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Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

Meeting Minutes

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Town of Shaftsbury Special Select Board Meeting

Date of Meeting: Monday June 9, 2025, at 6:00 pm, in person at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting came to order at 6:00 PM. Present were selectpersons Naomi Miller (Chair), Zoe Contros Kearl (Vice-Chair), Mike Cichanowski, Tony Krulikowski, and Brad Peacock. Also present were Town Administrator Paula Iken and Sewer Feasibility Study Committee member Art Whitman. David Mance, Sewer Feasibility Study Committee Chair, and Rick Bennett, Economic Development Committee Chair participated via Zoom.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement:

No one expressed a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda.

3. Announcements

There were no announcements

4. Public Comments:

There were no public comments

5. Sewer Feasibility Committee Report

Mr. Cichanowski provided a brief background on the grant and a previous forgivable loan from the State for a sewer feasibility study. The take home point of the study is that the town land behind Cole Hall can handle 6,490 gallons of wastewater per day, about 40 bedrooms. 2 issues were discussed: economic development & housing and failed septic systems. Mr. Cichanowski said that Dufresne had found about 10 system failures in 10 years, all were fixed by the homeowners. The committee started to focus on addressing current septic situations, unlocking economic potential that is held up by lack of infrastructure, and addressing the housing crisis. Mr. Cichanowski also noted that the school has 2 septic fields. The committee had reached out to residents in the 4 corners area to determine interest in a town sewer system; there was no response from residents. The committee then looked the potential for workforce and/or senior housing on the lot behind Cole Hall that was purchased by the town. The 60% report is in, and the committee would like to wrap up the project with Dufresne and pass the information on to the Planning Commission. Ms. Miller said she thought that there was a potential for a next stage of the Dufresne project, in which they would more thoroughly analyze exactly how many bedrooms could be accommodated. There was further discussion on this. Mr. Mance ran through some scenarios and concluded that the first step would be the plan for the land use. He also said it might be wise to hold back some capacity in case a business in that area had a failed system. Ms. Miller then summarized Mr. Mance's suggestion: The Select board, the Planning Commission, and potentially the Economic Development Committee should come together to be more concise and clearer on the constraints and possibilities of developing apartment housing on the Town lot. The Town could then provide this to Dufresne. Ms. Miller said that the Planning Commission had been asked to put rezoning

the area at the top of their agenda. Further discussion of the merits of senior housing ensued. Mr. Bennett brought up the value of economic vibrancy in the area and the possibility of combined housing and business buildings. Mr. Cichanowski noted that by reserving capacity economic potential is theoretically possible. Ms. Miller said that a conversation on all these topics should take place soon to create a plan for moving forward, perhaps by an ad hoc committee that has representatives from the Sewer Feasibility Committee, the Economic Development Committee, the Planning Commission, and the Select Board. Ms. Contros Kearn said she agreed that the different groups needed to create a plan for Dufresne to move forward with a conceptual drawing. She felt that zoning was the biggest issue. Ms. Miller reminded everyone that the property was purchased with the goal of creating dense housing. Mr. Krulikowski said he felt that a PR campaign might be needed to convince people to move out of their bigger houses into the housing. Mr. Bennett suggested a tax incentive. This would need further discussion. The legality of who limiting would be allowed to move into the senior housing was discussed.

Ms. Miller then asked how the board would like to move forward. Dufresne are set to move forward on the next stage. By the terms of the forgivable loan, Dufresne needs a recommendation from the Sewer Feasibility Committee to do so. But if the Sewer Feasibility Committee is going to be guided in its recommendation by the recommendations of the Planning Commission and the Economic Development Commission, then the Sewer Feasibility Committee can't do that yet. The Select Board is asking the Sewer Feasibility Committee to reconvene as soon as it hears from the Planning Commission. It will stay in touch with the Economic Development Committee to keep planning in line with that committee's recommendations and thoughts. The planning commission should be looking at what's currently possible and get imaginative with what might be possible.

10. Review of Action Items

Ms. Miller will contact the planning commission to clarify this mission.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Krulikowski moved; Mr. Peacock seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.