

1 **Local Permit Guide Committee**
2 **MEETING MINUTES**
3 **April 16, 2018**

4 *All minutes are draft until approved by the Committee; please check future minutes for approval of these minutes.*
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6 Members Present: Jim Fontaine; Liz Courtney; Mary Goderwis; Bob Malbon; Deanna Judkins

7 Members Absent: None

8 Others Present: Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Eric Williams and Brian Jones

9 Ron opened the meeting at 6:32 p.m. and welcomed everyone with introductions.

- 10 1. **Agenda Review** ~ Ron handed out copies of a staff packet and agenda. The Committee agreed to be
11 informal without a Chair and to try to keep to one-hour meetings.
- 12 2. **Kick-Off Meeting** ~ Planning commission members Brian Jones and Eric Williams remained after
13 their earlier meeting and were able to join in the roundtable discussion on permits & rules, personal
14 experience on the permit process and suggesting methods of how to best inform landowners or
15 businesses about the regulatory process. Issues and suggestions from the group's discussion
16 included:
- 17 • There is a need for less regulations, but the group agreed that was not the group's mission
 - 18 • Members felt a need from their own personal experiences to try to help the next guy
 - 19 • The permit process needs to be more streamlined with more information early in the process
 - 20 • Landowners should not be blind-sided, and the application process should be simplified
 - 21 • Permit delays can impact business plans and business owners need information early
 - 22 • A good process could make businesses want to come to Hyde Park
 - 23 • Agricultural businesses are impacted and there is a need a quick and easy process
 - 24 • Commercial building owners need to start very early with the State Fire Marshall's Office
 - 25 • Don't send all applicants down the rabbit hole – help triage early and give applicants only what
26 they need; simple projects, change of use, larger more complex projects
 - 27 • Time delays are more important to resolve than the costs for complying with the regulation
 - 28 • No common sense in the regulations and rules; needs to make sense, require reasonable
29 permit conditions and have a good foundation of why the rule is in place
 - 30 • Some rules are necessary for quality of life concerns for adjoining property owners
 - 31 • Some rules appear to be adopted to stop progress and do not address quality of life – can old
32 permit systems and rules be removed if they don't have a sound foundation or purpose
 - 33 • Real estate agents and lawyers need to be more responsible early in the permit process
 - 34 • Education to real estate agents appears to be necessary, as most simply look to set a closing
35 date and make assumptions that the permits are in place or don't require amendment
 - 36 • Change of use catches a lot of applicants and catching at closing can delay projects for months
37 at the risk of negative impacts on all parties involved – domino impact on related transactions
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- 39 3. **Committee Goal** ~ Ron reviewed the goal of having an informational pamphlet and possibly updates
40 to the municipal website within the next 6 to 12 months. The group discussed developing good concise
41 information and getting that information to landowners and applicants early in their project planning.
- 42 • Landowners could be presented with information when they apply for their first permit; which is
43 usually a town or state highway access permit or a state wastewater permit; both are required
44 before they apply for a construction permit.
 - 45 • A summary of the permit process from beginning to end for four or five different types of permits
46 based on the size and complexity of the project could be prepared.
 - 47 • Can the group “dumb down” the process so anyone could get started on the right track?
 - 48 • Some towns have developed a one-page flow chart while others have permit information sheets
49 for each permit type.
 - 50 • How do you know if a lot can be developed if it is sold as-is and it is represented as a “buildable
51 lot” by real estate agents?

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- Early notice that a lot has “all permits in place” or “permits needed” would help buyers be aware of what they might be facing.
 - Buyers of property that are proposing a change of use need to clearly define that change prior to starting the permit process because all state agencies and the town will use the project description to determine what permits are required.
 - Should the buyers of commercial property be advised to ask for a State Fire Marshall inspection at the time the first inspect the property? Waiting five weeks for Fire Marshall’s review of a new structure or a change of use in an existing building may be experienced.
 - Should buyers of commercial projects (or change of use for a commercial project) be advised that they may need an engineer or consultant to help them through the process, if they want a speedy process.
 - Applicants need early notice of potential time for town and state permit approvals
 - How can an applicant work with federal, state and local permit agencies when one agency may require something but the other agency exempts or prohibits that same activity
 - Applicants need to determine if they can push through the process themselves or hire someone
 - The first overview – by whatever agency – needs to be accurate and thorough and the State Project Review Sheet process benefits from the applicant presenting a good description of the project
 - It appears to some that some agencies do not know or care what other agencies are doing or requiring which becomes very frustrating to applicants
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4. **NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, **May 2st at 6:30 p.m.** to meet with Pete Kopsco, DEC State Permit Specialist to review his role with landowners and businesses and what is being done at the state level on permit guidance. The State Fire Marshall will be invited to a future meeting by Bob. Liz will look at examples of other good “process guides” and bring those to the next meeting.
 5. **Adjourn** – Having no additional business the group adjourned at 7:32 p.m.