

Minutes of the October 7, 2019 Regular Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2019, 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL – GREAT 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, policies, long-term planning and by promoting citizen participation in the planning process.

Planning Board Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Secretary Patricia Mallett, James Roberti, Frank Pinto, and Associate Member Sheila Olson

Staff Present: Interim Planning Director Laura Harbottle

1. Call to Order

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda – Citizen Speak

There were no public comments.

3. ANR Plan

Materials distributed to, and considered by, the Planning Board regarding this agenda item are retained with the official set of minutes available at the Planning Department Office.

PBC 19-05 – Endorsement, ANR Plan for 251-251A Weston Road

Present: Attorney David Himmelberger, Wilder, Shea & Himmelberger, LLP; Paul Delaney, Trustee – 251 Weston Road

Mr. Himmelberger outlined that his client is petitioning to raise the garage and combine parcels 251 and 251A. He stated that the combined lots will never address the lack of frontage.

Mr. Roberti questioned the possibility of attaching the garage to the house.

Ms. Woodward confirmed that the new lot would not satisfy all the non-conformities associated with lot 251A.

Mr. Roberti moved to endorse the PBC 19-05 ANR Plan for 251-251A Weston Road. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

4. Continued/Previous Applications and/or Public Hearings

a. Consider LHR 19-07 Large House Review for 14 Strathmore Road – *Continued from 9-16-19*

Materials distributed to, and considered by, the Planning Board regarding this agenda item are retained with the official set of minutes available at the Planning Department Office.

Present: Attorney David Himmelberger, Wilder, Shea & Himmelberger, LLP, Bonnie Tam, BT Design, Principal/Owner Jessica Ye, Rivermore, LLC; Engineer Raouf Mankaryous, Alpha Omega Engineering, Inc.; Neighbors David Chapman, Paul Goldman, Patrice Goldman, Barbara Viechnicki, Dennis Viechnicki, Joan Rubin and Dan Rubin

Mr. Himmelberger detailed the changes made on the plans and noted that all engineering concerns had been satisfied.

Mr. Roberti asked what the living area of the proposed house was. Ms. Woodward questioned the number of bedrooms of the reduced house size. Ms. Johnson maintained that articulation could help with massing. She also stated that there appeared to be differing dormer construction plans.

Ms. Tam asked for suggestions to address the massing aspect.

Board discussion took place.

Resident David Chapin, 10 Strathmore Road, stated the need for a neighborhood meeting.

Ms. Woodward agreed that the applicant should have sponsored a neighborhood meeting.

Resident Barbara Viechnicki, 5 Poplar Road, stated that the proposed house be at 3,600 square feet.

Ms. Ye noted that the livable space is really within 3,600 square feet, in consideration of the garage and attic.

Mr. Roberti itemized the recommended improvement list of the Board:

- Removal of shutters from windows
- Amend the doghouse dormer
- Consider DRB recommendation of hood back gable

Mr. Himmelberger restated his understanding of Board recommendations:

- Removal of shutters and retain the window impediments
- Recess the garage gable dormer/transfer to doghouse dormer which sets back
- Include a small hip (hooded) roof at the rear of the garage gable.

Ms. Woodward commented that she wanted to understand the possible implications of the applicant constructing this house “by right” rather than through Large House Review. She queried if more suggestions could be implemented. Ms. Johnson replied that the applicant’s proposal was 600 square feet from “by right” status. Ms. Johnson explained that the house is built “by right” the Planning Board would lose the ability to have input on stormwater control, the landscaping, and possibly lighting; she believes this would not be beneficial. She noted that mass and design continued to be considerations.

Ms. Mallett stated that the removal of shutters and control of stormwater is a considerable aspect and felt that a stormwater system should be implemented whether the square footage was 3,500 or 4,100 square feet. Ms. Johnson noted that in theory, the applicant must keep the stormwater aspect on their own property and affirmed that the Engineering Department sought final approval of the landscaping plan.

Ms. Woodward mentioned other “by right” aspects.

Ms. Woodward asked if the Board members were satisfied with the landscape plan.

Ms. Mallett noted that this was the first complete landscaping plan presented to the Board.

Ms. Johnson noted that the landscape plan presented tonight was beneficial and did delineate the number of trees that will remain.

Further discussion took place regarding proposed landscaping.

Ms. Woodward stated that she was concerned about many aspects of the project, totally sympathized with the neighbors, and asked if the neighbors could be given another opportunity to respond.

Mr. Roberti commented that the Board could not require that the applicant build a smaller house. Ms. Woodward responded that the Board could deem that the size of the structure was too big for the existing neighborhood and the applicant could decide to build “by right” or come back before the Board.

Resident and neighbor Joan Rubin of 18 Strathmore Road stated that she appreciated the fact that the applicant must realize a certain return on the property. Ms. Johnson noted that stormwater and landscaping could become more important aspects if the structure changed. Ms. Mallett agreed that if the application was not approved tonight, it could likely become a “creep” situation in the future and the Town would lose any control possible as a large house review.

