

**TOWN OF CHARLESTOWN
PLANNING BOARD
OCTOBER 4, 2022**

Members Present: Patricia Chaffee (Chair), Allen Putnam (Vice-Chair), Richard Carter, Alissa Bascom, Gabe Bailey, Keith Weed and William Rescsanski (Ex-Officio)

Guests: Tamara Golden, Joanne Hipp, Phil Turner

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Chaffee called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He noted a full Board was present therefore there was no need to call on the Alternate Members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2022:

Mrs. Bascom moved to approve the Minutes of the September 6, 2022, Planning Board meeting, as presented. Mr. Bailey seconded. With six members in favor, the Minutes were approved.

Zoning Proposed Change 79-E – The Board reviewed the map for the 79-E area, that would be proposed to the Selectboard for placement on the March 2023 ballot. Mrs. Bascom noted adoption of 79-E could be an opportunity for expansion and improvements in this area. Mr. Rescsanski voiced concern for the admin burden this might cause for the office staff. It would be helpful to have the Selectboard duties explained and possible form for processing the applications.

Mrs. Bascom moved to accept the two maps, Charlestown and North Charlestown, designated areas to present to the Selectboard. Mr. Weed seconded. With six members in favor, the vote passed.

ADMINISTRATION & CORRESPONDENCE: Ms. Emerson was absent from the meeting, Ms. Chaffee (chair) noted that review of the other possible warrant articles as well as the upcoming important dates for public hearings, would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Historic District Ordinance – As part of the Master Plan, it was recommended that the Historic District Ordinance be addressed. Members of the Historical/Heritage Commission were invited to the meeting to start the conversation about the ordinance. In 2014, work was done to complete the ordinance, however it was met with opposition from the Planning Board and some members of the public, and was not brought before the voters.

Mrs. Golden, noted she would like to get this started and work with the Planning Board to come up with an ordinance that works for all, and is a collaborative effort. She also would like to get other residents in the downtown area to join in the discussion and help to get the residents involved in the process as well as buy into the ordinance. Mr. Bailey voiced that he was somewhat mixed on the subject. Mrs. Golden expressed that Charlestown has an unique feel, one of the Town's greatest asset and she would not want to change that.

Mr. Turner spoke to how the ordinance needs to be a balancing act, and look at other means of preservation and modern methods that can be used. The current preservation standards can double or even triple the costs of renovations. It would also be important to educate the property owners on ways and means that could help preserve our quaint Town. Mrs. Hipp noted that the ordinance dealt with exterior renovations not so much interior. Ms. Chaffee suggested that the Commission not start over, but rather take the previous draft and work on it, addressing some of the concerns that were voiced in 2014. It was asked that the Planning Board members also review the previous ordinance and the two groups will meet again in a few months and compare notes and work to bring this forward in 2024.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Bascom moved to adjourn this meeting. Mr. Bailey seconded. With six members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Chaffee