

**Town of St. Albans
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 15th, 2020
6:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Teleconferencing**

On Monday, June 15th, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Selectboard met in person at Town Hall with the public participation via Zoom Teleconferencing.

Officials and staff in attendance: Chair Brendan Deso, Vice Chair Jessica Frost, Stan Dukas Jonathan Giroux, Erin Creley, Town Manager Carrie Johnson, Director of Public Works Alan Mashtare, Town Clerk Anna Bourdon, and Recording Secretary Jenn Gray.

No public allowed in Town Hall for the meeting due to pandemic containment rules.

Public Participation via Zoom Teleconferencing: Franklin County Sheriff Roger Langevin, Erik Alling and Caela Waite with Stantec, Russ Gouin, Jim Cota, Dave Blackmore, and Jon Kaplan with VTrans, Hannah Rounds, Catherine Dimitruk with Regional Planning, and Jackie Brown.

Gricebrook/Thorpe Avenue Extension residents: Randy Crepeau, Betty Popple, Ruth and Robert Cronin, Ruby Martin, Jack Kane, and Marlene Ovitt.

Chair B. Deso called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Health Path – Local Concerns Meeting

Director of Administration Ned Connell explained the project saying that it is focused solely on an at grade crossing from Thorpe Avenue to Thorpe Avenue, a super-sized sidewalk also known as a bike and pedestrian path.

Erik Alling from Stantec explained that the purpose of the Local Concerns meeting is for the public to voice their ideas, concerns, and issues on the project. He explained that the project team consist of the Town of St. Albans, who manages the project, a representative from VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation, which he pointed out is important because the State owns the SASH (St. Albans State Highway Access), and Stantec who was hired to perform the evaluation of alternatives and come up with the final report. Mr. Alling gave an overview of the project area, located in the middle of the SASH, and the approval process. After the Local Concerns meeting, the next step is to look at alternatives development; keep meeting with the Town and the State for feedback and then evaluate those alternatives. A report will be drafted after that and Stantec will come back to the public with a presentation of the alternatives later this summer. When Mr. Alling was done with the presentation, the Board opened the floor for questions and comments.

Ruth and Robert Cronin of Gricebrook addressed the Board. Mrs. Cronin is a runner and stated that it is very dangerous to cross the SASH from Gricebrook to Collins Perley making crossing impossible for her and her husband who uses a wheelchair and electric scooter. This crossing would allow both of them to cross the SASH safely. Mrs. Cronin also pointed out that she works at Collins Perley and would like to ride her bike to work. They are both very enthusiastic and support this project.

Ken Nolan owns 146 Gricebrook and his mother, Donna lives there. He is very encouraged to see this moving forward. He have a few concerns with the design. How does this plan to connect to Gricebrook? He stated that this area has a lot of elderly housing and if a bike path is put there, it'll generate more travelers and he suggested screening in that area. He stated that there are water drainage issues in the area that would need to be addressed. His last comment was that he was very excited to see this going forward and hopes it moves quickly.

N. Connell pointed out that regardless of the details for a path, the Town may get some federal or state funding that will require the Town to meet ADA guidelines. It'll be easily accessible by wheelchair or scooter.

Ruby Martin and Jack Kane of 144 Gricebrook stated that they do support this project and hopes that it gets accomplished.

Marlene Ovitt of 27 Thorpe Avenue Extension stated that this was a great idea. She was wondering how it will work on homeowners land? Will there be sidewalks? Mr. Alling stated that the thought right now is a shared use path and we would identify any Right of Way impacts

during this phase of project development. Mrs. Ovitt said great, go ahead and put a sidewalk in her yard, she doesn't mind. She supports this project.

Randy Crepeau asked if there will there be a change of speed on the SASH or is that something that is out of the scope or ability of the project? How is that being included in the thought process? Mr. Alling explained that could potential be one of the alternatives. It's more than just putting in a lower speed limit sign on the SASH. There will need to be some additional changes to the roadway, but is something we could look at, with VTrans coordination of course.

C. Johnson stated if anyone had questions or concerns and didn't want to address them at this time, they may call her or send an email and she will forward them to the working group. N. Connell stated that we have a deadline of July 3rd for comments.

Ken Nolan explained that he had heard at one point there was discussion of extending Gricebrook to interconnect with the SASH. Is that off the table at this point? Mr. Alling said nothing is off the table at this point. We will start to look at developments after we compile the comments from this meeting.

A member of the Gricebrook Association Board (didn't give name) stated that they do support that (Gricebrook interconnecting with the SASH), so if there is any way that could be included in the plan, they would support that 100%.

J. Frost asked if this project would consider how to connect with the schools. It may be beyond the scope of this project, but we should somehow look to the future on how we make it easier for kids from the Town school and the high school to safely get to Collins Perley. N. Connell explained that we want to connect the schools with Collins Perley and then eventually with Hard'Ack and other places in Town and the City. The current project is one small part of the scope of work. Once we can cross here, we can do a lot of other things. It's a known fact that both kids and adults are crossing in this area now.

Mr. Alling will compile the information from this meeting and prepare a Purpose and Needs Statement to address concerns. That will lead into potential ideas and solutions to address those concerns. These will all be reviewed by the Town and the State. Then, Stantec will be back for an alternative presentation to show the Board and community members what they came up with.

Public Hearing – Adoption of an Updated St. Albans Town Plan

C. Johnson read the public hearing notice for the adoption of the updated St. Albans Town Plan. B. Deso pointed out that the only change to the Town Plan was a section on getting a Village Designation for the Bay area, and he opened the hearing.

