

Present: Terry Spilsbury – Chair; Alan Putnam; Sharon Francis; Dick Lincourt;

Seated Alternate: Patty Chaffee;

Select Board: Bill Rescsanski

Absent: Doug Neill; Gabe Bailey; Jeff Lessels

Public: Steve Smith; Alissa Bascom

Staff Present: Liz Emerson; Sarah Davis - Secretary

Terry Spilsbury called the meeting to order at 7.02 pm, read the State Governor's notice concerning remote meetings during the Covid Pandemic and called a roll call attendance. Patty Chaffee was seated as a Board Member.

Terry Spilsbury detailed the objectives of the meeting which are to review the Transportation Chapter of the Master Plan and the Sign Ordinance; minutes of the meeting of January 19th will be held over until the end of the meeting. Terry Spilsbury called upon Steve Smith who presented the Transportation chapter for the Master Plan.

Transportation Chapter Master Plan Presentation

Questions:

Liz Emerson asked about automated vehicles and if this is something that Charlestown could look into especially with regards to the "last mile". Steve Smith responded that Charlestown is far from ready for this type of transportation due to the safety requirements: what is in place is a test option only. Steve Smith spoke about the inventor of the Segway, Dean Kamen, and different transportation possibilities that he is considering.

Terry Spilsbury asked about the 3 problematic intersections that were highlighted as dangerous and what sort of solutions are likely to pan out. Steve Smith explained that there would be a coordination with the Regional Planning Commission and or the DOT for a traffic survey in order to have data prior to any recommendations being investigated and or proposed.

Terry Spilsbury asked about the State Highway running through the center of town and any options for petitioning for control of the State Highway. Steve Smith spoke about ceding control and also not knowing if this has ever been done. He explained that the State Highway would remain the State Highway with the attached rules and regulations. His opinion is that there would be no benefit although this could be discussed separately.

Dick Lincourt asked which Charlestown roads were designated "Scenic Roads". It was agreed that there are several and Liz Emerson will check into the list, the purpose being to make this information more available and more broadly known.

Terry Spilsbury asked about recommended actions for the coming years. Steve Smith replied that the ride share proposal on the town website could be done right away together with the "Uber" and "Lift" ride options.

Terry Spilsbury thanked Steve Smith for his presentation. Steve Smith expressed thanks to Aare Ilves and Rosie Smith-Hull for their editorial help.

Sign Ordinance Review

Terry Spilsbury moved the meeting to the review of the Sign Ordinance “Signs 8.6” and explained that the proposal for the discussion is to go through the Ordinance which is embedded in the Zoning Ordinance, understand the full import of the regulations and agree on the requirements. He read through the salient points of the Ordinance.

Questions:

Liz Emerson stated that she has spoken with Tom Cobb about the banner sign at the Cobb Co store – this was removed the same day and has not reappeared.

Sharon Francis asked about the Post Office Manager having a political sign on his fence which has been in place since before the election. Terry Spilsbury responded that under the regulations signs in place for more than 2 weeks should be deemed to be “permanent”, thus requiring a sign permit, but as it is on private property this needs to be verified. Liz Emerson will check into the specific details of the RSA relating to political signs.

Dick Lincourt asked about 8.6.3 subsection (f) which relates to “high quality material” without a specific definition. Terry Spilsbury responded that this is something that would be discussed during an application and “banner” signs would not be considered of high quality material suitable for permanent use.

Sharon Francis asked if “banner” signs by definition are temporary signs – Terry Spilsbury responded that these are not permitted for longer than 2 weeks until they have been approved by the Planning Board.

Sharon Francis asked about the amount of information on a sign and whether these can be safely read at the relevant road speed. Terry Spilsbury responded that this would be discussed on a case by case basis and referred to section 8.6.4 iv “Zone E – Mixed Use Zone” which refers to businesses on Route 12 in the 50 mph zone.

Terry Spilsbury summarized that this is overall a well written Ordinance which simply needs to be read carefully.

Liz Emerson stated that she will take a sign inventory on Main Street and verify with the State where jurisdiction lies.

Sharon Francis asked about the “Real Deal Deli” sandwich board sign and this not being in compliance – she suggested a communication detailing the regulations concerning this type of sign. Liz Emerson responded that this is on her to do list following the meeting of January 19th when this was discussed.

Terry Spilsbury closed the sign ordinance discussion and asked Liz Emerson to speak about any administrative items.

Liz Emerson confirmed that she has recently taken over “Building Permits” which she is currently organizing. The Building Permit application will be sent to Liz Emerson to verify that all the requirements are met before the documentation is forwarded to the Building Inspector.

There are no applications or petitions for the March 2nd meeting: Alan Putnam will present the Education chapter for the Master Plan.

Liz Emerson spoke about the discussion regarding mobile homes at the meeting of 1/19 and limiting the types of residents/owners: this is specifically prohibited under RSA205A – Manufactured Housing Parks. She is looking into how the town can limit the number of mobile home parks possibly by specifically zoning certain areas for mobile home parks only. A discussion ensued on the Town's ability to limit mobile home parks based on the number that are currently in place if nothing else.

Terry Spilsbury spoke about the discussion on a moratorium – following discussion with Dick Lincourt it is clearly possible for this to be done although it will require the Select Board's approval. Patty Chaffee asked about the reasoning behind a moratorium, Terry Spilsbury responded that this is the question that needs to be discussed.

Sharon Francis spoke about Zones E and D and specifying home type and land uses whilst excluding mobile homes and suggested identifying the number of mobile homes currently in these zones to allow valid assessments. Liz Emerson confirmed that she is currently working on the mobile home data.

Terry Spilsbury asked for any other business - seeing none he moved the meeting to the minutes of the meeting of January 19th:

Changes: Terry Spilsbury p.1, para. 4, line 5 change "an entity" to "money/credits", p.2, para.2, line 2 change "the moratorium" to "a moratorium", p.3, para.1, line 1 change "areas" to "zones", p.3, para. 4, line 8 remove "the project is more expensive than" and replace with "a greater portion of" and add "must be borrowed" after "\$4.6 million", p.3, para.13, line 2 add "owners" after "Parks"; Sharon Francis: p.1 change "employees" to "staff" in the details of attendees at the meeting, p.4, para. 1 line 3 add "to send a letter" after "action".

Motion by Sharon Francis to move approval of the minutes of January 19th as edited, seconded by Alan Putnam.

Roll call vote: all in favor, motion approved.

Terry Spilsbury asked for any further business - seeing none he called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Sharon Francis at 8.52, seconded by Dick Lincourt.

Roll call vote: all in favor - motion approved and meeting adjourned.

Sarah Davis
Secretary