

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**MINOR PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, December 9, 2021**

**10:00 AM**

**Council Chambers,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

John Rogers  
Don Lussier  
Lt. John Bates  
Med Kopczynski  
Michael Hagan, Alternate  
Mari Brunner

**Other Staff Present:**

Megan Fortson, Planning  
Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Kürt Blomquist, Alternate

**1) Call to Order – Roll Call**

Med Kopczynski called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Roll call was conducted. Mr. Kopczynski stated that he would like to change the order of the agenda items, starting with approving the previous meeting's minutes.

**2) Minutes of Previous Meeting – September 9, 2021**

Ms. Brunner made a motion to approve the minutes of September 9, 2021. Mr. Lussier seconded the motion, which passed by a vote of 5-0. Mr. Hagan abstained because he was not at the previous meeting.

**3) Review MPRC Role**

Mr. Kopczynski stated that they need to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair, since the Community Development Director, Rhett Lamb, has retired. He continued that first, he would like to review the MPRC's role.

Ms. Brunner stated that the members of this committee have been given the authority, by the Planning Board, to review site plans that are below a certain threshold. She continued by saying that this group essentially functions as an extension of the Planning Board. The RSA terms it a "technical review committee," so it is comprised entirely of staff. They can review certain applications that are in compliance with the Planning Board's standards. If an application does

not meet the standards listed in the City's regulations or if it is above a certain threshold, it would have to go before the Planning Board. The MPRC's role is outlined in the Land Development Code. The schedule is set up to have two meetings per month: the first meeting is for the public hearings and will always be held unless there are no applications to review and no other agenda items to discuss. If something comes to the MPRC and during the first meeting the committee was not able to get enough information or they need to continue the meeting for any reason, then the second meeting of the month is held. The second meeting of the month is only held as needed.

Mr. Rogers clarified that the second meeting is for any continued applications. He continued that it would not be for any new application that had been submitted after the first meeting. Ms. Brunner replied that is correct. She continued that regarding the Planning Board meetings, there is a rather large amount of time between the deadline and when the project goes to the Planning Board, so staff is able to do a thorough review of the application and put together a staff report. They did not build in time for that for this committee. That is why they have two meetings set up. Simple applications can be reviewed and approved during a single meeting; however, those requiring more time can be continued to the second meeting of the month because they are not doing the same level of review ahead of time and preparing a staff report.

Mr. Lussier stated that the untimely departure of the Chair (Mr. Lamb) has raised some questions about membership, how members are appointed, and so on and so forth. He asked Ms. Brunner about that. Ms. Brunner replied that staff brings recommendations to the Planning Board and the Planning Board votes to appoint members to this committee. Mr. Lussier asked who the appointed alternates are. Ms. Brunner replied that currently it is Mike Hagan and Kurt Blomquist. She continued that Tara Kessler used to be an alternate as well. That position has not been filled since Ms. Kessler left. Mr. Lussier asked if Ms. Brunner is here today as a member. Ms. Brunner replied yes. She continued that in October the Planning Board voted to appoint her to the committee to replace Mr. Lamb. However, they decided to hold off on replacing the alternate position that became vacant when Ms. Kessler left, mostly because they wanted to wait until they hired more staff, including a Planner. Megan Fortson is staffing the committee.

Mr. Kopczynski stated that everyone here is aware, but for the sake of the record, he will explain that this committee grew out of staff's intentions for the Land Development Code and the reorganization of the Community Development Department. He continued by explaining that they are looking to make the processing of plans, and ultimately permits, as efficient as possible, and to help with the local economy. City Staff just spent over three years creating the Land Development Code and it was a very extensive process. They also know that it will continue into the future. The intention of this committee is to review projects that fall within a certain threshold that would normally have to go to the Planning Board.. The intention is to expedite the review process for Applicants without relaxing any rules or regulations.

Mr. Kopczynski continued that this committee will take on an increasingly important role in the future. It will replace some of the administrative approvals that were previously reviewed and approved by the Community Development Director. Mr. Lamb would review and sign off on projects within a certain threshold and report back to the Planning Board on an annual basis with an update. The Minor Project Review Committee has established a more formal review process. Although, the Community Development Director still has that authority to do administrative review and approvals. Administrative reviews are the lowest level of site plan review, the Minor Project Review Committee sits in the middle, and the Planning Board is the highest level of review. Mr. Kopczynski thinks they will see many projects come through this process and many projects try to come through this process. At first, the committee might waver a little bit, until they figure it all out, and that is okay. If they need to go back and make some changes to the Codes, that is okay, too. He thinks this is a good process, and one that they fully intended to do.

**4) MPRC 2022 Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Kopczynski asked if everyone has had a chance to look at the schedule. He continued that Ms. Brunner did a good job explaining why there are two meetings scheduled per month.

Mr. Lussier made a motion to approve the schedule as presented. Mr. Hagan seconded the motion.

Ms. Brunner noted that the only date that had to change slightly is the second meeting in November. She continued that if the second meeting in November is necessary, they will be meeting on a Wednesday instead of Thursday, because of Thanksgiving.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**5) Election of MPRC Chair and Vice Chair**

Mr. Kopczynski stated that he is currently the Vice Chair and willing to stay in that role. If anyone wants to be Chair, that is fine with him. Mr. Rogers stated that he will throw his hat in the ring.

Ms. Brunner made a motion to elect John Rogers as Chair of the MPRC. Mr. Lussier seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Chair Rogers asked if anyone has nominations for a Vice Chair, or if everyone is happy with the current structure and wants Mr. Kopczynski to continue in that role.

Ms. Brunner made a motion to elect Med Kopczynski as Vice Chair of the MPRC. Mr. Lussier seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Chair Rogers stated that since there are no applications for this meeting, the MPRC will not be holding its second meeting this month. He continued that the next meeting will be January 13, 2022. If needed, the follow-up meeting will be January 27. As Mr. Kopczyński said, what this committee is doing is really developing a three-tier application review process for Applicants. They will be reviewing some interesting projects that meet the criteria to come before this committee as opposed to having to go to the Planning Board.

6) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Rogers adjourned the meeting at 10:14 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Megan Fortson, Planning Technician