

Minutes of the June 20, 2023, Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2023, 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: Chair Thomas Taylor, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Secretary Patricia Mallett, Marc Charney, Associate Member Sheila Olson

Absent: Jim Roberti

Staff Present: Planning Director Eric Arbeene, Senior Planner Emma Coates, Planner Brad Downey

Advisory Liaison: Madison Riley

Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants

Mr. Taylor called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:32 PM. He acknowledged the presence of Board Members: Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, Tom Taylor, Marc Charney, Shelia Olson (arrived at 6:36 PM)

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

Resident Katie Schuller Bleakie, 41 Cliff Road, indicated that she was opposed to the proposed development at 8 Cliff Road.

Resident Leslie Holmes, 377 Weston Road, stated she had concerns about the new developments on Linden Street and Weston Road.

125 Oakland Street – Sisters of Charity – Zoning Update

Present: Sister Mary Ann Foster, Sisters of Charity; Krista Thibault, Director of Finance – Sisters of Charity, David Himmelberger, Attorney

Resident Leslie Hanrahan, 5 Putney Road, stated that Centennial Park would be adversely affected by development of the property.

Resident and President of Wellesley Conservation Land Trust Michael Tobin, 45 Cottage Street, stressed that protection of open space is not being maintained with possible development.

Resident and Vice-President of Wellesley Conservation Land Trust Judy Barr, 331 Linden Street, stated the Planning Board must consider the impact on wildlife in Wellesley.

Resident and Vice-President of Friends of Brookside, Sue McKay, 186 Oakland Street, requested that any new development be restricted to the areas already developed.

Ms. Thibault commented that the Sisters of Charity have been in Massachusetts since the 1800's, and the property is the primary retirement home for the Sisters of Charity.

Attorney Himmelberger stated the Sisters are seeking approval to transfer their existing rights to a for-profit operator in order to take care of the remaining sisters in their retirement.

Ms. Woodward inquired if any other parcels of land in Wellesley have the same characteristics as the Sisters of Charity parcel on Oakland Street. Attorney Himmelberger responded not.

Mr. Charney asked about the process involved in zoning change, should a new owner be considering such change. Attorney Himmelberger stated new owners would be subject to regulations regarding projects of significant impact, and they would be required to obtain a Special Permit from the Planning Board.

Ms. Mallett acknowledged the community was concerned about building expansion, which would encroach on the wetlands and natural habitat.

Mr. Charney stated if a new owner redeveloped the site, they would be restricted to 45-foot building height, which is less than the height of the present buildings.

Ms. Woodward stated another religious organization could evoke the Dover Amendment, which would allow the owners to build new buildings higher than the 45-foot restriction.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the Sisters had thought about retaining the buffer to Centennial Park. Mr. Himmelberger replied the Sisters continue to take all suggestions from the public, and hope to present the proposal at the upcoming Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Arbeene confirmed that the Planning Board needed to further discuss the matter before Members decide to sponsor such a Town Meeting article.

Resident Susan Mcelaney, 232 Oakland Street, inquired about the percentage of land which is presently developed on the site.

Large House Review

LHR-21-10 35 Pembroke Road – Major Modification (To be continued to 7/10/23)

Present: David Himmelberger, Attorney

Mr. Arbeene reported the applicants requested the hearing be continued.

Attorney Himmelberger confirmed the applicant was working on stormwater aspects.

Mr. Charney motioned to continue LHR-21-10 – 35 Pembroke Road - Major Modification, to the 7/10/23 meeting of the Planning Board. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

LHR-20-05 – 35 Rice Street – Major Modification – (To be continued to 7/10/23)

Mr. Arbeene reported the applicant has re-engaged the original engineer, to modify the stormwater management plan.

Ms. Mallett motioned to continue LHR-20-05 – 35 Rice Street - Major Modification to the 7/10/23 meeting of the Planning Board. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

LHR-22-05 – 20 Oakland Street (Continued from 6/5/23)

LHR-22-06 – 365 Worcester Street (Continued from 6/5/23)

Present: George Saraceno, Assistant Town Engineer; David Himmelberger, Attorney; Larry Schind, Attorney; Nick Landry, Architect; Angela Kearney, Landscape Architect; Dan Carr, Engineer

Ms. Coates noted that most of the remaining concerns had been addressed.

