

TOWN OF WEBSTER
Planning Board
Approved as Written Meeting Minutes
December 22, 2020

This special meeting of the planning board was called at 6:32 p.m. to discuss the status of the proposed wetlands ordinance. Present were members Susan Rauth, Craig Fournier and Select Board member David Hemenway. Member Paul King joined a few minutes after the start.

Chair Rauth explained the project is in its final stages. The initial legal review was initiated and a good part of it was completed. However, the review was delayed two weeks and we were unable to satisfactorily finish the sections related to the permitted uses; specifically, the sections dealing with timber harvesting and agricultural uses.

At the last two Planning Board meetings, residents came and spoke to the board with their concerns about the regulations. They also made the point that it is has been a difficult time for the town to try to enact this ordinance during a pandemic. Our efforts have been hampered for an adequate public outreach and education program. The science of wetland functions, values and protecting wetlands through buffers is important for residents to understand.

Chair Rauth consulted with the project subcommittee and the WCC Chair. They felt there is more work to be done before it can be brought to a vote. We have run out of time to meet the legislative schedule. Dave Hemenway agreed the ordinance should not be brought forward, especially if the WCC is saying they are not ready. Craig Fournier agreed, and noted that the public outreach is important. Paul King agreed and commented, if we do this and we fail, we won't have a good chance of doing it again.

She recognized the work done by the PB/WCC subcommittee and WCC commissioners. She thanked the Board members for the time and effort they put into shaping the ordinance. She feels the work can continue next year.

Since the PB voted to approve the ordinance in October, it was suggested we should take a vote. Dave Hemenway made the motion to withdraw the wetlands ordinance from the town warrant articles, due to incomplete legal review and public education. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

These Minutes were approved as written at the 1/21/21 Planning Board meeting.