

Charlemont Planning Board
February 02nd, 2023 6:00 pm Meeting Minutes
Via conference call and in person, Town Hall

Members Participating: Bob Nelson, Andy Mueller, Lori Shulda-Merrigan By phone: Colleen Champ
Others Participating: Star Atkeson (Secretary)
Called to Order by B.Nelson at 6:02 p.m.

This was a Planning Board Business Meeting. There was no input invited from the public.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Review/Approve 01/19/2023 Meeting Minutes
 - The 1/19/2023 Minutes were approved and initialed By B.Nelson and A.Mueller.
 - Lori Shulda-Merrigan initialed minutes from 1/05/2023.
 - **B.Nelson made a motion seconded by C.Champ to approve the 1/19/2023 Minutes as written. All in Favor.**

2. Discuss and Approve Rules and Regulations, edited and revised with new Clerk role duties.

C.Champ went over the clerk duties she prepared, namely *“Developing and/or maintaining a content management system of Planning Board related content in alignment with the Town Clerk/Select Board System.”* S.Atkeson was unclear about the implications for the Secretary role under the current Secretary Job description and offered alternative ideas for clerk duties.

S.Atkeson will send these suggested duties in an email to C.Champ:

- Correspond with The FRCOG about Planning Board activities requiring FRCOG input
 - Prepare and Share Planning Board information digitally at Town Meetings
 - Help to create and/or edit official Planning Board Documents for the Public
 - Support Secretary to the Boards in paperwork management
 - Take Meeting Minutes in secretary’s absence
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- On the topic of modernizing Town Hall document management, C.Champ said that it needs to be done, and someone needs to know how to do it. C.Champ said that the Select Board has their own subcommittee that is tackling the issue of modernizing and she would like to be in line with what they do.
 - A.Mueller said he thinks it needed to be a project across all Boards. And could be something to bring up at an all Board meeting. It should become a talking point with Select Board to at least know their plan.
 - C.Champ said she wanted everyone to be on the same page and to figure out common language. She said there needs to be a check on source files and archiving.
 - Other small improvements in wording and formatting were gone over.
 - The Planning Board Rules and Regulations will need to be approved at a Public Hearing.

DISCUSSION TOPICS:

1. Planning Board Goals

- Focus on areas we want to advance
- B.Nelson said The Board is clear that an area they want to advance is the modernizing of official document handling.
- Comprehensive Campground/Tiny House Bylaw (Hope for Technical Assistance from FRCOG)
- The Planning Board hopes to begin to pursue the topic of affordable housing.
- The Board would like to start focusing attention on The Master Plan

- Identify next benchmarks
- Figuring out the Master Plan.
- When the Town Hall computer system upgrades, getting everyone working Town emails.
- When the Town Hall computer system upgrades, A.Mueller would like to get a file storing and sharing system on the Cloud at the very least.

2. What to bring to next Town Meeting for zoning revisions.

- The Fiber Optic requirements for Subdivisions will be the only revisions brought to Town Meeting in May.
- S.Atkeson will get the ball rolling with C. Hayden about the timing sequence of it all.
- The Planning Board would like an update on the wording that Counsel came up with if indeed S.Reynolds talked to Counsel about it. S.Atkeson had mentioned that S.Reynolds, town Administrator, had been in touch with Town Counsel on behalf of the Broadband Committee and the Select Board on the topic of the Fiber Optic as per Peggy Sloan's (FRCOG) advice.
- 5G cellular changes that were started and dropped, The Board feels ill-prepared to speak for the revisions at Town Meeting. Perhaps B.Handsaker would speak to it.

3. Master Plan

- Board members started reading the Master Plan, the original, as well as the unofficially revised version on the town website. Some of the ideas in the Master Plan have been implemented and it could be updated to reflect what has been done.
- B.Nelson was impressed with the writing and was struck by how similar it was to The RKG Economics Development Report. Wonders however, how much of a benefit it would be to write down the great ideas. There were great ideas back then (Town Beautification committee, quick way to walk to fairgrounds, for example.) Those brainstormed ideas from RKG were already in the Master Plan, 20 yrs ago. B.Nelson fears it will be more of the same— Ideas written but not happening because of lack of volunteers. Thinks however, there could be relevant updates from the last 15 years for example the addition of the marijuana industry; the emphasis on protecting Agriculture; The integration of Fiber Optic; added emphasis on campgrounds or boutique lodging; and the increase in Housing.

- A.Mueller agreed he wanted to update the Master Plan to where they are now, and to where they are headed to anticipate the protection of Natural resources, and protecting the Ridgelines for example.
- L.Shulda-Merrigan agreed that some of the projects outlined in the master Plan have come to fruition like bussing and the improvement of town center with the sidewalks.
- C.Champ liked the idea of thinking globally and acting locally. For example, the solar bylaw was an issue that was large scale and Charlemont tried to do their small part in making sure solar fields were placed appropriately in the context of their surroundings.
- C.Champ would like to have the Master Plan as a north star for all of the Planning Board actions and bylaws, as it is easier to write a plan than a bylaw (although plan needs to be voted on at town Meeting as well.) She would like to reference The Master Plan as an important Town Document and would like the other Boards including the Select Board to do that as well— to continually align their actions and decisions with the Master Plan.

4. Town Report Preparation

- More small edits were discussed. Secretary will edit and pass on to Clerk, C.Champ for Final Edit to be approved next meeting.
- “Ongoing projects” section of Town Report lists 180 8A, C.Champ wants confirmation of the Planning Boards next Steps. The understanding is that the Planning Board should wait for Dupree to come into compliance with the Other Boards. The Boards discuss whether Dupree ever got a junk car permit.
- B.Nelson mentioned that the strategy was to start over, and not reference the old complaints. L.Shulda-Merrigan suggests waiting for the other Boards to write their next action steps email and then write theirs. C.Champ sent an email to S.Reynolds to get clarification.

OTHER DISCUSSION

- A.Mueller asked if C.Champ is still interested in forming a Housing Committee and if that would just be within Charlemont or if surrounding towns or FRCOG would be involved.
- C.Champ responded that she has become very busy. FRCOG currently has a group on affordable housing. A.Mueller wonders if they can get support from other committees. C.Champ points out that S.Atkeson was interested. They hope that Tiny Homes which will be wrapped in to the campground bylaw assistance will be a starting point for affordable housing.
- C.Champ pointed out that affordable housing was in the master plan (as an example of a big change that is implemented bit by bit.) That and subdivision law. She suggested starting with the housing section of the master plan. A.Mueller reiterated the importance of having a complete understanding of the master plan before taking one chapter at a time. He suggested they read all the relevant sections (land use, agriculture etc.) before doing a deep dive on one chapter.

Agenda Items for next Meeting

The Board discussed Items to put on the next meeting's Agenda. They would like to put on: Planning Board requirements for 180 8A; Approve Planning Board's Rules and Regulations; Start thinking about Housing; Berkshire East Sewer Attachment Requirements

B.Nelson motioned to adjourn at 8:10 seconded by A.Mueller, All in Favor.

NEXT MEETING J.Mirin/G.Richard Public Hearing February 16th 2023

Respectfully Submitted by Star Atkeson 02/14/2023

Documents reviewed in meeting:

Agenda for 02/02/2023 Meeting
Meeting Minutes of 01/19/2023
Rules and Regs as updated (G.Walker and C.Champ edits)
Town Report Draft prepared by S. Atkeson
2002 Charlemont Master Plan

Legal Notices

Town of Shelburne, ZBA Public Hearing,
December 8th, 20'x20' pavilion proposed for 19 Bridge St.