

*Minutes of the June 23, 2022, Meeting of the Planning Board*

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD  
(ANNUAL RETREAT)  
THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 2022, 3:00 PM  
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*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 James Roberti, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Secretary Patricia Mallett, Marc Charney, Tom Taylor, Associate Member Sheila Olson

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

**Advisory Liaison:** Madison Riley

**Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants**

Mr. Roberti called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 3:23 PM. He acknowledged the presence of Board Members: Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, Marc Charney, Sheila Olson, and Jim Roberti

**Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda**

No public comments were presented

**Election of Officers for FY23**

Mr. Roberti stated the end of the fiscal year marks an opportunity to reorganize the Board

Mr. McCauley explained the voting process

**Mr. Taylor motioned to retain the same officers until the next fiscal year (FY24) with Mr. Roberti as Chair, Ms. Woodward as Vice-Chair, and Ms. Mallett as Secretary. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 5-0; Taylor-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Roberti-aye**

**Organizational Matters**

Meeting Protocols

Mr. Roberti opined the Board has gained attention from the public and local media since 2017. He noted that he felt the number of Large House Review applications has increased, as has the size of proposed homes. Ms. Woodward praised local media sources for televising meetings and reporting on local matters.

Mr. Roberti requested that disagreements between the public, staff, or other Board members be directed to him.

Ms. Olson requested that staff and the Board develop a method to formalize multi-meeting procedures and submittal deadlines. Mr. Roberti, Ms. Mallett, Mr. Arbeene, Mr. Taylor agreed.

Mr. Taylor asked to what extent staff talks applicants through the LHR process. Mr. McCauley explained the process and noted that a mandatory meeting before submission could be useful.

Mr. Roberti suggested meeting with local counsel who frequently represent applicants.

Mr. McCauley clarified the purpose of applications.

Ms. Woodward inquired if rules regarding applications and submission deadlines would be in regulations. Mr. McCauley and Mr. Roberti confirmed and noted they would have to speak to town counsel regarding changes.

Ms. Mallett suggested creating a checklist of application items to ensure completion. Mr. McCauley responded that Staff have minimal time to streamline processes.

Discussion took place regarding difficulties with Town Human Resource policies and their effect on Staff workflow. Mr. Roberti asked Mr. Riley if he would like to meet to discuss HR level changes. Mr. Riley agreed

Mr. Arbeene mentioned Board meeting length. Mr. Charney echoed meeting length concerns.

Mr. Charney opined that the Board should differentiate between applicants for Large House Review.

Ms. Mallett and Ms. Olson disagreed.

Ms. Olson suggested setting time limits on applicant presentations for LHR applications.

Mr. Charney aired frustrations regarding interpersonal issues surfacing during meetings. He further clarified these appear to be between himself and Ms. Woodward. Ms. Woodward asked to discuss the issues separate from the meeting at hand. Mr. Roberti and Mr. Charney agreed.

### **Preparation of Rules and Regulations**

Mr. McCauley provided an overview of bylaws and regulations that need updating. Mr. McCauley also explained that regulations and applications need to be prepared for the forthcoming Article 39: Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw. Mr. Roberti asked how this will be done.

Mr. McCauley indicated that regulatory action deadlines make it difficult for staff to work on projects outside of daily permitting responsibilities and added that the town and the state need to update notice procedures.

## FY23 Work Plan Discussion

### Benchmarking

Mr. Roberti recalled past benchmarking efforts and reiterated the project needs to be completed.

Mr. Taylor described his past benchmarking efforts.

Mr. Arbeene suggested hiring a consultant to assist with the work. Ms. Mallett agreed. Mr. Roberti asked about cost related to hiring a consultant. Mr. Arbeene responded research would have to be conducted to answer that question.

Mr. Riley offered suggestions on the scope of benchmarking work. Mr. McCauley recalled a previous graph he had created for work hours and confirmed he would send it to Mr. Riley.

### Area Studies, Barton Road/Cedar Street/Route 9

Mr. Roberti relayed the history of the Barton Road area and expressed interest in using funds to conduct a study on the Barton Road, Route 9 corridor in the interest of redeveloping the area.

Mr. McCauley added that he will confirm the monetary amount available for a study.

### Zoning Bylaws

Mr. McCauley noted the Board should consider a zoning change and accompanying regulations to reflect recent potential biolab safety concerns. Mr. McCauley requested follow up on past efforts to amend the PSI process to include sustainability review.

### Tree Bylaw

Mr. McCauley described flaws within the Tree Preservation and Protection Bylaw. Mr. McCauley also suggested identifying a point-person responsible for enforcement supplemental to Building Department staff.

Ms. Olson identified further discrepancies related to the Tree Bylaw.

Mr. McCauley suggested using Tree Bank Funds to study the Tree Bylaw for amendment purposes and explained the overall process for bylaw amendment. Mr. McCauley posited that the Tree Bank Fund uses required reexamination as well.

### Other

Mr. Roberti asked if any Board members were interested in becoming liaison to another Board.

Ms. Olson asked if in-person meetings will be required again. Mr. Arbeene confirmed the State has not yet passed legislation deciding such.

Mr. McCauley noted that current vacant positions on supporting Boards will need to be filled.

Discussion took place regarding post-pandemic changes to housing and economy. Board members discussed how changes would affect the Town.

Mr. McCauley asked the Board about sustainability review in the PSI process and stated he was unsure if there will be a Fall Town Meeting.

Mr. Roberti confirmed he would reach out to his contact regarding PSI amendments.

Ms. Olson reiterated earlier discussion on streamlining application submittal and review processes and completing ADU regulations.

The Board thanked Staff for their time. Mr. Roberti thanked Mr. Riley for attending.

**Adjourn**

Mr. Roberti adjourned the meeting at 6:07 PM.

**MINUTES APPROVED – TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2022**