



Town of Plympton  
By-law Review Committee  
*Newsletter*

Number 17  
January 17th, 2019

The most common “use” of land in Plympton has always been and will likely always be residential. There are approximately 1,000 homes within the 15.1 square miles of the town, but much of the landscape remains decidedly rural. The subcommittee within the By-law Review Committee that is presently reviewing and updating the potential land uses categorized as “residential” is comprised of Amy Cronin, Jean Cohen, and Alan Wheelock. Although the number of allowed residential uses in Plympton’s current **Schedule of Uses** is small (there are only six in the current table), it is important to make certain that these uses are thoroughly reviewed and updated. In the residential category at present you will find:

- Conversion of Single Family to Two Family Dwelling (currently allowed only by Special Permit)
- Dwelling; Detached, One Family
- Dwelling; Detached, Two Family
- Dwelling, Multi-family, for Elderly and Handicapped Persons (currently allowed only by Special Permit)
- Airstrip or Heliport (currently allowed only by Special Permit)
- Trailer, Mobile Home (temporary) (This is also currently allowed only by Special Permit)

As noted in earlier newsletters, members of the By-law Review Committee believe that clear definitions should accompany each and every allowable use stipulated in Plympton’s table of allowed uses. This entails a considerable amount of work and research, given that less than a third of the 89 uses in the existing **Schedule of Uses** have been defined. In the residential category, only two of the uses are defined and those definitions are found in **Section 7** (Special Permits) of the By-law, rather than **Section 11**, where all of the other current definitions of allowed uses had been placed.

A key provision of Plympton’s **Schedule of Uses** can be found in the opening paragraph of the uses table – **Section 4.1, General Provisions**. It stipulates:

*“Except as expressly provided herein, no building or structure shall be constructed, and no building, structure or land, or part thereof, shall be used for any purpose or in any manner other than for one or more of the uses hereinafter set forth as permitted in the district in which such building, structure, or land is located, or as set forth as permissible by special permit in said district and so authorized.”*

In essence, this language tells us that, if a potential land use is not listed in the table of allowed uses, then it is simply not allowed in our community. The By-law Review Committee is therefore investing a considerable amount of time in reviewing, updating, and defining the table, as it is a critically important component of sound, fair, and enforceable zoning regulations.

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