

TOWN OF DEDHAM
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

John R. Bethoney, Chair
Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Vice Chair
James E. O'Brien IV, Member
Jessica L. Porter, Member
James McGrail, Esq., Member



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Jeremy Rosenberger
Town Planner

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
December 12, 2019, 7:00 p.m., Lower Conference Room

Present: John R. Bethoney, Chair
Michael A. Podolski, Vice Chair
James E. O'Brien IV
Jessica L. Porter
James McGrail, Esq.
Ralph I. Steeves, Associate Member

Staff: Jeremy Rosenberger, Town Planner
Jennifer Doherty, Administrative Assistant

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Plans, documents, studies, etc., referred to are incorporated as part of the public records and are on file in the Planning and Zoning office.

337-339 Washington Street (Continuance from 5/23/19)

Applicant: Garnett Realty Trust
Project Address: 337-339 Washington Street, Dedham, MA
Zoning District: CB
Representative: Stephen Rahavy, Esq.
Peer Review: Steven Findlen, Senior Project Manager, McMahon Associates

Chairman Bethoney stated 337-339 Washington Street was a continuation of a public hearing from October 10, 2019 on a Special Permit request for a Mixed-Use Development. Mr. Bethoney stated the Applicant is seeking a continuation of the public hearing to January 8, 2020 to allow for more time to address peer review comments.

Motion: Mr. Podolski moved to continue the public hearing to January 8, 2020 at 7 pm, seconded by Ms. Porter.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 5-0.

Committee Reports

Chairman Bethoney stated the Board would provide updates on the committees they are part of. He asked if there were any updates on the East Dedham Revitalization Committee. There were none.

Master Plan Committee: Ms. Porter said the master plan had their first committee meeting the previous night and had a great turnout. The consultant team would come to the next meeting in January 2020. The committee has a diverse set of talents, experiences and backgrounds.

Dedham Square Study Committee: Ms. Porter and Mr. Podolski shared that the committee had a meeting the previous week and David Gamble of Gamble Associates provided a presentation. It was a recap of the work from the previous Dedham Square study group.

Building, Planning and Construction Committee: Mr. Podolski stated that the committee has been inactive lately. The last meeting of the group discussed the status of the new Town Hall. Mr. Steeves asked if he could join Mr. Podolski on the committee. Mr. Podolski responded that anyone is invited. He also added that the committee did have a new member with experience in large commercial building construction.

Open Space and Recreation Committee: Mr. Podolski said the committee had recently completed its final report of the Open Space Plan, led by Stephanie Radner. She has done a phenomenal job as the chair and completing the plan. The report is good for five years.

Capital Expenditures Committee: Mr. Podolski stated they didn't meet last month due to the November Town Meeting and are looking forward to hearing from the new Town Manager for the upcoming Spring Town Meeting. Typically, the committee starts holding hearings and meetings in January.

Transportation Advisory Committee: Mr. Bethoney discussed the committee has been active recently. They have reviewed multiple applications for review of streets to be evaluated by the Engineering Department for minor modifications or mitigation. The committee has also heard many comments about excessive traffic, traffic speed, traffic volumes and accidents.

Chairman Bethoney reminded the Board that every June they review committee appointments and discuss interest in any of the committees. Mr. Podolski stated he will not be seeking to continue with the Open Space and Recreation Committee due to his many time commitments.

Zoning Discussion

Chairman Bethoney stated that the Board had been discussing their concern regarding Dedham's continual increase in housing units, while at the same time the number of affordable

housing units is stagnant. He would like to discuss with the Planning Director about drafting an article or articles that would require mixed-use development projects in the future provide a certain percentage of affordability. Mr. Podolski stated he would be in favor. He added the mixed-use development study discusses it, but it would be helpful for the Board to begin the conversation. Mr. McGrail stated he would fully support an affordability component within the Zoning Bylaw.

