

Minutes of the January 6, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL – GREAT HALL

MINUTES

The Planning Board guides the Town of Wellesley in preserving and enhancing Wellesley's quality of life by fostering a diverse housing stock, multi-modal transportation options, valuable natural resources, resilient infrastructure, and a thriving local economy. The Planning Board achieves these goals through the creation and implementation of Zoning Bylaws, policies, long-term planning and by promoting citizen participation in the planning process.

Planning Board Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Jim Roberti, Kathleen Woodward, Frank Pinto, Associate Member Sheila Olson

Absent: Patricia Mallett

Staff Present: Planning Director Don McCauley

1. Call to Order

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda – Citizen Speak

There were no public comments.

3. Public Hearings

Materials distributed to, and considered by the Planning Board regarding this agenda item are retained with the official set of minutes available at the Planning Department Office.

LHR 19-13: Large House Review for 194 Pond Road (continued from 12/2/19); to be further continued to 1/21/20

LHR 19-14: Large House Review for 196 Pond Road (continued from 12/2/19); to be further continued to 1/21/20

Present: Attorney Larry Shind

Mr. Shind confirmed that the applicant was requesting extension of public hearings to January 21, 2020 and revised plans would be submitted to the Board within a week.

Ms. Johnson asked if the plans for septic design would be included at the January 21st meeting. Mr. Shind responded the septic plans should be included and he would confirm that aspect.

Mr. McCauley noted the next hearing date would be January 21st or January 22, due to Martin Luther King Day on January 20, 2020.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue Large House Review 19-13 for 194 Pond Road and Large House Review 19-14 for 196 Pond Road to the next Planning Board meeting on January 21, 2020 or January 22, 2020; dependent on availability of meeting room. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4-0).

LHR 19-15: Large House Review for 15 Greylock Road

Present: Michael White, Landscape Architect – Symbio Design; Mark Cooperman, Engineer – Ecoterra Design Group; Rob Carlezon, Engineer – Grady Consulting, LLC; Ron Searles, Architect – R.C. Searles Associates; Kris Auger – Home Bride Remodeling, contractor and Kathleen Bragdon, owner

Mr. Cooperman provided update regarding the proposed plan, the completed environmental plan and the compliance aspect.

Mr. Roberti asked if engineering aspects had been addressed. Mr. Carlezon responded engineering considerations had been satisfied, to his knowledge. Ms. Johnson commented that Town Engineer, George Saraceno, had requested several items for clarification in his letter dated December 23, 2019.

Mr. Auger stated he had not received such a letter from the Engineering Department.

Ms. Woodward noted that there were approximately 11 items regarding project plans and design documentation detailed in Mr. Saraceno's correspondence dated December 23, 2019.

Mr. Carlezon acknowledged that that any Engineering considerations would be addressed in a timely fashion.

Mr. McCauley noted that the Board and staff endorsed the proposed project which maintained the existing home and addressed wetland considerations. Mr. McCauley recommended a consolidated plan, to include landscaping, stormwater provision, as well as, an exterior lighting plan.

Ms. Johnson suggested that a draft of a construction management plan be submitted, including parking provision and tree plan. She stated that Engineering noted that Greylock Road was in good condition and wanted assurance via a construction management plan that such conditions would remain here.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue Large House Review 19-15 for 15 Greylock Road to the next Planning Board meeting on January 21, 2020 or January 22, 2020; dependent on availability of meeting room. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4-0).

4. ZBA Cases for 1/9/2020 ZBA Hearing

#2019-88 – 36 Pine Street

Mr. McCauley stated the request involved a Special Permit for relief of side yard setback in consideration of constructing a non-conforming garage with second story with insufficient setbacks. He noted staff recommended ZBA deny the Special Permit.

Ms. Johnson and other Board members agreed with staff assessment.

#2019-98 – 22 Cavanagh Road

Ms. Johnson stated that Mr. McCauley recused himself from presentation because he residences within 300 feet of 22 Cavanagh Road. Ms. Johnson noted the applicant requested a Special Permit

for construction of a non-conforming rear addition. She added that staff recommended approval of the Special Permit.

#2020-01 – 60 Prospect Street

Mr. McCauley noted that the applicant requested a Special Permit for additions to an existing house on an undersized lot did not meet setback regulations, but would not extend such non-conformity status. Mr. McCauley stated that staff recommended approval.

Ms. Johnson noted that the back of the lot abuts commercial use property.

#2020-02 – 11 Dunedin Road

Mr. McCauley explained that the applicant requested a Special Permit to build a new structure on an existing non-conforming lot. He noted that staff recommended approval.

#2020-03 – 32 Cranmore Road

Mr. McCauley detailed a Special Permit for installation of a retaining wall was being requested, which would increase the height of the retaining wall. He added that staff recommended that ZBA deny the Special Permit.

Ms. Olson asked about possible recourse, if ZBA denied the request. Ms. Johnson responded that the homeowner might submit an application for a variance, in consideration of the fact that the owner completed this work without appropriate permitting/approval.

Mr. Pinto asked if supplemental filling of the retaining wall/fencing could mitigate the overall effect. Ms. Johnson responded that the primary issue involved the height of the fence.

Ms. Woodward commented that the picture of the fencing was somewhat confusing.

Ms. Olson stressed that there remains an issue with the owners considerably increasing/changing the existing topography of the site. Related discussion took place.

Ms. Johnson commented that the wall was already erected and a special engineering report could be recommended to address fill, including cross-section detail.

Ms. Woodward noted that precedent should not be set.

#2020-04 – 309 Washington Street – Unitarian Universalists Society of Wellesley Hills

Mr. McCauley explained that the petitioner was seeking a Special Permit for signage that exceeds the maximum number of signs and size permitted. He added that staff recommended approval of such Special Permit.

