

Approved Minutes: Marlboro Planning Commission May 9, 2023

In attendance: Tim Segar, William Shakespeare, Edie Mas, Jennifer Girouard, Patti Smith, Brian Potter, Mary Sargent, zoning administrator

In attendance via Zoom: Donald Sherefkin

Guest attendance: Staley McDermet, Andrew Richardson

Meeting opened at 5:02 pm

Minutes: Minutes from April 11, 2023 approved unanimously.

Discussions

Discussion of Town Plan Approach to the roads of Marlboro with Andrew Richardson

We discuss road improvements needed for Higley Hill such as a new base with stone, fabric, gravel and better ditching. Class 2 road grant money is typically used for blacktopping but can be used for these purposes and it will need to be subcontracted out due to the amount of work. The next step is guidance from Selectboard on timeframe for when that should be completed.

We discuss the following wording from the Town Plan (pg26) and ask whether it aligns with the town's road department approach: "Marlboro's aim is to fit the pattern of traffic, both present and future, within a rural setting, rather than let the demands of motorist and engineers dictate the shape of the town. While the rustic nature of our back roads is part of the character of Marlboro, it is also recognized that the elements of this character such as narrow roads, trees, and utility poles close to the roads, and stone walls lining the roads contribute to enhanced traffic safety through traffic calming resulting in slower vehicle speeds. These features should be preserved and back roads not over-improved."

In terms of the role of engineers in shaping the town, Andrew notes that because the town relies on state funding for some projects they have to work within state guidelines and standards (for example: stormwater runoff and water erosion).

We discuss whether narrow roads in terms of their scenic value and whether they reduce speeding. A key goal is to maintain the roads for safety and how narrow roads can contribute to safety risks.

Question on what the town and town road crew can do for better bicycle safety. Andrew notes that more visibility and less sharp corners could help. Discussion of ‘share the road’ signage as a possibility. Andrew notes that there is some possibility with this in the sign budget and we discuss how a local group of residents could looking into this further as well as considering grant options through a Vermont cyclist organization.

We discuss two transportation action steps in the Town Plan (pg. 28) and whether these are work within the town’s road department approach:

Work with the Town highway department to discourage the widening of back roads.

Work with the Town highway department to ensure that stone walls along roads are not negatively impacted by road work or snowplowing.

Andrew suggests a rewording to better describe the willingness to have conversations and approach this topic: “*Work with the town highway department to identify and discuss problem areas considered for road widening.*”

We discuss how road work is communicated with the public which involves posting on Facebook and Front Porch Forum when large projects are planned.

Discussion of Short-Term Rental Survey

We review the results of the Short-Term Rentals survey. We currently have 49 responses and it is still open until the end of month. We decide to send out a reminder on Front Porch Forum and repost to Facebook to encourage more submissions.

We discuss having a list or volunteer registration of rentals for safety reasons such as the info being available to the fire department.

We will revisit the survey at our next meeting once survey collection.

Schedule of Coming Meetings with Ad Hoc Committee on Grants, Conservation Commission, Energy Commission

We discuss setting up a calendar of inviting town groups and committees to our meetings.

- Conservation Commission will be invited to attend our June meeting
- Energy Commission will be invited for our July meeting

Discussion of an idea from the Selectboard about the creation of an Ad Hoc Committee populated with representatives from other commissions. One early goal would be to create lists

that pair desired projects with possible grants. The group would then play an ongoing coordinating role with the Selectboard. We support this creation and will share that with the Selectboard.

We discuss recruitment for the Planning Commission including following up with Ryan Williams and Will Shakespeare's ideas for possible members.

Meeting adjourned at 6:23 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2023 at 5 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Girouard