

Minutes of the May 15, 2023, Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, MAY 15, 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 Patricia Mallett, Jim Roberti, Marc Charney, Associate Member Sheila Olson

Staff Present: Planning Director Eric Arbeene

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: Patricia Mallett, Tom Taylor, Marc Charney, Jim Roberti.

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

Interviews for Prospective DRB Members

Present: DRB Candidates Claudia Perkins, 75 Central Street; Steve Bruno, 19 Francis Road

Mr. Taylor stated Claudia Perkins and Steve Bruno have been considered for possible membership on the Design Review Board (DRB).

Ms. Perkins provided detail regarding her professional background and interests.

Mr. Charney asked Ms. Perkins about related experience with landscape design, architecture, or landscape architecture. Ms. Perkins responded not, and indicated that she could contribute as an alternate member.

Mr. Arbeene stressed the need for a retail person on the DRB, who might also have a combination of experience with a varied background. Ms. Perkins indicated that was her understanding when applying for the appointment.

Ms. Mallett inquired if Ms. Perkins had been directly involved with design-related planning. Ms. Perkins responded that as a commercial/retail real estate broker, she appreciates the design aspect of the business and understands what is going on at Central Street. She confirmed that she had retail experience as well, as well as dealings with landscape architects.

Mr. Bruno highlighted his experience in both home construction/home renovation, and corporate foot design and engineering experience with Converse.

Mr. Charney stated the DRB is an appointed board and he inquired how Mr. Bruno would handle more controversial issues, such as the proposed high school lighting proposal and 40B proposals. Mr. Bruno stated he would learn those related processes/regulations and work in collaboration with other DRB Members.

Ms. Mallett noted that Mr. Bruno had related qualifications, and was interested in learning and volunteering his time. She commented that DRB had endorsed both Ms. Perkins and Mr. Bruno, and she was in agreement with the recommendations.

Mr. Taylor noted that both candidates had experience with making complex decisions in a corporate environment, and a passion for Wellesley with a willingness to serve and endorsed unanimously by the DRB.

Mr. Roberti moved in the words of the Chair to appoint Claudia Perkins as a member of the DRB, for a 1-year term to commence on 6/1/23. Ms. Mallet seconded the motion. It was on motion 2-2; Charney-no, Roberti-no, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

The motion failed.

Mr. Roberti moved in the words of the Chair to appoint Steve Bruno as a member of the DRB for a 3-year term, commencing on 6/1/23 and ending on 6/1/26. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 2-2; Charney-no, Roberti-no, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

The motion failed.

Partial Release of Escrow Funds

37 Ravine Road

Mr. Arbeene detailed the status of the application, confirming that construction of the pool house frame has been completed and related stone work/hardscape has been completed. He confirmed that some landscaping aspects had not been completed.

Mr. Roberti confirmed the amount of the escrow to be released.

Ms. Mallett moved to authorize the release of \$190,000, with the remainder to be held in escrow until the landscaping is completed. Mr. Charney seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Roberti-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

Large House Review

LHR-21-10 – 35 Pembroke Road – Major Modification

Mr. Arbeene explained that stormwater modifications have been proposed. He confirmed that applicant is awaiting a related landscape plan.

Mr. Charney motioned to continue LHR 21-10 – 35 Pembroke Road to the 6/5/23 meeting of the Planning Board. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Charney-aye, Roberti-aye, Mallett-aye, Taylor-aye.

LHR-22-05 – 20 Oakland Street – Continued from 4/18/23

LHR-22-06 – 365 Worcester Street – Continued from 4/18/23

Present: Larry Shind, Applicant’s Attorney; Angela Kearney, Landscape Architect; Nick Landry, Architect; David Himmelberger, Attorney for owner of 367 Worcester Street

Ms. Woodward joined the meeting at approximately 7:20 PM.

Mr. Arbeene updated the application, noting that revised plans had been submitted for architecture and landscaping. Mr. Arbeene recommended the Board not approve the plan at this meeting, in consideration of further clarification of plans.

Mr. Shind updated aspects of the application.

Planning Board members commented on the architecture of 365 Worcester Street.

Mr. Charney inquired about the proposed lighting. Mr. Landry replied that there will be no lighting on the driveway.

