

Cavendish Select Board Meeting, Monday, November 13th, 2023, at 6:30 pm
Town Office Meeting Room: 37 High Street Cavendish, Vermont & via Zoom

Present: Bob Glidden (Chairman), Mike Ripley, George Timko, Shannon Devereux, Rick Chambers (Town Manager), Jen Leak (Recording Secretary), OVTV and citizens as listed on the attached sheet.

- **Call the meeting to order**

Bob Glidden, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Bob said that they would take some time during the Town Manager's report to remember Board member Stephen Plunkard, who passed away recently.

- **Approval of Minutes from October 16th, 2023**

Mike Ripley moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to approve the minutes of October 16, 2023, as written. All voted in favor.

- **Adjust Agenda**

There were no adjustments.

- **Hear Citizens**

Margo Caulfield was present. She said that she is part of a long-term recovery group for area towns impacted by the July flooding. Margo said that some of the issues they have discussed include: the five Ludlow dams; sending information via the VTAAlerts system; installing 911 address signs; and planning evacuation routes. She asked Bob Glidden to keep her informed of evacuation plans so that she can publicize them using the same language.

- **New Business**

1. **Sign Perpetual Care Fund Deed**

Rick said that there was a deed for a perpetual care fund for a lot in the Cavendish Village cemetery which needed to be signed by the Board.

2. **Review and Consider Approval of Reappraisal Agreement with NEMRC**

Rick said that the Town was notified earlier this year that a reappraisal was needed. He added that many towns in Vermont have been instructed to reappraise due to increased housing values. Rick said that he recommended signing a reappraisal agreement with NEMRC, who has done reappraisals for us in the past. He said that Diane had reached out to another firm but they weren't certain they could do it and would require the purchase of new software if they did. Rick said that NEMRC could start in 2025 and finish by 2027.

George Timko moved/Mike Ripley seconded a motion to accept the reappraisal agreement with NEMRC. All voted in favor.

George asked if the Town's reappraisal fund will have enough money to cover the cost of this reappraisal. Rick said that he had spoken with our state representative John Arrison, and John thought the state might add extra money over the next 2 years to help cover the reappraisal costs. Rick said that if the state kept the regular funding levels there won't be enough funds to cover the full cost.

3. Windsor County Sheriff to Discuss Concerns/Expectations

Ryan Palmer, Windsor County Sheriff, was present. He said that he was elected in November last year and took office on February 1st. Ryan said that a deputy spends about 8 hours per week in town. He said that they do traffic control but also have been involved in events at Windsor County Youth Services and CTES.

Ryan said that they have added fingerprinting services, body cameras and tasers. He said that he has doubled the staff and is planning to hold autism awareness training and canine training for the deputies.

Ryan asked the Board what the department could do better in Cavendish. The Board did not have any questions or concerns. Ryan said that as budget season comes up he would be willing to talk with the Board again, and he would like to see the deputies spend more time here.

Rick asked if Ryan would have several options for the FY25 budget. Ryan said that he could.

4. Cavendish Green Mountain Snow Fleas Road Crossings

Joe Marini was present. He said that the snowmobile trail crossings are basically the same as last year.

Mike Ripley moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to approve the Snow Fleas road crossings with the same conditions as last year. All voted in favor.

5. Select Board Opening

Rick said that by state statute, the Select Board vacancy needed to be posted within 10 days. He said that he has received letters of interest from three individuals who could be appointed to fill the vacancy until Town Meeting Day in March, 2024. Rick added that two of the individuals were present tonight.

Dave Norton was present. He said that he has lived in town for 23 years and would be pleased to serve.

Chris Leonard was present. He said that he lives in town and has served on other boards and would be pleased to serve.

George asked if either of them might run for the position in March. Both Chris and Dave said that they would. Rick said that the other candidate, Sandra Russo, had said she would not run in March but would serve until then.

Bob Glidden moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to appoint Dave Norton to serve as Select Board member until the next election in March 2024. All voted in favor.

The Board thanked the other candidates for their interest.

- Old Business

1. Set Date for Town Plan Energy Chapter Hearing

Rick said that the Planning Commission has finished their hearing for the Town Plan Energy Chapter. He said that the next step is for the Select Board to hold a public hearing. Rick suggested holding it before the December board meeting on December 11th. The Board agreed to hold a public hearing to review the Town Plan Energy Chapter at 6 pm on Monday, December 11, 2023. Rick said that he would post a warning.

2. Academy Building

Rick said that he had received an email from owner Reese Brown with questions for the Board, which he passed on to them after last month's meeting. Rick said that he had found a letter from Brendan stating that the Board would agree to allow both commercial and residential use of the building, which he felt satisfied that request.

Chris Chadwick, prospective buyer, was present. He said that he has discussed some issues with the Preservation Trust mostly concerning renovations to the exterior of the building. He said that he needs to have further discussions with them to clarify what windows, heating system, etc will be allowed.

Chris said that he needs to clarify the parking situation since the property doesn't include any land beyond the building footprint. He said that he would take over the maintenance and landscaping of the adjacent town parking lot in return for using it for parking for tenants/customers. He said that he would also need to add a handicapped ramp and would need permission to use town land for that. Chris said that he envisions a residential space upstairs and commercial space downstairs. He added that he might need to build a structure for trash storage on adjacent town land.

Margo commented that it is the oldest building in town and has had many changes since the 1820's. She offered to talk to the Preservation Trust with Chris as she has dealt with them on other historic buildings in town.

George asked how many businesses Chris would put in. Chris said that first he would put a woodshop for himself on the ground floor as he worked on the building, and then convert it into a bakery/coffee shop with one residence upstairs.

Mike asked if the property was surveyed. Chris said that he did not know if it had been but Reese had told him that the town tax map shows straight lines around the building itself. Mike said that he thought the parking lot arrangement seemed possible but he thought a survey would be warranted to ascertain the line with the neighbor's property before planning to add any structures.

George said that he thought the town should do the survey if the town is keeping the property. Mike suggested that Rick should investigate the cost of a survey and perhaps the town and Chris could split the cost. Chris agreed that seemed fair. Rick said that he would contact some surveyors.

Chris said that if he can get parking spaces and use of the town property for a ramp and egress then he thought he would be able to figure out the other details with the Preservation Trust. Chris said that he would also work with the town to preserve the historic exterior.

- **Managers Report**

Rick said that he wanted to use this time to discuss the loss of Stephen Plunkard. He said that Stephen always had great ideas on making Cavendish a better place and had vast knowledge to move those ideas along.

Bob called for a moment of silence to remember Stephen.

- **Other Business**

Shannon Devereux – none.

George Timko – George said that the Board had talked about adding the road behind the brewery onto the Town's highway certificate. Rick said that it is called Park Place on Google Maps, and he has talked with the State about it.

Mike Ripley – Mike said that the Board has discussed short-term rentals off and on, and maybe they

could discuss it again. Margo said that many short-term rentals have been in town for a long time, such as the Castle condos and Depot Street condos. She said that this summer six long term rentals were lost because current laws do not favor landlords. Margo added that Airbnb can provide data on the rentals in town.

Bob Glidden – Bob said that the diesel pump needs a new nozzle.

- **Adjourn**

Mike Ripley moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:28 pm. All voted in favor.

Minutes Approved: _____

Date: _____