



**Town of Becket**  
**Planning Board**  
**557 Main Street**  
**Becket, Massachusetts 01223**  
**Phone (413) 623-8934 Ext. 120**  
[planning@townofbecket.org](mailto:planning@townofbecket.org)

**Meeting Minutes for March 10, 2021**

*Meeting held via ZOOM*

**Board Members Present:** Robert Ronzio, Alvin Blake, Ann Krawet, James Levy, Gale LaBelle\* and Howard Lerner\*\*

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Administrative Assistant:** Jessica Perotti

**Public Present:** Kathy Dickinson, Paula Miller, Peter Spotts- of the Country Journal, Larisa Shpitalnik, Lois Washington, Peter Gould, John & Beverly Lambert, Michael Bronstein, Sarah Hoecker, Brian Vincent, Laurie Friedman, Mike Starr, Barbara Wacholder, Adle Levine, Laura Fredricks, Tess Lundberg, Jeff Wilkinson, Yale Hauptman and Glenna Rubin

*Minutes are submitted in the order of the agenda for easier reference- not chronologically.*

1. **Call to order:** Robert Ronzio opens the meeting at 6:07 PM and reads the rules of the meeting.
2. **Board to review and approve meeting minutes of:**
  - a. **February 10, 2021:** Alvin Blake **makes a motion** to approve the minutes of February 10, 2021. Ann Krawet **seconds the motion** noting a correction to be made on page 5: *Mr.* Krawet- should say *Ms.* Krawet. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:
    - Alvin Blake: aye
    - James Levy: aye
    - Ann Krawet: aye
    - Robert Ronzio: aye
    - Howard Lerner: absent
    - Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

- b. **February 23, 2021:** Ms. Krawet **makes a motion** to approve the minutes of February 23, 2021. Mr. Blake **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:
      - Alvin Blake: aye
      - Ann Krawet: aye
      - James Levy: aye
      - Robert Ronzio: aye
      - Howard Lerner: absent
      - Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**



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3. **Old Business:** Mr. Blake **makes a motion** to move Old Business to the end of the meeting. Mr. Levy **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- Alvin Blake: yes
- James Levy: yes
- Ann Krawet: yes
- Robert Ronzio: yes
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

- a. **Informal discussion regarding the town's Master Plan:** Following the public hearing discussion, Mr. Ronzio returns to Old Business. Howard Lerner signs in at 7:00 PM\*\*. Mr. Ronzio gives a brief overview of the current Master Plan and the need for revising it. There is a brief discussion regarding the considerable time it will take and if the Board will have the time to work on it now. Mr. Ronzio suggests that the residents could be asked for it to be put out to bid for a professional revision. This could cost up to \$100,000.00. Mr. Ronzio says an alternative to that would be to form a sub-committee to make the revisions. Surveys would need to be sent out to find out what current residents want to see changed. Ms. Krawet feels that the Board should focus on revising the current bylaws before working on revising the Master Plan. Mr. Ronzio says that they are required, statutorily, to update it. Mr. Blake agrees with Ms. Krawet but thinks the decision to revise it is above the Planning Board. He feels the matter should be put before the residents at the next **Annual Town Meeting (ATM)** to see how they would like to proceed. Mr. Blake adds that the **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program (MVP Program)** suggests updating the Master Plan. Mr. Levy gave a cursory review of the Master Plan which he feels is very well written. However, since it would take a considerable amount of time and money to make the revisions, he would only like to see them made if it results in an actionable payoff. He feels that putting so much work into a document should fill an immediate need. He believes it to be wasteful and annoying without an immediate payoff from revisions. Dr. Lerner has no comment at this time. Mr. Ronzio agrees with Ms. Krawet and Mr. Blake but he feels it is the Board's responsibility to let the residents know that a part-time sub-committee may not be able to handle the work it would take to make the necessary revisions. It may be best for the town to have the document sent out to bid for a professional revision considering the tremendous time and effort needed for it. At 7:15 PM, Mr. Blake excuses himself due to poor internet connection and says he will try calling back into the meeting for better



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reception. After his return, he suggests to have a discussion at the next ATM. Mr. Ronzio doesn't agree that the ATM would be the appropriate venue for this discussion. Dr. Lerner feels it is up to the Board to decide if the matter should go to the Select Board for approval on the warrant. There is a brief discussion. Mr. Ronzio thinks it is too late in the year to put such a matter on the warrant for the ATM. Mr. Blake agrees and thinks the Board should prioritize what bylaws should be worked on this year instead.

