

# Montague Planning Board

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February 28, 2012 6:30 PM  
Town Hall Upstairs Conference Room

## MEETING MINUTES

**Board Members Present:** Bruce Young, Chair, Ron Sicard, Fred Bowman, George Cooke  
Robert Obear

**Staff Present:** Walter Ramsey- Town Planner, David Jensen – Building Inspector

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Bruce Young

There was a motion to approve the minutes of 01/10/2012 by Fred Bowman, Seconded by George Cook. All Approved. Motion passed.

### **Discussion Draft Zoning Regulations for Wind Energy Systems:**

The board will continue to discuss net metered wind energy generation facilities as they pertain to the Montague Zoning Bylaws in light of growing interest in such projects in Montague.

The board reviewed a draft dated 2.27.12. Walter indicated that since the last board meeting, the Zoning Board has issued a Special Permit for the installation of a horizontal axis turbine in Montague City. It was approved as a public utility use. Walter indicated that the process and outcome worked well in this case- but every case is different.

Dave Jensen noted that these regulations, as proposed were highly prescriptive which minimizes the discretion of the special permit granting authority.

Ron Sicard reminded that there are upcoming hearings and reports on the public health effect of wind. Other towns are developing bylaws and/or moratoriums.

Bruce Young noted that Montague has less wind potential compared to other towns.

Bruce Young had issue with the term “significant hill” because it is not clearly defined. Dave Jensen indicated that the term was used in the telecommunication facilities bylaw. While it may not stand up in court it has been effective for telecommunications. If the Board is to use this language, they will want to clarify what denotes a “significant hill”.

The Planning Board requested that Walter continue to refine the bylaw and to monitor what other towns are adopting and the outcome of the DOER hearings. The board agreed that there is not a rush to get the regulations on the Annual Town meeting warrant.

**Re-Organization of Zoning Bylaw:**

Walter presented a draft structural reorganization of the zoning bylaws. The board felt this is important objective because the bylaws are currently piecemeal and difficult to follow. This reorganization would make future changes more clear and consistent with the master plan. The biggest change is that the overlays are incorporated into the zoning districts instead of being placed in different sections of the bylaw. George Cook asked if there were any substantive text changes and Walter noted that the only change would be where an update is required- this is simply a restructuring- although it would require Town Meeting approval. A new official zoning map will be in order as well. Walter will work with David to draft a new official zoning map, but the re-structuring will come first (over the next year). This will set the stage for a master plan update.

**Work Plan:**

The Board reviewed and approved the work plan. Bruce Young noted that if the Board is to obtain outside technical assistance- it should be for the subdivision regulation overhauls rather than for the zoning regulations.

Meeting adjourned 7:47 PM

Exhibits: Draft Wind Energy System Regulation dated 2.27.12.  
Planning Board Work Plan

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_