Mr. Charney inquired about the sequencing of the restoration.

Mr. Shind stated Town Counsel had reviewed the easements, with comment that the Town has the right to access the property, if the applicant does not finish the landscaping as proposed.

Mr. Himmelberger stated Mr. Williams has agreed to approve the language to allow the Town to complete work as detailed in the bond.

Mr. Arbeene confirmed that Town Counsel agreed to the bond language.

Mr. Charney stated that everyone must agree to a timeline for the entire project.

Mr. Charney stated it would be beneficial for the developer to get the plants in the ground. Ms. Kearney agreed.

Ms. Woodward suggested implementing 2-year planting plans. Ms. Kearney concurred with seasonal monitoring as recommended.

Mr. Charney reiterated the importance of landscape monitoring, in consideration of the many trees previously cut down at the site. Ms. Kearney stated that three times the number of trees cut, would be planted.

Mr. Charney inquired if gas would be installed at the site. Mr. Saraceno replied there would not be gas service to the houses. Mr. Saraceno confirmed that DPW would be inspecting all the sewer work.

Ms. Mallet motioned to continue LHR-22-05 – 20 Oakland Street to the 7/10/23 meeting of the Planning Board, and to extend the action deadline to 7/13/23. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

Ms. Mallet motioned to continue LHR-22-06 – 365 Worcester Street to the 7/10/23 meeting of the Planning Board, and to extend the action deadline to 7/13/23. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

Zoning Board of Appeals Cases

ZBA-2023-38 – 96 Woodside Avenue

Mr. Downey explained the applicant was seeking a Special Permit Finding to demolish an existing deck, construct a new deck and a two-story addition.

Resident Ria Stolle, 102 Woodside Avenue, stated the proposed addition would cast shadow on her house. Staff recommended ZBA approve the Special Permit.

Board members agreed to recommend the ZBA delay action, and request the applicant reduce height of the structure, require consistency of plans and develop stormwater mitigation plans.

ZBA-2023-17 – 199 Worcester Street – Continued from 5/4/23

Mr. Downey detailed the applicant requested a Special Permit to allow motor sales for up to 5 vehicles, and operate between the hours of 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

Staff recommended ZBA delay action until the applicant provides clarifications on a number of issues previously raised by the Planning Board. Board Members concurred.

ZBA-2023-27 – 43 Fiske Road – Continued from 6/1/23

Mr. Downey explained the applicant sought a Special Permit to construct a two-story addition with less than required side yard setbacks.

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

ZBA-2023-36 – 8 Martin Road

Mr. Downey detailed the applicant requested a Special Permit for construction of a two-story addition and construction of a second story addition over an existing structure.

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

ZBA-2023-37 – 173 Worcester Street

Mr. Downey provided details regarding applicant request for a Special Permit to allow for the installation of replacement signage, which exceeds the letter height allowed by right.

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

ZBA-2023-39 – 951 Worcester Street

Mr. Downey explained the applicant was seeking renewal of a Special Permit to use a drive-through window where business is transacted.

Staff recommended ZBA approve the Special Permit renewal, with the same condition as previously imposed. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2018-18 – Modify – 39 Atwood Street

Mr. Downey confirmed the applicant sought to modify a Special Permit by adding a small cantilever at the back and a box bay window on the second floor.

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

ZBA-2008-Modify – 48 Parker Road

Mr. Downey explained the applicant requested modification of a Special Permit regarding conditioning, and the cutting of several mature trees on the property.

Staff recommended ZBA approve the Special Permit on the condition that the applicant provides documentation from a certified arborist that the felled trees were unhealthy. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2023-40 – 3 Summit Road

Mr. Downey explained the applicant sought a Special Permit to allow connecting a nonconforming garage.

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

Minutes 5/15/23 & 5/22/23

Review of minutes was postponed to the next meeting of the Planning Board.

Other Business

Nothing discussed.

Planning Director Report

Mr. Arbeene provided update regarding applications received for the Historical Planner position.

Planning Board Chair Report

Mr. Taylor confirmed the annual retreat would be held at the Kingsbury Room at the Wellesley Police Station on June 27.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 PM.

MINUTES APPROVED: MONDAY, JULY 24, 2023