

**TOWN OF CASTLETON  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at 7:00pm  
Castleton Town Hall  
263 VT – 30  
Bomoseen, VT 05732**

**PRESENT:** Janet Currie, Chair; Robert Franzoni, Planning Commission member; Val Waldrun, Planning Commission member; Jonas Rosenthal, Zoning Administrator; Eliza LeBrun, Recording Secretary/Planning Commission alternate; Dan Kloskowski; Phil Leamy, Castleton Professor of Cannabis Studies

**ABSENT:** Joe Bruno, Vice Chair; John Pintello, Planning Commission member;

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Ms. Currie called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. Franzoni made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. LeBrun seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion passed.**

**MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

The minutes of the November 22, 2019 Planning Commission will be discussed at the next meeting.

**DISCUSSION OF CURRENT INITIATIVES & STATUS UPDATE**

Mr. Rosenthal reported that he received the municipal planning grant in the amount of \$9,650.00. Now we need to fill out the grant agreement, meet with RRPC to set schedules and meeting dates, publicity, etc.

The tractor parade went well, the only comment Mr. Franzoni made was that they should have completed what was down in the Village before moving to the Fire Station.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Ms. Currie introduced Phil Leamy, Professor of the new cannabis studies certificate program. Ms. Currie also introduced Dan Kloskowski as a fellow hemp farmer.

Mr. Leamy explained that the University would like to work with the Town on the issue of recreational marijuana retail sales. Mr. Leamy provided a list of the Cannabis Studies Certificate Program. In the first semester the classes were full with 20+ students, about 25 of them want to pursue the certificate program. There are 3 students that have completed all of the classes and are now looking for internships. The courses are just about full for next semester.

Mr. Leamy shared that Mrs. Jakubowski had attended a Select Board meeting a few weeks ago and shared the information she heard with the Provost. The Provost asked Mr. Leamy to be a liaison to the Planning Commission. The University would like to work with the Town, but they must be very careful as they receive federal funds, so they cannot be viewed as promoting or endorsing the legalization of cannabis in Castleton. The University would like to be a research institution to provide information and polls. As

popularity increases the next step for the University would be to make Cannabis Studies a minor, then possibly a major. The University supports Cannabis the Vermont way.

Ms. Currie asked if the University is currently polling residents on their opinion? No but can. Ms. Currie suggested that this could be put on the ballot and would like to have some polling to see what the public feeling is. Ms. Currie has engaged with the Police Department to be a part of this process and Chief Mantello has demonstrated that he supports the Planning Commissions efforts.

There was in-depth discussion regarding the benefits of educating the public on cannabis and normalization and uses (including medical). Rediscovering the medical properties is part of what began the movement of legalization. Mr. Kloskowski explained how marijuana legalization came into place. Mr. Leamy shared that 11 states have legalized recreational marijuana and 34 states have legalized medical marijuana.

Mr. Franzoni suggested that there be someone that could listen to people with questions who know nothing about marijuana and cannabis and can respond in laymen's terms. Mrs. Waldrun suggested that at Town Meeting a presentation of the differences be shown. Mr. Leamy suggested that the University might be able to work with the Town to give a presentation and possibly a panel for discussion.

Ms. Currie is looking forward to Castleton being a model town. Mr. Leamy stated that the University would like to assist with this.

Mrs. Waldrun noted that this is also a great way to draw high school students, who may otherwise not want to attend college, to apply to Castleton University. Mr. Leamy shared that they have already seen some of this.

Ms. Currie noted that the Town of Fair Haven has already put in place an ordinance disallowing recreational marijuana retail businesses and does not agree that if Castleton decides to allow retail sales and benefits financially thru the local marijuana tax, Fair Haven (or other Vermont Towns that have denied retail sales of recreational marijuana) should not receive part of that tax benefit (revenue share) as indicated in the article. Discussion was held on the possible reasoning behind this action of revenue sharing.

The Planning Commission would like to help the Select Board make an informed decision with the help of Castleton University.

Mr. Kloskowski stated that he felt that if Castleton waits to see what other Towns do, they will miss out on the opportunities and it would be a mistake. Mr. Leamy agreed based on an article he just read about Colorado being the first state to reach the one billion dollar mark in local marijuana tax.

The Planning Commission's next meeting will be on January 14, 2020.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Ms. LeBrun made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:25pm. Mr. Franzoni seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted; Eliza LeBrun, Recording Secretary