

Minutes of the July 6, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Planning Board

WELLESLEY PLANNING BOARD
MONDAY, JULY 6, 2020, 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 Present: Chair Catherine Johnson, Kathleen Woodward, Patricia Mallett, James Roberti, Tom Taylor and Associate Member Sheila Olson

Staff Present: Planning Director Donald McCauley

Call to Order/Confirmation of Participants

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 6:36 p.m.

Public Comments on Matters Not on the Agenda

None

Project of Significant Impact

PSI-20-01 – Wellesley Park – 140-148 Weston Road – Continued from June 15, 2020

Present: Victor Sheen, Applicant; Susan Spratt, Engineer; Jonathan Berit Parkes, Manager; A.J. Jenkins, Mechanical Parking Consultant from Park Plus

Mr. McCauley provided project update, adding that the RIO (Residential Incentive Overlay) permit was granted and the PSI (Project of Significant Interest) discussion had begun.

Mr. Sheen presented plan updates since the last hearing, including new engineering plans to cover stormwater management, earth retention details, parking, trash and snow removal provisions.

Ms. Spratt updated drainage aspects and noted that additional soil testing was performed. She detailed the proposed changes which were submitted to DPW.

Mr. Roberti asked if DPW submitted an updated memo. Ms. Spratt answered not.

Ms. Woodward and Ms. Johnson asked Ms. Spratt about subsystem materials to be utilized. Ms. Spratt provided detailed explanation.

Ms. Johnson stressed the importance of the area being in the Wellesley Water Supply Protection District.

Mr. Roberti asked about open engineering issues. Ms. Spratt responded: phosphorus load, wall units and shoring, verification of sewer pipe sizes (man holes), and sidewalks. Mr. Sheen commented that sidewalk length is being considered.

Ms. Woodward indicated her concern regarding parking. Mr. Sheen replied that he is trying to promote an additional parking area around the community garden. He stated that the Town did not have enough parking and provisions could be implemented to extend such parking into the North 40 area, on a more permanent basis.

Park Plus consultants presented the mechanical parking video and addressed Board questions.

Ms. Johnson recognized that the last step of the process is the “site plan,” which requires 100% completeness. She asked about fail safe mechanisms. Mr. Jenkins provided explanation.

Mr. Taylor asked about the mechanical parking back-up options. Mr. Sheen indicated that the portable battery back-up option was preferred in an emergency.

Mr. Jonathan Berit Parkes introduced the proposed retaining wall plan.

Ms. Woodward emphasized that she had concerns regarding use of pressure treated wood in the Water Supply Protection District, and the possible leaching of toxins. Mr. Berit Parkes said he would research that aspect. Ms. Johnson agreed that this was an especially important topic and more information was needed. Mr. Sheen confirmed that additional information would be supplied to the Board.

Mr. Berit Parkes highlighted the trash management plan and shared a document titled “Trash Management Summary.” Ms. Johnson commented that prospective owners who are Wellesley residents, would likely dispose of their trash at the Wellesley dump.

Mr. Berit Parkes provided detail regarding the “Supplemental Information,” which included snow management. He also spoke of de-icing and tools to be utilized.

Ms. Johnson stated that the chemicals used with the proposed de-icing plan, would have to be closely examined. Ms. Johnson stated that the Water Department would review such anti-icing solutions.

Mr. Sheen confirmed he would be submitting verification of adequate gas load servicing from National Grid.

Mr. Sheen provided a listing of items to present to the Board:

DPW Update Memo

Update from Walker regarding parking

Chemical composition of pressure treated wood

Mr. Roberti suggested examination and review of the Town well protection bylaw. Mr. Sheen confirmed he would review the bylaw.

Ms. Johnson stated that a Construction Management Plan would be needed and resolution addressing parking of construction vehicles would be essential.

Ms. Johnson recommended submittal of finalized architectural plans.

Mr. McCauley also mentioned: water service, and testing of water service adequacy, sewer system process and related improvements. He added infrastructure aspects, such as routing of electrical service/transformers on site, retaining wall impact on Town trees, and tree protection in consideration of close proximity to the boundary line.

Ms. Johnson recommended the Board members walk around the boundary line area in consideration of the Town tree protection.

Resident Joel Bloom, 20 Howe Street, questioned the parking plan, which included construction vehicle parking. He stated that the College Heights Neighborhood Association found the plan to be unacceptable. Mr. Bloom affirmed that the first problem was the unsightliness of such proposed parking; and secondly, since Mr. Sheen is no longer part of the Delanson Circle project, no added parking space would be assured at the Delanson site.

Mr. Bloom had serious safety concerns about the proposed driveway being almost directly across the entrance to Howe Street. Mr. Bloom suggested that Mr. Sheen think creatively regarding resolution to this problem.

