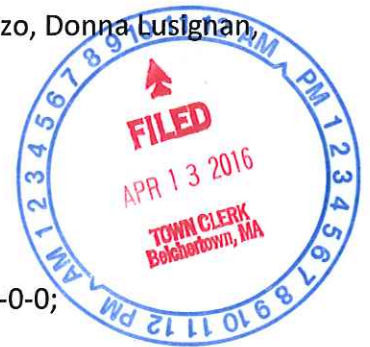


Belchertown Planning Board Minutes  
March 22, 2016

Planning Board members: Daniel Beaudette, Michael Hofler, Christopher Laurenzo, Donna Lusignan, James Natle

Staff: Douglas Albertson Town Planner, Susan Gay



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C. Laurenzo Chairman opened the meeting.

**Motion** J. Natle to accept minutes of March 08, 2016, Second D. Lusignan, Vote 5-0-0;

Time slips and bills were endorsed.  
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Small Wind Energy Systems discussion: the second draft for a proposed addition to the Zoning Bylaw (Chapter 145) for small wind energy systems was discussed. This addition to the bylaw is to guide wind electricity generation systems to be used by homes and businesses, but not to be sold commercially. Agricultural uses would be exempt.

M. Hofler had researched what would be a suitable size limit, as indicated by rated nameplate capacity. He said that the average home system would require 6 to 8 kW. A limit of 100 kilowatts seems to allow for business use, and while this seems high, no homeowner would want to spend the money on a system that is too large for the need. The market and systems are not set up in a way that would encourage that – a system too large for its immediate use would never break even financially. The board concurred that 100kW is an acceptable upper limit for small systems so to accommodate most possibilities for on-site use of a wind energy system.

Application submission requirements for wind energy were read and the board agreed that wind generation in some areas of town might not work well. D. Albertson said it would be good idea to have technical qualifications as part of the application to assure a wind tower would work so applicants don't waste their time and money pursuing such a project. Most likely applicants would hire installers who would advise them on the potential success of their sites.

The board discussed the extent of detail needed on site plans. The conclusion was that a private tower for wind generation is likely to require little site alteration. It could also add extra cost for an applicant making a project financially infeasible. D. Lusignan noted that the board does not always require applicants to hire a professional engineer to design a site plan for a small use as long as the plans are drawn to scale and with sufficient detail. More important would be the tower's visibility from off the site.

The board will specify that they are able to hire a professional engineer at the applicant's cost for technical review if deemed necessary.

The board went over wind towers becoming hazards if not kept in good working condition. The Town of Belchertown reserves the right to act on a safety issue. The Town may request the Zoning Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector to review it as a safety issue. Also noted was that town officials have the right to enter and secure unsafe places. The board decided to include that the Building Commissioner reserves the right to inspect any small wind energy system and its appurtenances at any time.

The board reviewed the fence and noise requirements. The board will put into the bylaw that the tower must comply with the Massachusetts Building Code and the Massachusetts Electrical Code.

The board went over the process for proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw. The proposal begins with submission to the Board of Selectmen for their review, and then it's forwarded to the Planning Board for a public hearing and recommendation to town meeting. The proposal goes to Town Counsel once it is the form to be proposed to town meeting. The board discussed the three specific requirements for a Special Permit in the Zoning Bylaw Chapter 145-69 (1) which notes the special permit granting authority shall grant special permit which (meet three criteria). The board also noted that procedural requirements derive from Mass General Laws Chapter 40A, Sections 9 and 11.

D. Albertson will forward a third draft to the planning board and it will be reviewed at a public hearing on April 12, 2016 at 7:30 pm. The paperwork is in place and will be forwarded to all pertinent offices as well as surrounding town offices.

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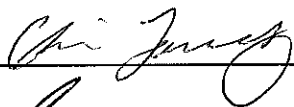
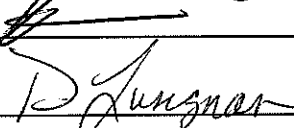
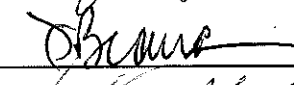
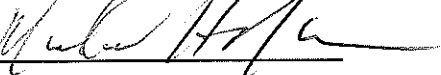
D. Albertson said he recently received a submittal from the Board of Selectmen from a town resident proposing an amendment to Chapter 145 Zoning Bylaw for wireless communication towers. He said the board may wish to add this amendment to a proposal of their own regarding towers. This residential proposal has a public hearing date scheduled for April 26, 2016 at 7:05 pm.

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The board discussed sidewalk requirements and whether the board should revise the subdivision regulations. The board decided it could wait as additions to the Subdivision Regulations do not need to go through town meeting. It was mentioned however that the ADA compliance of five feet width would be part of an addition to the regulations. D. Albertson noted the common drive regulations also need an update, as some homeowners do not comply with a signage requirement by having very clear numbering (signage) in plain sight from the roadway they're homes are located off of. The board decided to wait on the sidewalk issue but work quickly on the signage for common drive safety issue.

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**Motion M. Hofler to adjourn @9.05 pm, Second D. Lusignan, Vote 5-0-0**

  
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The board congratulated Susan Gay on her notice of retirement next month.