

**WARREN PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2016**

PRESENT: Mr. William Ramsey; Chairman, Mrs. Susan Libby; Vice-Chairman, and Mr. Peter Krawczyk,

ABSENT: Mrs. Melissa Sapanek

ATTENDEES: Mr. Jim Barry, Mr. Jack Keough, Mr. Dario Nardi, Mrs. Beverly Soltys and Mr. Brian Corriveau

The Meeting was called to Order at 7:00PM.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS-NONE

GREEN COMMUNITIES

Mr. Barry was in attendance this evening as a follow up to a recent meeting in which the Green Communities discussion took place. Mr. Jim Barry from DOER addressed the BOS in December and discussed the possibility of the town moving forward with making Warren a Green Community. Tonight's meeting is for the Green Communities Kick-Off Meeting. Building Commissioner, Jack Keough is in attendance as well to discuss the Stretch Code. Mr. Barry discussed the five criteria needed in order to gain Green Community Status.

Criteria 1 – Adoption of an as-of-right siting bylaw in designated locations for RE/AE generation – the town has done so already by the adoption of the Solar Energy By-law.

Criteria 2 – Adopt expedited application/permitting process – applications are done within the statute of MGL – would need letter from Town Counsel stating so.

Criteria 3 - Of the five, CMRPC will be assisting with Criteria Three (establishing an energy use baseline with a plan to reduce by 20% in 5 years). Warren will be using FY15 as a baseline.

Criteria 4 – Purchase only fuel efficient vehicles – town to adopt policy, however most likely would not have an affect where practical. This would require a vehicle inventory. Most municipal vehicles (police, fire, and highway) are exempt from this criterion.

Criteria 5 – Town would need to adopt the Stretch Code (780 CMR 115, Appendix AA). Simple majority at TM

Tonight's discussion will center on many of the misconceptions of the Stretch Code: The following information was provided by DOER.

Massachusetts has two energy codes – a base energy code and an optional stretch energy code. Communities can adopt the stretch energy code by Town Meeting vote and it can be rescinded by Town Meeting vote.

The stretch energy code applies to new homes, residential additions and renovations, many new commercial buildings, and additions to commercial buildings. The provisions for renovations and additions apply only to the areas affected. Both the base and stretch energy codes require that the portions of a building modified by renovation be brought up to code. Additions must be constructed to code. The Stretch Energy Code further requires that doors, windows or skylights meet Energy Star 5.0 standards and builders must complete the relevant portions of the Energy Star Thermal Bypass Inspection Checklist.

A feature of the Stretch Energy Code is that it is performance based. It requires new homes to meet a HERS (Home Energy Rating System) index rating target, rather than requiring the installation of specific energy efficiency measures. The HERS rating is a measure of a home's efficiency. It is calculated by a certified HERS rater using accredited software, which uses information on the design of the energy systems in a home to

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calculate the energy needs of the home and give it a rating score.

One benefit of using HERS ratings for compliance with the Stretch Energy Code is that builders do not have to install specific energy efficiency measures, they have the flexibility to choose energy efficiency measures that meet the HERS rating target. It is also a way to ensure that homes are well built. As part of the HERS rating, the HERS rater tests the home for air leakage and completes the EPA thermal checklist, which helps ensure that the home performs as designed.

Since the base energy code is updated every 3-4 years, the Stretch Energy Code must be updated periodically in order to maintain the "stretch." When the stretch energy code was first adopted, it was characterized as adopting the next version of the base energy code early, which is how it turned out. A new version of the base energy code went into effect on July 1, 2014 and buildings built to the new base energy code and the existing stretch energy code has roughly the same efficiency.

The Bureau of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) and the Department of Energy Resources (DOER), two state entities responsible for the building energy codes, are working on a new stretch energy code. DOER has presented to the BBRS draft language for a new Stretch Code. Basically, it would require that the performance path of the standard building code be followed in Stretch Code municipalities. If the draft proposal is accepted, the additional cost will be primarily for the HERS Rater. This is generally in the \$900 - \$1500 range for residences with a \$700 incentive available through the Mass Save Residential new Construction Program to offset the cost.

Once adopted, the stretch energy code can only go into effect on January or July 1st. Currently 161 communities, representing more than half of the state's population, have adopted the Stretch Energy Code. Nearby communities that have adopted it include Barre, Belchertown, Hardwick, Monson, Palmer, and Petersham. Most builders in the area are likely familiar with the stretch energy code.

As Building Commissioner, Mr. Keough said that builders are already meeting stricter guidelines. Mr. Barry will be attending our ATM in order to answer any questions residents may have.

JOHN FIJOL

The Board held continued discussion regarding Mr. Fijol's Special Permit Application. The only issue that is currently under the Planning Board's jurisdiction is 386 Old W. Warren Road and 656 Old W. Warren Road. Currently, Mr. Fijol is in violation of the zoning by-law for his property at 386 Old W. Warren Road. He is in the process of applying for a Special Permit to remove any junk/scrap vehicles that are located on the 4.1 acre parcel at 386 Old. W. Warren Road. His additional 35+/- acres that surround 386 Old W. Warren Road is under the Board of Selectmen's jurisdiction. He holds a Class III License for the additional property.

Mr. Krawczyk expressed concern that M.G. L. c140, Section 59A and 62 are not being adhered to. Some of the requirements that are included are inventory, fencing and inspections. Mr. Ramsey requested that he draft some conditions he would like to see, to which he was agreeable. He also requested use of Town Counsel. Mrs. Acerra will make the request as per the BOS's policy.

MINUTES

Motion to approve and sign the Minutes of March 14, 2016 as written made by Mrs. Libby; second: Mr. Krawczyk – unanimous.

PAYROLL

Motion to approve and sign payroll for Rebecca Acerra in the amount of \$213.54 made by Mrs. Libby; second: Mr. Krawczyk –unanimous.

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OTHER BUSINESS

Although already in receipt of the draft zoning proposals, Mrs. Acerra will check in with Town Counsel for comment. In particular, if he has any suggestions on adoption regarding zoning versus general.

Mrs. Acerra informed the Board that her recent work with Town Counsel on behalf of the Board of Selectmen regarding the access easement for a proposed WCF on Southbridge Road has turned up some questions regarding the ability to “re-purpose” the land which was left in a trust. Town Counsel has raised some question however suggested that it would be ok to proceed.

Next Meeting Date(s): April 13th (informational meeting on proposed zoning) at 6:30PM.

Motion to Adjourn made by Mrs. Sepanek; second: Mr. Krawczyk – unanimous at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra
Secretary

Date Approved