

Cherryfield Planning Board
May 17, 2023 Minutes

Present: Laurie Lee, Kim Smith, Billie Jo Brooks, Crystal Hitchings

The Planning Board had asked Mona to order 6-8 new Planning Board Manuals and Land Use Law handbooks; one of each was left for the Board at the meeting. The Land Use Law handbook is the 2017 edition not the 2021 edition. If more of this edition were ordered, they should be exchanged.

The Board debriefed about the May 3 workshop with the CEO and 3 members of the Selectboard. The workshop was intended to clarify land use and building permit review processes by both the CEO and the Planning Board, and lay ground for an improved system that is clear and efficient for applicants as well as Town boards and staff (workshop agenda is attached to these minutes). The workshop only addressed a small portion of the agenda, as the 3 Selectboard members, a business owner in attendance, and the CEO abruptly left the meeting. No progress was made in improving the land use review process and communication between the CEO and Planning Board.

The Planning Board discussed the letter sent to the Planning Board by the Select Board about the workshop which 3 of them attended (letter from the Selectboard is attached). The letter requests that the Planning Board review and update the Land Use Ordinance and permit applications, which the Planning Board already intends to do and has discussed publicly for some time. The letter also states that people have expressed concern that the Planning Board intends to issue fines to property owners whose developments were not permitted correctly. The Planning Board has never discussed taking such action and does not have authority to do so – this is the job of a CEO. No members of the public have brought such concerns to the Planning Board except for those given wrong information. Crystal will draft a letter in response to the Selectboard for the Planning Board to review and approve.

Laurie intends to resign from all Town Boards and Committees in June.

The Planning Board again discussed tiering and simplification of site plan review requirements and application forms, and the need for all building permit applications submitted to the Town Office to be provided to the Planning Board as well as to the CEO. They discussed establishing a committee of community members to work on land use ordinance updates.

Next Planning Board meeting is June 21.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06pm.