

Minutes of the July 24, 2023, Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JULY 24, 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 Marc Charney, Jim Roberti, Patricia Mallett, Associate Member Sheila Olson

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

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: Tom Taylor, Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, Marc Charney, Jim Roberti, Shelia Olson

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

Resident Leslie Hanrahan, 5 Putney Road, commented about the Sisters of Charity request to rezone their property in consideration of protecting the natural resources as required by the Unified Plan and Climate Action Goals Guide.

Reappoint Shelia Dinsmoor to the Design Review Board

Ms. Coates provided information regarding the reappointment of Shelia Dinsmoor to the Design Review Board.

Ms. Woodward motioned to reappoint Shelia Dinsmoor to the Design Review Board for a one-year term ending July 31, 2024. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 3-2; Charney-no, Roberti-no, Mallett-aye, Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye

Project of Significant Impact

PSI-23-01 – Wellesley College – Health & Counseling Center – Continued from 7/10/23.

Present: Justin Mosca, VHB; Michelle Maheau, Wellesley College

Ms. Coates provided project updates.

Mr. Mosca explained the College has contracted with a third party to dispose of any bio-waste generated by the health facility.

Ms. Maheau reported the college contracts with Newton-Wellesley Hospital to run the health center, and they utilize a third party, Steri-Cycle, to remove any biohazardous materials.

Ms. Mallett motioned to approve PSI-23-01 – Wellesley College – Health & Counseling Center. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye. Mr. Roberti did not vote.

8 Cliff Road Presentation

Present: Victor Sheen and Peter Holland, project developers

Mr. Taylor stated the 8 Cliff Road Presentation is an informational presentation

Mr. Sheen stated the site was previously identified as a suitable housing development, in accordance with the Wellesley Housing Production Plan.

Mr. Sheen provided details of the proposed development on Cliff Road.

Mr. Roberti inquired if proposed access to Cliff Road would be permanent. Mr. Holland responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Roberti inquired about a related traffic study. Mr. Holland stated a preliminary traffic study had been completed.

Mr. Charney inquired about the associated 40R process. Mr. Sheen replied the process reflected a public-private partnership.

Ms. Mallett inquired about the height of the building. Mr. Holland replied the proposed height is 36 feet high and would be set further away from the houses on Bradford Street.

Ms. Olson inquired about vegetative screening being proposed on the Worcester Road.

Ms. Woodward inquired if a conservation easement or restriction would be included. Mr. Holland replied protection of open space would be included in the development agreement.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the amount of ledge removal had been identified. Mr. Holland replied the modified plan would reduce the amount of ledge to be removed.

Resident Varnhan Dani, 20 Cliff Road, expressed his concern about the proposed development and the driveway being very close to his home. Mr. Holland commented that significant vegetative screening would be installed near the driveway.

Resident Andrew Mikula, 42 Arnold Road, stated he supported housing projects such as this one because it helps solve an existing housing problem.

Resident Pedro Caetano, 40 Williams Street, commented that many working professionals have been priced out of the Wellesley housing market.

Resident Mary Prosnitz, 11 Tappan Road, commented that she supports the development of affordable housing in Wellesley.

Resident Katie Schuller Bleakie, 41 Cliff Road, expressed her concern about the proposed underground parking plan.

Resident Leslie Leonhardt, 19 Cliff Road, stated the project did not fit the character of the area, and much wildlife habitat would be displaced.

Resident Laura Robert, 166 Oakland Street, inquired about project proximity to the homes on Bradford Road.

Resident Thomas Paine, 2 Cushing Road, stated that large projects like this one, transfer wealth from the abutters to the developers.

Resident Gregg Griner, 11 Bradford Road, stated rush hour begins earlier than 8:00 AM and lasts longer than 9:00 AM, as maintained by the developers. Mr. Sheen confirmed that the team was working with traffic engineers with the analysis of traffic patterns at the site.

Large House Review

LHR-23-02 – 84 Washburn Avenue – Continued from 7/10/23

Present: Huan Xu, Owner; Kyle Xue, Architect; Chi Man, Civil Engineer; Shufan Feng, Landscape Architect

Ms. Coates provided updates to the plan.

Ms. Woodward inquired about the proposed pole lighting. Ms. Feng confirmed the pole lighting would reflect improvement to the existing pole light.

Mr. Man reported the proposed lighting fixtures are dark-sky compliant.

Mr. Man explained the waiver to delay digging the test pit was requested in consideration that the test pit is located in the driveway, and the applicant will live in the house until construction begins.

Ms. Mallett motioned to continued LHR-23-02 – 84 Washburn Avenue to the Planning Board meeting on 8/7/23, and to extend the action deadline to 8/9/23. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Mallett-aye, Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye.

Zoning Board of Appeals

ZBA-2018-18 - 39 Atwood Street – Continued from 7/6/23

Ms. Coates detailed the applicant applied for a Special Permit to allow construction of a cantilever and a box bay window on the second floor. She noted that additional requested information had not been received.

Staff recommended ZBA postpone the hearing until the applicant provides additional information. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2023-39 – 951 Worcester Street – Continued from 7/6/23

Ms. Coates detailed the application was continued and additional materials were requested but not received.

Application was placed on hold until additional materials were received.

ZBA-2023-42 – 93 Worcester Street

Ms. Coates explained the applicant had requested a Special Permit for the installation of standing signs, which would exceed the number of signs allowed by right.

Staff recommended approval of the application. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2023-43 - 96,100,112 Worcester Street

Ms. Coates explained the applicant requested a Special Permit Finding for the installation of standing signs, which would exceed the number of signs allowed by right.

Ms. Coates confirmed DRB had reviewed the application and recommended several minor modifications. Staff recommended approval of the application. Board Members agreed.

ZBA – 2023-44 - 6 Dunedin Road

Ms. Coates detailed aspects regarding the application, noting that the applicant requested a Special Permit Finding to allow the construction of a porch with less than the required front and right-side yard setbacks.

Staff recommended ZBA delay action on the Special Permit, with the condition that the petitioner reduce the height of the proposal and modify the design to reduce the ratio to building area.

Mr. Taylor noted the proposed plan significantly moves the house closer to the street.

Board Members agreed to add a third condition, requesting the applicant reduce the encroachment on the front setback.

ZBA-2023-45 – 53 Pleasant Street

Ms. Coates detailed the application requested a modification of a Variance issued in 1947, and a Special Permit Finding to allow for the construction of a 2.5 story addition with less than right-yard setbacks.

Staff recommended ZBA Delay Action on the Special Permit, with the condition that the petitioner modify the design of the addition and include language regarding the pre-existing nonconforming setbacks. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2008-43 – 48 Parker Road

Review of the application was continued.

Minutes – 5/15/23, 5/22/23, 6/5/23 & 6/20/23

Mr. Charney motioned to approve the Planning Board Minutes for 5/15/23, 5/22/23 & 6/20/23, as presented. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Mallett-aye, Woodward-aye, Charney-aye, Taylor-aye

The Planning Board Minutes for 6/5/23 were postponed to the next meeting of the Planning Board.

Other Business

Adoption of Accessory Dwelling Unit Certification of Compliance

Mr. Arbeene explained the certification process required the registering of an ADU at the Registry of Deeds. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Certificate of Compliance Form details the operational requirements for the ADU.

Mr. Charney motioned to approve the operational requirements of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Certificate of Compliance, and to authorize Staff to implement the form. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye

Planning Director's Report

Mr. Arbeene reported the new planner will start next week.

Adjourn

Mr. Taylor adjourned the Planning Board Meeting at 9:53 PM.

MINUTES APPROVED – TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023