

**Planning Board
Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2011**

Present: Michael Fitzgerald, Chair (MF)
Alan Rice (AR)
Ken Miller (KM)
Sarah Holbrook (SH)
Walter Cudnohufsky (WC), Associate Member

Others Present:

The meeting is called to order at 7:35 pm.

1. Review of mail.
2. Review of the January 5, 2010 minutes. AR moves to accept the minutes as amended. KM seconds and all vote in favor.
3. Discussion regarding budget. SH moves to provide the town with level funding budget and a 5% decrease proposal. All vote in favor.
4. MF distributes *About Decible* article for the Board to read and discuss at another date.
5. MF suggests to the Board that it considers the following:
 - a. Future meeting with Board of Health to discuss noise related issues. MF will contact Duncan Colter;
 - b. GIS mapping – MF has made contacts with various groups / people regarding this;
 - c. Speak with wind turbine design expert. MF mentions Professor Manwell from UMass. Other suggestions are mentioned for wind experts, including a gentleman WC has recently spoken with who designed and installed turbines. These turbines, eventually, had to be removed. SH offers to speak with son who works for National Renewable Energy Laboratory for ideas;
6. KM presents second draft of *Best Practices for Renewable Energy*. This copy is placed in the Wind Energy folder.
7. Discussion of Berkshire East and Princeton wind turbines, particularly their installations (road widths). AR states that he would be interested in investigating the impacts of turbine installations.
8. Board regretfully accepts J. Haupt's resignation and acknowledges all her years of service. She will be missed. AR offers to write a note of thanks to J. H. to be placed in the Ashfield News.
9. Discussion re: new board member. WC is asked to fill in for J. Haupt until the next election or until a new member is found. WC agrees. AR makes a motion that WC becomes a voting member until there is a replacement for J. Haupt. SH seconds it and all vote in favor.
10. Board discusses wind energy topics and reviews the wind ordinance draft. The following is discussed:
 - a. Section 6.4.9– best management practices for large disturbances of soil;
 - b. Section 6.5 – Visual Cultural Impacts – move 6.5.6 – 6.5.7 to Land Clearing and Habitat Section. A wildlife expert will provide setback requirements depending on type of wildlife;

- c. Section 6.5.8 – MF believes this is not up to the town to decide – mandated setbacks impinge on landowner rights. If you have a voluntary hiking trail or prime hunting land and want to place a wind turbine on your property, the town cannot impose a setback from the trail or hunting area. AR questions if a setback can be imposed if the trail or hunting area is of great value to the town and would be affected by the wind turbine. KM states concern re: land owner liability. SH comments that she doesn't read this section as only pertaining to land owner rights. WC mentions that a community in NY recently passed a bylaw regarding perimeter boundary around town to prevent another town from installing wind turbines near town border. It is then asked if Section 6.5.8 should be moved to *Safety Section*. AR asks if there is any liability to the town if an injury occurs;
- d. Visual impact of flicker – WC states that he has recently read an article advising that wind turbine flicker should not be allowed at major intersections or highways;
- e. Should turbines be located near scenic byway? MF states that highway exclusions are arbitrary and proposes that wind turbines should be located 1 mile from Rt. 112 because it is the least scenic. He also states that the Planning Board should be defining scenic regardless of what the states dictates.

Meeting adjourns at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Sussbauer