



## *City of Caribou, Maine*

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### **Caribou Planning Board Meeting Minutes Thursday, December 9, 2021 @ 5:30 pm City Council Chambers**

**Members Present:** Dan Bagley, Christine Solman, Dave Corriveau, Frank McElwain, Eric Hitchcock and Steve Wentworth (came in at 5:40 pm)

**Members Absent:** Amanda Jandreau

**Other in Attendance:** Ken Murchison – CEO; Denise Lausier – Executive Assistant to City Manager

Tom Ayer, Councilor Liaison was absent.

**I. Call Meeting to Order, Determine Quorum** – Called to order at 5:30 pm, Quorum is present.

**II. Public Hearings** – None.

**III. Approval of Minutes** –

- a. **Approval of Minutes of the October 28, 2021, Planning Board Work Session** –
- b. **Approval of Minutes of the November 10, 2021, Planning Board Meeting** –

Frank McElwain moved to approve both sets of minutes as presented; seconded by Eric Hitchcock.

Roll Call Vote

Frank McElwain – Yes; Christine Solman – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes  
Motion carried with all in favor.

**IV. New Business**

a. **Subdivision Ordinance** – CEO Murchison stated that the issue being is that subdivisions are an onerous task dealing with State of Maine statute. Something to look at; are there different degrees of subdivisions. There are several developers that would love to subdivide but would not like to go through the process that others have been through like Solar Slopes, etc. Utilities and roads need to be to City standards.

CEO Murchison stated that it would be good to think about how the City can partner in developing these subdivisions. Other cities do all the engineering, put in the roads and put in lots. They sell the lots and put it into their revolving loan funds and on the tax rolls. CEO Murchison said that there are developers now who have land that is ready and are there things the City can do and techniques that could be used to help this process.

Chairman Bagley stated that there should be an option for a landowner to split up a lot into a few lots where there are no structures going in and no environmental impacts.

Eric Hitchcock said that DEP has rules in place already, might need a letter from them on what triggers these things. It is hard to get around the rules. Dealing with large tracks of land to do certain

things, the State has already thought of these things already. There are a lot of things the City can do depending on zones and those kinds of things.

CEO Murchison stated that there is a developer with a property that they wish to develop into eight parcels and this land is outside of the Urban Compact Area. This does constitute a subdivision however a subdivision that occurs outside of the Urban Compact Area (outside of the Utilities district) could be a more basic subdivision application. It is a great place for a subdivision. With housing shortages in the State, it would be good for the developer and the City. This could make room for some substantial taxation.

CEO Murchison commented that the current focus is to go with State minimums, that is what the City has now and is onerous. CEO Murchison will reach out to other communities to see what they are doing. Other communities are using a revolving loan fund up front, doing engineering up front and doing their own roads etc.

## V. Old Business

**a. 2021 Year in Review** – Chairman Bagley developed a list of what the Planning Board has accomplished over 2021. Chairman Bagley reviewed the list and thanked the Board members for all the work they did.

**b. Continue proposed amendments to Sec 13-700 (13) Home Occupations, and schedule a Public Hearing** – CEO Murchison brought forth the document with changes included. He highlighted areas that need to be reviewed and also offered a copy of the Windham, Maine Home Occupations Ordinance to review.

Two categories for Home Occupations; Category 1 would be in house review. Category 2 would require State licensure that would trigger Planning Board review.

CEO Murchison stated daycare language could be taken out and just reference that section of the ordinance.

Discussion on different home occupations and how they would fit into the two categories.

Eric Hitchcock said they need to have a way for just the bigger occupations to come to the Planning Board and the rest could be at the in house level. Steve Wentworth said it would be nice to make it easier for people.

Board reviewed the Ordinance.

Discussion on total floor space allowed in an accessory dwelling that currently is 50%, recommend 100%. Chairman Bagley doesn't think they should make it more restrictive, recommends going back to 100%. Eric Hitchcock said there would be no way to enforce it. Christine Solman commented that it can be more lenient because it is an accessory dwelling.

Eric Hitchcock recommends streamlining any part of the processes that they can so that what can be done inhouse, could be done inhouse.

Discussion on the residence is first with the home occupation as incidental use. Discussion on how much of total floor space can be used. Consolidated some sections. CEO Murchison will get final language to the Board.

Chairman Bagley stated that all the changes have been addressed. The Board consensus was to hold a Public Hearing at the next meeting in January.

c. **Comprehensive Plan Update, Research full Comprehensive Plan to be Complete 2024** – CEO Murchison stated that the initiative of City Manager Penny Thompson is that she would like to see full concentration on the new Comprehensive Plan. Manager Thompson would like CEO Murchison to check on the cost to put together a new Comprehensive Plan by 2024 and not worry about an update.

CEO Murchison stated there has not been Council input on this. CEO Murchison will meet with Jay Kamm at NMDC tomorrow. There are some positives to have this done by an outside entity and have professional help. A compliant Comprehensive Plan helps to go after CDBG funding.

Discussion on doing the updates. Dave Corriveau commented that this would give a window of opportunity to add economic development into the Comprehensive Plan. Work has already been done for updates. Frank McElwain & Dave Corriveau both commented that it is beneficial to continue with the updates. Chairman Bagley agreed to continue on with the updates because they are so close to completion.

## VI. Staff Report – CEO Ken Murchison

a. **Campground Ordinance Public Hearing** – this is going to the City Council on Monday and they will hold a Public Hearing. No feedback so far from Council or the public.

The City has received the stormwater and erosion control plan for Troy Haney's campground project, but the survey has not been completed yet. The survey was on the consent agreement given to Mr. Haney by the City Council.

b. **Demolition of 30 North Street** – City staff worked with the Business Investment Group. Kevin Thibodeau demoed this property and it is now an empty lot. There are three other buildings in that area that need to be demoed.

c. **Riverfront Redevelopment Committee** – meets on Tuesday and the Department of Transportation railroad section will be there to discuss the railroad right of way and legislation for railroad re-use. Sent information packets on zoning, master plan and outreach & marketing.

d. **Caribou Trailer Park** – work is ongoing with closure of the Trailer Park. It is in the hands of legal and they will send out final notices. There are four tenants left. Housing stock is just not available. Two tenants were not given the initial notices.

## VII. Adjournment –


Dave Corriveau moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 pm; seconded by Frank McElwain.

Roll Call Vote

Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Christine Solman – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes

Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Amanda Jandreau  
Planning Board Secretary

AJ/dl

