

Bylaw Review Committee

November 6, 2025 Minutes

Members present: Rob Bowen (Chair), Jen Duffy (Vice Chair), Caesar Nuzzolo (Clerk), Nancy Gray, Kathy Herrick

Call to Order

Mr. Bowen called the Bylaw Review Committee to order at 6:50PM.

Public Comment

Mr. Bowen asked if there were any public comments. There were no public comments.

Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes for the September 4, 2025 and October 2, 2025 meetings.

Mr. Nuzzolo moved to approve both sets of minutes. Mrs. Gray seconded. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Proposal to Merge Architectural Preservation District and Historical Commission

Mr. Bowen brought up the proposed merger of the Architectural Preservation District Commission (APDC) and Historical Commission. The Committee discussed the history of the proposed merger and noted that it was not included on the warrant for Special Town Meeting. The Committee determined not to take up the proposed merger as part of its review of the Town's Bylaws.

Feedback from Request to Town Committees and Stakeholders

The Committee has not received any responses from Boards/Committees/Commissions yet.

Preliminary Review of Bylaws

Ms. Duffy presented her review of the Town's boards, committees, and commissions. She shared a spreadsheet identifying which entities are included in the Charter, Bylaws, and on the Town website. The Committee discussed the placement of the APDC in Part I, as well as the Green Communities Committee, Conservation Commission, and Open Space Committee. The Committee discussed whether entities created in separate bylaws should be consolidated and reviewed the composition and terms of committees.

The Committee began reviewing "Part II: General Legislation."

The Committee reviewed Chapter 105, "Alarm Systems," including its fines and penalties. The Committee questioned why fire alarm systems are not included, whether fines are currently imposed, and whether the bylaw remains necessary. The Committee discussed the value of retaining enforceable provisions in the event they are needed in the future.

The Committee was not interested in pursuing a leash law.

The Committee discussed the public nuisance provisions relating to dogs, including situations in which a dog is off the owner's property. The Committee discussed whether the impoundment fee should be increased and whether there should be no fee for a first violation. The Committee also discussed whether the existing bylaws adequately require a dog to remain under control, including by leash or voice control. Mrs. Gray and Ms. Duffy believed such a provision already exists.

The Committee discussed the Architectural Preservation District and other bylaws that are maintained by their respective committees. The Committee discussed the value of maintaining a unified character among related bylaws and noted that some overlay districts may have goals that overlap or conflict with one another.

The Committee noted that the boating bylaw includes an attachment indicating that it was adopted by the Select Board.

The Committee reviewed § 134-3 and noted that the terms "days" and "business days" are used in the same sentence. The Committee discussed how a business day should be defined when Town offices are closed, including Fridays, holidays, and weather-related closures. The Committee discussed adding definitions of "business day" and "calendar day" in Part I and then reviewing uses of the term "day" throughout the Bylaws for consistency. The Committee also discussed addressing terms within individual sections when a Town-wide definition is unnecessary.

Mr. Bowen questioned why the Select Board has authority over earth removal rather than the Planning Board.

General Discussion of Progress, Timeline

The Committee decided to review approximately the next 20 pages of Part II: General Legislation during the next meeting.

Set Next Meeting(s) Date, Time, Place

The Committee decided to meet on December 4, 2025 at 6:45PM at the Library and again on January 8, 2026. The Committee generally plans to meet on the first Thursday of each month.

Public Comment

Mr. Bowen asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Adjourn

Mr. Nuzzolo motioned to adjourn at 7:50PM. Ms. Duffy seconded. The Committee voted unanimously to adjourn.