

Minutes of the January 24, 2022 Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022, 6:30 P.M.
ONLINE REMOTE MEETING

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 Members Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Tom Taylor, Patricia Mallett, James Roberti, Sheila Olson, Associate Member

Staff Present: Planning Director Don McCauley, Senior Planner Eric Arbeene

Advisory Liaisons: John Lanza, Doug Mansfield

Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants

Ms. Johnson called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:30 P.M. She acknowledged the presence of Board Members: Kathleen Woodward, Jim Roberti, Patricia Mallett, Catherine Johnson, Tom Taylor, Shelia Olsen

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

No Comments

Public Zoning Hearing on Citizens Petition

Citizen's Petition – Rezoning of 130, 136, 140 & 140R Worcester Street

Mr. McCauley detailed the citizen's petition to rezone lots mentioned on Worcester Road to a multi-family district. The lots in question are permitted to develop a 40-unit 40B housing development; of which 25% would be affordable housing.

Resident John Lin, 3 Dearborn Road, confirmed he represented thirteen single-family homeowners from the Dearborn Road neighborhood. He highlighted negative impacts associated with the proposed development, including increased traffic.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue the public hearing for the Citizen's Petition – Rezoning of 130, 136, 140 & 140R Worcester Street, to February 7, 2022. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Woodward-aye, Roberti-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye, Johnson-aye.

Public Zoning Hearing for Annual Town Meeting Articles

Mr. McCauley reported there are 11 articles being proposed for the Town Warrant.

General Residence District

Mr. McCauley noted the article involved the redistricting of Washington Street, from Cliff Road to the Grantland Extension Road, which would allow for expanded uses for the mentioned Wellesley Hills General Residence Districts.

Rezoning 219-220 Washington Street

Mr. McCauley stated this change had been requested by the Friendly Aid, the owners of 219-229 Washington Street, to allow for the rental of buildings to professionals and community organizations. He stressed the property is presently identified as being in the Single Residence District, and the owners are requesting the property be rezoned to General Residence District.

Ms. Johnson replied there was request for changes to the language of the warrant article.

Flood Plain Districts

Mr. McCauley stated passage of this Article would aid in improving the quality of the water in the Charles River, by restricting certain activities in flood plain areas. The FEMA maps are updated periodically, and would not be finalized until Fall 2022. Mr. McCauley detailed the State has amended construction regulations within the flood plain, and wants the towns to do the same. Preferred language has been received from Town Counsel.

Definition of Child Care Facility

Mr. McCauley reported this is an attempt to bring Town bylaws in sync with state statues. The update would eliminate a reference to a statue which has been repealed.

Town Houses

Mr. McCauley noted this article represents permitting of 2-unit townhouses in general residence zones; which is presently in conflict with the existing building codes. This article would resolve the conflict with the building code, and would expand the definition to include side-by-side duplexes, as well as 3-unit townhouses in General Residence District.

Sustainability Proposals, including Heat Pumps

Ms. Johnson provided detail of the four motions within the general article; including “sustainable,” language, analysis of greenhouse gas emission considerations, change in Design Review standards, and bylaw revisions to allow for heat pump installations

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Mr. McCauley clarified that an ADU is recognized as a separate living unit within a single-family home, which is owner occupied. Mr. McCauley detailed the requirements of the proposed article, which would promote multi-generational families to live together, as well as, advancing diversity of housing types within the Town.

Resident Deed McCollum, Build a Better Wellesley member, 6 Pickerel Terrace, thanked all the people who put considerable work towards the development of this article.

Commercial Gun Shops

Mr. McCauley maintained that the primary objective of the article was to limit the location of commercial gun shops. Mr. McCauley stated the article does not ban gun shops, and would not violate any State or Federal Laws.

Outdoor Lighting

Mr. McCauley stated this is structured to apply to both major and minor projects and it updates all lighting on the building which would bring the project into compliance with the lighting bylaw passed by Town Meeting.

Signs

Mr. McCauley explained the proposed article, which includes vital phrasing, in order to maintain consistency with the current bylaw.

Zoning Bylaw Reorganization

Mr. McCauley confirmed that the article reflects a multi-stage process, to modernize and codify the zoning bylaws.

Mr. Roberti motioned to close the Public Zoning Hearing for the Annual Town Meeting Articles, sponsored by Planning Board, labeled A thru K. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Woodward-aye, Roberti-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye, Johnson-aye.

