

Minutes of the June 16, 2021 Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16, 2021, 7:00 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 Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Vice-Chair Kathleen Woodward, Secretary Patricia Mallett, Jim Roberti, Tom Taylor,

Absent Planning Board Members: Associate Member Sheila Olson

Staff Present: Planning Director Donald McCauley

Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants

Ms. Johnson called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 7:00 P.M., acknowledging the presence of Board Members: Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, James Roberti, Thomas Taylor, Catherine Johnson

Public comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

No public comments

Large House Review

LHR-21-02 – 206 Winding River Road – Cont. from 6/7/21

Present: Chris Hall, Architect; Carson Hall; Architect; Sam Soderholm, Contractor; Troy Sober, Landscape Architect, Brian Nelson, Engineer; Aziz Hamzaogullari, owner

Ms. Johnson acknowledged that Board members conducted a tour of the site at 206 Winding River Road, and thanked the applicant and his team for staking the property.

Mr. Taylor recused himself from the application discussion.

Mr. McCauley stated that the Board was considering site vegetation, as well as the mass and scale of the proposed home.

Mr. Sober outlined the recent revisions made to the plans, which included:

- Reduction of exterior light fixtures, to 70 fixtures; and complete lighting plan
- Inclusion of a clearly defined staking plan, with inclusion of color-coded landscape plans

- The softening of the meditation room area, via diversity in plantings as screening with selected views and additional tree installation.

Mr. Sober described the new renderings and stated that a meeting took place with neighbors Minta Kay and Andrew Luster, who now endorse the plan.

Resident and neighbor Minta Kay, 207 Winding River Road, confirmed that the applicant permitted her to supply comments, and she indicated that she now fully supports the project.

Ms. Woodward confirmed she had visited the site, noting there was variation in the screening proposed, and agreed with Ms. Kay's opinion regarding a combination of ground level planting, undergrowing shrubs, and various over-story trees, was effective in that it allowed the house to be seen but with a lot of greenery. She liked the color-coding addition.

Ms. Woodward asked if the line of shrubs on the south side and trees on the property would remain. Mr. Sober responded that the neighbor's trees and shrubbery would remain, and some of the existing plantings on the applicant's property would be removed in consideration of the construction. Ms. Woodward observed that there was currently a nice mixture of trees and shrubs. She asked that it not be solely replaced with arborvitae. She recommended that additional planting screening would be included around the parking court, in consideration of the neighbors. Mr. Sober detailed the retaining of taller trees on the site, and additional plantings could be added. Ms. Woodward recommended adding several more shrubs around the meditation room area, which is close to the road. Mr. Sober confirmed that additional shrubbery would be added.

Ms. Mallett was pleased to see that the proposed home was not being "walled in" as the earlier renderings displayed. She added that the revised plan was more representative of the neighborhood, and now complemented the street and the neighborhood. Ms. Mallett thanked the applicant for providing additional graphics.

Mr. Roberti commented that the massing was excessive and recommended that the home be reduced in size. He noted that the lot was too small for the proposed building.

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Sober for the many changes made, which addressed many of the concerns expressed by the Board Members. Ms. Johnson commented about the very close proximity of the house to Winding River Road and agreed with Mr. Roberti's assessment that the house was too big for the lot and did not meet the criteria for mass and scale.

Mr. McCauley suggested that the Board review the height of the proposed building before and with the latest rendition. Mr. Hall stated that the proposed two-story height is just over 29 feet as is the adjacent house height.

Ms. Woodward noted that the exterior of the proposed home was rather subdued and indicated that all houses in the area are extremely large. She noted that the neighbors were not opposing the design and appreciated the mitigation plans. Ms. Mallett noted there were not many corner lots in the neighborhood.

Mr. Roberti reiterated that the house would be fine on a two-acre lot, but not on a one-acre lot.

Mr. Sober reiterated that the plan made significant large house review enhancements, such as a geothermal heating system, plant life, reduction in impervious lot coverage, LID measures that most new houses are not even considering. Ms. Johnson expressed her appreciation of all the sustainable oriented measures for such a large house.

Mr. Hamzaogullari stated that redesign would mean abandoning the project after a lengthy six-month process. Mr. Hall stressed that the house reflected form-based design.

Mr. McCauley noted that the lot was somewhat smaller than the other lots in the neighborhood, though the other houses are large as well. He indicated his appreciation for the improved landscaping. He stressed that he did not favor the location of the generator but did appreciate the design scheme, and suggested that the Board consider that aspect.

Ms. Mallett noted the noise from the generator was no greater than the noise produced by the neighborhood landscapers. She outlined the basic benefits associated with the updated plans:

- No neighborhood opposition
- Geothermal heating
- Stormwater Management Plan

Ms. Mallett stressed that the Board's denial of the revised plans could result in the loss of the mentioned benefits.

Ms. Woodward motioned to approve Large House Review - LHR - 21-02 for 206 Winding River Road, with the revisions discussed this evening, including additional screening at the driveway next to the parking court, and additional evergreen screening along the Winding River Road side of the property, the reduction in light fixtures by 23 as discussed this evening, including standard terms and conditions as found in Staff Report prepared by Don McCauley, Planning Director, as revised on June 6. Ms. Johnson added that specific conditions within the Construction Management Plan, will be presented to the Planning Director. Ms. Woodward accepted the specific conditions within the Construction Management Plan, to be presented to the Planning Director, as a friendly amendment. Ms. Mallett seconded the motion. The vote was 3-1; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Roberti-no, Johnson-aye

Ms. Johnson commented that she was more in favor of the project than opposed to it. She noted she was concerned about the scale of the house, and the preservation of the landscape. Ms. Johnson asked the applicant to continue to cooperate with the wishes of the neighbors during the process and stressed that any major changes made at the site, would require Planning Board approval; and minor changes, would require the approval of the Planning Department.

Board Members thanked Mr. McCauley for the hard work he put into this project.

Mr. Roberti motioned that the Planning Board allow Chair Catherine Johnson to sign this decision on behalf of the entire Board. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 4-0; Woodward-aye, Mallett-aye, Roberti-aye, Johnson-aye

Adjourn

Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:04 P.M.

APPROVED: September 13, 2021

NEXT MEETING: June 21, 2021