

**LAND USE REVIEW COMMITTEE MINUTES
TOWN OF UNITY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2013
LOCATION: UNITY MASONIC LODGE, UNITY, MAINE**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Randy Reynolds, Jo Kenney, Jim Kenney, Nancy Zane, Barry McCormick, Don Newell, John McIntire, Mark Nickerson

OBSERVERS: Chris Rossignol

RECORDER: Sherry Powell-Wilson

18:35:00 Jim Kenney: Sufficient members being present, shall we get started?

18:35:52 Nancy Zane: Yes.

18:35:57 Jim Kenney: We had Minutes of a meeting two weeks ago, you would've received them and had a chance to review them.

18:36:01 Don Newell: I motion to accept them as delivered.

18:36:01 Jim Kenney: Are there are any comments? I was leaving a space for somebody to comment but hearing none, hearing a motion.

18:36:14 Barry McCormick: Other than a comment that it's really nice having good Minutes.

18:36:14 Jim Kenney: Anticipating that serves as a motion, so, will consider the Minutes approved.

18:36:24 Jim Kenney: In conversations with, well let's go around the table. Does anyone want to jump in with anything? Randy has asked for some time, and you can see the boards. Before he gets started, is there anything you guys want to jump in with? Were there questions on the e-mail that you saw referring to Nancy and Mark) concerning the homework assignment?

18:36:51 Mark Nickerson: No questions other than I couldn't get to them.

18:36:54 Nancy Zane: Yes, that makes two of us. I feel like one of my students, I'm not prepared!

18:37:02 Don Newell: I do have a comment, before you jump in, but we had the hearing and you weren't there.

18:37:14 Jim Kenney: Do you want to give us a briefing then?

18:37:18 Don Newell: Well, the summary was, at the end, Barry and I and Randy were there, Barry asked for a straw poll to get a feeling of the 50 people who were there, well that got counted as 49 to 1. So, anyway, a straw poll on would the members there be in favor of spending serious money, \$20,000, \$15,000, on updating our Comprehensive Plan and asking the Selectmen to put it into a warrant for this year so it could be debated. Is it in there?

18:37:59 Jim Kenney: It is as a slip sheet.

18:38:04 Don Newell: So, 49 to 1, which blew me away, there were a lot of fresh faces but they obviously were there for a reason and ready to go. Now they weren't necessarily the biggest taxpayers in town but the point is there was an overwhelming interest in finding out who we are and doing the homework and research to get the opinion of all the people in the town.

18:38:30 Barry McCormick: A question I have pertaining to the vote, somebody tell me who can vote in the Town of Unity? What's the requirement to be able to vote?

18:38:41 Mark Nickerson: Resident.

18:38:44 Jim Kenney: If you have an address, and you're of an age above 18.

18:38:52 Mark Nickerson: Nothing if you pay taxes?

18:38:52 Jim Kenney: No, all of that stuff went out in the Voting Rights Act long before some people in this room were born. In order to vote in any election nationwide, you have to be 18 years old and show an address. You can then, of Unity, if you ask the question, can a college student vote, yes. Can women vote, yes. That's all part of those amendments and bills that were passed decades ago.

18:39:29 Don Newell: There are some wrinkles, you can't file your tax return in Florida as a resident there and then come up here and vote.

18:39:38 Mark Nickerson: I realize this doesn't have anything to do with the Planning Board but it really does irk a lot of us, long-time town residents, when the meetings get loaded up with college kids who really have nothing to do with our local issues.

18:39:48 Jim Kenney: That is happening to all of the nation.

18:39:52 Mark Nickerson: They're brought in there for a particular reason, that's what hurts.

18:39:57 Don Newell: I think it's pretty rare, are you talking about anything specific?

18:40:03 Barry McCormick: Well, I love having the college in Unity and college kids and all that, you know, I love them all but there are kids there that make a decision that involves the Town for the next 50 years and a year from now they won't even remember Unity.

18:40:18 Don Newell: Of course, that was a straw poll but having run meetings for 20 years, 15 years, whatever, there are not many college kids voting in town meetings.

18:40:28 Jim Kenney: But they do on the ballot, come Friday of next week, there will be a ballot. All of these kids can vote for selectman.

18:40:36 Barry McCormick: I just wonder how much knowledge they have of the Town of Unity, they are only here for a short period of time, they've got no history other than maybe what they learn up to the college. I don't know -- I was just curious.

18:40:46 Don Newell: Good luck with that, I mean we are a democratic society.

18:40:52 Jim Kenney: Those are the laws of America and college kids are voting on every campus on voting day.

18:41:01 Nancy Zane: They are, I mean, I have a son who even went to school in Connecticut and he's not from Connecticut but he went to school there and he voted in Connecticut.

18:41:05 Jim Kenney: He has an address.

1841:08 Nancy Zane: He has an address there and so they can do it. It's true, I mean, if one of them finds out about something and they are like, oh, and they get on a bandwagon, and it's just that generation because he is the same way being of that age. They get really excited and they get really involved and I think it's great that they get really involved. Again, like I always say to him, I don't care, even if it's completely polar opposite from me, but do your homework, as long as you do your homework and you feel educated, why not?

18:41:40 Barry McCormick: Well, I agree with that too, yeah, as long as they know what the issues are and what the history is and what we're voting towards, instead of just going because 'Mark is going to vote yes.' I just needed to get that off my chest.

18:41:52 Jim Kenney: Feel better now? Okay.

18:41:55 Don Newell: Just so you know, it's not just college kids that are doing it.

18:41:59 Nancy Zane: Yes, it's not just college kids, it's lots of people.

18:42:01 Mark Nickerson: Whenever you get a certain issue in the town, go with the firehouse, the town meeting that year was loaded with firefighters and all of their relatives that we never see at town meetings, and when that vote was done they all exited.

18:42:13 Jim Kenney: You were here, you were here--

18:42:14 Nancy Zane: Yes, it happens all the time.