Large House Reviews

LHR-21-08 – 16 Wedgwood Road

Present: Daniel and Karen Gurian, Owners; David Sharff, Architect

Mr. Arbeene provided description regarding the project.

Mr. Sharff reviewed aspects of the proposal, including a master bedroom above the existing garage, and the addition of a sunroom off the back of the garage.

Mr. Sharff confirmed a drainage plan would be submitted. Ms. Johnson requested that a stormwater management plan, a landscape plan, including a tree protection plan; be submitted as well.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue LHR 21-08 for 16 Wedgewood Road, to February 22, 2022, and to extend the action deadline to February 24, 2022. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye, Roberti-aye, Johnson-aye.

LHR-21-05 – 175 Walnut Street – Open and Continue to 2/22/22

Mr. McCauley confirmed the owner was finalizing the application, which would be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Roberti motioned continue LHR 21-05 for 175 Walnut Street, to February 22, 2022. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye, Mallett-aye, Roberti-aye, Johnson-aye

Zoning Board of Appeals – Site Plan Approval

ZBA-2022-11 – Wellesley Middle School

Mr. McCauley confirmed the Planning Board was not required to consider the ZBA case at this time.

Other Business

Board Discussion of Citizen’s Petition and Annual Town Meeting Articles

Mr. McCauley detailed the proposed warrant articles and related language associated with the motions. He detailed the proposed expansion of the general residence district area from Cliff Road to Grantland Road Extension. Mr. Taylor stated he was comfortable extending to Grantland Road Extension, to include the Friendly Aid property. Ms. Woodward commented the Friendly Aid property is privately owned, and could also be used for multi-unit housing. Ms. Mallett mentioned the proposal reflected a logical expansion of the zoning area.

Discussion among board members continued regarding general residence zoning, and the order of articles “a” and “b.”

Ms. Woodward agreed that such complete article language was appropriate when defining professional uses, as allowed in the General Residence District. Ms. Johnson agreed. Ms. Mallett stated this language seemed comprehensive. Mr. McCauley stated the purpose was to encourage service-oriented usage, instead of retail-oriented usage.

Mr. McCauley detailed different options on signage in General Residence District. Ms. Johnson inquired about related sign calculations.

Mr. McCauley detailed the changes in sustainability article regarding heat pumps. Ms. Johnson stated the changes made were intended to eliminate the possibility of placing the units in the front setbacks.

Zoning Board of Appeals

ZBA-2205-05 – 978 Worcester Street

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested the renewal of a Special Permit for a drive-through window, where business is transacted from the vehicles of customers.

Staff recommended ZBA approve the request for a Special Permit. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-09 – 30 Yarmouth Road

Mr. McCauley detailed the applicant requested the renewal of Special Permit for home occupation.

Staff recommended ZBA approve the renewal of a Special Permit. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-10 – 82 Wellesley Avenue

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested a Special Permit Finding to construct an addition to the existing deck in the rear of a non-conforming home.

Staff recommended the ZBA approve the Special Permit. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-12 – 26 Woodridge Road

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested a Special Permit for the demolition of an existing non-conforming house on a nonconforming lot, and construction of a new home.

Mr. Taylor inquired about the TLAG calculation.

Staff recommended ZBA deny the Permit. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-13 – 30 Comeau Street

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested a variance to construct an addition to the rear of the property.

Mr. Himmelberger stated hardship was present, due to the shape of the lot.

Staff recommended ZBA delay action on the variance. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-14 – 460 Weston Road

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested a Special Permit for construction of a new home on a non-conforming lot.

Staff recommended ZBA deny the Special Permit. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2022-15 – 36 Sheridan Road

Mr. McCauley stated the applicant requested a Special Permit for demolition of an existing non-conforming house on a non-conforming lot, and construct a new home.

Staff recommended ZBA deny the Special Permit. Board Members suggested ZBA delay the decision, in consideration of the Historical Delay Bylaw status.

Minutes

November 4, 2021, and November 8, 2021

Mr. Roberti motioned to approve the minutes for November 4, 2021 and November 8, 2021, as edited by Ms. Johnson and Ms. Woodward. Ms. Woodward second the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Woodward-aye, Roberti-aye, Mallet-aye, Taylor-aye, Johnson-aye.

Other Items

Planning Department FY22 Budget

Mr. McCauley provided summary of the Planning Department FY22 Budget. Ms. Johnson confirmed additional planning work justified the need for additional staff.

Adjourn

Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 10:13 PM

APPROVED – March 21, 2022