

**Town of Warren  
Planning Commission  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, August 23, 2021**

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Members Present: Camilla Behn (online), Mike Bridgewater, Randy Graves (online), Mike Ketchel, Dan Raddock, Jim Sanford.

Others Present: Ruth Robbins (ZA), Chris Behn (DRB), Rod Francis (PlaceSense)(online), Wayne Mackie, Peter Monte (DRB), Virginia Roth (DRB), Brandy Saxton (PlaceSense)(online), Jeff Schoellkopf (DRB), Stan Walker and Carol Chamberlin (Recording Secretary)(online).

Agenda:

1. Public comments
2. Conversation with DRB members about their concerns/questions
3. Continue review of Matrix
4. New/Other business

The meeting came to order at 7:33 pm.

**Public Comments**

No attendees had comments to provide at the beginning of the meeting.

**Conversation with DRB members about their concerns/questions**

Peter explained that the proposed new requirements for DRB proceedings to be structured as 'On the Record' and to make all decisions in deliberative session will lead to a diminishment of the transparency that he and the rest of the Board believe are beneficial for both the Board and applicants. He and others noted that the Board has frank and open discussions and that these discussions lead to better decisions. It was pointed out that a minimal number of decisions have been appealed over the years.

Brandy and Rod acknowledged that 'On the Record' review is helpful for towns that have a history of appeals, and that the DRB isn't required to make this change. However, they indicated that according to statute, decisions must be made after closing a hearing, after which no more information can be received or discussed with the applicant/other parties unless the hearing is reopened. Peter will review the related statutory language, and determine if it is viable to initiate a practice of straw polling the Board regarding conditions/approvals before closing the hearing.

Brandy and Rod answered other questions from DRB members, noting that:

- Some type of timing factor is necessary to prevent the avoidance of a major subdivision review via frequent numerous applications for minor subdivisions.
- The new chart outlining what must be considered in DRB review contains both Conditional Use and Site Plan Review criteria; not all steps are applicable to both types of review.
- The increased authority for ZA approval of modest changes to site plans and minor subdivisions also includes a checklist to outline what needs to be considered in such approvals.
- Qualifications for interested party status are outlined in statute.

- References to ‘unforeseeable circumstances’ as criteria for certain changes to previous decisions was included in the proposed changes to allow for minor and more substantive changes, with minor changes allowed to be approved by the ZA. If it decided to not allow this discretion for ZA approvals, the criteria will likely be reconsidered.

**Matrix review continued**

Virginia had requested a reconsideration of zoning district designation regarding two specific properties proposed for inclusion in the Conservation District.

Sugarbush Woods Road property – This parcel can be accessed from Sugarbush Woods Road, and is bordered on two sides by the Conservation District property and two sides by the Resort Residential District. There are some fairly level portions of the lot. After reviewing a map, those physically present provisionally approved the change, with final approval held off until all PC members could peruse the associated map information.

Plunkton Road property – This parcel has already been subdivided, and consists of several lots. Virginia noted that there is some flatter land that might be suitable for further subdivision, and that she does not believe that the property fits into the criteria for inclusion in the Conservation District. It was pointed out that this is an east-west wildlife corridor, and that the Conservation District does allow for development, with similar restrictions on structures as currently exist in the Forest Reserve District. Further consideration of this request will take place at the next PC meeting, when maps will be available for all the members.

**New/Other Business**

No other business was taken up.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

**Planning Commission**

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Camilla Behn                      date

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Mike Bridgewater              date

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Randy Graves                  date

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Mike Ketchel                    date

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Dan Raddock                  date

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Jim Sanford                     date