



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Remote via Zoom Video Conferencing

September 8, 2022, at 7:15 PM

Present: Tricia Kendall, Chair
Anna Tesmenitsky, Vice-Chair
Catherine Jurczyk, Clerk
Deepa Venkat, Member
Marcelo Arjona, Member
Kevin McClean, Associate Member

Others: Peter Matchak, Town Planner
Emma Snelling, Asst. Town Planner
Helen Nickole
Cathy Rooney, DRC Chair

1 **Call to Order**

2 Tricia Kendall called the meeting to order and reviewed the meeting agenda.

3

4 **Planning Board Clerk's Report**

5 Catherine Jurczyk reported that from the last Clerk's report on August 15, 2022, to September 6,
6 2022, four written correspondences were received. Two concerning specific topics were responded
7 to by the Planning Dept., and two were general and responded to by the Clerk on behalf of the
8 board. She noted that none of the correspondence was concerning items on this meeting's agenda.

9

10 **Discussion: Proposed Changes to the Demolition Delay Bylaw**

11 Ms. Kendall explained that changes to the Demolition Delay Bylaw for Historically or Architecturally
12 Significant Buildings were proposed at the spring Town Meeting. Mr. Matchak added that the
13 proposal was voted down to allow time for additional review before the next Town Meeting. He
14 added that this is not a zoning bylaw, but an amendment to the general bylaw, therefore, a Planning
15 Board public hearing is not required.

16

17 Helen Nickole, from the Save the Mill Buildings Working Group, said the citizen's petition warrant
18 presented at the spring Town Meeting was sponsored by the Historical Commission. She said that
19 she is now seeking input from other boards and committees regarding the language in the updated

20 proposal. Ms. Nickole reviewed the proposed changes to the Town General Bylaws, Chapter 125-2
21 Procedures, and the board members suggested several edits.

22
23 There was a discussion about the categories of buildings and or specific districts within the town that
24 would be applicable to the bylaw, and Ms. Nickole pointed out that the definitions are defined in
25 Section 125-9. The Cambridge MA Demolition Bylaw was cited, and the members suggested
26 including similar language in Section 125-1: Intent and Purpose, to address economic opportunities.

27
28 Joan Gonfrade, from the Mill Buildings Citizens Historical Preservation Working Group, supported the
29 proposed bylaw changes and agreed with the language that explained the expectations of the person
30 seeking approval to develop or demolish a building.

31
32 Ms. Nickole thanked the members for their support and feedback.

33
34 **225 Pond Street Special Permit and Site Plan Review – Continued from August 25, 2022, meeting**

35 Ms. Kendall explained that the 225 Pond St. Special Permit is concerning the McDonald’s double drive-
36 thru.

37
38 Mr. Matchak reported that the applicant went before the Design Review Committee (DRC) last
39 Thursday and the DRC provided their comments. He said that the applicant has requested a
40 continuance until the next Planning Board meeting

41
42 Ms. Jurczyk made a motion to accept the request to continue the 225 Pond St. Special Permit and
43 Site Plan review until September 22, 2022, at 7:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms.
44 Tesmenitsky; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Jurczyk-aye, Arjona-aye, and Kendall-aye; with a vote of
45 5-0-0.

46
47 **100 Chestnut St. Site Plan Review**

48 Mr. Matchak reported on correspondence the Planning Office received from the applicant, including
49 an email dated August 18, 2022, concerning the projected rents, memos concerning the loading
50 areas and the handling of packages in the mailroom, and the second dated September 1, 2022,
51 outlined the benefits the development will offer the town. He said that he drafted a preliminary
52 decision that was distributed to the Planning Board and the applicant, and he is working on
53 incorporating comments and suggested edits. Mr. Matchak also noted that the Fafard Co. has
54 started working on their 2015 punch list to finish areas of the Village of the Americas, and the paving
55 on Queen Isabella Way and Chestnut St. was completed today.

