

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Planning Board

May 6, 2020

**APPROVED**

1 In attendance: Arnie Rosenblatt - Chair, Michael Dell Orfano, Dwight Brew-Selectman Ex-  
2 Officio, Marilyn Peterman, Bill Stoughton, Brian Coogan, Cynthia Dokmo, Tracie Adams  
3 (Alternate), Chris Yates (Alternate), and Christy Houpis (Alternate).  
4 Staff present: Nic Strong, Community Development Director, and Kristan Patenaude, Minute  
5 Taker.

6  
7 Arnie Rosenblatt called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m., with the following statement. As  
8 Chair of the Amherst Planning Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by  
9 the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's  
10 Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to  
11 meet electronically.

12 Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this  
13 meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.

14 However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

15 Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by  
16 video or other electronic means:

17 We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting.

18  
19 All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this  
20 meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if  
21 necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #312-626-6799  
22 and password 854 5995 6670, or by clicking on the following website address:  
23 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85459956670> that was included in the public notice of this  
24 meeting.

25  
26 Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

27 We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the  
28 meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions  
29 have also been provided on the website of the Planning Board at: [www.amherstnh.gov](http://www.amherstnh.gov).

30  
31 Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are  
32 problems with access: If anybody has a problem, please call 603-440-8248.

33  
34 Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

35 In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and  
36 rescheduled.

37  
38 Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

39  
40 Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their  
41 presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting,  
42 which is required under the Right-to- Know law.

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44 **Roll call attendance: Bill Stoughton, alone; Chris Yates, alone; Marilyn Peterman,**  
45 **alone; Dwight Brew, alone; Cynthia Dokmo, alone; Tracie Adams, alone; Brian**  
46 **Coogan, alone; Christy Houppis, alone; Mike Dell Orfano, alone; Arnie Rosenblatt,**  
47 **alone.**

48  
49 **Marilyn Peterman moved that the Board enter Non-Public Session at 6:34 p.m.**  
50 **pursuant to RSA 91-A:3. II (I) to discuss legal matters. Bill Stoughton seconded.**  
51 **Roll call vote: Bill Stoughton – aye; Cynthia Dokmo – aye; Dwight Brew – aye;**  
52 **Marilyn Peterman – aye; Brian Coogan – aye; Mike Dell Orfano – aye. Motion**  
53 **carried unanimously.**

54  
55 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the Board would end this public meeting and enter into a separate  
56 Zoom session for the non-public part of the meeting. The Board would then reconvene in a  
57 separate Zoom session for Part 2 of the agenda.

58  
59 See separate minutes for the non-public session.

60  
61 Arnie Rosenblatt returned the meeting to Public Session at 7:07 p.m. for Part 2 of the agenda,  
62 with the following statement. As Chair of the Amherst Planning Board, I find that due to the  
63 State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in  
64 accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04,  
65 this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

66 Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this  
67 meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order.

68 However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

69 Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by  
70 video or other electronic means:

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74 meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if  
75 necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #312-626-6799  
76 and password 81459206716, or by clicking on the following website address:  
77 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81459206716> that was included in the public notice of this  
78 meeting.

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88       Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:  
89       In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and  
90       rescheduled.

91  
92       Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

93  
94       **Roll call attendance: Bill Stoughton; Marilyn Peterman; Chris Yates; Dwight Brew;**  
95       **Christy Houpis; Cynthia Dokmo; Brian Coogan; Tracie Adams; Mike Dell Orfano;**  
96       **Arnie Rosenblatt; all indicated they were alone in their separate locations.**

97  
98       **OLD BUSINESS:**

99  
100       **2. Discussion regarding pending applications and their status**

101       Arnie Rosenblatt explained that the Board has a number of pending applications, some of which  
102       came in under the IIHO and others that didn't. The Governor's Emergency Orders regarding no  
103       public meetings over ten people and any potential application deadlines have been extended  
104       through May 15<sup>th</sup>. From May 16<sup>th</sup> through the end of the month, there will still not be meetings  
105       of more than ten people allowed, but other provisions are less clear at this time. The Board will  
106       need to decide if it wants to keep putting off hearing any/all pending applications.

107  
108       Bill Stoughton stated that the Governor could extend all of the Emergency Orders through the  
109       end of the month. He believes that the Board could hear certain "non-controversial" applications  
110       in order to allow people to continue on with their business. Other applications that may draw a  
111       larger crowd should be held off on until they can be heard in an in-person session or the  
112       Governor forces deadlines that apply to the Board.