Ms. Johnson observed that there was at least one additional banner sign currently at the site. She asked if the granted signage would be permanent. Mr. McCauley responded that it appeared to be a permanent situation, 12 months per year and not seasonal. Ms. Johnson questioned if the larger proposed signage might become a traffic/parking obstruction. Mr. McCauley responded that such signage should not affect traffic at the site.

Ms. Johnson mentioned the recent denial of signage at the abutting Historical Society property and expressed some reluctance about possible ZBA approval of the Unitarian Church request, in consideration of its permanent status.

Ms. Woodward commented that such approval might set precedence for other house of worship sites in Town.

Mr. McCauley noted Dover Amendment consideration and suggested that conditioning for temporary signage, could be included. Board members agreed with such temporary signage conditioning.

5. Other ZBA Matters

ZBA 2019-61 – 136-140 Worcester Street (Continued from 12/3/19)

Mr. Roberti posed questions regarding project status.

Ms. Johnson recognized concern about the former owner of the site receiving payment for the lot, and how that might influence the determination by MA Housing Authority.

Mr. McCauley acknowledged the numerous wetland issues at this property.

ZBA 2020-05: Wellesley Country Club Site Plan Approval for 1/23/20 ZBA Hearing

Mr. McCauley noted that the case would not be before ZBA until January 23, 2023. He added that the project would require site plan approval and a Special Permit for construction of extensive upgrades to the existing irrigation system and rebuilding of bunkers on the golf course. It was noted that staff recommended that ZBA grant the site plan approval and issue the Special Permit.

6. Other Business

Ms. Johnson noted that the Board of Selectman will be performing final review of Town Meeting Warrant Articles next week. She mentioned the article which would change “Board of Selectmen” terminology to “Select Board.”

Planning Articles for 2020 ATM

323 Washington Street Historic District

Ms. Johnson stated that the 323 Washington Street Historic District Article report would be posted tomorrow after Historic District Commission review. She added that the public hearing for this article would be scheduled for the end of February.

Correction to List of Districts

Amendments to General Residence Bylaw and related amendments to Large House Review Bylaw.

Ms. Woodward queried about Section 2 and the grandfathering aspect of Town Houses. Mr. McCauley confirmed that such permitting would be granted by ZBA.

Ms. Woodward asked about the 3,600 square foot threshold referring to such dwellings. Ms. Johnson responded that the General Residence District would be regarded as if it were a 10,000 square foot district, as depicted within the Town zoning map.

Mr. McCauley noted that he would be working on the presentation of the articles and would include them on the Town website. He affirmed that he would distribute initial drafting to the Board at the January 21st meeting. Mr. McCauley stated the articles would be presented to Advisory on February 12.

Ms. Woodward recommended “dwelling” language be further clarified within the Article.

*Amendments to Tree Protection Bylaw**Amendments to Article 55 of Town Bylaw Regarding Tree Bank Fund**Amendments to Natural Resource Protection Bylaw**Amendments to correct and update marijuana provisions in Zoning Bylaw**Community Preservation Committee Request*

Ms. Johnson confirmed CPC would be meeting on Wednesday, January 8 and added that she submitted request for funding to rebind the two Town Atlas.

Tree Study RFP Process

Mr. McCauley affirmed the initiation of the Tree Study RFP for evaluation of Town tree law and its effectiveness. He noted that an initial RFP draft will be distributed to the Board for approval.

Form of Escrow Agreement

Mr. McCauley noted that there had been several Large House Review applications that had been granted without total completion of project (landscaping, etc.). He maintained that a proposed Large House Review Escrow Agreement would be efficient and deter further omissions.

Ms. Johnson commented that 900 Washington Street was operating under a temporary Certificate of Occupancy, which was agreed to obtain permanent Certificate of Occupancy permitting at the beginning of January. She added that the traffic light has not been installed to date and acknowledged that she had not seen any related updates. Mr. Roberti confirmed that the traffic light has not been installed and is becoming an issue. Ms. Johnson suggested that the state may be the reason for delay or consideration that the project developer has since sold the property to a Texas firm.

Ms. Woodward inquired about such progress updates. Ms. Johnson responded that there has been only one update submitted to the Board. She noted that with new ownership, the naming of the building would change. Ms. Olson commented that the Town owns the land and the new firm is the leasee.

Mr. McCauley noted that a St. James Church memorial plaque was recently unveiled in the lobby of the center.

Ms. Olson noted that she received six inquiries from Bates and Harding School neighbors, regarding the installation of the traffic light.

Planning Board Chair Report

Ms. Johnson suggested that the Board review the Newton Accessory Apartment Bylaw, which she found to be very insightful and comprehensive. Ms. Johnson recommended that the Board consider such bylaw article for Wellesley FY21 ATM.

Ms. Johnson stated Natural Resources Commission reviewed the High School Field Lighting Task Force Study and recommended that the Board discuss this at an upcoming Board meeting. She added the Commission is requesting Board feedback in consideration of how such lighting might affect the neighborhood.

Planning Director Report

Mr. McCauley suggested implementation of more efficient timeline guidelines regarding Large House Review application. He noted that a 45 to 50-day timeframe could be implemented. Ms. Johnson suggested asking the Engineering Department if they are fully staffed, an aspect that might contribute to process management and time efficiencies.

7. Minutes – Approval of December 2, 2019 Planning Board Minutes

Mr. Roberti motioned to approve the December 2, 2019 Planning Board Minutes with corrections by Catherine Johnson and Kathleen Woodward. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the motion.

There being no further business, Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Minutes Approved: Wednesday, January 22, 2020

Don McCauley

Planning Director