

**Norwell Board of Selectmen  
Open Meeting Minutes  
9/25/19**



**Present:** Ellen Allen, Jason Brown, Alison Demong, Bruce Graham, Peter Morin

**Open Session – Osborn Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 by Chair Ellen Allen, who reminded all that the meeting is televised and recorded. The board met earlier this evening with the Planning Board to discuss several topics of interest to both committees. Those meeting minutes will be posted by the Planning Board.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda as written.  
Unanimously voted*

**Citizen Comments**

Eileen Cronin, 184 High Street, expressed concern about the proposed assisted living overlay district. She stated that this area of Town is too congested to add this type of zoning. Ms. Allen reminded all that the proposal is not a BOS Article, but a citizens' petition. It must be included in the Town Meeting Warrant in accordance with the Town Charter. The group writing the petition will be meeting with the Planning Board which will hold public hearings on this topic. This process will take place between now and the beginning of April in order to be placed on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Graham explained that the current zoning allows some types of commercial buildings other than houses without requiring a special permit. He gave the example of a restaurant that might be more disruptive to the neighbors than an assisted living facility. This ALOD proposal would add to the current zoning and require a special permit, which would give the residents somewhat more control than the current permitted commercial uses. The board thanked Ms. Cronin for coming in.

Resident Richard Ricardi asked when this topic would be on the BOS agenda. The board reiterated that the group has to meet with the Planning Board first. The BOS really has no control over this proposal.

**BOS Reports and Announcements**

Ms. Demong thanked Norwell High School for the service day given by the Sophomore class. She also thanked Conservation Agent Nancy Hemingway, Highway Surveyor Glenn Ferguson and other volunteers in the community for making the day a success.

Jason Brown reported that Gov. Baker has issued an emergency ban on vaping products effective immediately. In response to Mr. Brown's question about enforcement of this ban in the Town, Mr. Morin stated that the Board of Health has oversight for the removal of these products from retail establishments. The Health Agent received the enforcement materials from the state late last evening, and Mr. Margro was onsite at each retail venue to ensure the removal of the vaping products for the four month ban.

Mr. Graham and Ms. Allen reported that the 9/24/19 MAPC meeting to kick off the community vision and zoning initiative went well. 71 people attended the meeting at the Cushing Center, which can be viewed on Norwell Cable TV every evening at 6pm. Ms. Allen encouraged everyone to get involved.

Ms. Demong reported that she, Ms. Allen and Mr. Morin attended the Chamber of Commerce lunch to honor the longtime business owners of Joseph's Garage.

#### **Town Administrator's Report**

Mr. Morin announced that the new, updated version of the bylaws has been published by General Code. The user friendly layout of the bylaws is much easier to navigate, and is available on the Town Clerk's page of the Town website. It is much more convenient to have the entire body of the bylaws in one place, in order! In addition, the text is now searchable.

#### **Jacobs Farm Licensing Update**

Mr. Morin reported that consultant Kim Roy has been working on this project to find a common ground for both Norwell Farms and Cross Street Flowers. The goal of finding a way for the two parties to work together was not as successful as initially hoped. The farm is now transitioning to a new license with Cross Street Flowers, and there has been good progress on negotiations for the equipment purchases from Norwell Farms. The meeting with Mr. Morin, Ms. Allen and Ms. Roy with Historic New England (HNE) went well. HNE was comfortable with the for profit aspect of the Cross Street Flowers license. Jacobs farm is maintaining PRA compliance with the historical character of the buildings in concert with the farming activities. Cross Street Flowers (CSF) is continuing to offer Norwell Farms the opportunity to remain on the farm for some of their educational events.

Mr. Graham reported on phone calls and emails from unhappy residents about the CSF license decision. He noted that the term non-profit does not mean not profitable. The name is really a misnomer. Ms. Allen noted that farmland has always been farmed for profit in the Town. She added that HNE cited examples of their historic farms that operate with similar for profit licenses to help defray the cost of upkeep and rehab of these landmark properties. She thanked Ms. Roy for her help.

#### **Sgt. Samuel Stetson House Disposition**

Mr. Morin updated the board on this property, and summarized the memo prepared by Town Counsel. Per Town Counsel and the IG's office, the Town could declare the house as surplus property if it is valued at less than \$10K. However, the Town currently does not have a surplus policy. The most expedient way to dispose of this property would be to auction it off.

Mr. Morin will prepare a notice of sale and rules to determine the sale/auction method, to be included on the next BOS meeting agenda. The rules will include language that says the house must be preserved, as well as a minimum bid. The auction will be advertised for at least two weeks prior and either sealed bids or an auction method will be used. The notice may include a deadline for moving the house. The board discussed other steps to be taken prior to the sale and move, such as notification to the utilities, lead paint in the house, insurances, etc. Questions were asked about preservation of the house and the mechanics of moving it, which are to be determined. Per Mr. Morin, the notice of sale could include language such as a requirement to "demonstrate responsible behavior in preservation." He will write up something for the next meeting.