113  
114       Marilyn Peterman and Chris Yates agreed.

115  
116       Dwight Brew explained that the Governor usually issues emergency order extensions for about  
117       21 days at a time, which is why they cover a 2-3 week time span. He believes that it will be  
118       possible for the Board to table any applications that go from being "non-controversial" to  
119       "controversial," due to the lack of deadlines currently being imposed.

120  
121       Christy Houpis agreed. He questioned what the Board will do, even when in-public meetings are  
122       able to be held again, for members of the public who want to be heard but do not want to come to  
123       public meetings.

124  
125       Cynthia Dokmo agreed with Bill Stoughton.

126  
127       Brian Coogan questioned how the Board will decide what applications are controversial versus  
128       non-controversial. He believes that the Board should set parameters for this that are then laid out  
129       for the public as a benchmark to follow, for example, number of lots or units, size of the  
130       development, land acreage, etc. He stated that this would be hard for the Board to establish.

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132 Tracie Adams and Mike Dell Orfano agreed with Bill Stoughton.

133

134 Arnie Rosenblatt shared Brian Coogan's concerns. He echoed that some applicants may not wish  
135 to move forward because they feel the process is unfair to them. The Board will need to reconcile  
136 competing concerns. As he believes that large gatherings will probably not be allowed any time  
137 soon, the Board will need to decide whether not to hear certain applications, or hear them via  
138 Zoom meetings.

139

140 Bill Stoughton suggested that, for the next couple of weeks the Board not hear applications, but  
141 if a particular applicant decides s/he wants to be heard by the Board, this can be put on a future  
142 agenda for a public meeting. At that meeting the Board can hear discussion from the public  
143 regarding hearing the application via Zoom in order to gauge the level of controversy.

144

145 Mike Dell Orfano stated that he has concerns regarding holding off some applicants in the  
146 application process. He is sensitive to the fact that some applicants may need a lot line  
147 adjustment in order to sell their homes. He wants to be sensitive to the possible economic impact  
148 of the decision that the Board makes on this topic.

149

150 Marilyn Peterman suggested that Community Development Director Nic Strong review the  
151 applications in conjunction with the Chair and make suggestions to the Board about applications  
152 that are relatively minor. She pointed out that even with in-person meetings there were various  
153 reasons that people may not want to be in the room.

154

155 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he was assuming that having a large Zoom meeting may not be  
156 reasonable or satisfactory. He noted that everyone would have the opportunity to comment and  
157 observe just as if they were at a regular meeting.

158

159 Bill Stoughton stated that Zoom meetings might be difficult in terms of the teams presenting and  
160 their ability to talk to each other throughout the hearing. He explained that certain groups are  
161 also being represented by attorneys during these hearings and it may be difficult for them to have  
162 sidebar discussions.

163

164 Brian Coogan suggested that "controversial" applications might be defined as those that are for  
165 new proposed developments that do not currently exist today. If there are other applications, such  
166 as lot line adjustments, that could be considered self-contained, those may be able to be moved  
167 forward within the next few weeks. He believes that the technology is there to support having  
168 larger meetings. There is access available to all town residents. In fact, certain people who were  
169 previously unable to come to in-person hearings, can now participate fully online. He believes  
170 the smaller groups within a hearing can still have side bar discussions while muting themselves.  
171 He doesn't believe progress needs to be stifled.

172

173 Nic Strong listed the current applications as: Arboleda site plan and CUP for wetlands/buffers, a  
174 lot line adjustment for Hufft on Horace Greeley Road, a subdivision request for Warren on  
175 Walnut Hill Road, Carlson Manor, and Jacobson.

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Mike Dell Orfano suggested moving the two smaller applications along in the process.

**Dwight Brew motioned to move forward with the Hufft and Warren applications. Mike Dell Orfano seconded.**

**Discussion:**

Martin Rowley, 8 Old Mont Vernon Road, agreed that this idea seems good to try out on the smaller applications. He has concerns regarding clearly being able to see all of the charts and maps that are usually presented during a hearing.

Tom Quinn, 30 Christian Hill Road, suggested that all of the plans and materials be posted on the town website ahead of time.

