



City of Caribou, Maine

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Caribou Planning Board Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 13, 2022 @ 5:30 pm City Council Chambers

Members Present: Dan Bagley, Christine Solman, Amanda Jandreau, Dave Corriveau, Frank McElwain, Eric Hitchcock and Steve Wentworth

Other in Attendance: Ken Murchison – CEO; Denise Lausier – Executive Assistant to City Manager; Travis Michaud and Aroostook Republican

Chairman Dan Bagley called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

- I. Welcome new and returning Board Members** – Dan Bagley and Amanda Jandreau were welcomed back to the Planning Board to both serve another three year term.
 - a. Swearing in of Appointed Officials** – Both members were sworn in by the City Clerk prior to the meeting.

- II. Election of Officers for 2022** –
 - a. Chairman** - Steve Wentworth nominated Dan Bagley to continue as Chairman; seconded by Amanda Jandreau

Roll Call Vote:
Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Amanda Jandreau – Yes; Christine Solman – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes.
Motion carried with all in favor.

 - b. Vice-Chairman** – Amanda Jandreau nominated Christine Solman to continue as Vice-Chairman; seconded by Steve Wentworth.

Roll Call Vote:
Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Amanda Jandreau – Yes; Dan Bagley – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes.
Motion carried with all in favor.

 - c. Secretary** – Dan Bagley nominated Amanda Jandreau to continue as Secretary; seconded by Eric Hitchcock.

Roll Call Vote:
Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Dan Bagley – Yes; Christine Solman – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes.
Motion carried with all in favor.

- III. Setting Meeting Dates/Times for 2022** – Motion by Dave Corriveau; seconded by Amanda Jandreau to continue meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion carried with all in favor.

- IV. Public Hearing to hear comments regarding amendments to the City’s Home Occupations Ordinance, Section 13-700 §13 and Section 13-900 Definitions** – Chairman Bagley introduced this item. This revision has been going on for several months now. The Board is wanting to make the ordinance more streamlined for applications. The revision is in the packet that is a combination of many weeks of work.

Chairman Bagley opened the Public Hearing at 5:35 pm.

CEO Murchison stated that no one contacted him from the public via phone, email or mail.

There was no one in attendance from the public. The Public Hearing was closed at 5:36 pm.

Chairman Bagley submitted a few changes. Some numbering was inconsistent, so he fixed that error. Chairman Bagley reviewed his recommended changes with the Board. All minor changes.

CEO Murchison recommends that they explicitly mention to the City Council that Section 13-900 Definitions is a part of the updates.

Chairman Bagley also mentioned once it is updated, the forms will need to be updated as well.

Steve Wentworth moved to forward both sections to the City Council; seconded by Eric Hitchcock.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Motion carried with all in favor.

CEO Murchison shared there is a massage business that was approved on Lynn Drive years ago by the Planning Board. The owner recently bought Dr. El-Silimy’s office. The business has prospered.

- V. Approval of Minutes**
a. Approval of Minutes of the December 9, 2021 Planning Board meeting –

Dave Corriveau moved to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2021 Planning Board meeting; seconded by Frank McElwain.

Roll Call Vote:

Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Amanda Jandreau – Abstained; Christine Solman – Yes; Dave Corriveau – Yes; Eric Hitchcock – Yes.

Motion carried.

- VI. New Business**
a. Introduction to JLD Properties, LLC Medical Marijuana Dispensary Caregiver Center Use Permit Application for 149 Bennett Drive Tax Map 38, Lot 14-A in the C-1 District – CEO Murchison explained the application is not complete, but this is a good conversation to have. Caribou does allow dispensaries in certain zones. This is a caregiver that also wants to have a retail store, with some products and consult. More of a process to become a dispensary, so it is easier to become a caregiver. Caribou prohibits medical marijuana retail

stores of any kind. If he comes forward, the Board can only permit the land use. As far as the business, they need to go to the City Clerk. It is the old Pizza Hut building. There is only a small area that would be allowed in Caribou because of churches and schools that are close by all around town.

Conversation on opting into the State rules. Caribou only allows dispensaries.

Chairman Bagley commented that this Use Permit will need to be a Site Design Application for the Planning Board to review.

CEO Murchison explained that a 'Caregiver Retail Store' is being proposed by the Developer. Only Registered Dispensaries are allowed in Caribou, not retail.

CEO Murchison explained there is one permitted dispensary in Caribou; one medical marijuana caregiver that looks more like a retail store, but a retail store was not permitted; one grow operation and a second grow operation affiliated with a medical marijuana caregiver site. Two successful businesses doing a great job, one existing non-conformance. It's a growing industry and is all around in other towns around Caribou.

b. Introduction to Caribou Aroostook River Development District

preliminary zoning concept – CEO Murchison stated they are thinking about the Master Plan for the River Redevelopment District. It is a unique zoning all to itself. Would love to see it in the TIF district and foresees mixed use.

