

Thorndike Planning Board
5-11-16 Meeting Minutes (Approved)
Town Office

[Decisions and commitments made in bold italic type.]

Members Attending: Michael Berry, Erin Bibles, Bob Carter, Mary Ann Hayes, Darryl Raven

Members Absent: Jesse Hargrove (School Board conflict), Doug Nye (out of state)

Others Attending: Charlie Porter (CEO), Brian Croft (LPI and Deputy CEO), Kari Hunt (Town Clerk), Kim Juskevica

Call to Order: Mike called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Everyone introduced themselves. Erin was welcomed as a new member.

Updating Ordinance Books: *Kari asked us to assign Tab 23 to Cell Tower Ordinance, Tab 24 to Solar Farm Ordinance and Tab 25 to Cemetery Ordinance so all town books would be the same. Permit fees may be inserted right after the Table of Contents, removing the old Land Use Ordinance Table of Contents page that most books still contained. Mary Ann offered to deliver Jesse's package to him. Kari will hold Doug's at the town office.*

Permit Forms: Michael reported that only fees needed to be changed so there was no need to review them. He has all the originals backed up in his cloud account.

Updating Summary Sheet: Not done yet. *Kari and Mary Ann will work on that and email it out.*

Review & Approve Board Meeting Minutes: *On a motion by Darryl, seconded by Bob, the March 2 minutes were approved as presented 4-0-1.*

Review of Administrative Procedures: *Charlie prefers to fill out permits (and applications if necessary) at the applicant site and write 2 copies then return to the town office and use the photocopier. He was encouraged to just compose one original and return it with the check. Kari would copy the permit and mail out the original unless the client preferred to pick it up. Brian prefers to do anything that does not require a site visit at the town office. He asked Kari to advertise that he is available by appointment at 8 AM the days she opens that early: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. He will meet clients initially at the town office, do all paperwork and then follow them to the site if needed. Once he had established a relationship with a client, he would meet them directly on site for inspections.* Kari mentioned how she appreciated getting checks, applications, permits and reports promptly. Brian shared that he had learned in training that all client contact should be documented and filed at the town office. Charlie does not believe that is necessary. *Brian will only serve as CEO when Charlie is ill or away.*

Review of Land Use Ordinance Changes: Mary Ann led a review of the substantive changes in the land use ordinance, especially of setback clarifications. *The Board asked Charlie, Kari and Brian to offer further feedback on whether any ordinance provisions proved to be problematic as applied.*

Lot Permit Enforcement: The group then discussed the challenge with getting the word out that Lot Permits are needed when new lots are created. Unfortunately, we have not been tracking when new lots were added to the tax maps so it is not easy to look up when a lot was created. One might have to refer to a deed to find the first one or look up property tax records beyond what is in the Trio database. Mary Ann shared that Stacy Martin the Register of Deeds advised that the Registry is just that and could

not help us enforce our ordinance (or any other law). She recommended getting the word out to the local real estate and title attorneys who frequently are involved with these transactions.

We discussed the challenge with reading deeds and being sure that lots meet minimum size requirements. The proposal to require surveys for new lots was dropped after the January public hearing but could be revisited in the future. The CEO will just have to do the best with information presented.

The following was agreed to: This year we will do a push on education and begin enforcement, including seeking after-the-fact permits of the person who created the lot (very possibly not the current owner by the time the Town gets a copy from the Register of Deeds). Kari will talk with Jackie the assessor. When she creates a new parcel, she will give the info to Kari, who will notify Charlie. He will then pursue the after-the-fact permit.

When a deed is presented as proof of ownership with an application, the CEO will note if the lot was clearly created since 1997 and require an after-the-fact lot permit before issuing a building permit.

In 2016, we will NOT assess the double fee since no one knew about it. Our goal is to get the word out and begin compliance. The purpose of the permit is to PROTECT new buyers and the Town.

Kari will send out an announcement with the tax bills this year informing property owners that lot permits are needed. We will also get it prominently placed on the new web site.

No plan was made for notifying real estate and law offices. If done, perhaps should be coordinated with Unity and Jackson, which Mary Ann believes also have lot permit requirements.

Review Bylaws: The bylaws were reviewed. Only one change was made: The regular meeting date will be the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6:30.

Web Site Update: The Selectmen have chosen GovOffice as our web site provider. Mary Ann and Kari are going to meet May 17 to begin to organize the info for the site. We will be using a stock template. Training will be provided. The site will be in the cloud. If it is possible, the Board will be sent a link to beta test the site before it goes live and offer feedback. If not, another way will be found to get Board feedback before the site goes live. Hopefully the new site will be up by July 1 at the latest.

Mapping Update: Mary Ann, the Selectmen, Kari and Michael attended an informational meeting with Aaron Weston of CAI, who helped us understand how our GIS files were organized and choices we needed to make about our desired updates and products. Ideally we would have our parcel maps orthorectified so everything lines up with aerial photography. This would cost \$6000 so will not be done anytime soon. CAI provided a proposal, which is being compared with Corson GIS and Western Mountain Mapping, who provided estimates for the work in January. Mary Ann hopes to have a recommendation for the Selectmen at their May 18 meeting. Erin shared that she and her husband Brent are GIS users. ***Erin agreed to work with Mary Ann to oversee the vendor's work on the project.***

All Board members are interested in the maps and will be included in the opportunity to review the draft zoning/road status map.

Bob noted that he would like to get all of the road maintenance management information into the GIS system but was meeting resistance from the 1st Selectman, who does not value such record-keeping. ***Erin and Kim offered to make inquiries at Unity College about opportunities for students to add road attribute layers and perform analysis either in classes, independent projects or as community service.*** We would be well positioned with solid files they could build upon by the fall semester.

Workplan & Schedule for 2016-17: Bob expressed interest in exploring the regionalization of Fire Departments. It seemed that an exploratory committee composed of representatives from the Departments and perhaps Selectmen would have to convene to move this forward. All agreed it was unlikely that fire departments would want to participate. In any event, it was agreed this would not be a Planning Board role as such.

The Board agreed that following through on the web site, mapping and lot permit education/enforcement were priorities for the year. No other projects were identified. Everyone will hold the 2nd Wednesday of the month open should a meeting be called but at this point no meetings are forecast. If the timing works well in June or July to review draft web site or map products together, meetings may be called for that purpose.

Elect Officers: Elections were not contested. Michael was elected chair, Darryl vice chair and Mary Ann secretary. All votes were 4-0-1 with the candidate abstaining each time.

Other Business: Mary Ann indicated that with no meetings likely in the near future, she would like the Board to make any corrections and approve the minutes of this meeting electronically while fresh. ***It was agreed that we would vote on the minutes by email. Michael asked Mary Ann to keep a copy of the votes cast as a record.***

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.