18:42:14 Jim Kenney: You were here. There was a time in this town when there was a move afoot to straighten and clean Sandy Stream through the village, and it was voted in at a special town meeting, it was voted out at a special town meeting, it was voted back in at a special town meeting, it was voted out. Then, a special town meeting was held and over 350 people attended, 350 people, and it was voted down overwhelmingly. I cannot tell you how many relatives I packed into the car to bring up to vote. You probably did the same thing, it was a plan that would cost the town to pledge upwards to \$2,000,000 or something like that in maintenance, but it happens. It is a democracy.

18:43:21 Don Newell: Best in the world.

18:43:28 Jim Kenney: Nothing has been proved different. It would be simpler if I was emperor, it would be my way.

18:43:32 Jim Kenney: Don, were you satisfied? You asked for something.

18:43:39 Don Newell: Oh, okay, I just wanted to give a brief update on that meeting.

18:43:45 John McIntire: So there is going to be an article in the warrant?

18:43:50 Jim Kenney: It is Article 35.

18:43:56 Chris Rossignol: It is preexisting, to add more money, and you just have to pump it up and--

18:43:56 Jim Kenney: Not to exceed, I believe. Right? I don't think that's going to be an issue. Barry?

18:44:09 Barry McCormick: I just think that if this is something that we're really serious about and want to do, somebody has to get up at town meeting and talk sensibly and calmly about what we're trying to do so that everybody is aware of it.

18:44:20 Jim Kenney: As you know around here, as soon as you speak, ask Don, you just volunteered.

18:44:28 Barry McCormick: Oh no, no, you don't want me. Somebody should, instead of just saying Article 35 and read it and wait for somebody to vote...if this is something we're serious about getting the money for, someone needs to get up and give a good speech about it.

18:44:39 Don Newell: Well, I can tell you who the most qualified person is. It would be John Piotti.

18:44:50 Jim Kenney: I believe he would already be queued up for it. I believe he is already queued up to do it in his mind.

18:44:58 Barry McCormick: Because I think somebody should get up and, John Piotti, that's great, if we feel it is something that the Town needs and wants, we really support it and try to get the Town to go along with it. We've got to be prepared when we walk into that meeting.

18:45:14 Don Newell: I would ask him to open it up and provide some background and then all of us should be chiming in to round it out because he'll try to be brief with it but then individuals should get up...

18:45:34 Nancy Zane: I can be brief.

18:45:38 Don Newell: I assure you, I won't let him get too far afield, that's really how it ought to happen. He can provide the foundation but then the rest can provide the bricks and mortar in the thing.

18:45:52 Jim Kenney: If there are no other discussions, everyone is liking it and feeling comfortable, Randy did ask for time.

18:46:05 Randy Reynolds: (Stepped up to boards) I have been having a lot of questions about some of this stuff, in my own mind, and have not been getting good answers. The only two, the Retail District, which is in the Downtown Village District, you have two places and I believe they are on page 50, at the bottom of the page, page 24, middle of the page. This one says the Growth District encompasses all of School Street, Main Street, and Sandy Stream, it says the same thing down on the bottom. Technically, I guess, this could be thrown right out but, what is the Retail District, does anybody really know what it is?

18:46:43 Jim Kenney: Randy led me through this so I'm not going to answer.

18:46:50 Randy Reynolds: Do you want to read this? You've also got the same thing here.

18:46:54 Barry McCormick: (Reading)

18:47:22 Don Newell: That's the easy example of retail right there.

18:47:28 Jim Kenney: Randy, perhaps you might define where that came from.

18:47:38 Randy Reynolds: Black's Law Dictionary. That's what I work from. Retail is largely the sale for consumption in contrast to the sale of wholesale. I say that because if you get back into this, it says like in the Downtown District that are engaged in retail activity or sales of goods or services....does anybody really know what services means?

18:48:09 Jim Kenney: We're going to learn , but let us capture the symbols he's got up on retail, one is presented as a verb, and one is presented as a noun. I asked him that so that comes from the same source but it's very (inaudible). It's not to bear in conflict.

18:48:39 Randy Reynolds: In the middle of page 3...in the folder that you have, it gives you a description of what services actually means.

18:48:53 Jim McIntire: If I were to have taken a guess....

18:48:59 Randy Reynolds: That includes a whole different ball game, you're not just talking retail now. You're talking doctors' offices and everything else. Let's jump ahead a little bit, these retail trades, hardware stores, home centers, lawn garden...you read down through, they are pretty well what you would think of unless you had somebody do it up like I did. I got this from the Internal Revenue, this is how they define retail and everything else. You go to nonretail and you get into different services like collection services, employment services, pest control services, management services, security services, landscaping services, janitorial services....that includes, that is all in the Village District or downtown in the Retail Growth District...and you would have to start shoving all those in...

Barry McCormick: Using both sides of this, retail or services?

18:50:15 Randy Reynolds: Go back and read this again. This is in the Downtown District and the Village District, goods or services.

18:50:21 Jim Kenney: Within the Land Use Ordinance of Unity.

18:50:28 Randy Reynolds: This is the only restriction you have in the Downtown District and the Village District. I asked a question at the meeting the other night about the Village District, and I was told that it didn't contain Depot Street although that isn't what it says here. Depot Street, it says, is in the Village District, either in the Village District or in the Retail Growth District, which is School Street. So, I know it says in the Comprehensive Plan that they want to take out Depot Street from this but they never did by town ordinance.

This shoves a whole bunch of services on School Street or in the Village District that I don't think anyone really realized...

18:51:17 Don Newell: Because it uses the word services.

18:51:23 Randy Reynolds: It's just like that, anything you can get a service out of which I know John is making up a list for being like Edwards....

18:51:27 Jim Kenney: No, Chris wanted to jump in but I'm trying to let you finish. Have you finished your discussion?

18:51:41 Chris Rossignol: Isn't that the same type of scenario that was talked about at the meeting the other night, it says one thing in the Comp Plan and it says something different in the Land Use Ordinance? We opened ourselves up to a lawsuit? The same thing that was discussed?

18:52:07 Randy Reynolds: I was told that Depot Street was not included, but it is. Everything, you take all the side streets off Main Street in the Village District and School Street.

18:52:16 Chris Rossignol: Because the way the Village District...

18:52:22 Randy Reynolds: You put all of these services in, you would have to put it in, you can't put it say out here...you can't put services out there. There are a lot of them that are not retail. I didn't realize until I started looking it over.

18:52:34 Don Newell: I can tell you from our work in the Comp Plan process and then the actual drafting of the Ordinance, we didn't get into that fine detail of all of the possibilities, you know, we were a bunch of lay people trying to put this together.

18:52:52 Randy Reynolds: You think about, Dick Chase Sales & Service, you think it is totally different, you don't think service is what these entail, you think of service being you backup anything you sell you fix, but it's not that way at all.

18:53:06 Barry McCormick: Because he could service something that he didn't sell. The service part of Dick Chase's snowmobile parts and services and all that is, if Don brought a snowmobile in that he didn't buy there at that facility, and they fixed it for him, it would fall under this service side of this thing.

18:53:32 Randy Reynolds: No, I don't think so. That's my opinion but I don't think so. I think it is different.

18:53:36 Nancy Zane: Yeah, I would think it would fall under services too.

18:53:41 Barry McCormick: Because it says purchases by customers that do not have physical characteristics, services of a doctor, lawyer, dentist, repair person...so it's a repair person.

18:53:49 Randy Reynolds: That's out of my realm.

18:53:53 Nancy Zane: Like automobile repair, in this case it's a service, it's not retail, you're not buying something, it's a service.

18:53:59 Jim Kenney: Well, you've cited Chase, I believe that Chase was exempt by everything from grandfathering. But to use it as an example...

18:54:16 Don Newell: What if they wanted to move down beyond Depot Street?

18:54:20 John McIntire: Well, we had an automotive repair shop right there on Main Street.

18:54:27 Jim Kenney: Actually, we've had four.

18:54:32 Jim Kenney: Harding's, Daigle's, Ames, and McCormick.

18:54:37 Don Newell: Bartels.

18:54:42 John McIntire: The last one was probably there when this was adopted. I don't remember when he went out.

18:54:52 Nancy Zane: It was because I remember it.

18:54:58 Jim Kenney: And I missed one that I worked at, the Mobile station. Ames was down there, Ames was consumed in part by the foundation building. Right across from there was Daigle, on the post office side consumed by Clifford Commons, and in front of the historical building was McCormick's SO. Further down the street where the parking lot consumed the restaurant and the mobile station, and then further down the street an Ann Reynolds lives was the Harding garage, all on Main Street.

18:55:49 Mark Nickerson: The cement slab is still there in front of McElroy's house.

18:55:59 Mark Nickerson: I'm thinking that type of service though, you really can't service a mechanical thing, like a car or a snowmobile without selling parts on it anyway so they are still selling...

18:56:14 Randy Reynolds. But it states where you have to put it, you have to put it in the Village District or School Street.

18:56:23 Jo Kenney: Could you just turn that over for one second. So I want to make I understand this. So, someone running a mail order house that was in the Rural District or was in the sustainable agricultural business or doing some kind of side thing to really finance their agricultural endeavor would not be able to do it in the Rural District?

18:56:53 Randy Reynolds: We're not talking about the Rural District, we're talking about the Village District and the Downtown District. I haven't gotten to those. The last page, I think, is the Rural District.

18:57:03 Mark Nickerson: Even if it is home based?

18:57:08 Barry McCormick: I think maybe times have changed. People realizing that there are businesses that still want to come into the Town of Unity, and for the tax base and jobs and all of that, however, the limited space we have to put these things, we really need to stay focused on that as we move forward. I said this down to the meeting the other night, I said I hear people saying they want to have everything side by side so walk to it which can fine but then on the next breath they tell we don't want strip malls, only business, you know there is only so much space in the middle of town, the cost of the property, you don't want to tear down old buildings, we've got to kind of keep an open mind on where do we want to grow as we put this whole thing together. We've got to keep that in mind because there are not many places. I mean, Don is in in real estate.

18:58:06 Don Newell: Yeah, and I didn't take issue with your comments at the meeting but you said something about a half a million or \$200,000 for a half acre and you said you can't get a half acre on School Street for less than \$200,000. It was a big number anyway and I...

18:58:25 Barry McCormick: And I was just using that say, where can you buy something down there, I guess my point was you can't afford to, for a piece of property, a half-acre of land in the standard in the middle of town, so the cost of property dictates who is coming to town, and we don't want to tear these old houses down. We've got to grow and if we're going to grow there are only so many places you can grow.

18:58:51 Don Newell: Well, if you look at School Street, Randy owns a bunch of land there that could house a lot of business in that field. The racetrack would be perfect, that's a big piece, race cars in Unity are not going to be around forever, with a little bit of community work and support, it wouldn't shock me if we could hasten that and come up with a plan that really made sense. That would be a tremendous place.

18:59:19 Barry McCormick: I would think the cost of that would be prohibitive. All of that oil that has been dribbled down there.

18:59:30 Jim Kenney: But, there's an idea and you're saying, no, and I don't think that you should be saying no. Don is speaking about an idea. Whether or not it's a viable idea doesn't change the fact that it's an idea.

18:59:48 Barry McCormick: I didn't mean to insinuate that.

18:59:50 Don Newell: And then you come up and the next lot is mine and I own all the way to the river right alongside of that raceway. I don't know how many acres are in there but 20 or 30. I mean, that has the room to put in some commercial activity, it would not be a strip mall. A strip mall is when you just keep buying property right up the street, but you've got an entrance where it goes back and you could have commercial development back there that you don't even see other than the sign. It could be really fantastic and it would absorb the demand for retail use even as Randy described it, for quite a while. That combination in particular, just those two properties alone, the one Randy is in.

19:00:38 Jim Kenney: McAlpine's, Bob and Regina Knowles, there is quite a bit of open land along School Street.

19:00:47 Randy Reynolds: Sandy Clark.

19:00:50 Don Newell: You might need to take a building down there and there might not be the end.

19:00:54 Jim Kenney: Where are we headed in this conversation? I got lost somewhere but you first.

19:01:00 Nancy Zane: I was just going to say, one of the things I think about when I'm thinking about development and commercial development is I like one of the points you said. We've got some old houses and some buildings in this town and one of the things I like, I'm not a southern Maine person, but one of the things I like about the Town of Freeport is that when the businesses came in they took those old houses and renovated and businesses moved right into them so you kept that character of that town, and there are all kinds of things down there, it is getting crazier now but at least 20 years ago probably they were just a little better about that, having people coming in and taking those buildings and that way you have what you want but you also have the character of the town, and I like that model a lot.

19:01:41 Don Newell: It is very walkable, at least it was.

19:01:44 Nancy Zane: It still is it is just Bean's has taken over and changed some things down there but it was really different 25 years ago. We do have a lot of buildings in town that I think, some of them obviously can't

because of asbestos and all that stuff and the expense but I think we have some of them that could be remodeled and renovated and have retail or whatever right there.

19:02:05 Chris Rossignol: The biggest problem with these old buildings and business is the lack of accessibility. In 2010, there were some drastic changes to the ADA devices that make it very hard to bring existing buildings into compliance.

19:02:36 Jim Kenney: Again, I'm going to say, an idea is an idea. If a business wanted to go into a house in Unity village, they would know the cost they would have to invest in order to make it accessible, make it free of asbestos, lead free, that would be part of the business decision.

19:02:55 Don Newell: And if we create enough synergism, it would be it. We already have, I mean, Unity is a magnet already, we could just take it to the next level.

19:03:06 John McIntire: I think that is just one of the things that makes Unity work is that we've got this mix of residential and business and, to my mind, strip mall excludes residential pretty much and makes driving necessary whereas if we can keep the mix, but this says to me we need to get the community involved in the Comp Plan.

19:03:40 Don Newell: I'm going to shift a little, I think we should shift a little and I'm going to speak to that. Barry brought up a great point, if we're going to do the right thing, we've been talking about the zoning ordinance and amending it and making it better and we've kind of come together and figured out that we can't just do that. We need to do it on the basis of data and a comprehensive look at ourselves, and we have two weeks before we're going to go to the town meeting. The rest of the population is back where we were a month ago, and not quite realizing the necessity to do your homework before you go setting the rules which will dictate what we're going to look like in 20 years. So I think either tonight or next week, we should turn our attention to what is it that we say, what is it that we do at that town meeting in order to move this agenda forward.

19:04:49 Mark Nickerson: I hate to admit this but I'm actually on Facebook and I actually read comments from local people who don't live in Unity, but a lot of people make comments of why do we need to go shopping anywhere else in the big cities because you can get everything right in Unity. I think the only thing that might be lacking is maybe a clothing store but the pharmacy is a big draw, we've got a full-service grocery store, and a lot of people come to Unity to do everything. And even if you have to spread out a little bit, you jump in your car and go a half mile to a couple little stores beats driving to Newport to Wal Mart and all that.

19:05:43 Jim Kenney: Unity once had all the needs of the citizens covered, to go to Waterville was a day-long ride behind the horse. In our time here in Unity, those things you just said were here. Times did change.

19:06:25 Barry McCormick: Just to back up a little bit, I've done at least three market surveys of the Town of Unity in my business career, extensive market research, traffic count, population, how many houses, financial income, I mean, it's a stack that thick. That is why my business career has been here in Unity because I know it's been the hub and it has been for quite a few years. The amount of people that we service in the Town of Unity is explained in these documents, which I would bring if it would help these meetings. It's amazing. The traffic count, when we did the survey for the Dunkin Donuts, it would scare you to know how many people.

19:07:21 Don Newell: 18,000, 14,000.

19:07:24 Jim Kenney: You did an analysis long before a lot of people knew you. You had a store in Brooks, you moved to Unity to get the business.

19:07:30 Barry McCormick: I wanted to grow in the business and I said the most logical, Unity is my hometown, and I said the most logical place for me to move is Unity.

19:07:42 Jim Kenney: I got involved, as a side point, in the Family Dollar. The financing company came in and he wanted to talk to us but I said we'll have the conversation outside. You keep track of the cars that will go by the location you're talking about financing because I know more than a few people. I said that person comes from Troy, that person, I believe, lives in is Freedom, that person is in Thorndike and they are headed to Waterville. They drive through Unity.

19:08:17 Barry McCormick: We service around 14,000 people in a day, 14,000 people in households around the town. It is really interesting if you look at it. There.

19:08:35 Don Newell: One of the things you study when you get into that is what the indications for a "hub town," and you'll find that hub towns start taking on a serious burden because with all of this comes the need or the demand for more services, which are not paid for people coming to your community don't pay taxes here. There is a dark side to this hub business and that's why planning is important because some of this business actually, the traffic is going to cost you more money than it brings and we need to understand which ones are those that are going to also take away from the businesses that are already here if you're not careful.

19:09:30 Jim Kenney: Somebody in this room started a restaurant, took a ceiling and a floor out and started a restaurant, and then he put the floor and ceiling back in and made it into an office building didn't you?

19:09:44 Don Newell: I didn't take the floor out, I didn't make it into a restaurant.

19:09:52 Mark Nickerson: That was the Wooden Nickel wasn't it?

19:09:58 Jim Kenney: We've been around and around. I don't think you finished what you wanted to say to us?

19:10:13 Randy Reynolds: Yes. I just wanted to get several points out, specifically what retail is, nonretail services...

19:10:25 Jim Kenney: Is it your thought with this information that something similar to that would go into the revised Land use Ordinance, that would be retail and that would be...

19:10:37 Randy Reynolds: I think it would help to explain what retail is and services and stuff like that.

19:10:43 Jim Kenney: Before you put that up there, I bet you there is more than one person in this room that is saying, oh my goodness, they can do that? Black is the source, we have one of those in our house don't we. That's the accepted language.

19:11:08 Barry McCormick: I've done a ton of reading, I think the Comp Plan we have now is totally, totally out-of-date, useless for what we're trying to do. I do feel that we have to address trying to get the funds to get that new Comp Plan done first. I think this is the Bible...

19:11:31 Jim Kenney: This is how Charlie describes it.

19:11:33 Barry McCormick: This has got information in it, anything you want to know is in there, so that is going to be extremely helpful. What I think we should be focusing on as a committee right now is moving forward trying to get funds, talking to people in the town, doing some more research and being prepared at the town meeting to them to vote to get the funds to get it done. Until then I think we're spinning.

19:12:01 Nancy Zane: I do to.

19:12:03 Mark Nickerson: Can I just make one quick comment about that meeting we had down at the firehouse the other night. There was that warrant article 2 that they put in there. As I read that, that doesn't stop like if you wanted to put something on that property down here on the right, that seemed to allow anything to go in there for services.

19:12:26 Don Newell: That was the intent, that was drafted to eliminate legal questions but still allow the same activities that the partition had asked for. That was the intent, to eliminate the legal issue.

19:12:45 Mark Nickerson: Which basically, I think, it allows you to put anything anywhere as long as it is for services...

19:12:56 Randy Reynolds: It can't be services, services are going to either the Village District or School Street. It can't go in this area of town, this is the Downtown District, you've got to put it in the Village District or School Street.

19:13:22 Don Newell: But wasn't that to amend that? What came out of it was that to go and spot zone like that without understanding our community now and the people now, and the impact of businesses being in the right or wrong place, was not a good idea. That's what came out of that whole discussion because we don't really want to make those decisions just yet until we have seen the whole scope of this question and that's why we need to spend some money and get the data. That's the whole idea.

19:14:03 Randy Reynolds: I'm the one that brought that up, the article, and I did it before I introduced the committee. Once I get putting it the hatch lines on I realized it is going to affect a lot of different things so at that point I knew it was a bad idea.

19:14:43 Don Newell: We've learned this but the people in the town meeting haven't learned it so there the six or eight of us here, we need to tell that story. That's critical.

19:15:00 Jim Kenney: I want to make a point. You said something that we need to shift to the Comprehensive Plan, I'm not debating that issue, but we are chartered, the words of our charter are quite clear. We would need the Board of Selectmen to authorize us to change our mission to take on the Comprehensive Plan, in my opinion.

19:15:25 Nancy Zane: We need to have a Comprehensive Plan before this committee can move forward, so then what would our direction be, which makes sense to me because it sounds like Barry said, we would kind of be spinning if we were doing anything else. But, in terms of this committee becoming the Comprehensive Planning Committee, I'm not sure if that, in my opinion, it seems like the Comprehensive Planning Committee would be a larger committee. I don't think we can become a comprehensive planning committee, I think we can be part of it if we choose, but it's a separate committee in the making.

19:16:18 Jim Kenney: That's why I'm saying the Selectmen would need to recharter us and that process and not just change a word there, they have to go through a process to do a committee.

19:16:31 John McIntire: So I'm puzzled, there a standing Comp Plan Committee at this point. I mean, there was one that got this one there, is that Comprehensive Plan Committee still in existence?

19:16:49 Jim Kenney: Some of the members are still alive.

19:16:53 Don Newell: We seem to be getting more and more confused. We're the Ordinance Committee and that's all we are. What we have learned is that in order for us to do any work, we need an up-to-date Comprehensive Plan and so that means that we as individuals now should probably go tell that story at the town meeting. It's the only time to do it, and then we cease to exist in essence, there is no carrying on, there is no transition to the Comp Plan Committee unless the Selectmen decide that is what they want. Maybe they will, maybe they won't but we don't have any standing once this is over.

19:17:39 Jim Kenney: I'm trying to say the same thing. We are not chartered to do the Comp Plan or invest funds in doing the Comp Plan.

19:17:59 Randy Reynolds: We can help back it to get the money.

19:18:02 Don Newell: We can tell the story, it might influence the voters to allow some funding so that a Comp Plan could be organized by the Selectmen...decide to go back to that original Comp Plan group and try to rev that up or the ordinance group that we pick and ask them to be the comp group and fatten the ranks a bit.

19:18:28 Jo Kenney: I think part of that story is why we started meeting to begin with and I think that is something that the townspeople need to understand, not only what we learned but why we came about to begin with.

19:18:46 Randy Reynolds: I think also we need to push the fact that without a Comprehensive Plan you get no grant money from federal or state.

19:19:00 Barry McCormick: My opinion is that I agree with everyone here, that if we can push to get the funds for the new Comp Plan, we should address the Selectmen to see if we can pick up that part of the Comprehensive Plan, if we choose. At the same time involving anybody that wants to get involved but if you get 40-50 people in the room and talking and giving opinions and all of that, my opinion is, you will never get anything done. You have to have a core group that takes charge of getting things done. I think this core group could do it, we have a good mix of people, but if the room was full of people that would be great, opinions and we'd listen to what they have to say and then step back and make the decision on where we want to go.

19:20:14 Chris Rossignol: I can only speak for myself, I can't speak for the other two, you guys have how many months, two months, 1-1/2 months where you dove into this and have real good grasp on what we have, things that need to be changed. I would hate to see this committee with the knowledge it has and not get driven into the Comp Plan.

19:20:43 Jim Kenney: If you read the words of our power, which every year is enacted by article at town meeting, the Selectmen have the authority and responsibility to appoint and affirm committees. The power resides of a committee, once authorized by the town, to be staffed by the Selectmen by the process they use.

Generally it is volunteers and what I experienced personally is you have to go out and beat the people to come in through the door.

19:21:28 Chris Rossignol: When this committee was brought together, there were 11 that applied, and 10 of you are sitting at the table, and the other one couldn't because of work schedules.

19:21:42 Mark Nickerson: I have a couple of questions. On the Comp Plan, I understand it is 20 years old or whatever and probably Don can answer it better than anybody but what makes it out of a date? I mean, what changes?

19:21:58 Jim Kenney: The State published a letter that said it's out of date.

19:22:04 Mark Nickerson: But what is going to change?

19:22:07 Don Newell: The demographics of our community are considerably different than they were.

19:22:23 Don Newell: You go anywhere in this Comprehensive Plan and the information is historical, so we're going to make decisions based on Unity today, no you're not if you don't do the homework and find out what we really are.

19:22:43 Mark Nickerson: The cost is supposedly \$20,000 to do the surveys and research.

19:22:59 Jim Kenney: That was a rough estimate. Mark, there was a young man sitting here, that's his experience, that's not a firm quote from an organization we've asked for a bid. The one that has been used in the past is KVCOG, we're a member to KVCOG.

19:23:17 Mark Nickerson: I just want to know, what does that money get us, they do the surveys ?

19:23:25 John McIntire: When I think about it and your comment earlier about all the young people that were at the meeting, when I look around I see a lot of those folks who work, young people, who when this was written who have now settled in the area.

19:23:50 Jim Kenney: More than a few.

19:23:57 Nancy Zane: I was one of those young people.

19:24:47 Jim Kenney: Unity College has brought a vitality to this town that I saw disappearing when I left this town. So, yeah, they vote not all of them are gone.

19:25:07 John McIntire: A lot of them stay.

19:25:10 Jim Kenney: A lot of them have invested their life in this town. I've read through here, I've read the 199 pages and then made a special decision to wrap Jo's birthday and anniversary presents and I stopped reading at page 200. There are 44 pages remaining. If I hadn't printed on two sides, I would've been able to use it for scrap paper. I do not see the \$20,000, they started with \$20,000 on a blank piece of paper. I see the \$20,000 can be a rough estimate maybe not to exceed on a lot of the work that has gone before, it is refresh the data and understand the growth.

19:26:25 Barry McCormick: We may want to tweak the zoning areas or at least look at it but that's already done, we don't have to recreate...

19:26:33 Jim Kenney: What has happened here in the past six or eight weeks is a better understanding. This is what retail means. This is what the federal government says retail is. I bet you there is at least one person in here, that being me, that didn't know that list.

19:26:54 Randy Reynolds: What about services?

19:26:58 Jim Kenney: So what we have is , Don is saying, Randy and Barry are saying, and others have said, if you have an interest, be at town meeting and voice it. I think that's the word.

19:27:22 Don Newell: I think we ought to do a little preparation starting with the grant money issue and why we the committee and Randy has learned, he's the one that started this whole thing and he has learned that it's pretty hard to make this decision without knowing what the implications might be and to do that you need to understand the whole thing.

19:27:44 Chris Rossignol: And even when you don't know the end results, they can be adjusted later as shown in some of the things that John was saying in the Land Use Ordinance, that well we thought it was going to work but it didn't work.

19:28:06 Nancy Zane: So, do we have our meeting next week and sort of come together and figure out how we're going to approach town meeting?

19:28:18 Don Newell: We need to have people actually give their presentation, what they're going to say so that we can kind of spread it out and we can give some feedback.

19:28:41 Don Newell: I wanted to talk to John at this point a little more. Mark suggested what has changed. One of the things that we've really worked hard at, at the last comprehensive planning session, was how we looked and how we felt and all of that stuff, which you kind of have to do, like what is special about Unity, why are we special. Well, we have always been the breadwinner/breadmaker community where we were self-sustaining, we were agricultural, and we always appreciated the open space, and we had a very unique village with a consistent architectural style, and so the 60 odd or less people, those are some of the pieces, I'm sure there are more, but those were some of the critical ones and the agricultural ones I want to speak to. In my business and you ask people what they like about Unity, the wide open fields, the vistas, I mean, you come in to the sub Appalachian, you come in through the flatlands of Burnham and Benton, and you come to the sub Appalachians and it makes a huge difference that we rise up on the sub Appalachians, and when you get there you've got these broad open fields and they are productive fields. At that point in time they weren't so productive and we wanted to make sure that when the time came when there was need for them that they were still there and we made a lot of decisions around that. Without prolonging this too long, I'm going to jump to today. That has had a huge impact with regard to how many farms, how much farmland is still farmland and how many people are farming. It has had a huge impact and when we study that, we will find that out, that there are a ton of farmers and farmer-minded people that live in this community, and it is extremely important to them that we preserve what is left of these very valuable open farm fields in the community for a wide variety of reasons. I think the Comprehensive Plan will really put a bright light on that and it will help to guide our decisions about how can we re-tweak this to make sure we have opportunities to prosper and bring in business but, at the same time, let's not compromise that farmability and the people that have come to use this property as farms. I think we'll find that is one of those critical elements but I want the Comprehensive Plan so I can answer that question.

19:31:51 Barry McCormick: I think there is a flip side to that as a business person. You know, I look at taxes in town, employment in town, you know, growth in those areas, that's equally as important. I don't know what the unemployment rate in the Town of Unity is but I think that has to play a part of it too. Businesses pay good taxes, and I agree that farmland is very important but so is growth of business that creates 10-15 jobs. Those people pay taxes, the companies pay taxes. I think it all has to work together. Taxes will go right through the roof if ye don't address it. We're tax poor now, we can't get enough taxes to pave the roads we've got to pave now. The roads are horrible.

19:32:37 Jim Kenney: A couple of data points for you that addresses where you're at and data that I know from my previous job here, 21% of the citizens of Unity live below the poverty level. Over 25% of the Unity lands are tax free.

19:32:57 Barry McCormick: And that's what I'm talking about. Some of the jobs, I mean, the people that work for me are not getting rich but they're making a living and then again, Dunkin Donuts was a hard thing to get through but there are at least 12 jobs there and you ask some of those people there who are happy to have a job. This thing out back here, they could have 150 people working there, if the right business came to town. It wouldn't hurt a thing.

19:33:26 Jim Kenney: Well, that kind of question was asked and I'm speaking back before the college, when the 20 families got together, including my parents and I believe your family got together, what is this town going to do because my generation was leaving. We didn't want to be farmers hence the college, with Burt's leadership, it took 20 families to put that together if I remember my numbers right.

19:33:58 Nancy Zane: One of the things I think it goes back to, looking at the future of the town and the farmland, thinking of students, I work at the college, I'm infused with the young vibrant energy all of the time, which is great most of the time, but one of the things is the sustainable agriculture is up and coming. With our new president, everything is about sustainability science, that is sort of the buzzwords, but one of the things that is very true, at least among young people is that making communities sustainable, not just by bringing in businesses they can shop in, but goods and products produced in that community, so when we think about how our community, we need to think about how we can be self-sustaining with everything that we have and when you were saying with Unity, people didn't have to go to Waterville, that we could get everything that we needed in town, in my mind, I could be wrong, it was more that the goods and services that we needed were produced right here. I think it would be prudent for us to think about as we move forward with this.

19:38:01 Chris Rossignol. Something that struck a cord, one of the things we've got to pay mind to in this process is the fact that Maine is a haven state. You just happened to mention someone looking at a piece of property from out of state, it just kind of clicked in my mind. A lot of people come here because it's easy to get on our welfare. That's something else that has to play a role in this Comp Plan.

19:38:32 Jim Kenney: I don't see how it would within the laws. The laws of the State of Maine are not subject to local revision.

19:38:42 Don Newell: I don't see it in my business.

19:39:04 Barry McCormick: When talk about hub town, in my business career, people say, why would you want to have a store in Unity, my simple answer is it's a half an hour to anything. All the businesses I deal with say, yeah, you've got a niche there, and if you're competitive, why would you drive to Waterville. If you're

\$.10 higher on something, that's the tool that we use. Go back to the point that you made, 20% of the people who live in Unity live in poverty?

19:39:41 Jim Kenney: Live below the poverty level.

19:39:47 Barry McCormick: Twenty percent doesn't pay taxes.

19:39:53 Don Newell: I would want to see the data on the 25%.

19:39:57 Jim Kenney: That came out of something that I saw as part of the assessment process, and it might be 5% but it's not a big....

19:40:04 Barry McCormick: One more comment, which I think is a sad state of affairs, Sparrow Farms does a ton of farming, they do out here, they do over there, the problem, the situation you have there is they take their produce to Portland and Boston. I mean, what does that tell us?

19:40:45 Don Newell: That's one of the things John is working on, trying to get processing right in Unity.

19:40:52 Barry McCormick: That's one of the things I'm saying, please don't mistake me for not liking farmers and farming, I really love them but I try to be practical, what does that tell us about the need for farming in Unity, why do they have to ship it out of town if there is such a need here in town?

19:41:04 John McIntire: Knowing farmers and knowing Matt Sparrow, in particular, there is a need for it here. The market is not developed here to where you can get the same price. He can get a good enough price in Portland and Boston to justify driving it there. He's not happy about it.

19:41:46 Barry McCormick: I tried to sell local products in my store, I tried that, the concept between wholesale and retail just didn't mix.

19:41:53 Jim Kenney: I ran a trucking company, my father ran it much longer than I did. Each day we sent a tractor trailer load of peeled potatoes out of this state and by leaving Unity and driving down through Portland and driving into Massachusetts, we travelled, I'm picking a number, close to 200 miles, and we passed 500,000 people, but only 100,000 within a half hour of the road system, got to Boston and there were a million people in sight.

19:42:29 John McIntire: And they're hungry.

19:42:32 Jim Kenney: And they're hungry because they don't have the fields to raise the food.

19:42:36 Nancy Zane: Another thing is Maine has this, what's the word I want, Maine is sexy . Seriously, outside of this state, it is. People are looking, ooh, Maine, it has the Maine name on it, and people are going to buy it.

19:42:54 Jim Kenney: It's exciting.

19:43:10 John McIntire: I have a brother-in-law who bought property on First Roach Pond. It's a haven, like you say, and I don't know anything about the welfare system, but I do know that for people with money, this is also a haven and people out of state look at this and they go, property isn't cheap, and he built way more houses up there.

19:43:54 Mark Nickerson: Maine people don't own the coast anymore.

19:44:02 Jim Kenney: Jo and I would not have been able to put up the house that we have anywhere but here. One, the land came at no cost to us, and two, the house would not have gone up within our means elsewhere.

19:44:16 Nancy Zane: I thought the land was expensive and I would tell my brothers and they would laugh.

19:44:27 Jim Kenney: Don, we need to plan for next meeting.