Nic Strong agreed that all of the materials will be posted to the town website and noted that the presenters will be able to share their screens during the Zoom meeting so that everyone can see.

Tom Quinn noted that those calling into the meeting by telephone won't be able to see the shared screen.

In response to a question from Bill Stoughton, Nic Strong noted that any applicant could decide whether or not to move forward with the process. All of the applications will also need to be noticed.

**Roll call vote: Bill Stoughton – aye; Marilyn Peterman – aye; Cynthia Dokmo – aye; Dwight Brew – aye; Mike Dell Orfano – aye; Brian Coogan – aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

The Board agreed to move forward with these two applications on May 20, 2020 and also to schedule a work session on the Master Plan, with the understanding that an additional meeting could be scheduled if the Master Plan discussion is not concluded that night.

**1. Discussion of upcoming Planning Board meetings**

Arnie Rosenblatt explained that there is a threshold question as to whether the Board wants to move forward with the Master Plan process. He noted that he was contacted in the last few days by Mike Akillian who had offered to assist with the Master Plan previously and the process had begun but not really moved forward. Arnie Rosenblatt believes it makes sense to go forward with the process, despite the circumstances, with the new Board. He did note that there were several reasons to consider not beginning the process - the pandemic, being a lame duck board, etc.

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219 Bill Stoughton agreed that it is important to try to make progress on the Master Plan. Another  
220 topic that the Board should discuss at some point is the impact fee schedule being examined by  
221 the Board of Selectmen.

222  
223 Dwight Brew explained that the Board of Selectmen currently has a draft report regarding impact  
224 fees that it will be discussing at its Monday night meeting. The draft will be made available to  
225 the Planning Board and public after the Board of Selectmen holds its discussion.

226  
227 Chris Yates suggested that the Planning Board take this opportunity to gather data electronically  
228 from the community via surveys regarding the Master Plan. He also agreed with moving forward  
229 with the impact fee discussion.

230  
231 Dwight Brew agreed.

232  
233 Christy Houpis agreed that, because the Master Plan process is going to take time, it is good to  
234 start the process sooner rather than later.

235  
236 Cynthia Dokmo agreed with starting the Master Plan process and discussing impact fees.

237  
238 Tracie Adams agreed with moving forward with the Master Plan, noting that the work could  
239 perhaps be done in phases, and stated that community input will be critical.

240  
241 Mike Dell Orfano stated that the Master Plan is an important element to get the town on track  
242 with its zoning. There are many tools available to facilitate information gathering. He believes  
243 that this is a good time for the Board to determine which of these tools to use and how to employ  
244 them. He believes the Board should first organize itself instead of going right out and talking to  
245 people in the community. This is a large project and will require a lot of resources.

246  
247 Brian Coogan stated that the Master Plan is the single most important thing this Board can  
248 achieve in the time it has. He believes that the Board should capitalize on the seasoned,  
249 experienced members that it currently has and leverage their skills during this process.

250  
251 Marilyn Peterman agreed that the Board should begin the Master Plan discussion regarding the  
252 logistics of how to proceed. She suggested that Mike Akillian be invited to be a resource at the  
253 next Board meeting. She also noted that she was looking forward to seeing the impact fee  
254 ordinance.

255  
256 Public Comment:

257 Tom Quinn, 30 Christian Hill Road, agreed with the discussions the Board is having. He stated  
258 that he has a concern regarding the data currently available for the Master Plan process, as the  
259 2020 Census is in progress.

260  
261 Arnie Rosenblatt reminded Tom Quinn that the Board will not be holding a discussion about  
262 how to move forward with the Master Plan until the next meeting.

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263

264 Tom Quinn stated that laying the groundwork for the Master Plan seems appropriate, so that the  
265 next Board can continue the work. He has concerns regarding reaching certain demographics of  
266 the public with online surveys and did not think it was a great idea at this point to solicit a lot of  
267 public input.

268

269 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that if the Board agreed, he would see if Mike Akillian would be  
270 available to participate at the meeting on May 20<sup>th</sup>, and the Board could review the things that  
271 had already been done. Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the Master Plan discussion would be added  
272 to the agenda after the two applications. He suggested that the impact fee discussion be added to  
273 a future work session agenda to have time for discussion. The Board agreed.

