

**Buckland Planning Board  
Meeting Minutes  
February 25, 2021 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting Via Zoom**

**AGENDA**

- I. Open meeting.
- II. Recent changes to the Zoning Act and how it affects Buckland.
- III. Discussion of changes to zoning bylaw related to housing.
- IV. Updates on recent meetings
  - A. Open Space and Recreation Plan on January 28 - comments, discussion, letter of support.
  - B. Abandoned Housing meeting held February 11.
  - C. Deerfield River recreation meeting held February 18.
  - D. Buckland River Access meeting February 19.
- V. Updates on inquiries made to the Planning Board
  - A. ANR for 26 Upper Street (Russillo and Davenport).
  - B. Solar project.
  - C. Marijuana micro business on Ashfield Road parcel.
- VI. Review and approve minutes.
- VII. Public comment.
- VIII. Other topics unanticipated by Chairs 48 hours prior to meeting.
- IX. Adjourn the meeting.

**ATTENDEES**

John Gould - Planning Board Co-chair  
Michael Hoberman - Planning Board Co-chair  
Andrea Donlon - Planning Board Member  
Brian Rose - Planning Board Member  
Jon Wyman - Planning Board Member  
Alyssa Larose - Senior Land Use and Natural Resources Planner, FRCOG  
Nancy Paris - Resident of Easthampton, MA  
Will Shea - Resident, East Buckland Road  
Mary Bolduc - Boards' Clerk

**MEETING**

- I. Open meeting - Meeting opened by Co-chair John Gould at 6:34 p.m.
- II. Recent changes to the Zoning Act and how it affects Buckland -
  - A. Alyssa expects many webinars and trainings due to changes in Zoning Act.
  - B. She gave an overview of changes including language and percentage of vote needed to pass certain items, simple majority vs 2/3 majority. Some issues may need to be separated for vote depending on which majority category they fall under.

- C. Michael emphasized that Board should not be less diligent in drafting bylaws even though in some cases only 51% of the vote is needed to pass as opposed to 66.67%.
  - D. John reviewed the changes and suggested that housing draft should be run by town counsel to confirm that it is in sync with new legislation.
  - E. Andrea recalled discussion at last meeting about parcelling out housing into separate articles. Would need to see which ones are simple vs 2/3 majority required to pass.
- III. Discussion of changes to zoning bylaw related to housing -
- A. Prior to meeting, Alyssa emailed Board members a draft Village Open Space Residential Development bylaw for review, to be discussed at meeting. Also included in email was a “clean” version of the ADU bylaw.
  - B. Alyssa went over each document noting changes in language, answering Board questions, and amending according to Board suggestions.
  - C. Discussion included: changes in square footage for ADU’s; consideration of Rural Residential in discussion, town water and sewer vs well and septic; primary focus of housing project is village residential; definition of ADU, camper or tiny house on wheels do not apply; definition of floor space and what constitutes a room; definition of “family” and how it has evolved relative to property descriptions; setbacks; parking space(s); owner occupancy regulations; definition of Short Term Rental.
  - D. Owner occupancy of Short Term Rentals (STR) precipitated discussion. It was suggested that perhaps STR ought not to be addressed at this time; it needs a bigger discussion with STR being primary focus.
  - E. “Capital A” Affordable housing addressed; do we need or want it in Buckland? Board Discussion followed.
  - F. Alyssa asked Board what to work on next. Village Cluster will be focus of next meeting.
- IV. Updates on recent meetings -
- A. Open Space and Recreation Plan on January 28; comments, discussion, letter of support -
    - 1. Board reviewed recommended actions to determine Planning Board responsibilities and suggested moving target end dates due to projects in which Board is already involved. Board discussion involved River Corridor Overlay District and Ridge Protection Overlay District. It was decided that assigning the recommended action of certifying vernal pools to the Planning Board was not in the Board’s purview, and would require specific training; it is more of a Conservation Commission issue.
    - 2. John recommended that everyone read the Open Space and Recreation document in its entirety, citing the importance of the document.
    - 3. Andrea moved that Co-chairs John Gould and Michael Hoberman sign the plan representing the Planning Board. Michael seconded. Vote: Gould, yes; Hoberman, yes; Donlon, yes; Rose, yes; Wyman, yes. John and Michael will go to Town Hall to sign.
  - B. Abandoned Housing meeting held February 11 -

1. Andrea attended meeting and reported that inventorying is ongoing. Local boards are being contacted for their input on the properties, such as taxes, BOH compliance, etc.
  2. Alyssa reported on the non-compliance issues which would enable the Attorney General's office to appoint a receiver.
  3. Some properties are non-conforming lots which may require being brought to the ZBA . Alyssa is going to further investigate this topic.
  4. Board discussion involved properties in different zoning districts and how the bylaws would affect them under various scenarios.
  5. Asked if the Select Board is involved, the answer is that they are, but it is mostly a Board of Health issue.
  6. Question was posed regarding the possibility of vacant and abandoned properties as an avenue to fill housing needs.
  7. List of V & A properties is not a conclusive document; it is a fluid process with work in progress on some parcels, and COVID having an impact on moving forward on others.
- C. Deerfield River Recreation meeting held February 18 - It was stated that this does not apply to Planning Board as much as river access.
- D. Buckland River Access meeting held February 19 -
1. There has been communication with Great River Hydro (GRH) regarding various entrance points to the river including a stretch along State Street owned by town, and another through Clesson Brook at the Buckland Recreation Area on property owned by GRH. Board discussion followed on both properties.
  2. Town was asked to take the parcel on State Street off the auction list while possibilities for river access are being explored.
  3. John Gould asked if there is access around Cricket Field. Andrea responded that there is an informal trail that adjoins the Gardner Falls trails, but it is a very different section of river than that along State Street.
  4. A list of potential river access properties is being created. When snow melts, site visits will be made to each.
- V. Updates on inquiries made to Planning Board -
- A. ANR for 26 Upper Street (Russillo and Davenport) - Owner is currently considering leasing the lot in question from the Library. John Gould suggested that the Board sign the ANR; applicant may or may not use, but has paid fee. Board members to go to town hall to sign.
  - B. Solar project - Acknowledged receipt of applicable bylaws, but no further communication.
  - C. Marijuana micro business - Inquiry was from a distant location, perhaps sending out many letters. Michael sent a copy of the use table and other applicable information but never heard back.
- VI. Review and approve minutes - Brian moved to accept the January minutes as written, seconded by Michael. Vote: Gould, yes; Hoberman, yes; Donlon, yes; Rose, yes; Wyman, yes.
- VII. Public Comment - N/A

- VIII. Other topics unanticipated by Chairs 48 hours prior to meeting - Jon Wyman shared a situation in Deerfield concerning a case of a land locked, non-conforming lot whose permit denial was overturned upon appeal.
- IX. Adjourn the meeting - Jon Wyman moved to adjourn, seconded by Andrea. Vote: Gould, yes; Hoberman, yes; Donlon, yes; Rose, yes; Wyman, yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Bolduc, Boards' Clerk, March 17, 2021