#### **Storm water management bylaw update**

Mr. Graham updated the board on the state's concern about storm water issues in its cities and towns. State law has left it to local towns to determine their own policy. Mr. Graham has worked with Ms. Hemingway to address the gaps in the Town's current policy. The bylaw update will address the obvious problems such as runoff into the street, etc. The board discussed how much of a regulatory burden this would be for the residents. Mr. Graham expanded the discussion with examples of this topic and what conditions would trigger a review by Con Com.

### **Community Compact Grant Potential**

The Town is eligible to apply for an IT grant. The application deadline is 10/16. All discussed ideas and suggestions. IT security would be Mr. Graham's choice. Mr. Morin reported that the Town did an IT audit and is awaiting the results. He would like to use this grant to address IT cybersecurity issues, which may be discussed in Executive Session at a future meeting.

### **Possible winter special town meeting**

Dates were discussed as well as potential topics for a meeting, with the board choosing late January or early February. Two dates will be chosen so that an alternate night would be possible. The board will confirm dates with the Town Clerk. Discussion ensued about ensuring that there are enough substantive Articles to justify the time and expense of this additional meeting. Big topic items such as Town speed limits, rehab of Town Hall and the Highway yard, the sign bylaw, stormwater bylaw and perhaps some CPC Articles could be included to take the burden off the May Town Meeting, which will be lengthy due to many zoning articles. An additional topic for an Article could be the spending criteria for the revolving fund for "pay as you throw" bags.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to call for a Special Town Meeting on a date to be determined in January or February, 2020. Unanimously voted*

### **Carleton Property Committee Update**

Ms. Demong updated the board on the status of this committee's activities. They have been meeting for almost 2 years with every relevant board, committee and group in Town to discuss possible uses for the land. At this time there are no plans for additional athletic fields or other active recreation proposals. The committee will recommend that the majority of the land be placed under a conservation restriction. Another CPA use could be Affordable Housing. The committee met with the Community Housing Trust, who would like to set aside 7-10 acres of the property off Lincoln Street for a potential AH project to be determined in the future. Ms. Demong reported that it is not possible for the committee to meet the charge from the BOS as written (requiring detailed AH plans) for several reasons. The CHT has a large project commitment in the planning stages for the AH property on Wildcat. It would be probably 8 years until that would be completed and they could address this project. The specific type of AH project should be determined in the future based on the needs of the town at that time. Ms. Demong noted that the committee may want to include a Warrant Article on the winter Town Meeting to address land use for this property. The board discussed at length options for Affordable Housing and funding sources with regard to the future needs of the Town. Ms. Allen noted that there are other AH designated properties in the Town that await decisions and a plan. All discussed options for this property moving forward. Per Ms. Demong, land purchased with CPA funding is supposed to have a determined purpose within a time period as well as deed restrictions. Further discussion ensued, with the board reviewing property maps of the area off Lincoln Street. One option could be to earmark this piece of land and go to Town Meeting for a vote.

*Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Jason Brown, to remove item 5. Recommendations for affordable housing, from the BOS Charge to the Carleton Property Committee. Unanimously voted*

The Carleton committee would like to submit an application to the CPC to continue clearing the stone walls at the back of the property for access to the additional trails. The initial estimate is \$20-30K. There are 7 miles of stone walls on this property, and the work would be a historic restoration. The committee has asked the NHC for time on their agenda. This application would be a joint proposal from the BOS and the NHC. CPC applications from the BOS will be a future agenda item.



The BOS reconvened in conference room 109 at 8:46 to continue their open meeting for the purpose of completing administrative matters.

The SEIU contract was signed by the BOS.

At the request of Metro West's mortgage company, the board resigned the Metro West mortgage loan modification agreement.

The board signed the Haskins license to rehab the Carleton property stone walls.

The board signed the contract for the lead abatement work at the Jacobs farmhouse. The kickoff meeting to plan the start date for this project is tomorrow.

### **Approval of Minutes**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the 9/4/19 BOS open meeting minutes. Unanimously voted*

### **Future Meeting Agendas**

- Sgt. Samuel Stetson House Auction
- Overview; 7pm – Duxbury Habitat for Humanity project – CHT member Liz Hibbard
- Task Tracking software demo
- Ed Forte – Town Hall and Highway yard – 10/16-pending
- NO meeting – 10/9

### **Adjournment**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 9:10pm. Unanimously voted*

**Ellen Allen, Chair**