

JOHNSON SELECTBOARD MINUTES
PUBLIC HEARING ON MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2024-2032
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024

Present: Selectboard members: Mike Dunham, Peter Hammond, Duncan Hastings, Eben Patch, Mark Woodward

Others: Tom Galinat, Paul Warden, Meghan Rodier (remote), Lois Frey, Sue Lovering, one other person

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call Meeting to Order

At 6:31 Eben called to order the public hearing for the purpose of hearing public comments concerning the proposed Town and Village of Johnson Municipal Development Plan 2024-2032.

2. Public Comment

Eben invited public comment. Lois Frey said she has seen all the work that has gone into the preparation of this plan and she didn't find anything to complain about. It looks good.

Eben asked if the planning commission has thought about going after a municipal planning grant for an overhaul of the capital budget plan. Paul said they haven't discussed it as a group yet.

Duncan gave an update on what he has heard from Pomerleau. Shaws has withdrawn their letter of interest in a store in the Pomerleau building, regardless of whether or not Pomerleau is successful with regard flood mitigation plans. Duncan let Pomerleau know that we received the Northern Border Regional Commission grant and will apply for an Act 250 permit for the light industrial park. He suggested that if that was of interest he should get in touch with the board. Duncan also indicated that he would be eligible for a buyout for that property. Seth Jensen of LCPC says as far as he knows the application period is extended to April but whether or not applicants can get 100% of the assessed value of their property will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Tom said all of the Johnson buyout properties we have received applications for have been reviewed and funds have been obligated. The Pomerleau site might be used for flood mitigation so it is possible that money for a buyout could come through the Rivers program instead. Mark asked, what about the garage Pomerleau owns? Duncan said Seth said it is likely that if Pomerleau submits a request for a buyout he would need to perform at least a Phase I environmental assessment. The gas tanks that were at the site have been removed. Some of the environmental requirements may have already been met. Duncan is sure if anything had been found when the gas tanks were removed there would have been remediation efforts and there never were any. Paul Warden asked the reason for Shaws' decision. Duncan said his understanding is that their board of directors were concerned that the risk of future flooding was simply too high. (*Sue Lovering arrived at 6:48.*) Duncan said if Pomerleau gets a buyout on that parcel it would go a long way toward relocating somewhere else.

Meghan Rodier said the village trustees are having their final hearing on this plan December 9. Once the selectboard and trustees have approved it a request for regional approval can be submitted. The LCPC board of directors will meet in January and can approve the municipal plan then. She has not seen a municipal planning grant announcement yet. It probably will come in the next month. Duncan said he is the chair of the Plan & Project Review Committee of LCPC. He will recuse himself from deliberations on this plan when it comes before them. He recommends that someone from Johnson be there to talk about it.

Duncan said we have to submit a request to the regional planning commission for review and approval. The trustees need to be made aware that that is the next required step. Meghan said she will be at their meeting and can give them that message.

Mark asked if Pomerleau said anything about the post office. Duncan said he didn't ask about that. The post office has a lease with Pomerleau. His assumption would be that if Pomerleau moves he will either release them from their lease or make accommodations for them at a new location.

Duncan said he doesn't know for sure if there have been conversations with Pomerleau about alternate locations. Randall Szott has been the major lead in working on the Swift Current grant application. If that is not going to go forward, that presents an opportunity for the town to have conversations about alternatives.

3. Adjourn

The hearing was adjourned at 7:00.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED