

TOWN OF UNITY
LAND USE REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 29, 2014
LOCATION: UNITY MASONIC HALL, UNITY, MAINE

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jim Kenney, Randy Reynolds, Barry McCormick, John McIntire, Tony Avila, Charlie Porter

MODERATOR: Jim Kenney

OBSERVERS: None.

RECORDER: Sherry Powell-Wilson

18:35:04 Jim Kenney: You have the Minutes? Any comments?

18:35:09 Randy Reynolds: I make a motion to accept as read. [Seconded and approved]

18:35:24 Jim Kenney: At last week's meeting Randy asked and I agreed to do work on the document. He sent me an updated one at the end of the week and I actually tackled it this morning (Jim passed out copies). You're going to find misalignment because I focused on the body and not the beauty. I will be going back through that and start on the alignment, etc. [Discussion regarding document layout, fonts, etc.]

18:43:16 Jim Kenney: Moving ahead. How do we go forward tonight? [Addressing John McIntire] Let me ask you a question, what came out of that meeting [Saturday, Comprehensive Plan public forum] that we need to address at this time?

18:43:52 Charlie Porter: Arrived.

18:44:09 John McIntire: I was the scribe, we had 12 teams of 2 people each, you had a facilitator and a scribe, and the facilitator was obviously going around trying to make sure everyone was heard. The scribe was literally trying to write as close as possible verbatim what people were coming up with. I was in with Jim Perry and we went around to the different groups, six different groups talking about natural resources. A couple of things that really popped out, every group talked about it, was water quality in the lake, and drinking water quality primarily in the village. We need to do something about this because it attracts or doesn't attract people to Unity. The lake could be a huge attraction, a huge plus to Unity in terms of attracting individuals and businesses, and the same with drinking water. If people find out that the drinking water in downtown Unity is poor, they're not going to want to be there. Those were the real common themes that we heard win the natural resources. People love the lake and, in fact, they want better access for swimming and that.

18:46:59 Jim Kenney: Just a side note, the University of Maine did a study on that three years ago, so they have data.

18:47:25 Randy Reynolds: The biggest problem with Unity Pond is it's too shallow.

18:47:32 Jim Kenney: And no natural inlet. And the bridge put in by the train company restricted the outflow. Period.

18:47:46 Randy Reynolds: And the State of Maine owns it.

18:47:48 Jim Kenney: I have not seen the results of that study.

18:47:57 Barry McCormick: I thought they talked about raising the water level by the dam.

18:48:07 Charlie Porter: There have been more studies on that lake. They do it all the time. It's a bog waiting to happen is what it is. As far as water, everybody takes care of their own, plain and simple.

18:48:31 John McIntire: What about a municipal drinking water supply? We've already got a Utilities District. It would cost a small fortune lay pipe. I think we need to study what it would cost and what we think it would attract.

18:49:03 Barry McCormick: Look at what putting a sewer in did for Unity. Everyone has water softener in their water.

18:49:12 Randy Reynolds: I have three different houses and each one of them are bad water but I fixed them. There is a good system out there now, they put in filters and take care of them. The arsenic on mine, the highest it's supposed to be is 0.5, it's 50. They put a series of filters in, it costs money to straighten them out. About \$2,500 her house.

18:49:47 John McIntire: It would be interesting to see what it would cost for the town to have a good well someplace, put a tank up there by the college where you've got good gravity feed and supply good water to the town, and that would also help with power outages. Whereas people are on individual wells, so everyone is not trying to run a generator to keep their well going.

18:50:29 Randy Reynolds: I think digging up the pipes at a minimum of five feet down, going through all of the pavement and sections, it's just like putting in a gas pipeline. Expensive.

18:50:38 John McIntire: It would be an expensive proposition but maybe that comes in with putting in a gas pipeline.

18:50:44 Charlie Porter: You don't want to hold your breath on that one.

18:50:46 Jim Kenney: Right now, these are brainstorm things and they're worthy to be looked at.

18:50:57 John McIntire: But if we don't think about it in advance, it will never get done.

18:51:03 Barry McCormick: I hear what Charlie's saying about the natural gas but I keep hearing stuff, how aggressive they're being on that.

18:51:16 Randy Reynolds: The price will go up, once they get it in. They start now but it will climb right up.

18:51:18 Charlie Porter: They're going Albion way, and then they're going China way.

18:51:32 Randy Reynolds: Maybe water and natural gas both but would have two separate trenches. You don't want the water below the propane and trying to dig to it.

18:51:50 Jim Kenney: These are brainstorms. What else came out of there of interest to us?

18:51:52 Charlie Porter: [Reading] Manage the number of franchises.

18:53:55 Randy Reynolds: There was another one in there about eateries, they want different types of eateries.

18:54:22 Barry McCormick: I have a question, we go through all of this work and the Comp Plan does all their thing, it's all done. Just pick the franchise, i.e., after we get this done, what's to stop somebody from putting a franchise in? [Nothing.] I mean, certain ones would like to see less franchise but there is nothing here stating you can only an X amount or certain types.

18:54:58 John McIntire: There are sa lot of generalizations that are going to come out of this Comp Plan.

18:55:06 Charlie Porter: Do they understand though that more EMT courses, all of these things cost a lot of money. Government with a town manager and more selectmen....

18:55:20 Tony Avila: I heard a lot that they want sidewalks and the sidewalks plowed in the winter and kept clean.

18:55:49 Randy Reynolds: That's been at Town Meeting.

18:55:53 Jim Kenney: My dad use to have the contract to plow the sidewalks but the people who didn't live in the village didn't want to help pay the bill. It got voted down.

18:56:18 Tony Avila: I had to be neutral. But you take on something like maintaining the sidewalks, if somebody slips it could end up with an insurance claim.
A lot of this stuff costs big money.

18:57:31 Randy Reynolds: Plus the fact that we don't own the area where sidewalks are. The State owns it.

The town really hasn't grown. If you look at the population, what I see is we have people that move here from other states that have their sidewalks and all the nice stuff and they expect it here. The tax thing is one thing, but it's more the liability of you put on someone's doorstep by having this stuff.

18:58:55 John McIntire: Can we have an ordinance similar to what the State has that allows people use of open space. If somebody is out in my woods, climbs a tree, falls off and breaks their arm, they can't sue me because the landowner is not libel in that regard? Why couldn't we encourage sidewalks and give people a rebate or something on their taxes for keeping their sidewalks clean?

18:59:42 Barry McCormick: That TIF money that we have here in town, that is earmarked for economic development including sidewalks and maintenance. It can be for sidewalks, it can be for certain parking lot type of things but economic development is the biggest thing.

19:01:51 Randy Reynolds: Let me tell you why we killed plowing sidewalks. I live on 139, the State plows it, between 30 and 50 trips I would guess per storm. That means you would have to go out 30-50 times to plow that sidewalk.

19:02:11 Jim Kenney: The Selectmen raised the question at Maggie's behest and I never saw a beating as hard as that night because what we were observing is there is a lady that lives at Leisure Village who has to get to the market in a wheelchair, powered wheelchair, we was raising the potential of aborting the ordinance that required the landowner to clear the sidewalk. We were beat.

19:03:12 Barry McCormick: Walking paths, bike trails, it would make it easier to move around. Even a 4-wheeler trail, just something that someone can get on and not have to worry about being run over in the road, maybe that could be incorporated.

19:03:53 Randy Reynolds: They already have a lot of trails.

19:03:58 Jim Kenney: Here's one of the things about the trail, we are exempt. For those of us who allow snowmobilers to go across our property, we're exempt from liability. That does

19:04:10 Charlie Porter: If you "recreate" on somebody else's property, the State says that you're not responsible.

19:04:23 Randy Reynolds: The homeowner isn't responsible. Back to where we were, I wondered how we would tie into what the Comp Plan is working on, and this gives us an idea.

19:13:03 John McIntire: This is an interesting document - we did a quick brainstorm right after the six discussions, the facilitators got together. The facilitators got together and said, what are the top points that came up and that's what that report is all about. The real challenge now for the Comp Plan Committee is going to be to try and distill this down into some sort of vision where we would like to see it all go. A draft will come out at Town Meeting and will strictly be a draft.

19:14:52 Randy Reynolds: We need to get back on track. One thing Barry brought up last week that I've given a lot of thought to this week is we're at a point right now, at the end of page 27, three quarters of the way down, what we've done to date. I'm thinking when Jim gets what he's doing done, get all the numbers aligned, then we can put it out to the Town, the Selectmen, the Comp Plan Committee. I was more concerned with what he's doing, getting that up-to-date, getting the whole document done. We can stop it right there, give it to them to take a look at. We can make a list of what's left to be done on the last page.

19:17:04 Charlie Porter: This is only going to go to the Selectmen?

19:07:07 Barry McCormick: The Planning Board members, Comprehensive Plan Committee, and the Selectmen.

19:17:12 Tony Avila: I was looking threw this last week and I have a couple questions. Do we have an Ordinance regarding adult business in town?

19:17:33 Charlie Porter: We have a separate ordinance altogether that covers that.

19:17:43 Randy Reynolds: It's the same with Shoreland Zoning. We're only dealing with land use.

19:17:57 Tony Avila: What do we have here to keep a methadone clinic from setting up shop in town? I'm not talking about meth labs, which are illegal. I'm talking the meth clinics that service people.

19:18:49 Charlie Porter: You can't do anything about it. Just look at the Town of Warren. They spent \$.5 million dollars to keep it out but they still haven't done it.

19:19:04 Jim Kenney: That is not something that would be in this document but there can be a separate ordinance.

19:19:43 Randy Reynolds: Methadone clinics are allowed by law.

19:23:36 Jim Kenney: So it's been decided that I'm going to clean this up through section 7, and then you want it published/carried to the Selectmen, Planning Board, to the Comp Plan Committee.

19:23:36 Randy Reynolds: When you get through 7, make a list of what is remaining such as mobile home parks, aquifer protection, subdivisions just to highlight what we haven't covered.

19:23:56 Barry McCormick: Tony has brought up a good subject too, whether it belongs in this ordinance or not, that we should identify things that are not in here that should be considered.

19:24:29 Randy Reynolds: We can't single out a methadone clinic with this ordinance. We can specify where it may be located in town.

19:29:34 Barry McCormick: [Read through Section 10, Mobile Home Parks, Section 11, Requirements for Small and Intermediate Wind Turbines.]

19:54:52 Meeting closed.

**Respectfully submitted,
Sherry E. Powell-Wilson, Notary Public
Approved:**