56
57 Todd MacDowell from Baystone Development reviewed the benefits that will result from the 100
58 Chestnut St. development, including \$174,000 and a \$10,000 payment for residential and commercial
59 units’ public safety, respectively. He noted the bus shelter is expected to cost over \$40,000, a
60 \$150,000 contribution to the Village of the Americas condo association (to use for a playground,
61 lighting, or as they see fit), the dog park for community use that will cost over \$25,000, a payment to
62 the Upper Charles Trail Committee to pursue a new connection, 18 affordable units, and the
63 completion of the Village of the Americas project. He said the development will increase commercial

64 and retail opportunities, provide a significant amount of permitting fees, and increase tax revenue by
65 approximately \$600,000 per year. Mr. MacDowell also mentioned a \$25,000 contribution would be
66 made to the Ashland Affordable Housing Trust, and he reviewed the Smart Growth and the
67 sustainable design strategies.

68
69 The members reviewed the recommendations provided by Matt Marshquist, from the Sustainability
70 Committee, and the Sustainability Committee's checklist against the applicant's sustainability design
71 strategies. Matt Marotta, from ICON Architecture, said that they would provide a completed LEED
72 checklist to show how close they are to meeting those standards. Mr. Marotta confirmed several
73 items such as electric appliances, minimal gas usage, structural requirements for roof-mounted solar
74 panels that may be installed with the initial construction if funding is available, electric vehicle
75 charging stations, and two outdoor bike racks. There was a brief discussion about including a
76 composting program, and Mr. Marotta said that composting is typically not included in large
77 developments.

78
79 Regarding the solar panel, Roy MacDowell, from Baystone Development, said that if the panels are
80 not installed with the initial construction, he would ask for up to two years to complete the
81 installation. He also asked Mr. Matchak to confirm with the Fafard Co. that the catch basin clean-up
82 and the ongoing maintenance would be addressed.

83
84 Regarding the landscape plan, the members asked the applicant to review where lawns are planned
85 and, if they are not essential, to consider other materials that do not require watering. There was
86 also a recommendation to conduct a parking study one year after full occupancy to determine
87 whether all of the parking spaces are needed. Roy MacDowell said that they had more than
88 adequate parking and would consider removing unused parking spaces in favor of adding
89 greenspace. Mr. Matchak suggested drafting a condition that a reduction of 15 or fewer parking
90 spaces would be allowed.

91
92 Concerning the utilities and the paving on Queen Isabella Way and Chestnut St., Roy MacDowell said
93 today their engineer confirmed the storm drains and conduits were in place, the electricity would be
94 supplied from the utility poles underground, the gas lines are tapped inside of the sidewalk, so there
95 would be no need to cut into the pavement on either street.

96
97 Mr. Matchak said that he continues to work on confirming the water and sewer flows, from the
98 town's perspective. Also, 20 years ago the Fafard Co. paid for upgrades to the Chestnut St. pumping
99 station to support the water and sewer capacity for the entire development. He said that he would
100 ask Greg Ellsworth, the water and sewer consultant, and the DPW for confirmation concerning the
101 capacity requirements, and any impacts to the water permit and the inter-basin transfers.

102
103 Mr. Matchak said he would continue drafting the Special Permit and Site Plan Review decisions and
104 incorporate language provided by the members.

105

106 Ms. Tesmenitsky made a motion to continue the public hearing 100 Chestnut St. Site Plan Review
107 until September 22, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Arjona; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye,
108 Jurczyk-aye, Arjona-aye, and Kendall-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

109

110 **501 Pond St. Special Permit and Site Plan Review - Continued from August 11, 2022, meeting**

111 The applicant requested a continuance to allow time to respond to GCG Consultant's comments and a
112 meeting with the Conservation Commission.

113

114 Ms. Kendall made a motion to continue the 501 Pond St. Special Permit and Site Plan review until
115 October 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Ms. Jurczyk; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-abstain,
116 Jurczyk-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye; with a vote of 4-0-1.

117

118 **300 Elliot Street - Site Plan Review Modification**

119 Ms. Kendall said the Bank of America hearing would be continued to allow the applicant time to
120 provide the drawings the board requested.

