



Town of West Newbury
Planning Board
Tuesday December 19th, 2023
381 Main Street, Town Office Building
www.wnewbury.org
Minutes of Meeting

Open Session: 7:00 PM by remote participation (see below)

Addendum to Meeting Notice regarding Remote Participation:

As is permissible by State Law the Planning Board conducted its meeting via remote participation. The meeting agenda included instructions for the public about how to participate remotely. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that it has been unable to do so, despite best efforts, the Board will post on the Town of West Newbury website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Chairperson Brian Murphey called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. Members in attendance were Ann Bardeen, Ray Cook, Tim Cronin and Deb Hamilton. Town Planner, Sue Brown, was also in attendance. All participated via Zoom Conference.

1. Housing Opportunities Initiative

a. Revised Regulations

Planning Board members reviewed the edits and comments of the revised draft zoning regulations. Definitions of building types were added. Dodson and Flinker responded to the posted questions on the previous draft regulations – members reviewed.

b. District Decision

Planning Board members discussed the options for the Overlay Zoning District.

c. Schedule

Select Board review of draft regulations and district/districts (12/20-1/2)

Submit pre-adoption review application to EOHLC (90-day window) (January)

Public outreach (PB meetings, website, article, survey, office hours, etc.) (on-going)

Public Hearing (March)

Annual Town Meeting (April)

2. Zoning Definitions

Building Commissioner, Sam Joslin, was present at the meeting. Joslin and Planning Board members went over the edits and comments to the definitions. The Board will seek Town Meeting Approval of the proposed revised definitions at the annual spring Town Meeting.

3. Project Review Proposal – Meridian

Town Planner, Sue Brown, stated that a contract has been executed with Meridian Engineering for review of the Definitive Subdivision Application for 125 River Road.

4. Update on Proposed Public Trails Review Meeting

Murphey and Brown attended the meeting. Brown stated that the Town feels that many residents have high expectations on how trails will be built, maintained and managed. There are currently no specific

funding sources for creating or maintaining the trails. The Town is trying to create a tool that will help identify relevant information for any potential trails. Wendy Reed, Chair of the Select Board, stated that the Planning Board may or may not be involved in the collection of the data but it is a Town wide issue to determine who will be responsible for collecting the information. She noted that the questionnaire drafted and presented is not a regulatory document, but help establish a framework for considering trail expansion. Ray Cook expressed approval of the trails within the Town and opined that the Planning Board should be responsible for the developer interaction and approval of trails as a condition of a permit, but not anything more than that. Ann Bardeen expressed concern that the trails should be built by a Town entity – whether that is a volunteered group, DPW, etc. Cook explained that there could potentially be a “trail warden” for the Town. Reed stated that is part of the Land Agent’s (ConCom agent Michelle Greene) job description; identify trails that need to be done, coordinate work, etc.

5. Town Planner Report

Brown reviewed her Town Planner report with the members. Merrimack Valley Planning Commission will be working with Consensus Building Institute to facilitate an interactive Housing Production Plan event at the Town Annex in mid-January. Greenbelt anticipates submitting an ANR Plan for Evergreen Farm on Ash Street tentatively for February 20th.

6. General Business:

- **Minutes** – None
- **Correspondence** – Reviewed correspondence from the Town of Groveland.
- **Administrative Details** – None.
- **Items not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in Advance of a Meeting**

Adjournment:

Murphey moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 P.M. Seconded by Cronin. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Katelyn Bradstreet, *Administrative Assistant to the Planning Board*