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TOWN OF BURLINGTON

Meeting Minutes

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Minutes need to be posted within 30 days or 2 meetings of the board – Draft minutes can be posted and revised at a later date

DEPT./BOARD: General Bylaw Review Committee

DATE: May 17, 2022

TIME: 6:30 PM

PLACE: Virtual via Zoom

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Vice chair Phyllis Neufeld, Michelle Huntoon, Susan Kadilak, David Miller

Excused: Scott Martin, Wendy Guthro

GUESTS: Eileen Coleman, Larry Cohen, Nicci Kadilak

Minutes

Vice Chair Phyllis Neufeld called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM.

Proposed amendments to the Stormwater Management Article

Eileen Coleman, Assistant Conservation Administrator, and Larry Cohen, Chair of the Conservation Commission, presented detailed information about the amendments that are being proposed to the Stormwater Management Article:

- There are new requirements for an engineering plan, stamped by a professional civil engineer, for a standard permit.
- The thresholds (square feet/percentage of lot) have increased for each type of permit (standard and abbreviated).
- The Planning Board references have been removed.
- The issue of tree removals has been included.
- The extent of land disturbance, and the extent of additional impervious surface, determines the type of permit required.
- Abbreviated permits do not require a public hearing; but all permits will require notice to abutters.

Larry said that recent house buildings in Burlington have been built to be “the largest possible home, out to the limits of the property” and that “landscapers have been coming up with their own version of how to handle drainage,” resulting in flooding problems on neighboring properties or flooding into the street. He said that the Commission’s goal is “to achieve the most effective solution at minimal inconvenience to the homeowner.”





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Dave said that he had personal experience as a homeowner regarding water problems that were apparently created by neighboring construction. Michelle asked about the impact of the proposed amendments on additions as well as new buildings/driveways. She said that drainage “is a problem across the entire Town” (not only in wetlands areas), and that an engineered plan, if designed correctly, would reduce this problem. Larry said the bylaw would apply to new construction as well as additions to current buildings, depending on the extent of land disturbance and additional impervious surface. He noted that tree management was also critical, as “one red maple can take up hundreds of gallons of water” and that as many trees as practicable should be left standing.

Phyllis appointed a subcommittee to work on a detailed review of the proposed amendments with Eileen Coleman. Dave and Susan will be members of this subcommittee with Eileen, and they will report at the next meeting. The plan is to submit the amended Article to the September Town Meeting.

Community Preservation Act

Phyllis noted that the Community Preservation Act article, which this committee voted to recommend, was the presented at the May Town Meeting; the TM members approved putting this matter on the ballot in November. Phyllis said that, if the matter is approved by a town-wide vote, an Article to create a CPA committee would be a topic at a future meeting of this committee.

Review of Minutes

The committee reviewed the minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting; upon a motion by Dave, seconded by Susan, the committee voted unanimously, 4-0, to approve the minutes as amended.

Election of Town Moderator

The committee members discussed a proposal to have the Town Moderator elected by the Town Meeting members, rather than by a town-wide election. Dave said that most townspeople don't know what the position is or how it functions. Noting that most other towns do elect the Town Moderator by a town-wide election, Phyllis asked whether there is a State ruling about how Town Moderators are elected. Michelle reviewed the relevant section of the law, read it to the members, and said that “the language seems pretty clear that it has to be the voters of the Town.”





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Hybrid Town Meeting

Committee members discussed several factors involved in hybrid Town Meetings, including cost to the Town, accessibility, participation, and State law. Phyllis appointed a subcommittee to explore this issue and to create an Article concerning hybrid meeting arrangements. Phyllis, Michelle, and Scott will be members of this subcommittee.

Article 1 Discussion

The committee had planned to review all Bylaws throughout the year, beginning with Article 1. This discussion was tabled to the next committee meeting.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Michelle, seconded by Susan, the committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM.

