

**New Marlborough Planning Board
Wednesday June 8, 2016**

Attendees:

Vice Chair: Charlie Parton

Members: Mark Carson

Other attendees: Jane Tant (secretary)
Patricia Hardyman (elected but not sworn in)
Lauren Geherty (Berkshire Regional Planning Commission)

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

Review of Minutes:

Minutes of the May 25, 2016 meeting were approved as amended.

Review of Mail:

Letter from Town of New Marlborough Administrator Mari Enoch requesting the Planning Board review and vote on the new road layouts of Hadsell Street, Umpachene Falls Road and a segment of Canaan Southfield Road adjacent to the Hadsell Street bridge developed by Massachusetts Department of Transportation prior to the planned special town meeting.

New Business:

Ms. Hardyman reported she had been unable to connect with the Town Clerk to be sworn in the new term to which she was elected in May. Mr. Parton requested she feel free to contribute to discussion although all agreed she would refrain from voting. There being only three sworn members of the Board (Mr. Carson, Mr. Parton and Mr. Mullen [not present]) all agreed the two members present constituted a quorum.

Ms. Geherty from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) initiated discussion concerning revision of the last Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) which was deemed "expired" in 2008. She noted New Marlborough was awarded a grant to update the document and Massachusetts General Law now allows such documents to remain current for seven years. Ms. Geherty highlighted content items which are prescribed by the Commonwealth including current population data, maps of pertinent features, changes in protected land and changes in developed land. Mr. Parton stated his concern that the previous OSRP was very lengthy and he believed a more concise document would be more likely to be read by town residents. Ms. Geherty recommended concentrating work on meeting Commonwealth requirements for the document. She also recommended creating an executive summary to contain the action plan and key maps which would be highly readable and "user friendly." She noted the first step in updating the OSRP is to conduct a survey.

Board members then discussed their interest in identifying resident concerns. Issues discussed included the health of the aquifers in Southfield, Clayton and Hartsville; potential for building of solar farms in open spaces; and a spate of newly constructed homes exceeding 5,000 square feet. Ms. Hardyman cautioned that use of open-ended questions in the

survey will likely yield results which are difficult to analyze and then act upon. Ms. Geherty allowed that while the Commonwealth does not require a survey, it does require obtaining resident views on open space, preferences in recreation and recreation facilities used. She suggested a survey might focus on asking the following:

- how residents recreate
- what recreation facilities they use and find accessible
- what recreational needs remain unmet

Ms. Geherty then distributed a sample survey from another Berkshire County town. Mr. Parton and Ms. Hardyman also made available the survey used to develop the expired OSRP for New Marlborough. Members reviewed these two documents, making deletions and revisions, to arrive at a preliminary set of questions. Ms. Geherty agreed to place these draft questions into the web-based "Survey Monkey" tool prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Board on June 22.

Members discussed several means of making residents aware of the survey. Mr. Parton agreed to take the following actions aimed at eliciting resident participation:

- draft a short article for the New Marlborough 5 Village News with information on the location of the web-based survey
- check with the administrator of "Maggie's List" on the feasibility of posting the link to the survey
- check with the Town Clerk on the feasibility of inserting a notice with the next tax bill providing a link to the survey
- contact the Berkshire Record for a possible news release regarding the survey

Ms. Geherty then distributed the Action Plan section from the expired document and requested all members review it to identify the following prior to the next meeting:

- items accomplished or completed
- sections that remain relevant
- aspects that are no longer relevant

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.