

Shaftsbury Planning Commission

June 8, 2021

The meeting came to order at 6:02 p.m. Present were commissioners Chris Williams (chair), Mike Foley, Martha Cornwell, and Naomi Miller. Also present was zoning administrator Shelly Stiles.

Mr. Foley moved to approve the May 25 minutes. Ms. Cornwell seconded the motion, which passed 4-0-0.

Wastewater treatment (WWT) in Shaftsbury Village

Ms. Cornell reported she'd reached out to Art Whitman to discuss the concept. He said he'd like to invite Cinda Morse and Phyllis Porio to join (they were active in the 2006 Stone Environmental study). They hadn't been able to arrange a time to meet.

She said she'd also tried to talk with Nelson Brownell, chair of the selectboard when Pownal built its wastewater system several years ago. Phone tag.

She reminded all that she'd sent out a summary of the Stone study, with a breakout of important findings, some weeks ago.

Mr. Williams noted that the Stone preferred option would serve only about 76 people, fewer even than the 305 served by the water system. Ms. Naomi reminded the group that they'd agreed that a WWT system in the Village would benefit all Shaftsbury residents, in tax receipts and economic development – not necessarily now, but certainly in years to come.

The group discussed Cat Bryar's presentation at a recent meeting and agreed it had little light to cast on this discussion.

The group discussed visiting the Select Board and what their message would be. (Aside: money for broadband expansion seems to be nearly certain, irrespective of how the town will spend the ARPA funds. Mr. Foley described some of the shortcomings of Vermont's broadband funding program.) It was agreed that commissioners would attend the June 21 Select Board meeting to 1) gather information as to how the Select Board planned to spend its ARPA funds (would they be amenable to a discussion of wastewater?), and 2) how the Select Board and Planning Commission can collaborate going forward. It was agreed that PC members would not attend to advocate for one project over another.

Next PC projects

After some discussion, it was agreed that the Commission will work on reducing the impacts of development on rural areas in the town. It would address two priorities from the Town Plan – forest fragmentation and reducing impacts of development. Mr. Foley thought that a successful effort would protect, not diminish, property values. Ms. Miller will lead these discussions.

(Revisions to the bylaws already in the works will be pursued as well.)

Other business

We will continue to Zoom unless circumstances suggest meeting personally is better.

Ms. Stiles will send the town counsel our proposed kennel language.

Ms. Stiles will gather all information needed to prepare for an eventual hearing on the many bylaw revisions the Commission has discussed.

Chris wants to find a better route to the Town Forest.

The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 7:15 p.m.