

**Town of Warren
Planning Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, May 9, 2022**

Members Present: Camilla Behn, Mike Bridgewater, Jenny Faillace (online), Dan Raddock, Chair.

Others Present: Ruth Robbins, Zoning Administrator, Nina DeLuca (online), Betsy Elliot, Sarah Eno, Brandy Saxton (PlaceSense, online), Amy Tomasso (MRVPD), Stan Walker (online), and Carol Chamberlin (Recording Secretary, online).

Agenda:

1. Public Comment
2. Amy Tomasso, MRVPD – Dashboard presentation
3. Discussion w/PlaceSense re maps to support LUDRs
4. Follow-up from Selectboard Discussion on 4/26
5. Updated Draft, Second Hearing, Additional SB Conversation, Timeline
5. New/Other business

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 pm.

Public Comment

Sarah Eno and Betsy Elliot both expressed that they felt it should be ensured that a wide cross-section of the community is informed about, and their feedback listened to, regarding the draft LUDRs. The logistics of the adoption process and past, ongoing, and upcoming public outreach plans were outlined by PC members.

Amy Tomasso, MRVPD

Amy spoke of the importance of community data and its accessibility and reported that the 2022 Wellbeing Survey is now available. The qualitative data collected regarding people, the economy, and the environment will be available on the Community Dashboard once it is collated. She explained that the PD is partnering with other groups in an attempt to receive a large number of responses. Amy provided a demonstration of the Dashboard, noting that the data is also available in print format.

LUDR Map Discussion

Brandy was available to review the contents of a memo that she had provided to the PC regarding the use of different maps. She provided an explanation of the data layers of ANR state mapping, noting which maps of those proposed by the Conservation Commission (CC) are already include in the state mapping, as well as which portions of the CC-proposed maps are already included in the LUDRs. Brandy also pointed out the conflict that is created between Contiguous Wildlife Habitat mapping and Ag Soils mapping, indicating that if both maps were in use, there would need to be an assessment of which type of land to be prioritized, forest or meadowland. She also pointed out that is needs to be determined what level of consideration the CC is seeking – limited development, more in-depth review, or some other consideration of the resource areas they have mapped. She additionally explained that regulations need to be based upon discrete data, and that the prior preference of the CC to use all their ongoing data collections would not be satisfactory for regulatory needs. They have now provided a more specific set of maps to be considered for use. Brandy outlined the similarities/differences between those proposed maps the available ANR maps for these areas/resources:

- CC Bear Wetlands and Wetland Advisory Layer – a couple of small areas are included in the CC map that are not in the ANR map (already referenced in the draft LUDRs), but overall the ANR advisory layer has more wetland coverage indicated.
- Rare species the same on both CC and ANR maps
- The state deer wintering area map is out of date, as it is based on early 90's photos of tree types. The CC map has much more deer wintering coverage indicated; it is based on types of forested areas. It should be decided which map to use.
- Regarding forested riparian habitat – the draft LUDRs have multiple components: 50-foot riparian buffer, flood hazard areas, river corridors. The CC maps depict a 50-meter riparian buffer, but only for forested buffers
- Wildlife road crossings – these Brandy was not able to locate on ANR natural resource or Biodiversity atlases. They are labelled on the Arrowwood data as ANR mapping, but no comparison was able to be made.
- The CC ledge and talus slope areas that are mapped are almost entirely in the steep slope category (25% and greater)
- Contiguous Habitat Units – Brandy pointed out the overlaps between this CC mapping and areas that are already part of the Resource Protection District as well as some commonalities with deer wintering areas and historic ag soils. She indicated that a decision should be made regarding how to use these areas in conjunction with each other, if the CC maps are adopted.

Brandy suggested that a conversation with the CC should take place to determine what they are requesting in terms of limiting development in the areas they have mapped, particularly the contiguous habitat areas, which conflict in some areas with ag soils, etc.

She explained that many of these maps would mainly come under consideration during subdivision reviews, when it must be determined if there is any adverse impact to the natural resources outlined/mapped. She also noted that these rules would apply to new, not existing development.

Brandy will provide maps of all the relative ANR layers to the PC.

There was a discussion regarding the use of these maps as 'advisory.' Brandy explained that these types of maps are often included in Town Plans, but that LUDRs are not the place for 'advice' as this cannot be enforced in courts and their use can lead to confusion for all parties. Ruth suggested consultation with the CC as advisory, in a similar manner to consultation with the Fire Department regarding road safety, sprinkler systems, etc. Brandy confirmed that CCs have the statutory role of being an advisory commission, and that they are able to provide subject matter expertise for the DRB.

It was agreed that further discussion with the CC is required to clarify many of these issues.

Selectboard Follow-up

Ruth will work with Brandy and Rod to have the questions raised by the Selectboard answered.

Updated Draft, Timeline, Etc.

It was agreed that currently there is no need for another meeting with the Selectboard regarding the LUDRs.

There was a discussion regarding whether or not another PC public hearing will be necessary; it had been agreed that one would be scheduled, but members felt clarity was needed whether this is necessary since the majority of the changes made subsequent to the last hearing were either edits for clarity or removal of sections that the public expressed discomfort with. Ruth will clarify with Brandy and Rod what is required at this point; it was agreed that a decision to include CC proposed mapping for use in DRB review would necessitate another hearing. All agreed that forward momentum is important.

Other Business

Camilla suggested that a clarification ('Mythbuster') document be added to the web site. Ruth will create a draft for review.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Planning Commission

Camilla Behn date

Mike Bridgewater date

Dan Raddock date

Jenny Faillace date