

*Minutes of the June 29, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Planning Board*

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD  
MONDAY, JUNE 29, 2020, 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 Present:** Chair Catherine Johnson, Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, James Roberti, Tom Taylor and Associate Member Sheila Olson

**Staff Present:** Planning Director Donald McCauley

**Natural Resources Commission (NCR) Members Present:** Brandon Schmitt, Director of NCR; Katie Griffin, Chair; Raina McManus, Laura Robert, Allison Burson, and Jay McHale

**Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants**

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Ms. Griffin called the joint NRC meeting with the Planning Board to order at approximately 6:45 p.m.

**Mr. Roberti motioned to appoint Catherine Johnson, chair of the joint meeting with NRC and moved to elect Katie Griffin as Secretary of the joint meeting. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (10-0).**

**Scenic Road Hearing – Joint Hearing with NCR**

*194 & 196 Pond Road – Postponed from April 1, 2020*

Present: Joseph Hassell, Applicant; Attorney Larry Shind, Marc Sullivan, Architect; and Bert Corey, Engineer

Mr. McCauley provided project update and reviewed MA General Law Section 4 of Ch. 87 which outlines scenic road regulations regarding trees and stone walls. Mr. Schmitt confirmed that NCR acted as the official tree warden under the described statute.

Ms. Johnson noted that Pond Road was declared a scenic road in 1971. She inquired about vehicle traffic on Pond Road during construction. Mr. Haskell referred to the proposed Construction Management Plan.

Mr. Shind stated that trees and stonewalls were the topic of tonight's hearing.

Ms. Griffin inquired about root-zone disturbance around the driveways and recommended monitoring surrounding trees. Mr. Schmidt agreed.

Ms. McManus acknowledged that one tree was being considered for a vote. Mr. Shind read the related regulation aloud.

Resident Frank Hunnewell, 37 Pond Road, stated that he was confused about the regulation. Mr. Shind responded that the project would not disturb any stone wall/s and that one small Norway Maple was being requested for removal.

Ms. Mallett requested Town Counsel advice regarding Section 6. Ms. Woodward commented that the development of the two homes would have a negative aesthetic impact on the neighborhood. Ms. Olson mentioned the interpretation associated with Section 6.

Resident William Iselin, 100 Pond Road, concurred with the concerns of Ms. Woodward, Mr. Taylor, and Ms. Olson.

Resident David Howe, 110 Pond Road, opined that Pond Road was an asset to the Town and the real concern was the proximity of two proposed houses and the distance from the scenic road.

Resident Kath Schaller, 6 Harvard Street, emphasized that Pond Road is a special place in Wellesley and the construction project, as proposed, was not consistent with the natural setting of the scenic road.

Mr. Schmitt suggested that the members of NRC determine whether to approve or disapprove the removal of the Norway Maple, as proposed. Ms. Johnson commented that in order to receive Town Counsel input, the hearing would have to be kept open. Mr. McCauley stated that the NRC could vote on the tree removal at this meeting, and the Planning Board could wait to hear from Town Counsel before voting.

Mr. Hunnewell stated that the one tree is not the primary concern, but rather the overall effect of this development on the Pond Road scenic road.

NCR members agreed not to recommend removal of the Norway Maple located at 196 Pond Road.

**Mr. Roberti moved to continue the Scenic Road Hearings for 194 & 196 Pond Road to July 20, 2020. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (5-0).**

### **Large House Review**

*LHR-19-13 – 194 Pond Road – Continued from April 1, 2020*

*LHR-19-14 – 196 Pond Road – Continued from April 1, 2020*

Ms. Johnson disclosed that she is a real estate agent associated with Caldwell Banker. She explained that unless she were to sell the properties at 194 and 196 Pond Road, no conflict of interest would exist.

Mr. McCauley updated the LHR project which had been revised.

Mr. Shind affirmed that the Pond Road neighborhood had been notified of the legality of the two conforming building lots which are zoned for single-family homes. He stressed that the project could go forward by right.

Mr. Hassell reviewed the plans, noting that Town departments approved the revised plans and engineering comments were being addressed.

Resident William Iselin, 100 Pond Road, commented about lack of screening foliage in the winter months.

Ms. Mallett noted that the presented renderings had no resemblance to the existing Pond Road sites, and was concerned about extensive grading.

Mr. Howe agreed that the renderings were not realistic and agreed that the site/s would not have screening for months of the year. Mr. Hassell responded that he would submit a vegetation plan that would better retain foliage throughout the year.

Ms. Johnson presented several stormwater-related concerns. Mr. Carey confirmed that the lots are not in wetlands but do adhere to wetland regulations with extensive stormwater measures in place.

Mr. Howe recommended that the proposed homes be set back from Pond Road. Owner Andrew Cole responded that the geography did not allow for setting the houses further back from the road.

Mr. Roberti mentioned the septic system factor might now allow for re-location of the homes. He suggested that improved screening plans be submitted.

Mr. Hallett confirmed he would be willing to conduct an additional forum and meet with neighbors.

Ms. Woodward maintained that two primary problems existed: the proximity of the homes to the street and adequate screening for six months of the year, which would not be possible in this part of the country.

Ms. Woodward affirmed that she supported the feelings of many Wellesley residents who advocated for a more natural approach with homes more characteristic of Pond Road.

**Mr. Roberti motioned to continue the Large House Review – LHR-19-13 – 194 Pond Road and LHR-19-14 – 196 Pond Road, to July 20, 2020. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (5-0).**

### **Other Business**

25 Upwey Road – Subdivision Compliance

Mr. McCauley stated that the counsel for the applicant is working on the issue and asked that the discussion be postponed to July 6<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:40 p.m.

Next Meeting:           Monday, July 6, 2020

Minutes Approved:   Monday, August 3, 2020