



TOWN OF WARE

Planning & Community Development

126 Main Street, Suite A, Ware, Massachusetts 01082
t. 413.967.9648 ext. 186 f. 413.967.9642

Planning Board

Meeting Minutes from
Wednesday, March 1, 2017
Board of Selectmen's Conference Room

Planning Board members present: Rick Starodoj (Chairman), David P. Kopacz, Sr.,
Joe Knight, Chris DiMarzio

Planning Board members absent: Fred Urban

Staff present: Rubén Flores-Marzán, Director of Planning &
Community Development
Judi Mosso, Assistant to the Director

Public: none

Chairman R. Starodoj Called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.

1. Administrative

Approve minutes from January 18, 2017 – **Motion** by D. Kopacz to accept the minutes as presented. Second by J. Knight. So voted 4/0/0.

Approve minutes from February 15, 2017 – **Motion** by J. Knight to accept the minutes as presented. Second by D. Kopacz. So voted 4/0/0.

Town notices – The Board reviewed legal notices from abutting towns.

2. Discussion re zoning standards for medical and recreational marijuana dispensaries – R. Flores-Marzán reported that the dispensary discussion is heating up and that there has been continued interest from facilities to locate in Ware. Our current zoning bylaw does not provide guidelines for such uses so he encouraged the Board to continue their proactive discussions. Details discussed:
- Some towns use wording similar to adult entertainment districts (e.g. must be N-feet from schools, etc.)

- The P&CD department will try to find a way to formulate standards to protect ourselves and thoughtfully regulate the use while still allowing it in Town
- Many industries are lining up to capitalize on the change (e.g. attorneys to argue for and against)
- In general, this is good for the economy including job growth, research and development opportunities, and a new industry
- Negative effects include potential misuse; smaller communities such as Ware may see negative impacts magnified
- Discussion at recent Selectmen meeting mentioned hiding a proposed facility or not
- On the other hand, the Planning Board prefers to have facilities with upscale-looking architectural elements (e.g. large glass windows, nice lighting, outdoor furniture, etc.) as opposed to facilities with dark, sterile buildings, no windows, empty walls and visible cameras, etc. Their rationale was that if these facilities are legal, Ware then needs to ensure they look visually pleasant so they appropriately merge with the surrounding built environment
- Discussion about allowing it in some zones by Special Permit
- Board generally agreed to address cannabis facilities similar to liquor stores: both are legal. This is a positive compromise and also reflects the will of the electorate as they did not support the proposed moratorium last fall
- Some Board members viewed medical and recreational use differently; others saw no difference because medical use can be abused too (ease of access in CO)
- “Gateway” is not marijuana but the illegal exposure to other substances
- What are the demographics of where current dispensaries are located; what are the application patterns?
- What is the breakdown of the permit distribution? How are profits handled? What other related industries can we attract?
- R. Flores-Marzán will conduct more research into design elements and locational criteria and will present preliminary findings at a future PB meeting

3. Other

- Brief discussion about Nautilus Solar project on Gilbertville Road; project is finally coming together.

- Board is looking for a final plan from APR Towing (see 2016 Special Permit). J. Mosso will provide a report on Board discussion and decisions for the March 15 meeting.
 - No members have signed up for the CPTC conference on March 18. J. Mosso and most ZBA members are attending
4. Adjourn – **Motion** by C. DiMarzio to adjourn at 7:40 p.m., second J. Knight.
Unanimous.

Documents reviewed:

January 18, 2017 meeting minutes

Documents received:

none

Minutes Approved on: _____	
Starodoj	_____
DiMarzio	_____
Urban	_____
Kopacz	_____
Knight	_____

*Respectfully submitted by
Judith P. B. Mosso, MPA
Assistant to the Director*