274

275 **3. Discussion regarding a further housing needs assessment for the Town of**  
276 **Amherst: the need; the purpose; who might perform such an assessment; what**  
277 **kind of information should be included; and so on**

278 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the Board held discussion on this topic at their last meeting. He  
279 explained that Mike Dell Orfano made a motion regarding moving forward with the assessment,  
280 which was defeated. The decision was made at that time to continue further discussion on the  
281 topic to tonight's meeting. He explained that Brian Coogan asked Mike Dell Orfano to procure  
282 an example of what such a study might look like from NRPC. He noted that he hoped the Board  
283 could resolve the issue up or down at this evening's meeting, bearing in mind the previous  
284 lengthy discussion that had taken place.

285

286 Marilyn Peterman stated that Mike Dell Orfano has additional information on this topic to share  
287 with the Board.

288

289 Mike Dell Orfano appealed to the Board to consider procuring baseline housing data that will  
290 give the existing conditions in town. He has received a revised proposal from NRPC, but is not  
291 sold on its value. He does not want the town to pay for data that is generally available anyway.  
292 He does believe that there are existing conditions in town that no one on the Board knows about.  
293 He referenced a document put together in 2013 by then Community Development Director Sarah  
294 Marchant regarding workforce housing.

295

296 Dwight Brew noted that he had an issue with having a discussion without specific items in front  
297 of the Board. He feels that he will continue to be badgered on this topic until a couple of people  
298 on the Board get their way. He would like the Board to have the items to discuss in front of them  
299 before continuing. Mike Dell Orfano asked Nic Strong to get the document up on her screen and  
300 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that it was okay for Nic Strong to share her screen with the meeting.

301

302 Mike Dell Orfano stated that the study he is referencing from 2013 gave projected housing in  
303 town at that time. He doesn't believe this information is currently available. He asked that the  
304 Board agree that there is a need to understand the existing conditions in town.

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306 **Mike Dell Orfano moved to do an existing conditions study of all the housing types**  
307 **listed in Jay's [Minkarah, NRPC Director] proposal, as a baseline for Master**  
308 **Planning. Marilyn Peterman seconded.**

309  
310 **Discussion:**

311  
312 Bill Stoughton stated that he didn't receive the updated proposal from NRPC. He agreed  
313 with Dwight Brew, that he would like to see specific documents when discussing them.  
314 He would like to see a specific list of what data is being sought, the data sources, and  
315 who would be doing the study before casting his vote. He believes that some of the  
316 sources used in the past have had a great deal of variability. He stated that he would like  
317 to know the information being sought, the sources and who would do it. Bill Stoughton  
318 was not in favor of an open ended motion.

319  
320 Marilyn Peterman stated that the document from Sarah Marchant gave specific  
321 information regarding rentals, cost, information from the Department of Revenue, etc.  
322 The document being requested could take the perspective from the 2013 document and  
323 evaluate types of housing, number of each, prices, differences and disparities in sale price  
324 and level of affordability, etc. There is real data already available, it just needs updating.  
325 She is unsure how the Board can move forward without knowing a baseline. She thought  
326 that Nic Strong would have been able to disseminate this information to the Board before  
327 the meeting so everyone would have it but apparently that request was not made.  
328 Marilyn Peterman went on to say that if Nic Strong wanted to go through the information  
329 and update it she would be agreeable to doing that. Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the  
330 Board would not question Nic Strong on this but continue with discussion on the pending  
331 motion.

332  
333 Christy Houpis questioned if this data is needed for current planning. If data is needed to  
334 handle currently pending applications, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to  
335 provide data as it is requested by the Board. He noted that the Board had the  
336 responsibility and the ability to request data from the applicant, even as to the source the  
337 information should come from. Christy Houpis noted that getting data for the Master  
338 Plan was another whole process to discuss. He also stated that the Board was able to  
339 request more information from applicants and did not have to accept the data they were  
340 given if there were questions. He is unsure how to support needing this data for current  
341 applications when the Board was able to approve previous applications. He is unclear on  
342 why this data is needed and why it is needed right now.

343  
344 Cynthia Dokmo stated that, if data is needed for the Master Plan process, it can be  
345 requested at that time. If data is needed for an application, the Board can ask a  
346 developer/applicant to provide it at that time. The Board can then have the data reviewed  
347 by an expert at a cost to the developer. She is not interested in spending money on a study  
348 if it is not currently needed. She asked Mike Dell Orfano to address how long it would

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349 take to get the information, noting that the Board would be addressing applications in a  
350 month or two.