19:44:33 Don Newell: I would like to talk to you a little bit about that. I like the fact that Maine is sexy, and so is Unity. If you are in my business, I know where people want to go and I sit with them and I say, I've got this in Troy, and I've got this in Thorndike, Knox, and Freedom, Montville...well, I really want to be in Unity, and I hear that over and over so, they've figured it out that we very blessed with Bert and his investing in our community. We have an infrastructure that the other communities don't have, and we're very blessed that that happened. We didn't make it happen by the Comp Plan, Bert made it happen. Now, it's a whole lot different than it was 20 years ago, what we have for assets here and we need to take that into focus and the planning as well. We in Unity are sexy and so we're going to have opportunities to pull people that other communities don't have. We need to look at that and see who do we need to pull, how can they be synergistic along with somebody else we need to pull, and how they can raise the quality of life in our wonderful community without taking away from that same quality of life. I've seen a lot of it where kind of new activities didn't raise the quality of life at all. We just need to keep that balance, we've got a great group here. I'm going to swing back to the previous note, I totally agree with your comments, we've got a committee that has come together, and Barry said it too, we've come together with diverse backgrounds and diverse ideas, we can now communicate, and we listen to each other. This group, these people should be part of the Comprehensive Plan Committee if we're lucky enough to have the community support.

19:46:40 Randy Reynolds: Is there an existing Comp Plan Committee, is there anybody on it that wants to do some more?

19:46:51 Jim Kenney: The Comprehensive Planning Committee by name is listed in the Town warrant which is now available at the Town Office and the answer to your question is, yes, members so named that are still on the Committee, but the second part of your question, do they still want to participate, I would say that the youngest person on that committee is John Piotti. Don is on that committee. I do not know how much older you are relative to him.

19:47:22 Don Newell: I'm older than dirt actually.

19:47:27 Jim Kenney: No, you're not, I had a birthday cake last year that had a hole dig it and a pile, and it said, "older than dirt." But, you would no better than anyway who remains on that committee.

19:47:42 Don Newell: I think Dave Smith was with us in the final later stages of it and I'm sure he would want to be a player in it.

19:47:56 Jim Kenney: The Town warrants are now available at the Town Office including Article 35.

19:48:10 Randy Reynolds: The article that I put in for an amendment is not going to be in the town report.

19:48:17 Jim Kenney: You're taking about the one...

19:48:22 Randy Reynolds: For this area.

19:48:29 Jim Kenney: No, I mean, what has gone into the Town warrant by slip sheet is the request to authorize expenditure up to a figure.

19:48:35 Randy Reynolds: Yeah, but it's not what I was talking about.

19:48:39 Jim Kenney: I understand, but that was tabled, as I recall the conversation with you probably, and what was being asked at town meeting is funding for a comp plan because I believe that there was a contrary thought that in the absence of a revision to the Comp Plan, a change would lead to possible lawsuit.

19:49:05 Don Newell: I don't think that was a reason why that was drafted. We really need to understand ourselves better.

19:49:15 Jim Kenney: I'm trying to remember notes from that meeting and conversations. I was not there.

19:49:20 Don Newell: When that issue was brought up, it wasn't to stop you.

19:49:27 Jim Kenney: I'm going to ask directly , who is willing to speak up at town meeting in support of the request for funding for the Comp Plan? I generally start as many people contrary to things when I start speaking. I would speak extemporaneously in support but you two have spoken a passion here that you could lead...

19:49:59 Barry McCormick: Have you heard me speak in public?

19:50:04 Jim Kenney: I'm saying you would do well... give yourself credit.

19:50:09 Barry McCormick: In small groups I'm fantastic.

19:50:10 Jim Kenney: Our son, his first public speaking was in front of 500 people, adults at a celebration dedication of a field house at Thomas, his very first, and he did excellent. You will do excellent, and you will do excellent.

19:50:32 Barry McCormick: John Piotti is probably the best salesman we have on our team.

19:50:35 Nancy Zane: I'll speak up in support but I'm not leading the charge.

19:50:39 Barry McCormick: My suggestion would be, and I'll try to say something, but my suggestion would be that John could sell it if anybody is going to sell it. He can get up and just walk everybody through it.

19:50:47 Jim Kenney: I think it would be good for your two to jump in.

19:50:56 Don Newell: Oh, there is no question. Not everybody is not going to line up but you guys bring a whole different flavor to that. You need to do it.

19:51:06 Jo Kenney: I'm really just supporting what you are saying. We've got to have someone or some number of people from this Committee. It is fine that John is speaking but he's not on this committee. This is

the committee that has worked all this timeframe to come to this conclusion and, by the way, it's probably not the conclusion we thought we would come to. It's really important that we speak. I don't mind speaking.

19:51:41 Jim Kenney: I don't mind speaking but Don would almost tell you that some kind of line forms when I start speaking.

19:51:49 Barry McCormick: What if we all stood up as a committee?

19:51:54 Don Newell: I'm only talking about having been in front of that group for 20 years. You want to have your individual moments, not as a mass. If you start pushing and all of a sudden you will see people pull back, but individually to stand up and say your position. You're going to keep adding people to the flow and that's what we really need to do. Individuals stand up and state their position in their own way and in their own words. That's what's critical.

19:52:25 John McIntire: And, without going into any detail, Barry, it would make a whole lot of sense for you and Randy as well as John to support it because, as Jo says, it brings in a different group of people. Not everybody in this town is lit up by what John Piotti has to say. In fact, a lot of them are lit up in a less than positive sense.

19:52:58 Don Newell: Well, I mean, he played his cards. He had his bag of marbles, he's been in politics and when you go in there....that has had the biggest impact, it's been tough.

19:53:05 John McIntire: I would, if it makes any sense and if looks like it, I'll say something.

19:53:14 Don Newell: Everybody has to go.

19:53:18 Jim Kenney: And more than likely, I've been known to speak extemporaneously when I feel the need to speak. I'm not saying I will be, if I feel the need, I will. I've sat on both sides of that table many a year. I served as selectman in two sections 11 years when all added. I've been the receiver of questions, and the pusher of opinions. But you two are going to bring a passion where you have actually lived it.

19:53:47 Barry McCormick: Battle scars.

19:53:53 Jim Kenney: You don't know a battle until you have been in one, and they have AK 47s shooting at you. Are we wrapped up?

19:54:18 Don Newell: [Sang Happy Birthday to Jo Kenney]

Respectfully submitted,
Sherry E. Powell-Wilson, Notary Public
Accepted: 03/27/13