

Maynard Planning Board Meeting
November 9, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.
(Held in person at Town Hall with remote participation available via Zoom)

Board Members Present: Chris Arsenault – *Chair*; Jim Coleman – Vice Chair; Bill Cranshaw; Natalie Robert; Bob Brown; Annette Garabedian (*Alternate*)

Others Present: Bill Nemser – *Planning Director*

Called to Order at 7:02 p.m. by Chris Arsenault

Minutes Approval (10.12.21 and 10.25.21)

Bill Cranshaw noted that his name was omitted from the list of attendees for the 10.25.21 PB Meeting when he was present at the meeting. The omission was corrected.

Natalie Robert made a motion to approve the corrected Minutes of 10.25.21, which was seconded by Jim Coleman.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

There was an issue with the Minutes of 10.12.21 due to a deletion of text during transfer to pdf. Bill Nemser asked to table those Minutes until the next meeting and the Board agreed.

31 Main Street – Update on Lighting

Bill Cranshaw noted that he had just driven past the building and saw that there was a new light installed. However, Jim Coleman stated that it is a double spotlight instead of a lantern style light to match the two other exterior lights on the front of the building. Bob Brown pointed out that the plans indicated that the three lights should match. Bill Nemser stated that he will get some pictures of the installed light. Jim Coleman stated that he does not find it to be acceptable with the spotlights instead of the lantern. Chris Arsenault stated that Bill Nemser should provide the developer with a reminder of what the expectation was for the light. The Board discussed the possibility that the spotlights are a temporary measure and that there might be supply chain issues delaying the lantern.

Jim Coleman made a motion to continue the topic until the first meeting in December (the 7th), which was seconded by Chris Arsenault.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Discussion of the PB Goals for FY22

Chris Arsenault asked for a Working Group (WG) update on the potential ZBL changes for home-based businesses. Bill Cranshaw stated that the WG had a kickoff meeting the prior week and put together a

very unfinished draft of the zoning ordinance, mainly for the purpose of listing topics of discussion at the WG's meeting next week. He anticipates having something to distribute to the Board in December for further discussion. There was a question brought up by Bill Nemser regarding the letting of rooms and related language in the ZBL. Bill Cranshaw noted that that is another topic that will need to be addressed, likely as part of the Accessory Dwelling Unit discussions. Bill Nemser stated that once the draft of the Home Occupation revision proposal is in final form, there will be a public meeting. The Board discussed some of the details that will need to be worked out for the final draft.

Chris Arsenault asked if there are additional steps that can be taken prior to a public meeting. Bill Nemser stated that he can issue a press release and direct the public to contact the Board with questions or concerns prior to a public meeting. The Board agreed that it would be good to get public input prior to the draft being finalized. Bob Brown said that typically there would be a list of stakeholders to reach out to in order to gather input. He listed opportunities for outreach such as the town website, the monthly newsletter, and Action Unlimited. The Board all agreed that gathering early input from various stakeholders is a good idea. Bill Cranshaw suggested posting a survey on the town website followed by a public meeting to discuss the results of the survey.

Chris Arsenault wondered whether there is a way to incorporate the idea of helping home-based businesses grow to become commercial entities in town into the proposed revisions. Bill Nemser mentioned working with the Economic Development Committee (EDC) on that. Natalie Robert suggested that, for example, the EDC could provide a welcome packet for people who register a home-based business to provide resources to help their business grow. Bob Brown suggested creating a listserv of interested parties. Bill Nemser said he can help with that. Natalie Robert suggested using the Town Newsletter distribution list. Chris Arsenault asked to review any draft communications prior to them being posted or distributed. Bill Nemser will draft a press release and work with Bill Cranshaw and Natalie Robert on the timing of everything. There will be a quick status check-in at every upcoming Board meeting.

Bill Nemser stated that the final draft of the Powder Mill Corridor Initiative recommendations is expected at the beginning of December. It will lay the groundwork for a future Powder Mill Overlay District. Bill Nemser explained the general process of moving towards a new overlay district. He noted that DPW and the Conservation Commission are major stakeholders for the Powder Mill Corridor initiative. There are some related grants coming up in the spring that Bill Nemser will be pursuing with Bob Brown's assistance.

Jim Coleman asked about the status of the apartment project that spans the border of Maynard and Acton. Bill Nemser stated that his colleague in Acton indicated that there will be some changes to the original plans. They are forthcoming. He does not know who the new owner is. Bill Nemser will continue to engage and communicate with Acton town representatives as the project moves forward. He stated that it is possible to do a joint Planning Board (PB) meeting with Maynard and Acton at some point in the future. Bill Nemser also pointed out that the overall goal is to improve the Powder Mill Corridor collectively rather than project by project. He noted the opportunity that now exists at the old John Deere site since that land was not previously conducive to development due to contamination and other issues. Bill Nemser also stated that there are projects being discussed for the corner of Waltham and Powder Mill and that, regardless of what happens with those potential projects, there is a level of contamination at that location that will need to be remediated. He noted that it is in the Town's best interest to approach that area like the old John Deere location to make it more conducive to

development. In doing so, it would enhance the Downtown Overlay District as well as jump start the economic potential for development of the Powder Mill Corridor. He stated that the Royal Beijing School is still in a holding pattern.

