

Charlemont Planning Board
June 26th 2025, 6:00 PM Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, 157 Main Street and via conference call

Members Participating: Bob Nelson, Lori Shulda-Merrigan, Bill Harker, Molly Cantor, Jenn Mooney

Others Participating: Kim Blakeslee, Star Atkeson, Travis DeCere, Madison Schofield, Charlotte Dewey, Eric Moyen, Megan Moyen, residents of the Oxbow and supporting neighbors (see attendance sheet)

On Phone: member Liz Bouyea

Citizen Comments 6-6:15

6:15 Special Permit Hearing for Travis DeCere/ Shelburne Equity LLC for partial change of use at The Oxbow, 1741 Route 2.

Bob Nelson opened the hearing at 6:15 and read the hearing notice.

Travis spoke about his vision for the Oxbow as it related to Charlemont's Master Plan visioning session which he had attended. Affordable housing, smaller housing units, and workforce were some of the takeaways from that meeting which he proposed are being delivered by his project. He came to seek a Special Permit to change the back two buildings of the motel from Transient to Non transient use. He will create 5-6 jobs with the location and when the restaurant opens, 4-5 more.

He gave many examples of the types of accommodation situations he would be able to accommodate with the change of use.

The board and Travis deliberated over whether they should allow the back units to fall under both categories—Transient and non-transient, and that he could choose the more lucrative designation when he has been there for a while. Although Travis would like both, for the time being he would like to stick to the original ask, to make sure everything goes smoothly with the building department. If he would like to change it in the future, he will come back to the Planning Board.

They spoke about how the units are taxed. The property owner pays school taxes and both the R1 and R2 classifications pay lodging taxes.

There will be 24-hour staffing with Manager on site in the single family house;
24 hour fire system;

Glenn Dean (runs Mile Long Farm,) Pastor Paul from Maranatha Church, Residents of The Oxbow and Greg Rowehl spoke in favor of the project

Bob Nelson read his draft of 6 general conditions, one was that this permit would nullify all previous special permits. Travis suggested adding "except for the existing single family home Special Permit."

Bob read specific conditions which touched on:

- on downcast lighting,
- maintenance,
- what to do if a resident became a nuisance;
- common kitchen hours (6AM-11PM)
- signage (the sign size is grandfathered; he may change the lettering; Lori asked him to come back to the Planning Board if he wanted to change the look of the sign)

They spoke about parking; it is ADA compliant under 1965 standards.

The permit will be written to *run with the applicant*.

They spoke about ADA compliance; Travis said the building does not need to be fully accessible within the level 1 modification being performed. If it was level 3 or higher, it would need to be ADA compliant.

Travis went over what was included in the plans he submitted. (Existing and proposed use codes, septic well and public water supply locations.)

The Board went over the Criteria letters A-L and found nothing controversial.

Bob Nelson made a motion to close the hearing at 7:30 pm. Bill Harker seconded the motion. All in favor, Liz Bouyea-Aye.

Bob Nelson made a motion to approve the Travis DeCere/ Shelburne Equity LLC Special Permit to partially change the R1 transient to R2 non-transient as described during the meeting, impacting the rear 2 motel buildings at 1741 Mohawk Trail with conditions and criteria as described in the meeting. Bill Harker seconded the motion. All in favor. (Liz Bouyea was out of earshot on the phone and did not vote)

7:45 Charlotte Dewey to request the Planning Board authorize some edits of the new Master Plan around Charlemont Inn mentions.

Charlotte Dewey came in to ask if the Planning Board would consider editing the new Master Plan. The Charlemont Inn was the only business called out as being condemned. She said there were other buildings that were condemned or at least should be condemned, as well there were particularities about why and by whom it was condemned and what part was condemned that she went over with the board. She doesn't think that a document meant to guide the town for 20 years should have that snapshot of the Inn including a footnote to an old article.

The Board members could see both sides of the argument. There was truth to the mention, but perhaps not appropriate for the Master Plan from Charlottes point of view. They suggested she come back with an edit and they can bring it back to Dodson and Flinker.

Agenda Items:

1. Review/Approve Minutes of June 4, 2025
The Minutes were not ready
2. Board reorganization: the Board will decide next meeting, in tandem with looking at the rules and regulations.

3. Choose PB member to be on Earth Removal Committee. Lori Shulda- Merrigan volunteered to stay on Earth Removal Committee.
4. Choose PB member to be Charlemont representative to FRCOG Regional Planning department. Bob has done this but the meeting conflicts with the Planning Board schedule. They will discuss next meeting.

Bob Nelson made a motion to close the meeting at 8:08. Jennifer Mooney seconded the motion. All in favor.

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for 6/26/2025
- Shelburne Equity Special Permit Plans
- Shelburne Equity Special Permit Hearing Notice