

Minutes of January 9, 2024 Meeting
Warren Select Board
Streamed on MRVTV
6:30 PM

Members Present: Luke Youmell, Chair; Andrew Cunningham, Vice Chair; Bob Ackland, Camilla Behn, Devin Klein Corrigan

Staff Present: Rebecca Campbell, Town Administrator; Ruth Robbins, Zoning Administrator

Planning Commission Members Present: Jenny Faillace, Macon Phillips, Dan Raddock, Jim Sanford, Adam Zawistowski

Others Present: Tracy Brannstrom, Lisa Loomis, MRVTV, Stan Walker

Public Comment

Nobody present requested time to address the Board.

Agenda Changes

Minor adjustments were made to the order of agenda items, and an item related to the Town Garage was added.

Town Garage Update

Mr. Ackland reported on recent conversations with Andrew Bombard, Rebecca Campbell, and Mark Bannon regarding Town Garage needs. It was agreed that the Garage is one of the Board's top priorities, and that locating a parcel of three acres or more upon which to site a new garage is critical, as the current site is no longer viable.

Administrative Items

MOTION: *A motion to ratify and sign the updated Errors and Omissions Report passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve three payroll warrants in the amounts of \$20,103.39; \$4524.95; and \$4616.21 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve the accounts payable warrant in the amount of \$45,456.91 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve the minutes of December 19 and December 29, 2023 passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve a Tobacco License renewal for Jiffy Mart passed unanimously.*

Planning Commission Priorities List

Short Term Rentals

Mr. Raddock gave an update on the purchase and use of short-term-rental (STR) tracking software, which the MRVPD has been researching. The PD has recommended that a platform provided by Granicus be used for this purpose, for a base price of \$14K annually, or the suggested package which includes administrative follow-up capabilities for a cost of \$29K annually. With approximately 450 STR units identified in Warren, if an annual \$100 registration fee is mandated, the software's cost will be covered. It was discussed that Waitsfield and Fayston both have significantly fewer STRs, but that if they decided in upcoming years to also purchase the software, a slight discount may be offered. Mr. Ackland indicated that, due to Warren's larger number of units, and the active involvement of the PC in STR considerations, it is prudent for Warren to take the lead on initiating the software and related strategies for administration.

Mr. Raddock further explained that the software will provide a better understanding of the use of STRs in Warren, and enable the Town to better understand their impact on the housing market, the frequency of complaints/nuisances related to STRs, and potentially allow for enforcement of safety and health regulations. He explained that an ordinance will need to be drafted to require registration by STR owners and set any fees involved. It was agreed that initially a flat \$100 fee will be suitable, although there may be consideration of a per-bedroom or other tiered fee structure in the future. Mr. Raddock will look into the software's ability to track complaints.

It was agreed that the PC will monitor the software and track the data received, and that the expense should be included in the PC's budget lines.

Town Visioning Work

Mr. Zawistowski provided an overview of plans for a town wide charettes, which will potentially be scheduled on a 5-year basis, with one to be held this spring (April or May 2024). He explained that the potential needs of the town will be reviewed at the event, will overviews of past charettes and resulting projects which have both been completed and have yet to be fully accomplished. He noted that there may be some preliminary evening presentations which those interested in participating may attend in order to have a fuller base of information/tools to work with on the day of the charette. The presentations, discussions, and materials will be archived; Ms. Robbins noted that previously a final report of the charette was developed and included as an appendix to the Town Plan. Strategies for ensuring a suitable number of participants were discussed.

Communications

Ms. Behn noted that the Communications subcommittee is determining the most appropriate strategies for both making information about PC initiatives available to the general population as well as piquing interest in the PC's work and providing an opportunity for those who would like to participate to do so. Different media strategies, better use of the web site, and reaching out through personal contacts are all being explored.

Affordable Housing

Ms. Faillace noted that she and Mr. Phillips have met with Michelle Liebowitz and Joshua Schwartz regarding this topic, and will be meeting with Amy Tomasso and Kaziah Montgomery as well. They are also speaking with employers to determine housing needs, and determining what other information can be gleaned during this outreach stage of their work.

Mr. Cunningham pointed out that the nation's 250-year celebrations will be taking place in 2026, which provides an opportunity for Warren to initiate some town-wide gatherings, which the PC might use in their communications/town-wide participation strategies.

LUDRs Discussion

Mr. Youmell and Ms. Behn reported on their meeting with Sharon Murray, who has agreed to assist with finalizing the LUDRs. The process undertaken to date was outlined, with it being explained that there are several areas for which the Selectboard has compiled questions and suggestions, most of which need a consultant's input for in order to have appropriate language included in the regulations. Ms. Behn also pointed out that there has been new legislation enacted during the lengthy process undertaken for drafting and reviewing the document, and there will need to be some content reviewed/added appropriate to the new requirements.

A discussion followed regarding the logistics of the Selectboard and the PC working with Ms. Murray to get a final document in place. It was agreed that a subcommittee with members of both groups should work with Ms. Murray, with the two full boards working together to determine a direction for some of the broader questions raised and the subcommittee working with Ms. Murray to iron out the details

needed in the LUDR language. Once the subcommittee has completed some work, there will be a better understanding of the time required from Ms. Murray, who has requested that some sense of the time necessary be provided so that she can submit an appropriate quote for her work. It was agreed that the subcommittee members will be Mr. Youmell, Ms. Behn, Mr. Sanford, Mr. Raddock, Ms. Faillace, and Ms. Robbins. The initial task of this group will be to review the information provided by the Selectboard, and compile a list of the broader questions which need to be discussed at another joint meeting of both boards.

There was time at this meeting to begin these topical discussions, and two items were addressed:

The General Business District along Route 100 near the bottom of the Access Road - Three areas of the General Business District are now included in the Town's Zoning, one at the Airport, one at the Bobbin Mill, and one at the bottom of the Access Road. It was agreed that the Bobbin Mill and Access Road areas can handle more density/smaller lot sizes, but that the Airport area should not be changed from what exists in the draft LUDRs. The subcommittee will look into what the common lot sizes are in the two areas to be changed, in order to determine if 1-acre or ½-acre lots are more suitable in keeping with what already exists.

Potato Road Association request – it was agreed that the Potato Road area that is currently designated as Rural in the draft LUDRs should be change to Residential, as it appears that lot size is the main reason that the lots in Rural have been so designated.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carol Chamberlin

The Warren Selectboard



Luke Youmell, Chair



Bob Ackland



Devin Klein Corrigan



Andy Cunningham, Vice Chair



Camilla Behn

