Members Present: Thad Presby, Mark Hesler, John Dimarzio, Eric Meth, and Mary Grote

Also Present: James Fitzpatrick and Robert Tortorice, Energy Commission Members

A regular meeting of the Franconia Planning Board was held at the Franconia Town Hall on Tuesday, April 13, 2021.

The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm by Thad Presby

**Solar Regulation –** Jim Fitzpatrick stated the Energy Commission has been discussing the need for a solar regulation for about a year. Eric Meth, who is also a member of the Energy Commission, advised the Commission that the Planning Board had been approached by two residents requesting the Planning Board develop a solar regulation. The Energy Commission was planning on looking at regulations from four or five different towns and would then put a regulation together to present to the Planning Board for approval. The Energy Commission is looking for direction from the Planning Board on whether they should continue with their work and present a regulation to the Planning Board at a future meeting or does the Planning Board want to work on formulating a solar regulation themselves or make it a combined effort of the Energy Commission and Planning Board.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding different concerns related to solar energy that should be addressed in the regulation (i.e., protecting view sheds and esthetics, stand-alone versus roof installations, commercial installations, designating stand-alone panels as structures, the balance between homeowner’s rights to have solar versus neighbors/towns not having their property devalued, increase property setbacks, visibility of panels).

There was discussion regarding a timeline to present the regulation to the Planning Board. Thad stated the Planning Board needs to hold two public hearings before the end of the year so it can be voted on at next year’s town meeting.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Master Plan update. Mary suggested mentioning the solar regulation in the survey that will be sent to residents. Discussion ensued regarding the different options for sending out the survey: 1) mail the survey to every resident; 2) post the survey on the website; 3) mail a postcard asking residents to go online to complete the survey, print it off and mail it back, or call and ask that a survey be mailed to them. Jim and Bob stated the postcard option seemed the most reasonable since every homeowner would receive one and they could choose how to respond to the survey.

Jim stated the Energy Commission would continue working on the solar regulation and will have something to present to the Board in the near future.

**Board Member** – Thad stated Monica Laflamme approached him about becoming a Board member. After a brief discussion, Thad made a motion to recommend the Selectmen appoint Monica as a member of the Planning Board, second by Mary Grote. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**Master Plan –** The Board discussed the type of questions that should be included in the survey (i.e., yes/no questions, yes/no questions with a comment line, open-ended questions, etc.) Mark Hesler discussed the question categories—future land use considerations, future housing considerations, recreation considerations, transportation considerations, community design considerations, natural resource considerations, economic development considerations, and to address the solar energy issue, alternative energy considerations.

The Board discussed the trail system and the desire to protect it from new owners putting up no trespassing signs. Thad suggested that since this is a voluntary trail system it might be beneficial to reach out to new homeowners and try to reconfigure the trails so they don’t pass too closely to anyone’s house. John also suggested reaching out to homeowners to have additional trails added to help interconnect more trails which could be put under recreation considerations.

The Board agreed the survey should have a couple yes/no questions under each section and an open-ended question to solicit some good responses and to get people thinking about their interests.

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 11th, at 7:00pm at the Franconia Town Hall.

After a motion and a second, the meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Wills