351  
352 Mike Dell Orfano stated that the information being sought is important. He talked with  
353 Nic Strong about assembling the data and it is unclear if her staff has the time to do so.  
354 The staff would have to go through all of the records and look to extend the inventory of  
355 allowances given. The accuracy of the information should be good, but this work can  
356 probably not be completed in a timely manner. Mike Dell Orfano stated that the question  
357 was whether or not to hire a third party to review and assemble the data under staff's  
358 direction and noted that NRPC has tools to make this effort painless and could deliver in  
359 a fairly timely manner.

360  
361 Tracie Adams clarified that the request is to get data that the town staff can obtain, but  
362 because of the timeline it is being recommended that an outside agency pull the  
363 information together in a report. Mike Dell Orfano thought the Board should narrow  
364 down the essence of information the Board needs, whether for the Master Plan or  
365 applications, as base level data that the Board can all agree is real. He stated it shouldn't  
366 cost a lot of money but takes time to assemble. He noted that the applications were  
367 coming in in a few weeks and strongly recommended that the Board could make better  
368 decisions with good information and that the Town has all the information and does not  
369 need to go outside for any of it.

370  
371 Brian Coogan stated that he would love to have more information and data. He thought  
372 that data on the existing housing in town was currently missing and that the Master Plan  
373 data and application data could be conjoined. Brian Coogan went on to say that he was  
374 indifferent as far as when the data needed to be available, noting that it could guide the  
375 community in moving forward but the Town had been here a long time and would  
376 continue on for the next couple of hundred years.

377  
378 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he is opposed to the request. He stated that there is only one  
379 reason for the urgency behind this request and it is not for town planning. If it was, then  
380 the request would be made as part of the Master Plan discussion still to be had. He  
381 believes that the one reason to be requesting this with such urgency is to provide  
382 information for the three pending applicants to move forward with their applications that  
383 were submitted under the IIHO. This is only to aid those applications being grandfathered  
384 in and the urgency comes because they are currently pending. The IIHO was passed  
385 believing there was adequate data to support it; if this was not the case then it shouldn't  
386 have passed. He also believes that the Board can make reasoned decisions based on the  
387 information presented by an applicant. He does not believe in acting with urgency simply  
388 to assist pending applicants.

389  
390 Marilyn Peterman stated that she respected Arnie Rosenblatt's opinion, but found his  
391 statement it to be accusatory. She disagrees that this request is to help any applicants.  
392 Data is being requested because the Board needs data. The 2013 report was put together

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393 by the Planning Director at that time at the request of the Planning Board. This can be  
394 done again in order for the Board to have a coherent discussion moving forward. The  
395 Board has always relied on data. This is no different; simply a request to update the study  
396 done in 2013.

397  
398 Mike Dell Orfano stated that he in no way is advocating for data in order to help  
399 developers. Rather, the data will help the Board to know what currently exists as a way to  
400 benefit the town. The Board doesn't know which housing types it's short on. He would  
401 like there to be a standing inventory, so that when a developer comes in with a proposal  
402 the Board will know if it is appropriate for the town.

403  
404 Brian Coogan stated that he is surprised that the data from the 2013 report was not  
405 maintained. He hopes, as part of the Master Plan process, that the town can look into  
406 maintaining this type of data. While he believes the requested data is valuable, he doesn't  
407 see there to be an urgency in requesting it.

408  
409 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he had not intended to cause offense by his comments, much  
410 in the same way that he had not taken offense to Mike Dell Orfano's comments to him at  
411 the last meeting. He agreed with frank and open discussion among the Board members  
412 and expected people to disagree with himself and each other. He did note that he thought  
413 that Mike Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman were proposing getting this information out  
414 of what they think is in the Town's best interests and he happens to disagree.

415  
416 Mike Dell Orfano asked the Board to begin the process by collecting and organizing data  
417 in order to have it on hand for applications as they come in, and as a baseline for the  
418 Master Plan process.

419  
420 Chris Yates stated that he noticed a lot of data that appears not to be maintained. He  
421 suggested looking into updating the databases first.

422  
423 Tom Quinn, 30 Christian Hill Road, stated that there have been a lot of comments  
424 regarding unavailable data needed to make decisions; however, he remembers that a lot  
425 of decisions seem to have been made without this data in the past. He requested that the  
426 Board comment on the Non-Public Session that happened earlier in the evening.

