

Richmond Planning Board Meeting
Town Hall
Minutes
June 10, 2019

Members present: Doug Bruce, Rick Bell, John Hanson (Chairman), Katherine Keenum

Member absent: Pete Lopez

Other present: Christian Hanson, 81State Road, Richmond

Mr. Hanson opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

1. The first item of business was the annual election of a chairman, vice chairman, clerk, and delegate to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC).

In regard to the chairmanship, Mr. Hanson observed that Mr. Bell had been making the point that knowledge of procedures should not depend on one person. He suggested as a plan for going forward that one of the new members be elected vice chairman and then follow procedures in lockstep with the chairman for the next year. This would allow the two of them to proof the document adopted in 2015 and the procedural manual being drafted by Mr. Bell against practice and also provide experience to the vice chairman. Mr. Hanson would serve as chairman for at least some months although, he pointed out, offices could rotate before the next town election if the Board so chose. Since Mr. Lopez was absent, he asked Mr. Bruce whether he would be willing to take on the job of vice chairman. Mr. Bruce said he would.

Mr. Hanson added that he had spoken with the Town Counsel, Beth Goodman. She stressed to him that in order for special permits and variances to survive court challenges, it was important for adequate notice of public hearings to be posted in the Berkshire *Eagle* and sent to abutters and neighboring towns. This was the sort of thing that could be nailed down in a procedural manual, perhaps with the aid of added templates.

Mr. Bell nominated John Hanson for chairman. Ms. Keenum seconded. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

Mr. Hanson nominated Doug Bruce for vice chairman. Mr. Bell seconded. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

Mr. Hanson nominated Katherine Keenum for clerk. Mr. Bell seconded. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

Mr. Hanson nominated Pete Lopez to be Richmond's delegate to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC). Mr. Bell seconded. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

Mr. Hanson called for no recommendation for an alternate delegate to BRPC even though one was often chosen from the Planning Board. At present, Frederick Schubert was happily filling that role and it seemed best to allow him to continue. Agreement was by consensus with no vote taken.

2. The second item of business was an opportunity to comment on a variance application to the Board of Appeals (ZBA) for Primadonna LLC./81 State Road Map 403 Lot 1000, which was received on May 11, 2019, by the Town Clerk. Christian Hanson explained that the case involved the need for him to build a second parking lot at Balderdash Winery to meet legal requirements for use at farm functions under Section 4.8.B.16.b of the Richmond Zoning By-Law. As a practical matter, the second parking lot could not meet a hundred-foot setback from State Road without moving the winery building or occupying land devoted to the vineyard. Chairman Hanson explained that the Planning Board seldom sends a comment to the ZBA on such applications because it does not participate in the public hearings at which neighbors express their concerns. He then went over Richmond's Zoning By-Law Section 7.2.2 and advised Christian Hanson that the key criteria for granting a variance are, first, that the obstacle to be overcome was unique to the particular property and did not affect the zoning district generally and, second, that literal enforcement of a requirement would involve substantial hardship to the petitioner.

Chairman Hanson then recommended that the Planning Board authorize him to respond to the Town Administrator that it had no comment. Ms. Keenum so moved. Mr. Bruce seconded the motion. It passed unanimously, 4-0.

After the departure of Christian Hanson, Chairman Hanson took the opportunity to further review the issue of variances for the benefit of Planning Board members.

3. Mr. Hanson pointed to three sentences that required emendation in the minutes for May 13, 2019. Mr. Bell moved that the minutes be approved with the necessary changes. Mr. Hanson seconded. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.
4. Mr. Hanson opened discussion of Mr. Bell's "Proposed Content" for the Planning Board's page of the Town of Richmond website (see Exhibit 1). He said that the driving force behind it was the desire to present a template to the Town Administrator and the Board of Selectmen (BOS) for use in updating all the town's boards and committees. Mr. Bell called on members to focus on the content and decide whether we could now say that this was what the Planning Board wanted. Ms. Keenum cautioned that especially at a time when the BOS was absorbed by the search for a new Town Administrator, they might not be receptive to undertaking wide changes to a project that they might consider complete. She also said that although she thought it was fine for Mr. Bell to pursue the project on his own, she could not endorse it as coming from the Board but she did not object to taking a vote. Mr. Hanson proposed instead that all members examine the existing web page and Mr. Bell's draft closely and be prepared to discuss revisions more thoroughly at the next meeting.
5. Mr. Hanson called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bruce so moved. Mr. Bell seconded. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.

The meeting adjourned ca. 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine Keenum, Clerk

Exhibit 1: Mr. Bell’s Proposed Content for the Planning Board Page of the Town’s Website

Proposed Content – DRAFT 6-10-19:

PLANNING BOARD

Purpose

The purpose of the Planning Board can be separated into two different categories: (1) permitting/approvals and (2) planning. A Planning Board is tasked with developing and implementing land use regulations such as the zoning by-law and the subdivision control regulations through the issuance of permits/approvals. Equally important, the Planning Board is tasked with planning for the future growth, development and preservation of a municipality’s physical resources.

Key Responsibilities

- Review and act on Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans (subdivision not required)
- Review and act on Preliminary and Definitive Plans for subdivisions
- Review and act on Site Plan Reviews
- Act as a Special Permit Granting Authority, when applicable
- Review/prepare amendments to the Richmond Zoning By-Law
- Other duties as authorized/required by Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) (e.g. follow Public Records Law, Open Meeting Law; create/update the town Master Plan; etc.)

Meeting Agendas and Minutes documents

- Planning Board meets the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 PM in the Town Hall.
- Go to [PB AGENDA & MINUTES](#) for Planning Board meeting notice (agenda) for meeting minutes. Scroll to Planning Board.

Contact Us

- For more information call 413-698-3355.
- Mail may be addressed to: Planning Board 1529 State Road Richmond, MA 01254

Members

	Position:	5 year Term Ends:
• John Hanson	Chair	2020
• Richard Bell	Member	2024
• Katherine Keenum	Clerk	2022
• Peter Lopez	Member	2021
• Douglas Bruce	Member	2023

Application Forms, Fees, and Planning Board Regulations

- Applications for the Planning Board may be accessed on-line (see link below) or a hard copy may be pickled-up at the Town Hall. Complete and submit as required.
- Go to [DOCUMENT CENTER](#) for Planning Board Application Forms and Subdivision rules.
- Go to [FEES](#) for a list of Planning Board Fees.
- Scroll to Planning Board for all above links.

List of documents and links used by the Planning Board

- Go to [BYLAWS & REGULATIONS](#) for Richmond Zoning Bylaws, Zoning Map, etc.
- Go to [RICHMOND MAP GIS](#) for Richmond Geographic Information System (GIS) Map
- Go to TBD for the Richmond Master Plan