

New Marlborough Planning Board ("PB")
Minutes
October 14, 2020

Attendees

Mark Carson (Chair), Paul Marcel, Jonathan James, Tom Sebestyen, John Schreiber (representing the Historical Commission), Bob Hartt

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:03 pm.

Review of Minutes

The minutes from the 9/23/20 meeting were unanimously approved, subject to correcting the date of the next meeting to 10/14/20.

Surveyors/ANR Review

NA

Review of Mail

NA

Old Business

Historical Commission – Demolition Delay Bylaw Proposal

Presentation by John Schreiber:

- Historical Commission (HC) is an arm of the town
- HC has a regulatory function in coordination with the Building Inspector
- Most towns in Berkshire County have a demolition delay bylaw
- Purpose of such bylaws is not to prohibit demolition, but to promote creative re-use of buildings with historical significance (e.g. The Whip Shop)
- HC goal is to start a public dialog on the topic
- HC used the Sheffield demolition delay bylaw as a model
- 283 historic homes in New Marlborough (out of approximately 1,000) are defined by HC as historical homes

PB Questions and Discussion:

Jonathan

- Are there any properties currently being considered for demolition? (Possibly the Rooney house)

Bob

- How does someone who buys a house in town know the house they are buying is an historical house and subject to the demolition delay bylaw? (All of the historical homes have been inventoried; there is not currently a public directory of those homes)
- Why a 12-month delay? What happens during that time? (Property may be moved, or there would be time to consider alternative uses e.g. affordable housing)
- Right now no one knows if a home they are considering buying is considered historical by HC and therefore, subject to the proposed demolition delay bylaw. That is problematic. There needs to be a notification mechanism.
- What is the extent of HC's statutory authority? (Authority to review a bylaw that would impact historical structures)
- Have you spoken with other HC's who have implemented such a bylaw?

Mark

- PB needs to discuss independently, then provide written feedback to the HC.
- Need to define what is "historical" (100 years old and geographically or architecturally significant?)
- Need to understand what people with historical homes think about the proposed bylaw

John Schreiber

- Thank you for the feedback
- Next step would be to have a public hearing for additional input; maybe a couple of meetings to get as much feedback as possible
- HC will meet with the Building Inspector
- HC would like PB to co-sponsor the demolition delay bylaw

Junk Car/Boat Bylaw

- Nothing new
- Next step – put proposed bylaw language on a piece of paper that we can all react to
- Include boats, storage containers (other than temporary)
- Key word is "delapidated;" must at least be screened and out of public view
- Paul will draft proposed language for review

Dark Sky Bylaw

- Want to see what IDA Public Policy Committee model language (lite) looks like which may be ready by year end
- Need to prepare summary information about the dark sky issue for review by PB then post on the town's website to see if we get feedback
- Perhaps circulate the summary information through Maggie's List
- We should also ask if NM5VN would highlight the issue to help raise public awareness and interest in the topic
- Bob and Tom will work on developing summary information

- Summary information should include:
 - Describe the problem – show satellite images showing how the countries lighting has increased over time
 - Show Modern light fixture examples
 - Explain why we should care

New Business

Lake Buel Development

- The Conservation Commission invited the PB, the Board of Health and the Lake Buel District board to participate in a conference call on Saturday 9/26/20 to discuss “development in the Lake Buel area.”
- There is a general concern with over development and density on Lake Buel and an interest in creating a working group to address the issue
- PB would like residents from the New Marlborough side of the lake to indicate their level of concern; need the residents
- Discussed reaching back out to Pete Hagan who represents the Lake Buel District board (LBD) board. Would LBD be willing to circulate a petition? Involve the Monterey side of the lake as well because they have to look at the changing nature of the lake
- Bob discussed the issue with Pete by phone and email subsequent to the 10/14/20 PB meeting
- Pete communicated that he had discussed the issue with all of the LBD board members; T
- The consensus of the LBD is that there does need to be a review and update to the current zoning. Each board member felt that any update effort should include a LBD board member. The LBD purpose for attending would be to insure that any changes to the zoning/codes would not negatively impact the lake. Any decisions regarding septic, grey water, light pollution impermeable surfaces and lawn fertilizing are examples of great concern to everyone on the lake both including New Marlborough and Monterey land owners. The LBD board strongly suggests that a review be started with the intention of creating a unique Lake District plan for any future development around Lake Buel.

Umpuchene Falls

- Mark is working on the issue with the Police Chief
- Considering restricting access to just New Marlborough residents
- The question is how do you enforce that?

Next meeting: October 28, 2020

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.