

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
PLANNING BOARD
January 26, 2022
7:00 PM**

Board Members Present: Chairman Smith
George Oleen
Robbie Cooper
Sari Hoy
Caitlin McNeill

Others Present: Members of the Public
Lori Neil, Administrative Assistant

Chairman Smith opened the meeting at 7:01 pm.

1.) ANR Requests - None

2.) Approval of Draft Minutes – January 12, 2022: G. Oleen made a motion to accept the draft minutes as written. R. Cooper seconded the motion. Motion carried, 3-0.

C. Marsden joined the meeting at 7:04 pm.

S. Hoy joined the meeting at 7:04 pm.

3.) Discussion Regarding Citizen's Petition recommendation: Chair Smith mentioned there has been some discussion between himself and Rhonda LaBombard. It is still unclear if a special town meeting is needed. He said if the Planning Board is not ready for discussion, it can be tabled. C. Miller stated she had received an email from R. LaBombard that gave her the impression it has to go on the next town meeting. C. Miller stated, the proposal the citizen's will make, will be on Friday, and we were hoping the group could meet with S. Hoy and R. Cooper next week. Chair Smith stated what he had stated at the last meeting; this will have to be presented exactly as it was to the town clerk. It can always be amended. R. Cooper and S. Hoy both agreed they could meet with the Citizen's group next week.

4.) Planning Board Rules & Regulations versus Special Permit Application: There were no updates at this time and will be tabled until the next meeting.

5.) Planning Board Mail Review: No Mail

6.) Board Member Items: There was a discussion regarding the decision of abstaining from the Citizen's Petition recommendation. The Petition passed at the original town meeting but it was a clerical error that did not allow it to pass. The Planning Board has decided to support the Citizen's Petition. S. Hoy made a motion that the Planning Board explain at the town meeting, where our initial standing was and at this point we support the petition moving forward as stated. G. Oleen seconded the vote. Motion carried, 5-0.

S. Hoy mentioned attending the second Housing Production Plan meeting. C. McNeill was unsure of the date but asked Chairman Smith if he remembered a few years back when a woman from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission spoke at their meetings with the topic of Aging in Place. Chairman Smith will go back in the minutes and get the information to S. Hoy. C. McNeill had asked, what happens when a family member dies and now we are left with a four bedroom family home in the rural district? S. Hoy explained the Housing Production meeting is starting with basic ideas of what the plan is, identifying land and things that a town might need to do going forward. There will be discussion on where building is allowed, what the septic situation might be, and grants that may be available. There is a committee that will come after this one that seeks out funding or if we need to change bylaws to allow a building in the Center of town. Right now it is the big picture we are focused on.

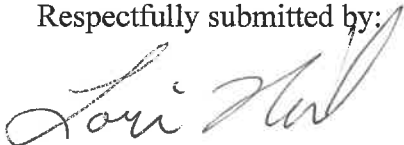
S. Hoy mentioned she was also on the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) meeting. The topic was putting together three different groups. There is a place to go regionally for all the towns grappling with housing. There are not enough rental units or affordable houses to buy for middle to low income jobs in Berkshire County. The BRPC is making a portal to view various grants for different projects. C. McNeill asked S. Hoy what the qualifications were for Sheffield and what the repercussions are for Chapter 40B. Chapter 40B is a state program that allows developers to override local zoning bylaws to increase the number of affordable homes where less than 10% is defined as affordable. S. Hoy said if we don't fill out 10% of affordable housing, we are subject to an aggressive 40B application which means the developer can decide to change the set-back limits, or they can change the height of their buildings. She said it would not be a blanket approval. There would be certain allowances that if petitioned, the state would be approved. C. McNeill asked how do we maintain a Master Plan and not turn into a situation of suburban sprawl. Where is the line drawn? She stated this is jeopardizing the integrity of the Master Plan and of these rural properties. S. Hoy mentioned that even the Master Plan suggests making adjustments to certain bylaws but this is so far ahead of where we are at right now. S. Hoy stated as we move along, I will bring more information to the Planning Board meetings.

7.) Public Inquiries: None at this time.

R. Cooper made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting. G. Oleen seconded the motion. Motion carried, 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Lori Neil
Administrative Assistant

Supporting Documents:

- P. B. Meeting Agenda
- Draft Minutes from 1-12-22