

New Marlborough Planning Board ("PB")
Minutes
August 26, 2020

Attendees

Mark Carson (Chair), Paul Marcel, Bob Hartt

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:05 pm.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the 8/12/20 PB meeting were unanimously accepted.

Surveyors/ANR Review

NA

Review of Mail

523 Main Road, Monterey – Notice of a Board of Appeals Hearing on 9/16 at 2:30 p.m.

Old Business

The PB was very pleased with outcome of marijuana bylaw vote at the Annual Town Meeting. All agreed the Moderator and the Select Board should be applauded for conducting a successful town meeting.

New Business

There was discussion about possible future bylaw initiatives the PB should focus on including:

Dark Sky Protection

General concern that man-made light is obscuring the night sky. There was consensus that the town should seek to protect the rural character of the town, including its dark sky. This will be especially important if there is development in the town in the future. Developing a bylaw to preserve the dark sky in New Marlborough for the town's consideration should be a priority prior to the next annual town meeting.

Reviewed International Dark Sky Association Model Municipal Lighting Policy. Includes model language. The question was raised whether existing lighting would be grandfathered, or could a bylaw address existing lighting? Dark sky protection should possibly involve an educational element in order to get people/businesses with excessive lighting to understand the issue and moderate existing conditions. Will investigate availability of grant money to help with retrofitting existing lighting.

Bob was assigned to do preliminary research on this issue with Jonathan.

Junk Cars/Boats

Existing bylaws do not address these issues adequately. Particularly with regard to a recent situation with an abandoned car on Rt. 57. Currently six independent citizen complaints are required before the police or the town can react to a clearly abandoned vehicle.

Paul was assigned to do preliminary research on this issue.

Umpachene Falls/Parking Violations

There was general discussion about the use of this local park and capacity limits. It was pointed out to Mark that the New Marlborough Police Department does not have authority under town bylaws to write parking tickets.

Mark has spoken to Chief Graham Frank. Chief Frank was asked to write a letter to the PB a letter indicating the authority required to manage parking and parking violations at Umpachene Falls and other potential problem areas in town.

PB will look at how other area towns address this issue in their bylaws. We should also get input from the Umpachene Falls Commission regarding the needs they see.

Mark will do preliminary research on this issue.

New Board Member

Jonathan Jamess has come forward and expressed his interest in joining the PB. The PB unanimously approved a recommendation to Select Board to appoint Jonathan to the PB.

Next meeting: September 9

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 pm.