and attend the meeting to ask any questions

they may have. Mr. Ruck asked if the public would be notified, and Mr. Drexler replied that there would be an outreach effort on behalf of the Town to notify residents about the new maps and the open house.

Mr. Ruck opened the public hearing, and asked for questions or comments on the new ordinance from either the Board or the public. Mr. Costello pointed out that if a resident owns a home that is now in the flood zone when it was not before, it was likely that their insurance agent would notify them that they are now eligible for flood insurance. Mr. Drexler agreed it was likely, though not certain, that that would be the case.

Hearing no other comments, Mr. Ruck closed the public hearing and asked for a motion.

Motion: Dave Thompson moved that the Planning Board recommend the new Floodplain Management Ordinance to Council for adoption.

Second: Michael Costello

Mr. Ruck asked for a roll call vote. The vote to recommend the new Floodplain Management Ordinance to Council passed with seven in favor, none opposed.

Item B: Annual Planning Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson Election

Mr. Ruck asked Mr. Drexler to brief the Board on the process for electing a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Planning Board. Mr. Drexler explained that the Board elects its Chair and Vice Chair annually, and invited the Board to make recommendations for either position. The Board agreed that Mr. Ruck should remain Chair of the Board, given his long and successful history in the position. The Board also agreed that Jud McIntosh (absent from the meeting) should be re-elected to his position of Vice Chair, if he were willing to do so.

Mr. Drexler asked for two motions, one to elect the Chair and one to elect the Vice-Chair.

Motion: Ashley Case moved that Jud McIntosh remain Vice-Chair, pending his approval of his re-election.

Second: John Beckett

The Board voted seven for, none opposed, to re-elect Jud McIntosh to the position of Vice-Chair, pending his agreement.

Motion: Michael Costello moved that Phil Ruck be re-elected to the position of Chairperson for another year.

Second: Dave Thompson.

The Board voted six for, with one abstaining, to re-elect Phil Ruck to the position of Chairperson for another year.

Other New Business

There was no other new business.

Discussion

The Board took the discussion period to recognize Board Member Dave Thompson for his long and upstanding service as a member of the Planning Board as his final term came to an end. Mr. Thompson was a member of the Board for 22 years, as well as serving on a number of other boards and committees for the Town of Orono. The Board expressed their admiration and appreciation, and

were joined in doing so by Town Manager Sophie Wilson.

Adjournment

Mr. Ruck asked for a motion to adjourn the April meeting of the Planning Board.

Motion: Dave Thompson

Second: John Beckett

The motion to adjourn the meeting passed seven in favor, none opposed, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm April 19, 2023.