

**Minutes of the
Conway Planning Board Meeting
Thursday, May 18, 2017
Town Office – 32 Main St.**

Members Present: Co-Chairs Joe Strzegowski and Mary McClintock, Sue McFarland, Andy Jaffe

Members Absent: Beth Girshman

Visitors Present: Peggy Sloan (FRCOG), Jessica Atwood (FRCOG)

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Joe Strzegowski

1. The Minutes of the May 4, 2017 meeting were approved as written.

2. Presentation by Jessica Atwood re: Economic Development Survey/DLTA grant

Discussion:

Ms. Atwood presented a draft of a Village Center Market Survey to be used by the Planning Board to gather information about potential economic development in Conway, specifically what goods and services do perspective customers want. (See attached.) She explained the process for publicizing, distributing, and gathering surveys. She also provided traffic data: the annual average daily number of cars on rte. 116 near the Deerfield/Conway line is 2,600 vehicles; Shelburne Falls Road is 1,075 vehicles; Whately Road is 660 vehicles. Ms. McFarland raised the issues of whether we should consider economic development beyond the center of town as well as the importance of learning what economic activity already exists in Conway (such as home-based businesses, B&B's, farms, etc.). The board discussed modifying the survey to include questions about: where people live, existing businesses input from residents about their awareness of what people come to Conway for, businesses outside of downtown Conway, where people get goods and services (including surrounding towns). Ms. Atwood will revise the draft survey based on the board's input and will send the revised draft via email to the board members for feedback.

Actions Assigned:

Board members will respond via email to the revised draft survey to provide feedback.

Mr. Strzegowski will send dates of upcoming meetings to Ms. Sloan to plan for another visit with Ms. Atwood.

3. Presentation by Peggy Sloan re: Recreational Marijuana regulations and Short-term Rentals regulations

Discussion:

Recreational Marijuana regulations: Ms. Sloan presented information about the current situation within Massachusetts with regulations of recreational marijuana, including cultivation and manufacturing, retail stores, and cafes. (see attached). Cultivation of recreational and medical marijuana does not qualify as agriculture but are considered light industry that takes place in large warehouse-type buildings. Because the state will not finalize its regulations until July 1, 2018, many towns are adopting temporary moratoriums on recreational marijuana establishments to give them time to see what the state regulations will be and to undertake a local planning process related to the legal, planning, and public safety issues involved. The Board discussed proposing a moratorium at a fall Special Town Meeting to extend for 18 months (or at minimum until the end of December 2018). The possible timing could include a public hearing in late September in preparation for a late October Town Meeting. Issues to consider in a potential future zoning bylaw would be whether the town would permit cultivation, manufacturing, retail stores, and cafes, and whether a special permit would be required. Ms. Sloan will draft a generic moratorium warrant article for the board to review/revise and approve.

Short-term Residential Rentals:

Ms. Sloan presented information about the issues related to short-term residential rentals (such as those rented via Airbnb and VRBO). The board discussed how this type of rental compares to B&Bs and inns. Currently, in Conway, B&B's and inns are required to get an annual license from the Board of Health and comply with fire safety regulations. Short-term/Airbnb type rentals are not currently regulated in Conway. The board discussed the need for a general bylaw that would regulate short-term rentals in the same way that B&B's and inns are regulated. The purpose of such regulations would be to "level the playing field"/be fair in relation to B&B's and inns, and to address public health and safety issues on an equitable basis. The board discussed which town board would most appropriately handle this issue. Ms. McFarland and Mr. Jaffe proposed attending a Board of Health meeting to discuss this issue and propose a joint meeting of the Select Board and Board of Health.

Actions Assigned:

Ms. McFarland and Mr. Jaffe will attend a Board of Health meeting

4. Election of Officers:

The following officers were elected for the 2017-18 year:

Chair: Mary McClintock

Vice-Chair and Mentor to Chair: Joe Strzegowski

Clerk: Sue McFarland

Representative to Community Preservation Committee: Sue McFarland

Representative to Wastewater Committee: Joe Strzegowski

Representative to Regional Planning Board: Joe Strzegowski

5. Next Scheduled Meetings of the Planning Board: The usual schedule would be June 1 and June 15, 2017 (1st and 3rd Thursdays). Mr. Jaffe made a motion that the June 1 meeting be changed to June 6. Ms. McClintock seconded the motion and the Board voted to change the meeting to June 6, on the condition that the meeting room is available, if Ms. Girshman is available, and if Mr. Chichester and his guest are available.

Actions Assigned:

Mr. Strzegowski will check with Mr. Chichester and his guest and with Ms. Girshman about their availability for a June 6 meeting.

There being no further business, the members voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary McClintock