



Town of Plympton  
By-law Review Committee  
*Newsletter*

Number 7  
March 1st, 2018

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The By-law Review Committee has continued working closely with the Planning Board and with Town Administrator Liz Dennehy to prepare two draft warrant articles for consideration by Town Meeting in May. Excellent progress has been made, and a public hearing on the two warrant articles has been scheduled for Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at the Town House.

During that hearing, interested residents will hear a brief overview of the two articles that have been developed by the By-law Review Committee. One article recommends a significant enhancement of existing Zoning By-law Section 2.1, entitled **Enforcement**. As noted in earlier newsletters, the existing 2.1 is quite brief, and stipulates very little, other than the fact that the Town shall appoint a Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) and that the ZEO reports to the Board of Selectmen. The new, much more detailed language prosed by our Committee stipulates that:

- The Town will have a detailed permitting process.
- The ZEO can and should initiate civil or criminal action, if necessary.
- The ZEO can initiate non-compliance fines of up to \$300 per day.
- The ZEO must respond to written enforcement requests within 14 days.
- The ZEO will be required to maintain a record of all zoning permits.
- The ZEO can request police assistance if necessary and appropriate.

This new suggested language is informed by state law and has been thoroughly vetted with Bob Karling, our current ZEO.

The second draft warrant article suggests an important edit to Section 1 – **Authority and Purpose** - of the existing Zoning By-law. Authority and Purpose is intended to provide the by-laws with exactly what you would expect – what Authority underpins our zoning regulations (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A), and what is the purpose of our zoning regulations? The current language in “Purpose” lists many specific purposes for Plympton’s zoning laws, such as conserving health and securing safety, preventing overcrowding, encouraging

housing for persons of all income levels, conserving the value of land and buildings, and many more.

The suggested edit to Authority and Purpose from our Committee reads as follows:  
*"to preserve views; to protect, preserve, and maintain the existing surface and groundwater supplies and their drainage or recharge areas within the known aquifers of the Town"*

Given that all one thousand households in Plympton are dependent upon well water, the Committee felt that this added language is necessary and important.

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