Ms. Porter stated her support as well, and also highlighted that the Town has two recent reports that support adding an affordability requirement to the bylaws – both the mixed-use study and the recent housing study made this recommendation. She also mentioned the 2009 Master Plan recommended an affordable housing bylaw. Ms. Porter felt an affordable housing bylaw shouldn't be restricted to just mixed-use development. Furthermore, she stated the Board should discuss the idea with local developers to ensure any future bylaw would actually be feasible and utilized. Mr. O'Brien agreed with Ms. Porter's ideas.

Mr. Bethoney thanked Board members for their input and asked the Planning Director to prepare a draft affordable housing bylaw and provide it to Board members for the next meeting.

Mr. Podolski asked Mr. Rosenberger about the status of the final draft of the mixed-use study. He replied he didn't have a definitive date as of yet. Mr. McGrail stated it unacceptable that the final report has not been provided to the Board. He asked what the timeline was for going to Spring Town Meeting with regards to any zoning recommendations per the mixed-use study and if the failure to provide the Board with the report would be an issue. Mr. Bethoney asked Mr. Rosenberger to provide a timeline at the next meeting for the Board.

Mr. O'Brien discussed his concern with regards to ensuring the proposed zoning changes are part of a greater conversation about overall growth in Dedham. Ms. Porter replied that the Master Plan process will be the forum for those discussions.

Meeting Minutes

Chair John Bethoney stated he would call out the meeting minutes they are reviewing and if anyone has any issues regarding those minutes, they shall state "pass" and they'll come back to those. He stated Mr. McGrail would not be voting on any of the minutes as he was not a Board member in 2018. Meeting minutes of January 11, 2018, February 8, 2018, March 22, 2018, April 26, 2018, July 26, 2018, August 9, 2018, August 14, 2018, September 13, 2018, October 25, 2018 and November 8, 2018 were deferred to a later date for review and corrections.

Motion: Mr. O'Brien moved to approve as presented the meeting minutes of March 26, 2018 and April 12, 2018, seconded by Mr. Podolski.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 4-0 (with Ms. Porter not voting as she was not on the Board at that time).

Motion: Ms. Porter moved to approve as presented the meeting minutes of May 10, 2018, May 24, 2018, June 21, 2018, July 19, 2018, September 27, 2018 and December 11, 2018, seconded by Mr. Podolski.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 5-0.

The Board discussed that the July 7, 2018 meeting minutes needed to be revised. The Board discussed the July 21, 2018 minutes and had no changes.

Motion: Mr. Podolski moved to approve the July 21, 2018 meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. O'Brien.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 5-0.

Mr. Steeves requested that the agenda be included with future minutes. Mr. Bethoney reiterated the request and asked Mr. Rosenberger to make sure that all meeting minutes are formatted consistently.

Planning Board 2020 Schedule

At the last Board meeting the possibility of changing the Board dates from Thursdays to Wednesdays had been discussed. Mr. Rosenberger stated to avoid conflicts with the Select Board who meet on Thursdays, and to utilize the large meeting room at the new Town Hall, he recommends the Planning Board meet on Wednesdays. Assistant Town Manager Nancy Baker stated the Select Board do not typically meet on Wednesdays and this would be preferable. As such, Mr. Rosenberger discussed before them was the proposed Planning Board schedule for 2020, with meetings on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. The only exception would be a Thursday meeting in November due to Veterans Day. He further added this could remedy the public concern of both Boards meeting the same night. Ms. Porter discussed this would make it easier for Dedham TV.

Motion: Mr. Podolski moved to approve the 2020 Planning Board schedule, seconded by Ms. Porter.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 5-0.

Old Business/New Business

Mr. O'Brien addressed the email he sent regarding the Dunkin Donuts on Milton Street. He stated the rain garden, as part of the approved plan, appears to be different and not operating correctly. Mr. Rosenberger replied he would look into it.

Adjourn

Motion: After discussion, Mr. Podolski moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Porter.

Vote: The vote was unanimous at 5-0.