121

122 Ms. Kendall made a motion to continue the 300 Elliot St. Site Plan Review modification until October
123 13, 2022. The motion was seconded by Mr. Arjona; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Jurczyk-aye,
124 Arjona-aye, and Kendall-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

125

126 **Scenic Road Application: Multiple Streets**

127 Mr. Matchak read the public notice to open the Scenic Road hearing. He reported that trees on
128 multiple streets were marked for removal. He reported on a site visit he conducted with DPW and
129 said the trees at 310 Cedar and 422 Chestnut had recovered and are healthier than when they were
130 first inspected by DPW. However, the two pine trees at 331 Chestnut St., trees at 19 Franklin St., and
131 2 Shady Hollow Path are on town property and would require removal.

132

133 The members had a brief discussion about the need to draft a Tree Ordinance, with Tree Warden Roy
134 Carrera's input that would address the replacement of trees removed by the town.

135

136 Ms. Kendall asked for public comments.

137

138 Cathy Rooney, the DRC Chair, cited bylaw 270-10-J and said that she supported keeping street trees,
139 and suggested using tree bags for irrigation.

140

141 Ms. Kendall made a motion to continue the Scenic Road application until October 13, 2022. The
142 motion was seconded by Mr. Arjona; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Jurczyk-aye, Arjona-aye, and
143 Kendall-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

144

145 **Planning Topics**

146 **Scenic Roads Outreach**

147 No new updates.

148

149 **MBTA Communities**

150 Mr. Matchak reported that the MBTA provided their final guidelines, and he attended a training
151 session on the topic today. He said in a few weeks he will report to the board on how the guidelines
152 have changed.

153

154 Bylaw 9.4.5.3 (Public Information Meeting)

155 Mr. Matchak said that a memo from Lisa Mead, Town Counsel, explained the interpretation of the
156 public informational meeting noted in the bylaw is the public hearing for Site Plan approval.
157 Therefore, it is a practice that the board has already incorporated into its procedures.

158

159 Mr. Matchak said he would redistribute the memo to the members for their review.

160

161 Economic Impact Tool

162 Mr. Matchak reported that he received the impact tool from the applicant of 10 to 50 Main St., and
163 he is reviewing it to understand its potential use by the town.

164

165 The members also expressed interest in receiving more information concerning the evaluation of
166 how proposed developments would impact schools.

167

168 **Reports from Board Members and Town Planner**

169 Sustainability Committee

170 Ms. Tesmenitsky reported that the Sustainability Committee is working on taking a position regarding
171 a potential tree bylaw. Once the committee decides, she said she would update the board regarding
172 the Planning Board's role.

173

174 Design Review Committee (DRC)

175 Ms. Kendall noted that a meeting between the DRC Chair and Vice-Chair, and Mr. Matchak and Ms.
176 Snelling to talk about the relationship is pending.

177

178 Comprehensive Plan

179 Ms. Tesmenitsky reported that a joint meeting with the Select Board and the Planning Board is
180 scheduled for September 14, 2022, at 7:00 pm. Ms. Kendall hoped that at least three of the
181 members of the board are available to attend.

182

183 Inclusionary Zoning

184 Ms. Kendall reported that inclusionary zoning will not be pursued for the fall, given her tight schedule
185 and others' heavy workload. She anticipated it would be considered in the spring.

186

187 Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

188 Ms. Kendall reported that there were no new updates. She also noted her surprise that the CPC
189 receives few applications for funding.

190

191 **Administrative Matters: future meetings, public hearings**

192 Applications Received

193 Mr. Matchak reported that no new applications have been received.

194
195 Regarding the Shaw’s plaza development, Ms. Kendall confirmed that the board has not received an
196 application for the project.
197
198 Meeting Schedule
199 The next meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2022.
200
201 Mr. Matchak noted that the 10-60 Main St. site visit is scheduled for next Thursday, September 15,
202 2022, at 5:00 pm.
203
204 Topics for Future Meetings
205 Ms. Jurczyk recommended that the board become familiar with the Upper Charles Trail and its
206 proposed routes and entries, so when projects come before the board the topic is included in the
207 discussions.
208
209 Approval of Minutes
210 Ms. Kendall made a motion to approve the minutes of July 14, 2022, and July 28, 2022, as amended.
211 The motion was seconded by Ms. Tesmenitsky; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-
212 aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye; with a vote of 6-0-0.
213
214 **Adjournment**
215 Ms. Kendall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms.
216 Tesmenitsky; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye;
217 with a vote of 6-0-0.