427  
428 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that he had forgotten to mention the non-public session, thanked  
429 Tom Quinn for reminding him and stated he would talk about it after this item was done.

430  
431 Kelly Mullin, 48 Christian Hill Road, stated that it's troubling how much time the Board  
432 has spent discussing this possible report from NRPC. She believes it is time for Mike  
433 Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman to realize that this is a community and that the Board  
434 does not want this report. She explained that, in the past year or so, she has never heard  
435 anything regarding data being needed. During that time, the Board considered  
436 applications and whether or not to move forward with them. She believes that, if the

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437 public had not been at these meetings to speak up, the Board would not have slowed  
438 down on any of these applications and she had never once heard a statement that the  
439 Planning Board needed more data. She does not believe that NRPC is needed to decide  
440 things for the town of Amherst. She stated that the vote in March should speak volumes  
441 to the Board. This is a community; this is not Mike Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman's  
442 community.

443  
444 Tim Yakovakis, 22 Eaton Road, stated that he remembers a citizen asking the Board to  
445 get more data regarding the town's housing inventory in the fall, but that the Board was  
446 not interested at that time.

447  
448 **Roll call vote: Bill Stoughton – nay; Marilyn Peterman – aye; Dwight Brew – nay;**  
449 **Brian Coogan – nay; Mike Dell Orfano – aye; Cynthia Dokmo – nay.**  
450 **2-4-0; motion failed.**

451  
452 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that it is self-evident that, despite this vote, the Board will seek data  
453 under the Master Plan effort.

454  
455 Cynthia Dokmo stated that Marilyn Peterman and Mike Dell Orfano have worked on this Board  
456 for decades. She does not believe the two of them think of Amherst as “their” town. Their work  
457 on the Board, along with the work of others, is one of the reasons that people want to move here.  
458 She believes it to be totally unfair to take shots at them, simply for them stating their thoughts  
459 and opinions.

460  
461 Arnie Rosenblatt apologized to Mike Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman. He stated that they  
462 speak strongly simply because they are trying to do what they believe to be best for the town. It  
463 is okay and encouraged for Board members to disagree.

464  
465 Bill Stoughton agreed. He stated that, while he voted against the motion, he still has the utmost  
466 respect for Mike Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman and their views and service on the Board.

467  
468 Marilyn Peterman stated that she appreciates her fellow Board members' kind words. She stated  
469 that the Board members are all public figures and adults, and are able to take these reproaches  
470 with a grain of salt. She does wish that members of the public would take more time to  
471 understand the process. Otherwise she fears that those chastised for doing their job on the Board  
472 or for giving their opinion will no longer serve.

473  
474 Brian Coogan stated that he agrees with Mike Dell Orfano and Marilyn Peterman about  
475 obtaining data, but he is willing to wait for it. He applauded the public for getting involved, but  
476 asked that they do so in a more respectful manner moving forward.

477  
478 Arnie Rosenblatt stated that the Board held a Non-Public Session earlier in the evening to  
479 discuss two written opinions from the town attorney, Bill Drescher, Esq., regarding two pending  
480 applications and their status after the repeal of the IIHO. The Board discussed this issue and

TOWN OF AMHERST  
Planning Board

May 6, 2020

**APPROVED**

481 voted to release the written opinions in their entirety. These will be posted for anyone to review  
482 them. The Board is currently waiting on opinions on a couple of other matters. When these  
483 opinions are received, the Board will discuss and make determinations.

484

485 **OTHER BUSINESS:**

486

487 **4. Reminder of NHMA webinar “The Workings of a Planning Board,” May 13,**  
488 **2020, 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

489

490 Nic Strong stated that this webinar is an NHMA training session. The Board has been provided a  
491 link to register.

492

493 **Cynthia Dokmo moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:52pm. Marilyn Peterman**  
494 **seconded.**

495 **Roll call vote: Cynthia Dokmo – aye; Marilyn Peterman – aye; Dwight Brew – aye;**  
496 **Brian Coogan – aye; Mike Dell Orfano – aye; Bill Stoughton – aye. Motion carried**  
497 **unanimously.**

498

499

500 Respectfully submitted,

501 Kristan Patenaude

502

503 Minutes approved: May 20, 2020