

*Minutes of the February 28, 2023,
Meeting of the Planning Board*

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 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 James Roberti, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, Tom Taylor, Marc Charney, Associate Member Shelia Olson

Staff Present: Interim Planning Director Eric Arbeene

Advisory Liaisons: Madison Riley

Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants

Mr. Roberti called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:31 P.M. He acknowledged the presence of Board Members: Kathleen Woodward, Jim Roberti, Tom Taylor, Patricia Mallett, Marc Charney, Shelia Olson

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

No comments

Discussion of Housing Coordinator Position with Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

CPC Members present: Chair Barbara McMahon; Vice-Chair Allan Port, Stephen Murphy, Jay McHale, Mason Smith

Also Present: Fran Stanley, Housing Coordinator - Town of Groton; Wellesley Executive Director Megan Jop Town; Building a Better Wellesley Member Sheri Kassirer

Ms. McMahon called the Community Preservation Committee meeting to order.

Ms. Stanley outlined her duties/responsibilities as Housing Coordinator.

Mr. Roberti inquired about affordable housing options for seniors and young families.

Ms. Stanley stated the power flows through the volunteer committees.

Mr. Taylor inquired if many towns employ housing coordinators.

Ms. Mallett asked how residents find information about housing. Ms. Stanley detailed that the Town of Groton has and updates a Housing Coordinator web page.

Ms. Stanley acknowledged that the Groton Planning Board has helped with inclusionary zoning units and ADUs.

Mr. McHale inquired about the number of affordable housing units in Groton. Ms. Stanley replied there were 200 units.

Mr. Port asked who Ms. Stanley reports to. Ms. Stanley replied that her supervisor is the Land Use Director.

Mr. Murphy inquired about the skills necessary for the housing coordinator's position. Ms. Stanley provided a description of the skills needed.

Ms. McMahon asked if Ms. Stanley supported the Housing Authority. Ms. Stanley replied such support was provided on an "as needed" basis.

Ms. Kassirer stated Massachusetts ranks third in the nation in the number of homeless families, and the housing coordinator position would make housing a priority.

Ms. McMahon adjourned the CPC meeting at 7:20 PM.

2023 Annual Town Meeting Articles

Sisters of Charity – 125 Oakland Street – RIO (Continued from 2/21/23)

Present: Mary Anne Foster, Sisters of Charity; Krista Thibault, Sisters of Charity; David Himmelberger, Attorney for the Sisters of Charity

Mr. Arbeene provided summary of Article 42 and reviewed issues discussed at last week's Planning Board meeting.

Mr. Himmelberger reported that the Sisters were willing to place a deed restriction on the property.

Resident Ann Maysek, 15 Cunningham Road, stated the use of RIO seems to increase housing density, but does not help with affordable housing.

Resident Joan Gaughan, 16 Laurel Terrace, requested the removal of Article 42 from the Town Warrant.

Resident Gail Lockberg, 10 Oakland Street, stated the Sisters of Charity have added much to the community, and we need to take care of their needs.

Resident Eric Warasta, 122 Oakland Street, expressed his opposition to the article, stating the article should not move forward.

Resident Jaden Crawford, 15 Rice Street, stated the NRC has voted unanimously to request the withdrawal of the article.

Resident Yuyin Liu, 28 Grantland Road, stated Wellesley has a long history of environmentalism.

Resident and Art Wellesley member Elizabeth Cohen, 56 Yarmouth Road, emphasized that this property presents a unique opportunity to help the arts in Wellesley.

Resident Susan Freed, 15 Standish Circle, mentioned that traffic is an issue.

Resident Bill McMahon, 7 Amherst Road, stated our first priority is to solve the financial problems that the Sisters of Charity are faced with.

Resident Sue McKay, 186 Oakland Street, stated that additional time was needed for all stakeholders to provide input.

Resident Jared Parker, 16 Dean Road, indicated that the proper plan would benefit all.

Resident Bruce Meltzer, 30 Amherst Road, confirmed that the Wellesley NRC land surrounds the Sisters of Charity.

Resident Irene Flint, 6 Hopewell Farm Road, Natick; stated it is difficult for seniors to downsize in Wellesley.

Resident Larry Shind, 36 Grantland Road, stated that an RIO goes way beyond what the Sisters of Charity require.

Resident Vincent Codispoti, 130 Oakland Street, stated the RIO would permit 350 units on 14 acres of land.

Resident David Laffitte, 14 Dudley Road, opined that a solution should be found which would meet the needs of the Sisters and would not burden the neighborhood.

Resident Jen Beachell, 190 Oakland Street, stated the RIO seems to be a short-term solution.

Resident Leslie Hanrahan, 5 Putney Road, stated the RIO was not an appropriate zoning measure.

Resident Predrag Radivjac, 11 Cunningham Road, stated we need to consider all options before making a decision.

Resident Megan Macleod, Oakland Circle, stated the existing zoning laws at the site were implemented almost 100 years ago.

The public hearing was closed at 8:43 PM.

Mr. Roberti motioned to take no action on Article 42 for Town Meeting, to be held in March, 2023; and to further motion to support a collaborative process among interested parties in order to create an alternative approach for the property at 125 Oakland Street, to be brought forward at a future Town Meeting. Mr. Charney seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye, Mallett-aye, Roberti-aye.

Zoning Board of Appeal Cases

ZBA-2023 – 09 485 Washington Street – Wellesley Police Station

Mr. Arbeene detailed various aspects of the application, including the lattice-style proposed antenna.

Staff recommended ZBA deny the Special Permit, and encouraged the Town to apply for a variance. Board Members agreed.

ZBA-2023-14 – 110 Worcester Street

Mr. Arbeene provided detail regarding site plan approval for 110 Worcester Street.

Staff recommended ZBA approve the Site Plan. Board members agreed with the staff recommendation.

Other Business

Planning Director's Report

Mr. Arbeene had nothing new to report

Planning Board Chair Report

Mr. Roberti inquired about the scheduled dinner at the Wellesley Club.

Minutes – 11/1/22, 11/14/22, 12/5/22 & 12/19/22

Mr. Taylor motioned to accept the Planning Board Minutes for 11/1/22, as edited; 12/5/22 and 12/19/22 Minutes, as presented. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 5-0; Taylor-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Roberti-aye

Mr. Taylor motioned to accept the Planning Board Minutes of 11/14/22, as edited. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0-1; Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-abstain, Roberti-aye

Mr. Taylor abstained in consideration of his absence at the 11/14/22 meeting.

Adjourn

Mr. Roberti adjourned the meeting at 9:42 PM.

MINUTES APPROVED – May 1, 2023