

Charlemont Planning Board
October 16th, 2025, 6:00 PM Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 157 Main Street and via conference call

Members Participating: Bob Nelson, Lori Shulda-Merrigan, Bill Harker, Jennifer Mooney

Others Participating: Star Atkeson,

Bob Nelson opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Appointment 6:00 pm: attend FRCOG online presentation about the new Massachusetts Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) law and regulations. The Board attended the meeting.

Agenda Items:

1. Review/Approve Minutes of September 18, 2025

The Top Stitch address should read 2069 Route 2, not 1071 Route 2.

Bob Nelson made a motion to approve the September 18th, 2025, minutes as amended. Jennifer Mooney seconded the motion. All in favor.

2. Hinata site visit debrief, Jeff lacy email re: Hinata

- The board was very impressed with the site visit. They received an email from Jeff Lacy pointing out that the configuration of cabins differed by 2, so far, from what was presented on the plan. The board read the Special Permit again, remembering that they had given some leeway on size and placement if he ran into trouble with the blasting or wetlands.
- Jeff Nielsen had made a comment on the size of the units. The board talked about the square footage. It said shall be 504 square feet +/- 10%, the deck was a separate 120 square feet +/- 20%. Bob remarked that the board would have been flexible with size, it was Jeff Nielsen that chose the small square footage.
- The board suggested emailing Jeff Lacy back thanking him and asking for advice. The Board would like people to abide by the Special Permits. They talked about letting Hinata know that they noticed a deviation and asking if the rest of the project will follow the plan. Jeff Nielsen had mentioned that he will be coming back to get approval for more projects. The Board agreed that they knew there could be placement issues and that he may not be able to build it exactly as in the plan. Lori didn't think it was a big deal as they aren't building new roads or going in different directions. Bob agreed they should talk to Jeff Lacy, and when Jeff Nielsen comes in again for another permit he can make the change to the current plan. Lori suggested continuing to do site visits. Molly said the records should be accurate. Liz thinks it boils down to the definition of "substantial." They will get Jeff Lacy's response first and take it from there.

3. Bylaw changes to make for next year: State mandated requirements for Town regarding Marijuana applicants; Accessory Dwelling Units language for bylaws; Electric Vehicle charging stations

- Bob will get a draft together in the next few months for the ADU language. The EV charging stations can be tabled this year.
- Lori had talked to Sarah who gave her some information from the Cannabis Control Commission which provided a bylaw template for municipalities. The bylaws need a social equity piece. Select Board will do the licensing, and the Planning Board needs to choose one

of three options: Exclusively permit a social equity business for 3 years; adopt the model bylaw; or have a local approval process for general applicants only after a social equity business has been approved.

- Cannabis facility permits should amount to 20% of a towns liquor licenses, which would be 2 establishments for Charlemont. The Board will take the reading home and bring it back next meeting. It needs to be ready for Town meeting.

4. Letter to Topstitch Upholstery, 2069 Mohawk Trail re: Special Permit

- The email from May with Carlene's advice was brought back up. Liz read the email. It said that Top Stitch owner should be sent a letter asking that he comply with the conditions of the SP that he is operating under, or to come and get a new Special Permit more appropriate for his business, but then he would need a permission letter from the owner of the property. Failing to do so may result in the Zoning Enforcement officer's involvement.
- Bob prepared a letter and read it. He will edit the letter and include Bill's 2021 letter and the 1989 Special Permit.

5. Master Plan implementation plan

- Liz Bouyea sent out a draft letter she had written calling for new committee members for an Open Space and Recreation Plan and Master Plan Implementation Committee. She suggests they meet monthly, hybrid in-person or remote with Zoom or Teams, and to meet with other boards biannually. She'd like to get it in Sarah's newsletter, and the email list from the Master Plan workshops.

Bob Nelson closed the meeting at 7:36 pm

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for 10/16/2025
- Minutes of 9/18/2025
- 2069 rte. 2, 1989 Special Permit
- Cannabis Control Commission bylaw template
- Email from Jeff Lacy to Star Atkeson dated 10/14/2025 re: Hinata
- Email from Star Atkeson to Bob Nelson and Lori Shulda Merrigan, dated May 9th, re: Carlene's Advice
- Email from Liz Bouyea to Star Atkeson dated 10/16/2025 re:draft email for the OSRP Master Plan Committee