



## **Plympton Bylaw Review Committee**

Minutes for March 4th, 2021

6:30 PM, Zoom Call

The meeting, having been duly posted with an agenda, was opened by Chair, Alan Wheelock, at 6:33 PM.

**Committee Members Present, via Zoom:** Alan Wheelock, Ted Taranto, Kim Russo, Dave Alberti, Ann Sobolewski, Dominique Sampson

**Regrets:** Amy Cronin, Jean Cohen

**Guests:** John Traynor, Plympton Selectman

1. **Minutes Approval.** The minutes for February 18th, 2021, submitted by Amy Cronin, were approved unanimously.
2. **Review of final, PDF version of informational sheets.** Dominique had provided the Committee with final, PDF versions of the informational sheets that were developed by committee members over the last several months. The consensus of the BLRC membership was that these high-quality sheets were ready to go. Alan explained the goals of this effort to John Traynor, who expressed support. He also said that he believed that these sheets should go through legal review prior to being implemented. Several days later, Alan delivered all of these documents to the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator with the following introductory note:

Hello Mark, John, Christine, and Liz,

On behalf of the By-law Review Committee, I'm happy (and proud!) to present to you several new tools that we hope will be useful to members of Town Government. We were thinking primarily about those at the Town House who field questions from the public about Plympton's zoning regulations. It is our hope that these informational sheets – in both hardcopy and digital form – could be used by the Town Clerk's Office, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, the Building Department, and perhaps even the Board of Health, Conservation Commission, and Planning Board.

As you'll see, these are simple, single sheet informational documents covering several common topics. They are designed to tell people initiating a project in town the key things they need to know about the zoning laws pertinent to their project, and also points them to our wonderful new digitized by-laws on the Town of Plympton website.

We believe that your board and Liz should review and approve these documents prior to implementing them at the Town House. We sincerely hope that they will be helpful, and we are willing to develop additional information sheets in the future for other topics, if needed.

3. **Discussion regarding Inconsistencies in how Dog Kennels are Addressed in the By-laws.** Alan reported that he had followed up with Liz Dennehy, Town Administrator, regarding recent confusion surrounding Plympton's zoning regulations that pertain to dog kennels. Alan stated that he informed Liz that the absence of "dog kennels" in last year's revised

Schedule of Uses was not an error. The BLRC removed it because committee members did not feel that Plympton residents wanted to encourage the additional development of these businesses in residential areas. However, as Alan explained, the General By-laws section of our regulations contains a huge, detailed section – Section 135 – that focuses entirely on dog kennels, dog licensing, commercial and “hobby” operations, etc. Thus, the confusion at the Town House. After some discussion, the consensus of the BLRC was to put this issue on our list of things to prepare for 2022 Town Meeting, rather than 2021. Members did not feel that we had sufficient time to address this properly in the short interval prior to the warrant closing for the upcoming Town Meeting.

**4. Updates from Subcommittee Formed to Look at Potential “In-law” Apartment” By-law.**

The members of this subcommittee are Ann Sobelewski, Dave Alberti, and Jean Cohen. Ann reported that her research on the feasibility of developing such a By-law for Plympton was proving to be fairly complex. She stated that she has looked at the “Accessory” or “In-law” regulations from surrounding South Shore towns and that there are many viable approaches to creating such a by-law. Nevertheless, Ann felt that it was feasible to develop the language for a new By-law governing this use prior to the closing of the Town Meeting warrant – which is March 29<sup>th</sup>. More to come on this one!

**5. Discussion with John Traynor Regarding Enforcement.** Dave Alberti has updated the zoning violation worksheet developed by BLRC during the winter. It now contains 22 potential instances of zoning violations extant in town. These examples range from long standing violations to more recent, and all should be investigated and resolved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. John promised the Committee that he would bring this list forward to the BOS and ZEO for resolution. During an earlier discussion about the “Enforcement” informational sheet that BLRC has created, John stated that – speaking as a private citizen, not a selectman, he believed that all complaints sent to the ZEO about a potential zoning violation should be in writing and signed – not anonymous phone calls to the ZEO.

**Next Meeting:** The next scheduled meeting of the Committee will be Thursday, March 18th, 2021. Meetings are typically held every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by Alan Wheelock at 8:13 pm. These minutes are respectfully submitted by Alan Wheelock.