



**TOWN OF PORTSMOUTH
PLANNING BOARD**

2200 East Main Road
Portsmouth, RI 02871
401-683-3717

**PORTSMOUTH PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting
March 10, 2021**

Members Present: Guy Bissonnette, Luke Harding, Edward Lopes, Kathleen Wilson, David Garceau, Ryan Tibbets and Seth Pilotte

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Leon Lesinski, Administrative Officer, Portsmouth Planning, Gary Crosby, Town Planner, Michael Asciola, Assistant Town Planner and Atty. Kevin Gavin, Town Solicitor

The Zoom Meeting was called to order in the Town Council Chambers by Mr. Bissonnette at 7:00 p.m.

1. Agenda Continuances/Modifications: none

2. Approval of minutes for Planning Board meeting of February 10, 2021

MOTION: Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilson to approve the February 10, 2021 meeting minutes with the following corrections: Page 1, The sentence following the "Others Present" sections, shall read "The Zoom Meeting was called to order in the Town Council Chambers by Mr. Bissonnette at 7:00 p.m."; Pages, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, Mr. Pilotte's is correctly spelled, removing a second "l" erroneously inserted. All in favor. So voted.

**3. Highlands at Prescott Point, LLC, AP55, Lot 1 (2543 West Main Road).
Request to reduce the \$400,000 Road Bond**

Mr. Bissonnette called for representatives of the petitioner to speak on the request. No one came forward to speak. Mr. Bissonnette called for public comment to which there was none. Mr. Bissonnette directed that the following letters be accepted into the record:

1. Thomas A. Santilli, Green Hill Builders, Inc., Narragansett, RI to Leon Lesinski, Portsmouth Planning Board Administrative Officer, dated February 16, 2021, requesting a 50% reduction to the road bond at The Highlands at Prescott Point.
2. Brian Woodhead, Director of Public Works, Town of Portsmouth to Leon Lesinski, Portsmouth Planning Board Administrative Officer, dated February 18, 2021, recommending a 50% (partial) release of the road bond in the amount of \$200,000.00 for The Highlands at Prescott Point.

MOTION: Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilson, to approve a reduction of the road bond by 50% or \$200,000.00 for Highlands at Prescott Point, LLC, AP55, Lot 1 (2543 West Main Road), based on the written recommendation of the Portsmouth Director of Public Works, dated February 18, 2021. All in favor. So voted.

4. Continue Town Council request that the Planning Board assess the recommendations to the Solar Ordinance made by Scott Millar from Grow Smart Rhode Island

Gary Crosby, Town Planner stated that after further review of the Solar Ordinance he does not recommend any changes to the ordinance in accordance with the comments set forth in Mr. Millar's letter (GrowSmartRI), dated November 23, 2020.

MOTION: Mr. Harding made a motion, seconded by Ms. Wilson, to refrain from making changes to the Portsmouth Solar Ordinance based on the recommendation of the Town Planner.

Referring to his talking points that were posted on the meeting Zoom screen, Mr. Crosby focused on three points:

1. Directing solar development to commercial or industrial zoned parcels will not likely avoid close proximity of solar development to residential zones because most commercial/industrial sites border residential properties in Portsmouth. The impact of solar development on residential zones will have to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis within the public hearing process.
2. Limiting lot coverage in a solar development, once the setbacks and screening areas are determined, is not a desirable way to optimize solar energy, particularly since the new Comprehensive Community Plan supports renewable energy efforts within the town.
3. A predetermined setback requirement and thus a one-size-fits all approach hinders the Planning Board's vested task to strike the desired balance between the rights of the property owner and those of the residential neighbors. Given variations in topography, the Planning Board should have the ability to determine setbacks and screening area specifications on a case-by-case basis within the public hearing process.

Mr. Bissonnette called for public comment to which there was none. Mr. Harding stated that based on Mr. Crosby's comments, he wished to keep his motion as stated.

In response to Mr. Tibbetts and at the recommendation of Mr. Crosby, Mr. Harding amended his motion to state that Mr. Crosby will forward a formal, written summary of his talking points to the Planning Board. Ms. Wilson

amended her second to the motion. The motion was carried, 6 votes in favor. Appearing to have been dropped from the Zoom meeting, Mr. Garceau abstained from the vote.

5. Approve March 10, 2021 Monthly Project Status Report, Administrative Subdivisions and Plat Plan Recording.

MOTION: Mr. Lopes made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harding, to accept the Portsmouth Planning Board Monthly Project Status Reports, Administrative Subdivisions and Plat Plan Filings, March 10, 2021 and to place it into the record. The motion was carried, 6 votes in favor. Appearing to have been dropped from the Zoom meeting, Mr. Garceau abstained from the vote.

At 7:29 p.m., a motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. All in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted:
Dede Walsh
Recording Secretary for:

Leon Lesinski
Administrative Officer