Ms. Olson stated that she is not a voting member of the Board, and stated that she was in opposition to this project in consideration of precedent and the effect on the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Himmelberger stated that it was unfair to differentiate between resident and non-resident builders and emphasized that his client is a resident of Wellesley at 6 Clifford Street. Ms. Olson restated that her intent in language was if the builder was living at the proposed property.

Mr. Pinto noted that in consideration of the suggested changes and the “by right” controls, he was in favor of the project.

Ms. Viechnicki stated that the neighborhood is respectful of other neighbors when making changes to their homes and this should be no different and expressed disappointment that the developer did not reach out to the neighbors and would rather that the Board choose the option of eliminating the master bedroom over the garage. Ms. Woodward agreed that it would have been preferable that the developer/applicant reach out to the neighbors.

Mr. Roberti inquired about the effects of proposed screening. Ms. Johnson responded that in year one it has no effect and as it grows in approximately ten years, people will have gotten accustomed to it and told Ms. Ye that a four-bedroom use would have been far better.

Ms. Ye stated that before coming to the Board she did try to share the plans with the neighbors and many were not home and since that time residents could have presented comment and she has made all changes that the Board has suggested. Ms. Johnson responded that there is never enough outreach and within the building plans a contact phone number must be provided and if future building is anticipated, builders go

house to house to connect with neighbors on a consistent basis. Ms. Ye stated that she would communicate with the neighbors in regard to the building plans.

Mr. Roberti expressed that there would be further risk and no gain to considering the decrease in size. He stated that he wanted to see a plan reflecting the itemized recommendations to be presented at the next Planning Board meeting. Ms. Johnson agreed with the suggestion.

Ms. Woodward stated that at the next meeting she wanted to see a landscape plan along with the revised building plan.

Ms. Mallett suggested that Mr. Himmelberger also present any related renderings he had at the next meeting. Mr. Himmelberger agreed to do so.

Ms. Johnson moved that the applicant present all the suggestions presented at this meeting to include:

- Removal of shutters from windows
- Amend the doghouse dormer, not a wall dormer
- Consider DRB recommendation of hood back gable
- May include slightly smaller windows in the doghouse dormer

Mr. Himmelberger asked if a conditional vote could be taken this evening. Mr. Roberti noted that in this case, it would be more prudent to continue the hearing and have the Board examine the amended plans at the next meeting.

Mr. Himmelberger commented that time is of importance and winter is approaching and the applicant is seeking confirmation that will be sufficient to receive the Board's approval. Ms. Johnson asked that there is a possibility that the Board might not approve of the amended drawings. Mr. Himmelberger agreed to continue the hearing to the next meeting.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue LHR 19-07 Large House Review for 14 Strathmore Road to October 21, 2019 for the hearing and October 22, 2019 for the action deadline. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

5. New Applications and/or Public Hearings

Materials distributed to, and considered by the Planning Board regarding this agenda item are retained with the official set of minutes available at the Planning Department Office.

Consider LHR 19-11 Large House Review for 44 Denton Road

Present: Attorney David Himmelberger, Wilder, Shea & Himmelberger, LLP, and Douglas and Abigail Wolfson, owners

Mr. Himmelberger indicated no change in footprint and noted the Wetlands Committee found that this to be acceptable. He also noted that the property is located in the Town's only conservation district; the house went through extensive review and was issued a favorable letter. Mr. Himmelberger detailed DRB recommendations, including the clapboard treatment. He affirmed that there would be no changes to the garage height and additional supports would be implemented. He stated that the front porch met all setback standards.

Mr. Roberti inquired about the new plans that came to the Board today. Mr. Himmelberger replied that the two plans reflected DRB suggestions, alignment of windows on the right side and replacement of a fascia board and three different option treatments regarding the clapboard.

Mr. Roberti motioned to approve the LHR 19-11 Large House Review for 44 Denton Road with conditions outlined in staff's report subject to revising the A12 rendering with regular sized clapboard and a bottom trim board to indicate where the projection is on the side elevation to the rear of the chimney. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

6. Other Business

a. Planning Board Chair Report

Ms. Johnson stated that Don McCauley has accepted the position as Planning Director and will be starting by the end of October. Ms. Johnson stated that she discussed the issue of applicant materials being submitted late with Mr. McCauley. Mr. McCauley and Ms. Johnson discussed implementation of a policy which will enforce such timely submission standards to allow for adequate review time. Ms. Woodward stressed the importance of receiving materials with enough time to review before the meeting.

Ms. Johnson recommended inclusion of models or computer models to assist with projects brought before the Board, especially in consideration of a PSI project. Ms. Woodward commented Delanson Circle and the 148 Weston Road project, effectively utilized computer generated models/images. Ms. Mallett agreed that such methods are most effective.

Ms. Harbottle commented that such models aid in the consideration of the neighborhood and structures nearby and benefits the Board, the applicant and the public.