Mr. Ronzio polls the Board to find out what bylaws need the most attention. The need of an Airbnb bylaw is also discussed. Dr. Lerner is briefed about a recent discussion regarding a decision made, by the **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**, on a request for a temporary mobile home. There is a brief discussion regarding Dr. Lerner's previous personal experience with this bylaw. Mr. Levy says he has a problem with the obsessiveness to over specify what people write. He feels it invites lawyers, tax accountants or anyone else to try and decipher it another way. He doesn't feel that it is possible to write such a bylaw without it being hundreds of pages and even still, he thinks there's always going to be someone that can find fault with it. Mr. Blake clarifies that the ZBA, on which he serves, suggested that the bylaw should include the word "consecutive": a *consecutive* twelve month period. Ms. Perotti offers that a twelve month period defines itself as consecutive; splitting it, as the ZBA approved, would create two six month periods. Dr. Lerner feels that the intent of the bylaw, when it was written, also needs to be considered. There is a lengthy discussion. Mr. Ronzio says the Board can review it.

Ms. Krawet believes the marijuana bylaw should be addressed first. She says there are different types of marijuana that produce less smell than others. She suggests the bylaw could limit the types of marijuana plants grown in town. Dr. Lerner says many residents were concerned with dropping property values if marijuana establishments were allowed in their neighborhood and feels property values all over town would be reduced if mobile homes were allowed anywhere and everywhere. Dr. Lerner doesn't think it would take a lot of time to revise the mobile home bylaw. Dr. Lerner also points out that Becket had one of the largest voting marijuana approvals in the state but when residents find out an establishment will be close to them, they panic. Mr. Blake **makes a motion** for the Board to make a decision regarding what bylaws will be worked on this year; it is not seconded. Mr. Ronzio opens the discussion to other bylaws that need to be addressed. Following a brief discussion, the Board agrees to start with the mobile



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home bylaw because it doesn't require a lot of revision. Then, will work on the marijuana bylaw. Dr. Lerner emphasizes the need for a bylaw regarding Airbnb. Ms. Krawet **makes a motion** to make revisions to the marijuana bylaw first and then to the mobile home bylaw. There is **no second to the motion**. Dr. Lerner **makes a motion** to work on the mobile home bylaw first and then the marijuana bylaw. Mr. Blake **seconds the motion**. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- Alvin Blake: aye
- Howard Lerner: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- James Levy: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Gale LaBelle: vote was not required.

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

b. **Informal discussion regarding constructing a small wind turbine next to Town Hall:**

Mr. Ronzio reminds the Board this suggestion was made to reduce energy costs to the town. Mr. Levy thinks placing something like this next to Town Hall may not be the best location- especially considering the nearby residents. Mr. Ronzio says that if the criteria within the bylaw is not met, the turbine cannot be constructed. There is a brief discussion regarding other wind tower proposals. Mr. Ronzio reads through the current bylaw and confirms that small wind turbines are allowed, by right with site plan approval. Mr. Ronzio says that until an official plan is designed and submitted, no comments can be made. Mr. Blake returns at 7:24 PM. Mr. Blake says that through discussions with the Energy Committee, the wind turbine bylaw was reviewed and it seemed they would not need to come before the Board because it is by-right. He would like the Board's opinion. Mr. Ronzio says it is allowed by-right but it does require site plan approval from the Planning Board. Mr. Blake argues they should not because the parcel is more than 2 acres. Mr. Ronzio reviews the bylaw again and agrees that site plan approval is not required providing the specific criteria is met. Mr. Blake invites the Board to join the discussion at the next Energy Committee meeting.

