

Starks Planning Board Meeting
November 5, 2025

Present: Gwen Hilton, Ken Lust, Claire Nelson, Joe Harttigan, Tiffany Bellefleur, Phil Cole

Guests: Byrne Wright, Maggie Wright

Chair Gwen Hilton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and determined that adequate public notice was given of the meeting, a quorum was present, and no conflicts of interest nor bias were reported. The meeting's agenda was approved, and public comments were invited.

Old Business:

The minutes of the October 1, 2025, meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

New Business:

Moratorium Ordinance on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

Gwen presented a detailed Moratorium Ordinance draft designed to give the Board more time to adequately research the impact BESS facilities would have on the community. The Board anticipates approving the proposal at its December meeting once minor changes are made and at which time any Public Hearings will be scheduled.

Implications of recent Housing Legislation on current Ordinances

LD 1829, LD 427, and LD 997 were passed by the 132nd Legislature to address barriers to the creation of dwelling units in the hopes of making housing both more available and more affordable. The Board reviewed the specifics of the statutes to determine whether our current Ordinances are in compliance with the new legislation. In short, both the Site Plan Review Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance will need minor tweaking regarding parking regulations. The statutes do not apply to either the Shoreland Zoning or to the Building Ordinances.

Large Scale Battery Storage Facilities

Starks' existing Site Plan Review Ordinance will serve as the framework to address concerns and to create safeguards specific to the development of large-scale battery energy storage facilities (BESS). A quick review of the current Ordinance identified areas where language will need to be added that target issues unique to BESS. Those include fire safety, impact on community services, and decommissioning, among others. The Board will begin its work at the December meeting.

Adjourn: 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire Nelson, Secretary