Jim Coleman expressed concern about the new apartment developer (at the Maynard/Acton border of Powder Mill) moving forward before the Powder Mill Overlay District is finalized. Bill Cranshaw stated that he is not concerned because the new owner bought the property after the project was already permitted and will build accordingly. The existing permits are from the town of Acton, not Maynard. Bill Cranshaw asked about the potential for a large multi-residence property being built on the old John Deere property. Bill Nemser noted that Maynard has Safe Harbor status and will continue to have it.

Chris Arsenault asked Bill Nemser for next steps. Bill Nemser suggested working quickly to get the framework of an overlay district created as soon as the Powder Mill study is finalized. He noted that the Board can begin to craft the objective of the overlay district now. Jim Coleman asked if opening a Public Hearing on a new overlay district for Powder Mill would take precedence over any new project applications that come in. Bill Nemser stated that it would unless a project is done by right and, therefore, does not require a special permit. The Board reviewed the zoning map to determine what could potentially be built on the old John Deere property.

Chris Arsenault wanted to understand the process of moving forward and asked Bob Brown for feedback. Bob Brown noted that the topography along the riverbank changes as you follow it along Powder Mill Road. Bob Brown stated that he was hoping the Town could use grant money to assess where, for example, a walkway or canoe launch should be located. He suggested that the study is very broad but could be refined into a working plan and, ultimately, an overlay district. Bob Brown stated that the study will be the critical starting point. A Community Planning grant could then help to refine the specifics of river access along Powder Mill Road. Chris Arsenault noted that the Housing Production Plan and the Master Plan will also provide guidance as the Board moves forward towards the new overlay district.

Chris Arsenault reiterated that the Board is the primary owner of five Master Plan assignments and a supporting entity for another 26 or so. Three of the five primary assignments are related to housing.

Bill Cranshaw asked Bill Nemser if the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan application has been submitted to help with the work that will be done on Powder Mill Road. Bill Nemser stated that DPW Director, Justin DeMarco, is in charge of that process. Bill Nemser does not know the current status of the application.

Bill Nemser provided an update on the Housing Production Plan. He stated that the plan was received by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and that DHCD had two comments. The first was that DHCD would like to see clearer messaging on the Town's commitment to accessibility. The second comment was that DHCD wanted clearer language around the use of "friendly 40Bs" (the Local Initiative Program or LIP) for projects in designated areas. Bill Nemser stated that the Town has done three LIP projects this year. With those minor changes to the plan, the DHCD said the plan will be approved. Bill Nemser is hoping the plan will be finalized by the end of the year.

Chris Arsenault stated that he made a presentation to the Select Board (SB) last Tuesday. The SB has asked all Committees and other town entities to provide a presentation of their framework of the goals,

objectives, and metrics related to the Master Plan. Chris Arsenault presented the PB's FY21/22 goals and initiatives. Bill Cranshaw asked if there were any particular areas of interest expressed by the SB. Chris Arsenault stated that they asked how the Planning Board maintains a "deep bench" since it is an important Board in town. Bill Nemser summarized by saying that the SB is happy that the Board is trying to be proactive with the initiatives that are tied to the Master Plan goals and that the PB wants to be more proactive in general rather than reactionary.

Chris Arsenault stated that he met with the Master Plan Implementation Committee representative, John Cramer, who asked how the PB's work relates to the Master Plan. Chris Arsenault told him that the PB is in the process of discussing that topic. Chris Arsenault will reach back out to John Cramer to let him know the PB's goals and objectives.

Town Planner Update

Bill Nemser stated that the Town received a \$250, 000 Housing Choice grant today.

There are two finalists for the Assistant Town Planner/Conservation Agent position. Both candidates have gone through two rounds of interviews. Chris Arsenault participated in the second round of interviews. The new Town Health Agent, John Robertson, started in the role. He was previously the Health Agent for Foxborough. He also has experience in food safety. He will be in the role of Health Agent full time.

Chris Arsenault stated that he had asked Jim Coleman to participate in the pre-application meeting for 2 Waltham Street. Jim Coleman stated that it was a very intense meeting that covered a lot of issues and included many town stakeholders in addition to the applicant and his architect. He noted that it is now in the applicant's hands to determine if and how he wants to proceed. Jim Coleman will continue to work with special permit applicants prior to submitting their application.

Jim Coleman had an opportunity to visit the Thomas Street open space site that was developed by James MacDonald as part of the Summer Street project. He said it is a very nice site and that he hopes it gets utilized. Bill Nemser noted that it might provide a model for future projects.

Jim Coleman stated that he was saddened to learn that Maynard will lose its last downtown bank, Citizen's Bank, which will move its downtown operations to its Stow branch.

Natalie Robert stated that her understanding is that Fine Arts theater has been purchased and will eventually reopen.

Bill Nemser stated that Bull Spit Brewery will be moving into the old Battle Road Brewery location at the mill.

Jim Coleman made a motion to close the meeting, which was seconded by Natalie Robert.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Adjourned at 8:46 p.m.