



Town of Plympton
By-law Review Committee
Newsletter

Number 11
August 2nd, 2018

The By-law Review Committee would like to thank all Plympton voters, town employees, and board members for their very strong support at the recent Town Meeting. Our two warrant articles – one pertaining to **Enforcement** and the other pertaining to **Authority and Purpose** – were passed by voters with overwhelming margins. In addition to getting our warrant articles approved, members of our committee have been receiving a lot of positive and supportive feedback from townspeople regarding our efforts to update Plympton's By-laws. A good example of this encouraging feedback is the note that we received from Nancy Denman of Ring Road:

"Dear Alan,

I wanted to thank you and your-by-law review committee for the outstanding work you've done (and continue to do) revising Plympton's by-laws. You gave a succinct and interesting presentation which showed the depth of your team's efforts.

Kudos on a job well done! Plympton is a better community now and in the future because of all your work. You are all a gift to the residents!

Sincerely, Nancy Denman"

At our most recent meeting, we conducted a detailed debrief of our committee's performance during the previous year. We want to be certain that – as a group – we have a clear idea of our committee's strengths and weaknesses, what we've done well and what we could improve upon. The consensus was that our strengths included: the consistent dedication (and attendance) of the committee members; the quality of the research and developmental work done by the committee; and the overall professionalism of the committee members. In regard to those areas where we could improve, the committee felt that we needed to work harder at pulling other town departments into our projects, particularly the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. Although the By-law Review Committee consistently produces this Newsletter and reaches out to other departments and department heads, we believe that there is always room for improvement in this vital area.

The By-law Review Committee, as you may remember, was established by the Board of Selectmen as a permanent town committee, so, in a very real sense, our work has just begun. We have already chosen some focus areas that we believe should be brought forward to next year's Town Meeting. One of the most important focus areas that we have discussed is **Uses** and the allowed uses table (known as the **Schedule of Uses**). These are Sections **4.1**, **4.2** and **4.3** of the existing By-law document. Updating this section of the Plympton By-law is a sizable and complex undertaking, given that there are currently 89 "uses" described in Section **4.2**.

This table is at the absolute heart of Plympton's zoning By-law. It will need very careful review and updating. Given that reality, the committee plans to divide itself into sub-groups, with each subgroup working on different parts of the **Schedule of Uses**. We plan to do detailed research on what similar and surrounding communities are doing with their approach to allowed uses in the hope of learning from them and facilitating our work. We welcome input on this subject and ideas from other boards and Plympton residents in general. Of course, there will be additional areas of focus for the By-law Review Committee in coming months, and we will be sharing details on those areas in future iterations of this Newsletter.

The By-law Review Committee meets on the first and third Thursday of each month at the Town House – starting at 6:30 PM – residents are welcome to attend!

Thank you.

Alan Wheelock - Chairman Plympton By-law Review Committee