Ms. Woodward reiterated that Mr. Sheen add the parking aspect to his list.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue the Project of Significant Impact – PSI-20-01 – Wellesley Park – 140-148 Weston Road to August 3, 2020. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (5-0).

Large House Review

LHR-20-02 – 81 Arnold Road

Present: Attorney David Himmelberger, Michael Collins, Architect; Brian Morgan, Architect; Kevin O’Leary, Engineer; Kimberly Turner, Landscape designer; Matt and Greta Fruhan, Owners

Mr. McCauley presented related background regarding the project and noted that Engineering and the Design Review Board (DRB) had submitted their prospective reports.

Mr. Himmelberger stated that the proposed home would sit on an oversized lot and had a TLAG of 9,308 square feet.

Mr. Collins described the architectural plans for the property. He noted that roof changes had been implemented, per DRB recommendation.

Mr. Collins stated that a primary goal was to minimize ledge removal. Mr. Morgan commented that control of sizing and scale were also considerations.

Ms. Turner outlined the tree removal plan and noted that approximately ten trees would be removed. She detailed the plan for replacement trees.

Mr. Morgan provided lighting plan detail. Ms. Johnson asked if a photometric plan had been completed. Mr. Collins stated that some modifications were being completed.

Ms. Woodward questioned why an Elm tree and a Red Oak tree in the front of the property needed to be removed. She stressed that the horticultural opinion was not conclusive. She asked if arborvitae could be replaced with American Holly.

Ms. Woodward expressed concern about the circular driveway, indicating that it would add too much hardscape and could create water issues. Mr. Himmelberger mentioned other houses in the neighborhood with circular driveways.

Ms. Turner stated that she would suggest the American Holly in combination with the arborvitae, and would speak to the client regarding specific trees suggested to be removed.

Ms. Woodward indicated that she had spoken to the property owners and felt they did not wish to cut down an unnecessary amount of trees. Mr. Morgan stated that the clients did have concerns about safety, which is why they preferred a circular driveway.

Ms. Johnson mentioned she had concern about the circular driveway. Mr. Collins confirmed that he would review the tree report.

Ms. Johnson asked if new water lines and sewer lines were being brought into the property. Mr. Collins responded affirmatively.

Mr. O'Leary provided overview of the proposed stormwater management plan. He noted that stormwater had drained into the neighbors' yard and this plan would stop that from occurring.

Ms. Mallett opined that drainage from the circular driveway would not be captured. Mr. O'Leary noted that other areas on the property compensated for that aspect. Ms. Mallett stated that she had concerns about ledge excavation and related impact on neighbors.

Mr. McCauley suggested that after the existing home was demolished, the applicant could appear before the Board to review the excavation removal plan.

Ms. Mallett spoke of potential construction management plan impacts and suggested a neighborhood notification be circulated in the event that neighbors had questions. Mr. Collins stated that such notice would go to abutters. Mr. Himmelberger noted that large house regulations never mandated such follow-up.

Ms. Johnson stated that if there was a major change to the plan, such as ledge removal, that would require presentation before the Board. Mr. Collins agreed with the mentioned protocol.

Mr. Roberti noted that DRB brought up the ledge issue.

Ms. Woodward expressed concern with stormwater created by the sloped circular driveway and parking court. Mr. O'Leary provided detail regarding the filtering mechanism.

Mr. Roberti motioned to continue the Large House Review – LHR-20-02 – 81 Arnold Road to August 3, 2020. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (5-0).

Other Business

25 Upwey Road

Mr. McCauley commented that the owner was working towards resolution. Ms. Johnson agreed that Mr. Schwartzman's recent note indicates his willingness to resolve the situation.

Resident Kevin Cullinan, 53 Kirkland Circle, stressed that his property incurred considerable flooding due to recent changes made at 25 Upwey Road. He asked that the Board ensure that 25 Upwey Road be inspected and that a proposal for mitigation be considered.

Ms. Johnson stated that Engineering must review the subdivision plan and consider the effect of such event on other properties.

Mr. Roberti asked if Engineering was able to get onto the property. Mr. McCauley responded that progress is likely to occur within a week. He stressed the seriousness of the matter.

Ms. Mallett expressed concern about the clear-cutting of the yard.

Discuss Articles for 2020 Fall Special Town Meeting

Mr. McCauley spoke of the articles for the 2020 Town Meeting, some of which have changed since March.

Planning Director's Report

Mr. McCauley shared a picture of the new table located in the Planning office.

Mr. McCauley mentioned that the Planner position would likely get posted by Human Resources next week.

Minutes Of 3/16/20 and 6/1/20

Mr. Roberti motioned to approve the minutes for March 13, 2020, as amended. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (4-0). Mr. Taylor was not present at that meeting.

Mr. Roberti motioned to approve the minutes for June 6, 2020, as amended. Ms. Woodward seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous (5-0).

There being no further business, Ms. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 10:57 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, July 20, 2020

MINUTES APPROVED: Monday, August 3, 2020