Ms. Johnson announced that the League of Women Voters of Wellesley is sponsoring Wellesley Meet-Up on Thursday, October 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Wellesley High School Cafeteria. Elected officials on various Town boards and committees/commissions will be present to answer questions. Ms. Johnson asked if two Board members would like to attend. Ms. Woodward and Ms. Johnson offered to attend the event.

b. Review Planning Board Report for the Town's Annual Report FY19

Ms. Johnson affirmed that the Board needed to approve the Planning Board Report and could change the report.

Ms. Woodward commented that she was impressed by what the Planning Department has done and asked about the order of items in the Report. She felt that the Report should not be shortened. Mr. Roberti also indicated that the Report should not be shortened.

Mr. Roberti motioned to accept the Report of the Planning Department for the Annual Town Meeting as drafted by the staff and Chair Catherine Johnson for FY19. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

c. Review Application for ZBA 40R Site Plan Approval for Hanover Wellesley (Wellesley Office Park)

Ms. Harbottle stated that ZBA has 120 days to schedule the first hearing for the project and affirmed that the 120-day timeframe had begun. She explained that the 40R process includes design guidelines. She

noted that the DRB has looked at the plans and will likely review those again. She stressed that plan recommendations from the Board would be beneficial.

Mr. Roberti asked if there was a deadline to submit related Board recommendation/comment. Ms. Harbottle commented that the Board start that process soon. Ms. Johnson suggested that Board comment/suggestions be submitted to Planning Department staff, with special consideration to landscaping/trees, massiveness of structure and connections to the parking garage and the main building. She mentioned that the applicant's approach appears to be a "by right" approach and intended to build the structure to office park appearance and integration. She noted that the Board can consider materials and texture and suggested that a peer architect could be involved.

Mr. Pinto asked about the traffic aspect. Ms. Johnson replied that the Board could comment regarding such, to include bicycle paths, connectivity to trail.

Ms. Harbottle suggested that a Planning Department staff member and Planning Board member review all the standards in the zoning bylaw. Ms. Woodward stated that she had concerns regarding the landscaping and architecture and would defer to DRB.

Mr. Pinto commented that he would like to see more information regarding the traffic aspect.

Ms. Woodward stated that she had difficulty interpreting the lighting aspect and had never seen such information presented in this manner.

Ms. Johnson spoke of the transportation aspect, including the developer's suggestion of dedicated busing in and out of the development, which would have effect on conditions.

Ms. Johnson recommended that Board members submit particular questions/concerns to Tucker in the Planning Department and he can provide a memo to ZBA reflective of those concerns.

d. Review other ZBA Cases for 10/10/19 Public Hearing

Ms. Harbottle provided detail regarding the ZBA cases to be reviewed:

9 Granite Street - #2019-78

Non-conforming garage demolition for a new two-story addition. All aspects will be conforming upon project completion. Staff recommended approval. Ms. Johnson questioned the associated TLAG.

38 Whittier Road - #2019-79

Small addition which intensifies the non-conformity aspect. Ms. Johnson commented that the addition would not be creating additional nonconformity, in consideration of existing conditions.

25 Oak Street - #2019-80

Proposed duplex on a non-conforming pork-chop lot, which was not permitted in the Town, currently, and including easement and a shared driveway. Ms. Harbottle recommended considering the condition of the driveway, screening and stormwater because of proposed intensity of use.

Ms. Johnson provided some recommendations and made comparison to two condo-duplex; one at the corner of Hollis Street/Westerly and another at the top of Rice Street, which are both not preferred in consideration of size and mass. Ms. Harbottle noted there is no front setback. Detailed discussion continued.

Ms. Johnson suggested that the petitioner withdraw his application and the Building Inspector should be informed about this aspect.

32 Boulevard Road - #2019-81

Ms. Harbottle noted that this petition involved razing and reconstruction on a non-conforming lot in consideration of coverage and lot size. Ms. Harbottle recommended that the petitioner comply with lot coverage. Ms. Johnson recommended such compliance be suggested to ZBA.

7. Minutes

Mr. Roberti moved to approve the minutes of November 8, 2018 and November 19, 2018, as amended by Ms. Woodward. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

Mr. Roberti moved to approve the minutes of September 3, 2019. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 3-0-2; two abstain and three in favor. Johnson-aye, Pinto – aye, Mallett – aye, Woodward – abstain and Roberti – abstain.

Mr. Roberti and Ms. Woodward were not present at the September 3, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Roberti moved to approve the minutes of September 9, 2019. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

Mr. Roberti moved to approve the minutes of September 16, 2019. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0-1; one abstain and four in favor. Johnson – aye, Woodward – aye, Roberti – aye, Pinto – aye and Mallett – abstain.

Ms. Mallett was not present at the September 16th meeting.

There being no further business, Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 21, 2019

Minutes Approved: Monday, October 21, 2019

Laura Harbottle, Interim Planning Director

