



City of Presque Isle, Maine

Planning Board Minutes

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Presque Isle City Hall- Council Chambers

March 16, 2023 @ 6:00 PM

Planning Board Members Present: Bruce Roope (Chairman), Ward Gerow (Vice-Chairman), Jayne Farrin, Rachel Murchison, Sean Nordenhold, David Perry, & Richard Engels (Alternate)

Planning Board Members Absent: Stacey Walton

Others Present: Galen Weibley, Director of Economic & Community Development; Tim St. Peter, Code Officer; Martin Puckett, City Manager; Doug Cyr, Craig Green, Jacob Shaw, Jeffrey Willette & Toby Michaud, WBRC.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Roope called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mr. Engels was made a voting member for the meeting given the absence of Ms. Walton. Total members present seven voting members.

2. Minutes Approval: Review and approve draft minutes from February 16, 2023.

There were changes noticed by *Ms. Murchison* and *Mr. Gerow* regarding the public comment section of the land use code.

A motion by *Ward Gerow*, second by *Sean Nordenhold* to approve the February 16, 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes with revisions by members Murchison & Gerow. **Vote – unanimous 7-0**

3. Site Plan Review for NMCC Child Care Center - 33 Edgemont Drive

Richard Engels stated to Chairman Roope that he has a conflict of interest and removed himself from the board and discussion on this item citing his involvement on the capital committee for NMCC.

Toby Michaud with WBRC presented Northern Maine Community Colleges' proposed childcare project located at the renovated Penobscot Hall at 33 Edgemont Drive campus. The proposal calls for using the existing drive and repurposing the current parking lot into a new loop configuration for pick up and drop off of children.

NMCC Site Plan Review (Continued)

The childcare center will accommodate 40 children with most being NMCC students as primary focus in an effort to aid in workforce development and removing the barriers to seeking education. There will also be a proposed three child care play areas in the lawn north of the hall with pedestrian walking paths. Galen Weibley presented the discrepancy letter and responses from WBRC explaining that outstanding items have been addressed with unanimous support from the development review staff. Planning board members inquired into the number of children being housed and if public will have access to the site. Mr. Michaud stated the primary focus will be for NMCC students then employees who need childcare access and should not compete with the private sector.

A motion by *David Perry* and second by *Jayne Farrin* to approve the site plan for NMCC's childcare center located at 33 Edgemont Drive. Vote 6-0-1 (Engels abstained)

4. MSAD#1 Broadband Map Discussion

Galen Weibley presented to the Planning Board the work done by the County Broadband Coalition consisting of municipal, community, internet service providers, Aroostook Partnership and Northern Maine Development Commission in identifying areas where broadband is lacking in Aroostook County. Mr. Weibley's focus was on MSAD#1 communities of Presque Isle, Mapleton, Chapman, Castle Hill and Westfield which may consist of outreach before applying for technical assistance grant and later a construction grant for broadband expansion. Right now, this is an informative project and the County is exploring services to do the technical grant for Aroostook County. More information will follow regarding the progress of this project. Planning Board members expressed interest in learning more and a link will be shared for members to view in the leisure.

5. Citizen Comments: None

6. Other Business

Mr. Weibley shared updates from the Department with hosting the Genesis Fund's Housing Developer Workshop which had the highest attendance rate for the state. He also mentioned a pending Façade Loan Application for 412 Main Street which has a great story to tell about the merchant and contractor looking to rebrick the building.

Tim St. Peter also mentioned that there are three pending site plans in the hopper for potential discussion at the board's April 20th meeting.

7. Adjournment of the Planning Board Meeting

A motion by *David Perry*, second by *Jayne Farrin* to adjourn the Planning Board Meeting at 6:57 PM. **Vote – unanimous 7-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Galen Weibley