

April 6, Planning Board Notes

Call to order at 6 by Bob Nelson

Board Members Present: Bob Nelson, Lori Merrigan, Andy Mueller, Colleen Champ

Guest: Sarah Reynolds, Town Administrator

Subdivision Road Improvement Discussion with Town Administrator

- Sarah searching for grant to update roads was spurred by high interest in real estate, people wanting to build in Charlemont on 3 roads: Cherry Pearson, Mountain View, and Potters Rd Extension.
- In order to get grant, Sarah surveyed all land owners on all streets. All owners must agree to having the roads improved, and to have them potentially adopted by the town. Sarah received 100% landowner agreement on Mountain View and Potter's Road Extension. Within these 2 roads there are 21 lots. At least half of the owners expressed interest in building homes should their roads be improved. This is good news for town, more homes, more people to share tax burden, more families, kids in school, etc.
- Grant was approved, approx. 500K to improve roads to subdivision/public road status.
- Sarah is working with attorney to create a warrant article to bring to town meeting regarding town adopting roads
- Planning Board agrees with Sarah that current status of these roads is "Private way".
- Road improvement will not increase taxes for landowners, but may make land more desirable for potential buyers, will create easier to access, and increase likelihood that more houses will be built.
- If town adopts roads it would add to our road miles (chapter 90), which means we would get more funding for other road projects.
- Will current frontage situations be grandfathered-in? Planning board will have to go through material, review bylaws to determine this.
- Other Road-related news: Recent grant for EV chargers will put one at Hawlemont and one at fairgrounds

Great Outdoors Tubing business to discuss a desire to renew Special Permit at 78 Main Street

Attending: Helen and CJ Carcio

- Helen and CJ report that last season went well.
- Planning Board recent site visit went well.
- Previous permit was temporary because Planning Board wanted to get through covid period and updates to river regulations.
- Public hearing will need to be scheduled if they renew special permit.
- They will be applying to have 300 cars max (potentially 600 people). Their business is helping town parking situation and residents along the river by providing parking, shuttle rides (instead of people walking on rt 2 with tubes), safe river access. Also potentially reduces pollution problems town faces at Zoar picnic area. More people using tubing company also means more

people are hearing safety precautions for tubing. River-side residents potentially have less trespassers.

- They have designated parking areas to support cars, and the personnel to support business.
- They would prefer the next permit to not be temporary.
- C. Champ and L. Merrigan ask about people management (potentially 600) and that it might be a board of Health concern. C. Champ says we need to plan holistically—new lift at Berkshire East will also draw more families/traffic/tourists in summer months. Helen and CJ point out that that is even more reason to increase parking capacity at 78 Main. Carcios make sure to have enough portable toilets and dumpsters available as well.
- Andy Mueller asks if the Charlemont Conservation Committee is involved in reviewing of parking near river, in or near flood plain. Helen Carcio reports that she spoke to Mark Stinson, an Environmental Analyst for the MA Department of Environmental Protection about their current parking lots. According to Helen, Mr. Stinson says their current parking arrangement works as long as they don't destroy the grass. CJ reports that they regularly rotate parking for this reason.
- Andy Mueller points out that the 240 x 240 lot can fit 240 cars (assuming that lot is 200ft away from river). There is adequate space next to this lot to place additional cars.
- CJ reports that they keep track of everyone's license plate, and are able to quickly assist police when/if needed.
- Lori Merrigan asks if they have had complaints. Helen said no, no citations, no drownings. There are some tubers who enter water. Some tubers who originate from Hyytinen Hollow tubing company, and ignore HH pull-out sign, and ask to be shuttled by Great Outdoors.
- Andy Mueller asks about influx of traffic coming off of river at the same time. Helen mentioned clear site-line onto Rt. 2.
- Andy Mueller asks about saturation point at drop off at Shunpike. Carcios mention how helpful it has been to have police presence there.
- Helen and CJ will move forward with public hearing for 300 cars, and are considering being open 7 days per week.
- Public hearing May 4th.

Discussion of request to add Broadband to Subdivision Regulations

- Town Council suggests that we not make changes to subdivision bylaws. Peggy Sloan (FRCOG) made same suggestion.
- Bob Nelson spoke with Valentine Reid (Selectman) who feels that it should be added; if rejected by Attorney General it will be on record.
- Language proposed by Bob Handsaker to add to Subdivision bylaws:

Extensions to the town's municipal fiber network shall be installed along any street the Board deems appropriate at the applicant's expense. Applicant is further required to pay to add additional capacity to the town's municipal fiber network facilities sufficient to serve the proposed number of new homes, structures and lots in the subdivision. The required extensions and additions to the town's municipal fiber network capacity must be authorized and approved by the town's Municipal Lighting Plant (MLP) Manager.

- The Selectboard will move forward with modification,

Part 1 of Amendments to Planning Board Bylaws

- Kathy Reynolds responded to Attorney General's email, letting them know we will bring section 1 to the town meeting again. Bob Nelson has asked Bob Handsaker to attend public hearing before it goes to town meeting. Town meeting must be 2 weeks after public hearing if Planning Board is unanimous.
- New 90-day deliberation is June 29th.
- We reviewed the response from AG and will proceed with public hearing and warrant article.
- Bob Nelson will call AG for clarification of her response as it is not clear.

180 Rt. 8A

- Lori Merrigan was asked by Select Board member if Planning Board had followed up after joint meeting regarding report of excessive cars at on property.
- Bob Nelson will seek clarification.

Improving Housing in Charlemont, Cluster Homes and Campgrounds

- Bob Nelson shared Concord plan, all members will review.
- For next meeting, all members are to come up with proposals/ case-studies that are successful. Share ideas and arrive at proposal. Need Board of Health input.
- Lori Merrigan researched Wisdom Way in Greenfield had 20 units, cluster. 11 reserved for low income, 5 for moderate, 2 for market rate, 2 for developer and rented to people with disabilities. All solar, shared garden.
- Colleen Champ shared experience at Laurel Park in Northampton. She also shared similar discussions Planning Board had in October and December of 2021.

Next meeting April 20th, we hope to discuss Hyytinen Hollow if they are interested in renewing Special Permit, Lori to follow up with Star.

Town meeting is in May, Lori will follow up to get date.

Master Plan update:

Bob shared what he learned from CPTV meetings. Littleton just updated their masterplan, was held up as a good example of a master plan. Strong suggestion to have a focused master plan committee. We need more people on Planning Board to get things accomplished.

Next week:

Minutes review

Masterplan discussion

Updates from Nicole (AG)

Meeting closed at 8:36

