



# Hubbardston Massachusetts

## Planning Board Meeting Minutes

**Date:** January 19, 2023

**Location:** 7 Main Street, Slade Building, Hubbardston, MA 01452

**Members Present:** Kristofer Munroe, Francois Steiger, Alice Livdahl (remote), Erica Dack (remote)

**Members Absent:** Bill Homans, John DeMalia

**Other Attendees:** Mike Stoll

### 1) Call to Order – 6:41 pm

2) Chair Munroe calls for any public comments on non-agenda items. None

### 3) Minutes Acceptance

- a. On a motion by Member Steiger, seconded by Member Livdahl, minutes from the 1/04/2023 meeting are approved unanimously with three affirmative votes, Munroe, Livdahl and Steiger.

4) New Business: None

### 5) Old Business:

- a. Crane clay pit restoration decision - signatures

Clerk Kresge states that the signature page from the Crane decision will be left with Bobbie Thibault at Town Office so that members can swing by to place signatures and have it notarized. Once signatures are complete, the decision will be recorded with the Worcester Registry of Deeds.

### 6) Administrative matters:

- a. Review of Planning Board annual report

Member Steiger recommends an edit to the item regarding status of Attorney General review of the Battery Energy Storage System bylaw. The language “awaiting results of Attorney General review” should be changed to “awaiting approval from Attorney General”. Member Livdahl presents a motion to accept the Annual Report with this requested change, seconded by Member Steiger. The motion is approved unanimously with three affirmative votes, Munroe, Livdahl and Steiger.

- b. Review of zoning bylaw changes – child care facilities as allowed use, and other minor revisions.

Chair Munroe recaps previous discussions regarding bringing references to child care facilities in the Town Zoning bylaw into compliance with State Chapter 40A Section 3, which states that these are exempt from Town zoning restrictions other than dimensional lot requirements. The proposed

language would add child care center, school-aged child care program, family child care home, and large family child care home to the list of uses permitted by right in the Residential and Town Center districts. It would also delete the Day Care center from the list of uses allowed only by Special Permit in the Residential district.

Member Steiger feels that it is important to get feedback from both Town Counsel and a public hearing before finalizing the language. He also suggests a more comprehensive review of the Town bylaws to check for other areas that might be in conflict with State statutes. Chair Munroe agrees that this would be desirable, along with a complete re-codification of the bylaws, but that's a bigger project.

Clerk Kresge suggests a public hearing date sometime in February to discuss the revisions on the child care use, along with other bylaw language revisions that have been under discussion such as changing Building Inspector to Building Commissioner, changing the reference to the Town zoning map, etc. The Board is in favor of the proposed changes regarding child care centers, and Clerk Kresge will prepare a document that presents these changes along with the other revisions that need to be presented in a public hearing and to Town Meeting.

c. Update on ongoing projects with MRPC

Chair Munroe summarizes meeting with Karen Chapman regarding active projects, and indicates that finishing up the Master Plan and Agricultural Accessory use bylaw will be the main DLTA grant opportunities with MRPC for 2023. Status of solar bylaw and Town Center zoning project are still a little uncertain, but will be further investigated.

Member Steiger expressed concern about the delays on the Master Plan project. He's glad that conversations are occurring with MRPC to get things re-started, but hopes that there will be firm timelines resulting from these conversations. Chair Munroe agrees and expresses his own frustration, but is optimistic that this will get worked out in the near future. He indicates that Nathan Boudreau now has a central role managing the relationship with MRPC, and that this involvement by full-time, paid staff should be helpful in getting things moving forward.

7) Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair

- a. Member Livdahl raises the issue of inquiries by realtors for the Marinelli/Proulx properties regarding potential future uses in this area. She observes that one of the constraints on development of this area would be the Town's limitation of 500' distance on a dead-end street. She suggests that there might be enough frontage on the Town-owned lot that provides access to this area for two separate road entrances, which would eliminate the need for a dead-end road. Member Steiger requests further clarification on the current status of the Marinelli property. Chair Munroe indicates that the Town has received email inquiries from representatives for Marinelli about potential uses, and that Nathan Boudreau will be acting as the point of contact for further discussions.
- b. Chair Munroe provides an update on recent developments with discussions on the potential Northern Tier Rail Expansion initiative. Six alternative scenarios have been developed. Two of these scenarios were presented in the last public meeting and the remaining four will be presented in the next meeting. The scenarios presented thus far were for Amtrak-style regional passenger rail with a limited number of stations. If any of the remaining scenarios include expanded commuter rail with a station near Hubbardston, it could have a large impact on Hubbardston, creating a need for zoning in line with MBTA guidelines.
- c. Member Steiger asks whether there is any update on the legal issues surrounding the Vertex cell tower

proposal. Chair Munroe states that there have been some recent developments and that an Executive Session can be scheduled for the next Planning Board meeting to discuss this further.

8) Additional Comments from Public:

Mike Stoll requests clarification on the location of the Marinelli property that was discussed earlier. Clerk Kresge explains that it is the old sand & gravel pits located to the west of the solar field on Pitcherville Road.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Kresge  
Land Use Clerk