

**New Marlborough Planning Board
Business Coffee
February 13, 2016**

Board Attendees:

Chair: Holly Morse

Members: Mark Carson and Patricia Hardyman

Other Attendees:

Name	Village	Contact Info
Robert Miller	Mill River	429-6963
Bill West	Hartsville	528-2009
Herb Eichstedt	Mill River	229-2544
Al Lenardson	Mill River	229-8654
Bill Simpson	Clayton	229-2358
Dawn Lidstone	Southfield	229-7903
Wayne and MaryJane Eline	Mill River	528-2051
Wendy Miller	New Marlborough	229-8708
Will Regan	New Marlborough	646-450-1894
Charles Wyman	Hartsville	528-1934
Michele Shalaby		229-9050

Call to Order: 10:04 am

Holly Morse, Planning Board Chair welcomed everyone and asked them to introduce him/herself to the room.

Ms. Morse explained the purpose of this “coffee” was get feedback and input from local business owners regarding potential revisions to the Town’s Protective By-laws. She noted that the Board focused on the first two goals listed on the Planning Board page of the Town’s website include:

- Promote New Marlborough’s small town atmosphere.
- Allow for continuation of traditional settlement patterns in New Marlborough.

She continued by explaining the Board’s process to draft the revisions to the Protective By-laws. This included reviewing:

- The current By-laws to identify sections that needed to be updated to support the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.
- Data on the number and size of lots throughout the Town, the density of lots within the “village” areas, and the placement of homes/buildings/lots.
- Burdens created on residents by the current special permit and variances processes.

This review suggested to the PB that most of homes within the “villages” do not meet current zoning requirements thus creating an undue burden for owners. Therefore, the Board has drafted revisions to the By-laws that would:

1. Create two districts/zones within the Town; and

2. Relax the front and side set-backs and set a maximum set-back for lots within the “village district.”

Specifically the proposed adjustments within the “village district” are:

- 10’ – front set-back
- 15’ – side set-back
- 35’ – maximum front set-back
- 75’ frontage

Ms. Morse noted that the current requirement of 1 acre for a building lot would NOT change. Further, the boundaries are for zoning purposes only. They are not intended to identify the totality of any one village identity, i.e. residents may reside in Southfield without residing within the proposed boundaries. The boundaries were based on the most densely settled areas of the Town reviewed by lot data. The “subjective” feeling of the “villages” and the natural boundaries (streams, etc) also influenced the drawing of the boundaries. She asked if anyone knew the current New Marlborough set-backs. (There was no response from the attendees.)

The following summarizes discussion:

PBQ1: (Question posed by the Board) What should the two districts within the Town be named? Currently all of New Marlborough is one district.

R1: (Resident) *“Number of parcels impacted by these proposed changes?”*

PBR1: (Response from the Board) We would have two types of zoning. The changes would not effect the parcels outside of the “villages.” For most of the villages, the number of parcels would only increase by 1 or 2. In Hartsville, the number of potential dividable parcels would increase by 5. In Mill River with no changes to the Protective By-Laws, 18 additional building lots could be created.

PBQ2: *What should we define/name two districts – inter-village district vs. outer-village district?*

R2: *“Call the village the village.”*

R3: *“I used to live in Eastern Massachusetts. Most large towns have multiple zones.”*

R4: *“Do you have a map of the proposed districts?”* (Need to double check to see if the maps are still posted.)

PBQ3: *“What do you think about the proposed set backs?”*

R5: *“If made too narrow, it will cause problems with water and sewage.”*

R6: *“Do you want to create a footprint at this same time? Need to be mindful of accommodating.”*

R7: *“I am concerned about stacked up row housing with no space between them.”*

Ms. Morse noted that the Board had received DLTA funds to update the OSRP (Open Space and Recreation Plan). Water safety is one of the questions to be considered as we update the OSRP.

R8: *"Change is tough for me – and lot of people. As the old saying goes, 'If one goat leaves the barn, others will follow.' We have provisions for obtaining extra permits. One just has to get a (special) permit. If you change, than what is the next step – what comes next?"*

R9: *Construction/relaxing set backs will/could mean more people, larger requirements for the septic systems. Varying cautions need to be considered.*

PBR2: New construction will require review and approval by the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, and Building Inspector.

R10: *"If change # of bedrooms in a home, requires a large septic system. Will need to upgrade septic systems."*

PBR3: If we allow current standards to remain, they will not allow for traditional settlement patterns to continue. No change is not no change. If we do not make changes to our By-laws new construction may change the scale and look within our villages.

Our economy is not in a big building cycle. The economy would need change dramatically for major changes within our Town.

PBR4: Villages are not the likely site of new construction. Most construction/change has been in the rural area. The villages are where people come together.

R10: *"How many non-conforming lots are within the villages?"*

R11: *"1966 at the Town meeting – Ted Locke was working on the By-laws. Harry Van Dussen asked him about the effect of proposed By-laws on his chicken coup. It is probably time to come up with some revisions."*

R12: *"Current By-laws have lasted 50 years. They could last another 50 years."*

PBR5: 60% of property within New Marlborough is owned by non-residents. We believe our protective bylaws protect us but this is what the Planning Board has been reviewing. What are we doing to protect ourselves? Most of the businesses created by New Marlborough settlers failed because they did not protect the natural resources they needed for their businesses, i.e. Hemlocks for The Tannery, lumber for the mills, topsoil for farming. We need to protect our natural resources. This is a first step toward protecting natural resources. We had less population in the 1950s than in the 1860s. Current population is just over 1,500; it is steadily growing. Our data shows that growth has occurred almost exclusively in the rural areas of Town.

PBR6: Any further questions and comments? You can leave comments to the PB via the NM webpage "comments" to be directed to the Planning Board.

Draft language for the draft revisions to the By-law is available on Town's web site.