4. **New Business:**

- a. **Public Hearing: Brian Vincent, on behalf of Tetrahydra Agtek LLC, seeks relief from Section 6.8.10 to operate a recreational marijuana facility for a tier 11 cultivation and processing plant at 509 Quarry Road; Map/Lot: 416/10:** Mr. Ronzio says an email was received from the applicant, Brian Vincent, to withdrawal the application. Mr. Ronzio reminds Mr. Vincent that there are only 4 (four) members of the Board present and



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gives him the option to wait to present his withdrawal as it needs to be decided if the application will be withdrawn with or without prejudice. Mr. Vincent agrees to have the 4 Board members present review his request to withdrawal. Mr. Blake **makes a motion** to allow the application be withdrawn without prejudice. Mr. Levy **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio polls the Board for any comments. Hearing none, he calls for a roll-call vote:

- Alvin Blake: aye
- James Levy: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Howard Lerner: absent
- Gale LaBelle: absent

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

Gale LaBelle arrives at 6:52 PM\*.

Mr. Ronzio asks the public if they have any comments or questions. A resident gives an independent source to get information regarding marijuana. She says the cost of marijuana will be going down and will continue to go down with more and more of these types of establishments opening. She questions if promises made now could be kept considering the ever changing prices. Another resident thanks the Board and Administrative Assistant for their time and consideration. All attendants are asked for comments or questions; there are no other comments.

- b. **Informal discussion regarding making revisions to Section 6.2, Mobile Home Regulations, of the Becket Zoning Bylaws:** There is a brief discussion regarding the need to make revisions to this bylaw. Sarah Hoecker is recognized and lets the Board know she thinks the definitions of recreational vehicle and mobile home need to be better defined. She gives her suggestions where changes should be made and offers her assistance in writing revisions. Mr. Ronzio talks about what is needed for revising a bylaw, getting on a bylaw review committee and submitting special permit applications in general. Ms. Hoecker lets the Board know she currently serves on the General Bylaw Review Committee.

5. **Public Input:** As discussed throughout.
6. **Budget:** Ms. Perotti asks the Board for a motion to pay an invoice from New England Newspapers, Inc., in the amount of \$509.90, for public hearing notices published in the



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Berkshire Eagle regarding 509 Quarry Road and 229 South Cove Drive. Mr. Levy **makes a motion** to pay the invoice. Ms. Krawet **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- James Levy: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- Howard Lerner: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- Gale LaBelle: vote was not required

All in favor. **Motion passes.**

7. **Correspondence:** Ms. Perotti confirms she has not seen any response from the Board regarding attending any online courses.
8. **Any other business to come before the Board:** Mr. Levy reports that the **Community Preservation Committee (CPC)** only has three members currently serving. He reports that 3 projects were on the agenda and all were approved:
  - Congregational Church belfry
  - A new hiking trail
  - Insulating the Becket Arts Center.

These projects will be placed on the warrant for the ATM. Mr. Levy invites a resident, who is attending tonight's meeting, to join the CPC. Mr. Ronzio gives her a brief overview of why the committee was formed and their duties. She is thankful for the suggestion and expresses her interest to join the CPC. Mr. Levy lets her know who to contact for an application to get on the CPC.

Mr. Blake notes that in past years, the CPC has awarded projects between \$40,000 and \$50,000 and asks where they got the funds this year for projects costing more than \$140,000. Mr. Levy explains there were funds left over from approved projects that were not executed last year. Ultimately, those funds were not reserved for such projects. Mr. Ronzio questions if the CPC might award a project to install a sidewalk along Wells Road; it runs from Route 20 to the Sherwood Shoppe. Mr. Ronzio notes that women walk carriages down that street and a thinks a sidewalk would be a welcomed addition. There is a brief discussion regarding a program called "Complete Streets". Mr. Blake says an application would need to be submitted. There is a brief discussion regarding getting the word out to residents about the CPC and how to submit applications.



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9. **Adjournment:** Mr. Blake **makes a motion** to adjourn. Ms. Krawet **seconds the motion**. Mr. Ronzio calls for a roll-call vote:

- James Levy: aye
- Howard Lerner: aye
- Alvin Blake: aye
- Ann Krawet: aye
- Robert Ronzio: aye
- Gale LaBelle: vote not required.

All in favor. **Motion passes.** Meeting is adjourned at 8:41 PM.

**Meeting minutes reviewed and approved on April 14, 2021 by:**

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Robert Ronzio, Chair

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James Levy, Vice Chair

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Ann Krawet, Clerk

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Alvin Blake, Clerk Pro Tem

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Howard Lerner

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Gale LaBelle