

TOWN OF LEVERETT - PLANNING BOARD AGENDA

MARCH 19, 2025, 7:00 PM

Attendees: Greg Tuzzolo (virtual); Richard Nathorst, Swan Keyes, Kimberly VanWagner, Tim Shores

NOT in attendance: Molly

Public Attendees: Carol Heim, Susan Mareneck

1. Approve Meeting Minutes (5 minutes)

The following minutes were approved unanimously:

1/8/2025, 2/11/2025, 2/26/2025

All approved without discussion

2. Public Hearing - Ground Mounted Solar (20 minutes)

Tim reached out to the solar store in Greenfield and PV Squared and asked about advice on striking the height regulations; both companies were pretty happy and indicated that solar mounts wouldn't be getting higher than 25 feet.

Richard - this bylaw was an artifact from planning board of old wanting to prevent any solar in town; just made a lot of work for the Zoning Board of Appeals; this will reduce ZBA busywork; this way people can just go to the building inspector and pull a permit

Swan - so, no height restrictions?

Greg - yes, the height is limited by the structure and economy and norms of industry

Tim moves to close the hearing; Richard seconds; all approve

3. Public Hearing - Mobile Homes (20 minutes)

Review changes and purpose. See previous minutes and FRCOG guidelines.

No comments. Greg moves to close hearing; Richard seconds. All approved.

Both public hearings closed 7:11pm

For both hearings, Greg moves that recommend the changes to the bylaws as discussed/shown on screen.

Tim seconds; all approved.

Greg will take these changes and connect with Margie to have in the warrant, including the language changes for the kennel.

5. 2025 Zoning Bylaw Changes (20 minutes)

Greg: this may need to be 2026 but maybe at the special town meeting in the fall we can keep chipping away at these bylaws. The ADU changes will need digesting and public education that we should make space for after we as board become really familiar with the new language/law; we could promote the meeting where we discuss the changes and try to get the public to come out and give feedback/ask questions. We can take our time, everyone read the changes and understand, put on agenda for next time to just discuss. And this is perhaps similar to Floodplain changes.

Richard - very much. We need a plan to create some public information sessions, talk with the Conservation Commission, and learn more from FRCOG, and regardless of what happens with FEMA/federal level, the Commonwealth will push for a floodplain/national insurance program, and make the town safer and help people get affordable flood insurance.

Tim - tangible next step suggestion. But first, ADUs have model bylaw and published guidance from Housing and Livable Communities that we need to review. Molly's already done the legwork. Now we could prepare a brief report for each of these (ADUs & Floodplain) for the Fall Town Meeting.

Greg - we can workshop this together. Maybe at our next meeting, Richard and Molly come with updates/where are you at/roles for the rest of us and what the public outreach might look like. The simpler bylaw changes are cleared off so now we can work together on talking points and outreach plan or whatever we decide is most appropriate for moving forward. We have some time but let's also keep some momentum and not just show up in the fall without a plan.

We could also work on a Housing Production Plan and the MVC. Let's talk about that under Walk-In Business.

Richard - I'd like to bring the maps in for floodplain and talk about it. We need to approve them, but first we need to digest them ourselves and understand them.

Kimberly - maybe the next meeting can be Richard sharing the maps.

Tim - the next milestone from FEMA and FRCOG is to send a letter to the Select Board declaring the beginning of the 90 day feedback period (technical feedback of a cartographical nature). That will be important and a good opportunity. Let's revisit after the Town Meeting and hopefully we will have the Letter of Final Determination by then. Our contact is Nadia Madden, Floodplain Management Specialist.

Richard - these maps will also help us determine aquifer areas and longer term planning for a town water supply/town wells.

Swan - let's put something together for the Town that's brief and interactive for the website; something brief but helps people understand.

Richard - yes, I'd like to get the FEMA maps online in a way that everyone can view them easily. Maybe FRCOG can help. And whether our Town website can handle the maps.

Tim - definitely we will have to host somewhere else.

Greg - Kimberly and I can hash out the agenda- something like preliminary discussion of bylaw changes. Then we can regroup and see where we are at and think about what next steps we take and work through the summer.

6. Kittredge Update (5 minutes): No updates

7. Walk-In Business (10 minutes)

Discuss: Housing Production Plan and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant opportunity.

Tim - MVP grant opportunity due 4/4/25 but we probably don't have the stamina although Margie is great at grant applications. A quick glance at our Comp Plan shows many opps for MVP related activities.

Richard- the energy committee would support this; heating/cooling centers/solar battery and electrical backbone for 4 public buildings (library, school, safety complex, safety complex garage) to allow a single connection to the grid. Look at the Feasibility Study and use that language. Now we need the design funds.

Tim - let's ask Margie again if we can apply/she can write it up using that Feasibility report.

Note: The [2020 Municipal Vulnerability Plan](#) identifies top recommendations on page. 12:

Developing an energy resiliency plan topped the list of a highest priority recommendation, with workshop participants agreeing that reinforcing the power grid is essential.

The next step after the Feasibility Plan is the Design Plan.

Tim - I move that we propose to Margie that we apply for MVP to support the design of solar resiliency for Microgrid for Municipal Buildings.

Discussion: The Benoit Sprinkle Road review for solar - the person isn't at the meeting to present.

Tim - can they skip the site plan review by the planning board and go to ZBA first? Or do they need a special permit? And do we need to look at it in an open meeting? And does the applicant need to be present?

Greg - this needs to be an agenda item on the next agenda. Greg will review the procedure and application.

Tim - add to walk-in business the misprint of the Comp Plan printout. Tim has added a print out of the correct letter in the hard copies. The 900 page complete text and appendices and we want 2 copies (one for town hall and one for library). Tim and Carol want to pay for it; cost \$300 a piece; PB doesn't like this idea; Greg will ask about a budget from Margie to reimburse people for the real costs of items for the Town.

Swan - and add to the memory bank that when we hire a consultant, they have to give us the product in a way that works for us.

Tim - lesson learned.

Tim encourages Carol to consider being on the PB; Carol responds that as long as the Kittredge property continues, she will decline the role since she is an abutter.

Richard - Carol, I want to thank you for everything you do. You contribute enormously to the Town.

Greg - I agree.

Richard to Tim regarding paying for printing of plan: Unless you want to wind up like me, be sure not to spring too many surprises on your wife.

Carol and Tim discuss the pagination of the appendices, pros and cons.

Carol - being able to read the documents, and discuss with others, people will get a lot out of that.

Tim - this is another important landmark in the reported history of Leverett.

Tomorrow, Greg will talk to Margie about the warrant (bylaw changes), budget, and grant application.

Richard moves to adjourn.

Swan seconds.

All approved. Meeting adjourned 8:16pm.

Greg- our next meeting is April 9th.