DRAFT Minutes of the Special 12 March 2020 Clifton, Maine Planning Board Meeting

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. in the town office building. Present were Chairperson Bruce Jellison, Vice Chairperson David Cogdell and Members Julie LaVertue and Vern Campbell.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Upon a motion by David/Vern and a vote of 4/0, approval of the 4 March 2020 meeting minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

Bruce explained that the purpose of the meeting was to set a date for the Silver Maple project public hearing and to decide the rules by which the hearing would be conducted. At an earlier meeting, Bruce had handed out the “Sample Rules for the Conduct of Public Hearings” that were taken from pages 175-179 of the February 2017 revised edition of the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Planning Board Manual.

Bruce also reported that he had spoken with the MMA on whether the Board had the authority to impose a time limit on each witness during the public hearing and was told that the Board did in fact have that authority. Additionally, he said that, like the earlier Maine Department of Environmental Protection hearing for the Silver Maple project, there will be a sign in sheet for those wishing to speak at our hearing.

Regarding the sample rules and related issues, the following decisions were made to the rules and, following a motion by David/Vern and a 4/0 vote, to accept those rules with changes in the upcoming hearing:

--In the title section, insert the words “Planning Board” and “Clifton, Maine” in the blank slots.

--In Section I, Scope of rules, insert the words “Planning” and “Clifton, Maine” in the blank slots.

--In Section II, Notice of Public Hearings, insert the words “Bangor Daily News” in the blank slot. The Board decided that an ad will be placed in that publication at least seven days in advance of the hearing to satisfy the public notice requirement.

--Section IV, Subsection C, Witnesses in the sample rules stated that each witness would be required to state his/her name, residence address, business address, business or professional affiliation, the nature of their interest in the hearing, and whom they represent. There was some discussion among the Board whether all that information was necessary. However, it was ultimately decided to leave the list as is.

--In Section IV, Subsection, F3 Order of Business and Testimony, it was decided to delete the words “and reads all correspondence and reports received.” This decision was made due to the sheer volume of material that would make it impractical to read at the hearing.

--In Section IV, Subsection F11, Order of Business and Testimony, the Board decided to insert words to the effect “Generally, comments, questions and presentations will be limited to five minutes per person.” Per Section V, Subsection G of the sample rules, the Board will have the discretion of waive the five-minute requirement for a speaker should circumstances warrant.

--Initially, the Board was divided on whether to send a mailer to town residents alerting them to the hearing. After discussing the issue, it was agreed to do so.

The Board, in consultation with the Silver Maple representative in attendance, discussed when would be an appropriate date for the hearing, notwithstanding that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic might be a factor. Upon a motion by David/Julie and a 4/0 vote, the hearing was set for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 14 April 2020 in the town office building.

During the public comments portion of the meeting, there were several questions regarding what the town’s land use ordinance said about the scenic aspects of wind farm applications.

Upon a motion by David/Vern and vote of 4/0, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Vice Chairperson David Cogdell

***N.B. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, on 17 March 2020, the Clifton Board of Selectmen closed the town office building and cancelled all meetings until further notice. As a result, the 14 April 2020 Silver Maple hearing has been cancelled and will be rescheduled when circumstances allow.***