

**Charlemont Planning Board
September 18th, 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 6:04 pm.

Appointments:

6:15 Carin Cookman - plans to build deck at 28 Heath Stage Terrace, may be too close to side lot line. This appointment didn't happen. The board told Star to let her know she would need to contact the ZBA to get a variance.

Agenda Items:

1. Vote to accept Charlemont Master Plan with Charlemont Inn footnote edit.

Bob Nelson made a motion to accept the Master Plan with the changes made at the last meeting, removing the footnote regarding the Charlemont Inn. Bill Harker seconded the motion. All in favor.

2. Review/Approve Minutes of September 4, 2025

Bob Nelson motioned to accept the September 4th Minutes as written. Lori Shulda-Merrigan seconded the motion. All in favor.

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 said the planning Board should plan on doing the ADU bylaw update and Marijuana update in May, and have it ready by the end of the year. He will take care of the ADU update by looking at what other towns have done, Buckland did a good job, Greenfield has pictures.
- Lori can finish up the marijuana update. The Town needs to come up with a packet to assist applicants who have been historically disadvantaged by marijuana laws to successfully navigate the permitting system to open a cannabis facility.
- Bob hasn't found any towns that have set limits regarding the EV charging stations. There have been state laws proposed to require towns to allow the EV stations, but nothing has passed yet. If the Board felt strongly about it, they could add a number of charging units, over which would require a special permit, and then when the state changed their law the town could follow suit. Bob believes that it is an issue that will only be relevant in many years when gas stations are replaced by large scale EV charging stations.

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

The Board talked about what can be seen from the road at 1071 Rte. 2. There have been improvements, but there is still a lot of stuff. Jenn Mooney read the conditions of the permit which emphasize the planting and maintenance of trees to screen the view of the business (trucks) from the road, even stipulating that if the trees die, they need to be replaced. Many trees on the west sideline have died.

The business currently has 4 large signs in addition to the sign on the building. The Board found a letter that the Planning Board had written 4 years ago about the same issue —the screening trees dying and not being replanted or maintained. The Board discussed the issue extensively, on the one hand realizing that a lot of time has passed and it is a different business and wondering if the screening trees really mattered, on the other, not being comfortable with being lenient to one business and not another. Also, there have been complaints about the parcel. The business owner can come in and get his own special permit for his business. He will need a letter from the property owner giving permission for him to have a business there.

Bob plans to write a new letter and include and refer to Bills letter from 2021, that we haven't seen any progress made, saying again that the other option is to come in for his own Special Permit that could be more specific to the needs of the current business, perhaps not requiring screening trees. They spoke about using a fence instead of trees. The board suggests bringing up the signs as well. It should be a total of 64 square feet combined

5. Master Plan implementation plan

This will be tabled until the next meeting as Liz was going to take the lead.

Bill Harker made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 Lori Shulda-Merrigan seconded the motion, all in favor.

Documents reviewed in meeting

- Agenda for 9/18/2025
- Minutes of 9/4/2025
- 1071 rte. 2, 1989 Special Permit
- Letter to Robert Tatro dated May 6, 2021 re: Tatro Trucking, signed William Harker