

**HANSON PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2017
TOWN HALL, 542 LIBERTY STREET, HANSON, MA**

Called to Order at 7:00 PM by Joseph Weeks, Chairman, in Meeting Room A at the Town Hall.

Present: Joseph Weeks, Chairman
Joe Campbell, Vice Chairman
Don Ellis, Member
John Kemmett, Member
Rebecca Nehiley, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Stephen Regan, Vice Chairman
Laurie Muncy, Town Planner

Also Present: Kurt Tarvis, Candidate for Planning Board

Discussions

Mr. Weeks opened up the meeting to have a general discussion about the Planning Board's approach for the coming year in regards to what they would like to accomplish. Firstly, he mentioned the need for a parcel map to display in Meeting Room A for use of the Planning Board as well as other town departments, specifically the building departments (Board of Health, Conservation and Appeals). Mr. Campbell commented that it might be constructive if the map had various overlays, such as wetlands, zoning districts and aquifer protection. Mr. Ellis said that regardless of the overlays, different factors go into whether or not individual parcels or subdivisions are developable. Mr. Weeks suggested talking it over with the Town Administrator.

Secondly, Mr. Weeks expressed the need for more sophisticated technology in the meeting room, such as having a projector for maps and pictures, etc.. Mr. Campbell said that he has a table projector that he would be willing to donate to the Planning Board. Mr. Campbell suggested the necessity of having a Wi-Fi connection in the meeting room to facilitate the use of laptops and other electronic equipment. In summary, Mr. Weeks, going forward procedure-wise, wants to look at the budget and at perhaps what other towns are doing.

To that end, Mr. Kemmett, in his capacity of serving as liaison to the Community Preservation Committee, had the opportunity to meet with several other towns and found it very helpful to hear from people in different areas to garner new ideas. The Board agreed and Mr. Campbell offered to call surrounding towns to set up an annual or a semi-annual public meeting to network and have a roundtable discussion of ideas and/or problems and to share information. Mr. Campbell also suggested a "Summit Meeting" of the town's land use Boards after the upcoming Annual Town Meeting and the elections.

Next, Mr. Weeks indicated that he wants to focus on signage. Mr. Ellis reported that for all intents and purposes, a new sign by-law has been mostly completed. He added that there had been some opposition to it, so it was ultimately put on hold. It just needs to be looked at again by the Zoning By-Law Committee. Mr. Weeks requested that Ms. Nehiley email the most recent version of the draft sign By-Law to the Planning Board for their review. Mr. Campbell suggested taking a look at the Earth Removal By-Law (Article 3-12 in the Town's General By-Laws). Mr. Weeks commented that it doesn't specifically relate to the Planning Board, but is something that could be discussed at a land use summit meeting.

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A discussion ensued over who would present the Planning Board articles at Town Meeting. Mr. Weeks, as Chairman, was amenable to presenting the articles. The two articles being proposed are amendments to the Zoning By-Law regulations and include the designation of adequate access for driveways in excess of 150 feet in length and the addition of M Large-Scale Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations.

Mr. Kemmett was of the opinion that someone should accompany Ms. Muncy to onsite inspections as a representative of the Planning Board. Mr. Ellis agreed and said that in the past, the Board met for walk-through's on all ongoing projects. Mr. Campbell made the point that the Board should use caution during site visits as Open Meeting Law expressly mandates they're for information gathering only and board members should refrain from making deliberations until a posted public meeting. He also suggested that pictures taken at site visits be put in a Drop-box or a shared folder on the Town Hall network to be available to view before hearings.

Lastly, Mr. Weeks wanted to discuss current contracts with the Board's review engineers and the procedure used for hiring said consultants. Mr. Ellis said that all current projects have different engineers. He added that a problem arose when consultants that were working on behalf of the town were also coming before boards with their own projects which could be viewed as a conflict of interest. To that end, Environmental Partners was hired to take over from Merrill Associates to review the road construction at Stonebridge Commons. Mr. Weeks wanted to know if there was a written contract with them to which Mr. Ellis replied yes.

The Board decided to table the review of individual sections of the Planning Board binders until a future meeting. Mr. Kemmett wanted to make one final point about developers coming to meetings to have an informal or hypothetical discussion with the Planning Board about subdivision design. He was of the opinion that it was a "slippery slope" and could be perceived as an approval of a project before an actual hearing. Mr. Ellis disagreed and said that it's okay to help the public and answer questions, especially if Ms. Muncy has already spoken with them but they are adamant about talking with the Board.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:12 PM: Joseph Campbell

Second: John Kemmett

Vote: 4-0-0