Mr. Shind stated nothing has been done without appropriate permitting.

Mr. Himmelberger stated the issue of easements had been reviewed by Town counsel and resolved.

Board Members discussed how proposed construction at both sites would affect the neighborhood, as well as the restoration of the hillside.

Mr. Himmelberger stated that Mr. Williams, owner of 367 Worcester Street, confirmed that most of the hill on his property will be restored.

Neighbor John Lanza, 18 Oakland Street, inquired about the wording of easements within the Staff Report. Mr. Arbeene directed Mr. Lanza to the Staff Report section/s where easement language is detailed.

Mr. Arbeene reviewed the tree protection plan.

Ms. Woodward commented that it would be beneficial to examine the two properties together, to get a complete picture of the tree/landscape plan.

Mr. Taylor inquired about the makeup of the trees to be removed, and those which have already been removed. Ms. Kearney responded that all but three trees, were identified as invasive species.

Mr. Charney inquired about the trees within the “exclusive easement” area. Ms. Kearney replied the trees in the “exclusive easement” are to be maintained by the owner of 367 Worcester Street.

Mr. Shind stated a bond will be used to cover tree survival for a two-year time period.

Mr. Charney confirmed that after two years, the responsibility for tree maintenance and replacement within the “exclusive easement” area will be the responsibility of the owners of 367 Worcester Street.

Mr. Shind explained that for the first two years, the responsibility falls to the owner of 20 Oakland Street, and after that it is the responsibility of 367 Worcester Street.

Mr. Lanza stated the area is a mess and there are many unanswered questions about the “exclusive easement” area.

Ms. Woodward confirmed that any property that has gone through the LHR process, must come back to the Planning Board for consideration of substantial and significant changes to the landscape plan.

Neighbor Herb Glick, 8 Bancroft Road, stated that the developer has proposed a good plan which cleans up the area.

Mr. Roberti had left the meeting.

Mr. Charney motioned to continue LHR-22-05 – 20 Oakland Street to the Planning Board Meeting of 6/5/23, and to extend the action deadline to 6/7/23. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Taylor-aye.

Mr. Charney motioned to continue LHR-22-06 – 365 Worcester Street to the Planning Board Meeting of 6/5/23, and to extend the action deadline to 6/7/23. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Taylor-aye.

Ms. Olsen joined the meeting at 9:25 PM

Minutes – 4/3/23 & 4/18/23

Minutes were postponed to the next meeting of the Planning Board on 5/22/23.

Zoning Public Hearing

Updating the Tree Bylaw Regulations- Continued from 5/1/23.

Related discussion by Board Members took place.

Ms. Woodward reported only one change to the rules and regulations had been addressed at the last meeting.

Ms. Mallett motioned to approve the updated Tree Bylaw Regulations, as revised May 15, 2023; including the edits provided by Ms. Woodward. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Woodward-aye, Taylor-aye.

Other Business

Planning Director’s Report

Mr. Taylor confirmed the Annual Planning Board Retreat was scheduled for 6/25/23.

FY24 Meeting Calendar Approval

Mr. Arbeene reviewed the proposed FY24 Calendar.

Mr. Charney motioned to approve the FY24 Meeting Calendar and Submittal Calendar. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Mallett-aye, Woodward-aye, Charney-aye, Taylor-aye.

Authorization to Sign Atlas Restoration Contract

Mr. Arbeene addressed the ongoing efforts to restore the Town Atlases, as covered by CPC funds, which had been previously approved. Mr. Arbeene added that during restoration, the 1935 Atlas will be digitalized.

Mr. Taylor inquired if the CPC funding will cover all aspects of restoration and digitalization. Mr. Arbeene confirmed that the cost of the digitalization will come out of Planning Board funds.

Ms. Mallett motioned to allow Planning Director Eric Arbeene to sign the restoration contract to repair the Town Atlases and digitalize the 1935 Atlas. Mr. Charney seconded the motion. It was on motion 4-0; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Charney-aye, Taylor-aye.

Planning Director's Report

Mr. Arbeene reported that a new planner had been hired, and will start the first week of June.

Mr. Arbeene suggested the Planning Board packets be distributed electronically.

Adjourn

Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 10:14 PM.

MINUTES APPROVED: MONDAY, JULY 24, 2023