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to adopt the 2020 St. Albans Town Plan as presented. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

B. Deso asked for comments. Hearing none J. Giroux made a motion to close the hearing.

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to close the public hearing on the Town Plan. J. Frost seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

General Warrant

MOTION: S. Dukas made a motion to approve the general warrant dated June 15th, 2020 in the amount of \$92,969.22. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Payroll

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to approve the payroll warrants dated June 5th, 2020 in the amount of \$21,698.52 and June 12th2020 in the amount of \$22,164.83. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Stone House Warrant

Historical Preservation Grant – Stone House

MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to approve the Stone House warrant in the amount of \$37,700 for P.I. Charbonneau. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Industrial Park Warrant

MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to approve the Industrial Park warrant in the amount of \$792.42. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Infrastructure Development Warrant

MOTION: E. Creley made a motion to approve the Infrastructure Development warrant in the amount of \$10,469.96. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to approve the Selectboard special meeting minutes from Tuesday, May 26th, 2020, the Selectboard meeting minutes from Monday, June 1st, 2020, and the Selectboard special meeting minutes from Monday, June 8th, 2020. Seconded by J. Frost. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Public Comment

None.

Town Manager's Report

RFP for Policing Services Update

C. Johnson explained that a RFP (Request For Proposal) was issued for police services. The Town received two bids; Franklin County Sheriff's Office and the St. Albans Police Department. We are currently reviewing both proposals which are not public yet. C. Johnson did follow up with a few questions to both entities and will review that information. She did point out that this is the Town's biggest contract.

Salt Shed Update

C. Johnson explained that Project Manager Matt Young continues to work with the State. We are hoping to start construction in the fall. Currently we are waiting on approvals from the State. S. Dukas asked what the drop dead date was? A. Mashtare explained that he gets his sand in September and then his salt at the end of September or beginning of October. If the RFP gets out this week, the drop dead date would be the 1st or 2nd week of October and that's pushing it. He went on to say that he will probably need to partially fill the old salt shed at the former DPW site.

COVID-19 Update

C. Johnson explained to the Board that Town Hall is still open by appointment only and it seems to be working okay. People needing to come to Town Hall call A. Bourdon and make appointments with her. We require anyone coming to Town Hall to follow all CDC guidelines to ensure protection for the employees. C. Johnson also stated that the Fire Department continues to have its trucks and offices sanitized. She pointed out that we are actively updating our COVID-19 tab on the Town's website and said that Healthvermont.gov (Vermont Department of Health) website has a lot of very current and helpful information.

Town Hall Relocation

Project Manager Matt Young is receiving letters of interest from vendors interested in working on our schematic design and put out an RFP for an environment assessment.

Schedule

The next regular Selectboard meetings are Monday, July 6th and Monday, July 20th. Town Office will be closed Friday, July 3rd for the 4th of July holiday.

B. Deso asked if Bay Day is cancelled, what will we do with the fireworks we've purchased? A. Mashtare explained that we could possibly have a fall festival and set them off then, or keep as a credit and use the credit towards next year.

Farmers Market

A. Mashtare explained the Farmers Market is going well, John Montagne is doing a good job. We have one way in and one way out of the park and we are socially distancing. The "Platform" program through Regional Planning and Healthy Roots is up and running. You can put orders in online and pick the order up outside the market for folks who are not comfortable walking through the market.

Chair's Report

B. Deso had provided the Board with a draft of the Fair and Impartial Policing Policy for their review. The Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council approved this policy. This is not a requirement. It's just a way to say we will not accept bias policing. B. Deso read the purpose of the policy.

J. Frost asked if we should require either department to include this with our contract? B. Deso stated we can thoroughly review both department's policies. Either our policy we set or the department we go with must meet our high standards.

S. Dukas doesn't have a problem with the Town having their own policy. We'd be ahead of the curve if we have something for ourselves.

E. Creley stated this is a good starting place, it's already been approved at the state level. There is room for improvement. We should set high standards. We should have conversations with the public about what policing means to the Town.

B. Deso said he could see the Town expanding this policy and have law enforcement departments submit quarterly statistics to see if we need to adjust the policy.

B. Deso suggested that maybe having the Police Advisory Committee look into this, get more participants, someone with policing or medical backgrounds, or a government background. S. Dukas thought this was a great idea. B. Deso stated we could have the Police Advisory Committee review those quarterly statistics and then have them meet with the Selectboard to discuss possible changes.

E. Creley explained that maybe changing the time for this committee to meet to include more people would be helpful as well. Currently, they are meeting in the middle of the day.

The Board agreed to table the policy at this point and decide how we want to engage the public in participating with this committee. The plan is to get it off the ground by the end of July or beginning of August.

Other Business

Town Forest Trails

J. Frost reminded the Board that there will be a grand opening planned for the Town Forest. One a side note, she did point out that there were horses on the Town Forest trails this weekend which did cause a little bit of damage. There was discussion on possibly changing the Parks Ordinance to prohibit horseback riding in the Town Forest. J. Giroux suggested trying to find out who owns the horses and ask them not to ride there before we decide to change our ordinance. Staff will look into it and bring back a draft ordinance to address prohibiting horseback riding.

Executive Session

MOTION: J. Frost made a motion to go into executive session at 7:34 p.m. to discuss legal, contractual, or personnel issues where premature general public knowledge of the subject matter would place the Town (or person involved) at a substantial disadvantage. It is further moved to enter into executive session to discuss legal, contractual, or personnel issued under the provisions of Title 1, section 313(a)(1) of Vermont Statutes and to invite Town Manager Carrie Johnson. Seconded by J. Giroux. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:04 p.m. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Adjournment

MOTION: J. Giroux made a motion to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 9:04 p.m. Seconded by E. Creley. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn Gray, Recording Secretary