

Minutes of the September 9, 2019 Special Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2019, 6:30 P.M.
PLANNING BOARD OFFICE – TOWN HALL

MINUTES

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, polices, long-term planning and by promoting citizen participation in the planning process.

Planning Board Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward (arrived at 6:50), Secretary Patty Mallett, Jim Roberti, Frank Pinto (arrived at 6:50), Associate Member Sheila Olson

Planning Board Absent: None

Staff Present: None

Call to Order: Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

Citizen Speak for Matters Not on the Agenda: No one addressed the Board.

1. Planning Staffing: Ms. Johnson updated the Board on the status of new hiring. Tucker Becket has begun work as the Part-Time Planner. Dana Marks will begin work on September 25 as the Full-Time Planner. The search for a Senior Planner is continuing.

2. Interview with Candidate for Planning Director: Antonio Lemos

Ms. Johnson introduced Mr. Lemos to the Board, saying that his current position was as city planner and civil engineer for New Bedford.

Mr. Lemos gave the Board an overview of his 34 years of experience, some of which involved work for his native country, Portugal, and for many countries in the European Union as well as his work in New Bedford.

He described how his work involved resiliency planning that factored earthquake preparedness, a project to build a large fueling station, and a terminus connection for the European Union's high-speed rail system in Portugal. In discussing the details of this latter project, Mr. Lemos explained that he was responsible for the feasibility/design choices that were presented to the EU for selection. Mr. Lemos

said that in New Bedford, the projects before him included infrastructure and added that without proper infrastructure nothing could be built. He also described his work with residential housing and zoning.

Members of the Board asked Mr. Lemos to describe how he worked in collaboration with other departments in New Bedford, with reference to the city/mayoral municipal system and decision-making there. The Board also inquired more about Mr. Lemos' interface with residential housing development and historical preservation of a town's character as well as the importance of emphasizing open space and sustainability.

3. Interview with Candidates for Planning Director: Don McCauley

Ms. Johnson introduced Mr. McCauley to the Board, noting that many if not all of the Board, knew Mr. McCauley and his volunteer appointed and elected positions within Town government: Advisory, Planning Board (including Chair), Board of Selectmen, and Town Moderator.

Mr. McCauley described his current work as the founding member of McCauley Lyman LLC, a firm that specializes in all aspects of energy law. He described a passion for law, architecture, planning, and the mapping that is associated with planning.

He said that his knowledge of the Town and the structure of Town Government could compensate for not having a Master's Degree in Planning. As former Chair of the Planning Board, he had been instrumental in writing several Zoning Bylaws and applying others. Mr. McCauley mentioned that in his first year on the Board, he worked with Tom Frisardi to draft the Large House Review Bylaw and felt that it was a negotiated product so that he was impressed by the Board's repeated revisions since 2007.

Mr. McCauley described the work his firm has done, specifically relating to sustainability, solar arrays and alternative energy, and the related negotiations. He indicated that if he were the candidate selected as Planning Director, he would step away from running the firm. He said that it made sense to him to change direction and follow interests other than law.

The Board asked about how he would manage and mentor junior staff members who would possibly have more planning experience. Mr. McCauley said that he would take the experience he gained when building his own firm and transfer that to the Planning Department.

The Board and Mr. McCauley discussed the challenges of knowing Wellesley as a civic volunteer and resident vs. working for the Town. The conversation included a discussion of the perception that there were departmental silos and the need to work across department lines. Mr. McCauley said that he believes that frequent person-to-person communication usually produces results.

4. Next Steps: The Board discussed both candidates and what each offered to the Department and the Town. The Board analyzed the interaction of staff within the Department and the necessity for team building. The Board then reflected on all candidates that have been interviewed during this process.

The Board concluded with the recognition that local knowledge of Wellesley, its government, history, planning and zoning, as well as the understanding of how the residents of Wellesley have expressed their vision for the Town within its Unified Plan, is critical to the role of Planning Director.

Ms. Johnson asked the Board if everyone wanted to vote for Planning Director or continue the search. Mr. Roberti made a motion to offer the position to Mr. McCauley and for the Chair to communicate this to the Human Resources Department. There was a brief discussion concerning the process for reference checks. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion, with the additional favorable support of Ms. Olson, the Associate Member.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 16, 2019

Minutes Approved: Monday, October 7, 2019

Minutes prepared by Catherine Johnson, Chair