Chairman Bagley commented that they are looking at 5-6 zones. They envision that certain areas will have a certain set of uses. Commercial shops, bed and breakfast, parks and whatnot in the downtown. Outer areas may want other businesses. A concept where there is flexibility for the City.

CEO Murchison stated they will be looking at goals, priorities and a long range plan. Mr. Murchison wanted to bring this to the Board as an introduction and to think about.

Chairman Bagley asked the Board if they had any suggestions for the Committee and commented that this will be a collaborative project with the Planning Board.

c. Discussion on Economic Development and the Planning Board – CEO Murchison said basically everything the Board does is economic development.

Dave Corriveau stated that the Planning Board needs to plan for today, but also tomorrow and down the road. The last 20 years that he can remember, there has been no economic activity or progression. A lot of opportunities have been lost because of no staff to take care of this.

CEO Murchison commented that CEGC holds a loan portfolio. Chamber is limited to retail, ribbon cuttings etc.

Dave Corriveau said that the focus has been on keeping the taxes low. Economic development has been put aside.

Discussion.

Dave Corriveau stated that since they are doing a community profile of sorts, they can put it into a hard copy so the City Council would have a chance to look at it and perhaps fund it. CEO Murchison said to put it into the Comprehensive Plan, the re-write is 2024. It is going to cost approximately \$32,000 to have it done for the City, which will include Planning Board workshops, public outreach, etc.

Steve Wentworth agrees that the City could be promoting the community to other places, there are things available and offered but not promoted. Economic development was more of a reaction, not proactive. Mr. Wentworth believes the Planning Board could put together a recommendation for the City Council to consider. The Planning Board is here for economic development. Mr. Wentworth recommends having a workshop.

Dave Corriveau stated that there is stimulus money out there that may be able to fund it for a couple of years. Mr. Corriveau commented that with the right person, what they could bring into Caribou in a 3-5 year period will more than offset the costs of the position.

Amanda Jandreau questioned if they should be working on it for now because of the budget being worked on this month. Otherwise, it will already be 2023.

Chairman Bagley says there is a lot in the Comprehensive Plan already and things are not getting done. Dave Corriveau stated it needs its own separate identity in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman Bagley questioned what are the next steps, the Board is in agreement. Dave Corriveau stated to sketch out how to begin. CEO Murchison said goals, needs and priorities.

Chairman Bagley stated they need to draft a letter to the City Council to let them know what the Planning Board is thinking and their recommendation.

VII. Old Business

- a. **Permit Report December 2021 (68 Total Building Permits)** – CEO Murchison stated this is a look at the permits that went on in 2021, 68 building permits were issued. Activity at old Mecon building, opening a sports bar and big ball bowling in July “ish” with tournaments, restaurant etc. Dave Corriveau said this is a form of economic development. They will have tournaments with others throughout the State. This will bring them in and they will go to restaurants.

CEO Murchison stated that Beauregard left and Gary’s moved in. It is a beautiful facility and the largest Coyote dealer in the northeast. Mr. Murchison also mentioned the City has solar developments.

- b. **2021 Notices of Violation (actionable correspondence (64))** – CEO Murchison stated this is right around the same as last year.

VIII. Staff Report - CEO Ken Murchison –

- a. **Dangerous Buildings** – working on former West Gate Villa, trailers abandoned, reaching out to landowner and each trailer owner. 37 Home Farm Road collapsed, the building is back on the list for this year.

Caribou Trailer Park - one of the last tenants has left and got an apartment. Now left with five tenants, working with Housing Authority to get housing. Two tenants were notified late, so they will be ongoing but one has abandoned his trailer. Talking to legal counsel tomorrow for notices. The exciting part is re-use potential. There are potential uses that the FAA would approve.

- b. **Comprehensive Plan 2024** – Chairman Bagley asked if the cost of support for this is going to be added into the budget. CEO Murchison said the City is also looking at total review of Chapter 13, Zoning of City Code through NMDC.

IX. 2022 Planning Board Goals –

- Amanda Jandreau – short term rentals.
- CEO Murchison – tiny houses and accessory dwellings.
- Dave Corriveau – site development plans to get interest in housing, not necessarily a huge 200 home situation, but maybe one or two homes like what Troy Haney has, affordable housing. Chairman Bagley asked if something is lacking in City ordinances. Dave Corriveau says the ordinances are quite restrictive and need to be loosened up.
- 2024 Comprehensive Plan.
- Riverfront Committee collaboration for zoning.
- Chapter 13, Zoning review & revisions, including processes.
- Land Banks – CEO Murchison said the State is going to look at Land Bank legislation, going to the idea committee next week. If approved, this would give the City the opportunity to have their own Land Bank.

Chairman Bagley complimented the Planning Board and stated they are a hardworking and smart group.

X. Adjournment – Frank McElwain moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 pm; seconded by Amanda Jandreau.

Roll Call Vote:

Steve Wentworth – Yes; Frank McElwain – Yes; Amanda Jandreau – 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

