



BELLINGHAM PLANNING BOARD

10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 7:00 pm

Bellingham Municipal Center

Arcand Meeting Room and Via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT:

William F. O'Connell, Jr.	Chairman
Brian T. Salisbury	Vice Chairman
Philip M. Devine	Member
Dennis J. Trebino	Member
Nick Mobilia	Member
Robert Lussier	Alternate Member- via Zoom

ADDITIONAL OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Amy Sutherland, Assistant Town Planner

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Citizen Petition Article:

The purpose of the public hearing is to see if the Town will vote to amend its Zoning Bylaws as follows:

To add the following definition to the provisions of Section 240-32.

1. Warehouse: a building or facility with the primary function is to provide for the commercial storage and/or distribution of a wide variety of merchandise, goods, and/or other products. This shall include those facilities designed to store products in preparation for shipping and where those products are generally not made available for retail sale at the facility. Warehouses shall include those facilities for short or long-term storage, and, in this manner shall also include fulfillment or "last mile" facilities for the short term storage and distribution of items made available through online or similar sales. The storage or parking of tractor-trailers, trucks or trailers used in moving goods to or from warehouses is also included within this definition. The term warehouses shall not include retail self-storage facilities where members of the public can lease portions of a building for storage of household or personal goods or other items not intended for distribution or sale.

2. To Amend Section 240-31, the Use Regulation table, by changing "Yes" to "No" for Warehouses in the Industrial Zone, thereby making Warehouses a prohibited use in all zoning districts within the Town of Bellingham.

The Petitioner was in attendance at tonight's meeting. He shared his concerns about the warehouses in Bellingham. He believes they are causing problems which include: character of the community, traffic, environmental conditions, safety issues, curb appeal and home values declining. He shared a map of

Bellingham and stated that the lower home values are where the areas have been industrialized in residential areas. The Petitioner shared his concerns with crime rates being higher in the Town of Bellingham and attributes that to the infrastructure in North Bellingham. The petitioner believes there are too many warehouses in Bellingham in residential areas and they are hurting more than helping. The Chairman opened up the discussion for public comment. Residents agree with the petitioner and state that if this article is approved, it gives the town the ability to say no to more warehouses. They shared their concerns with the rapid growth, due to the warehouses, putting pressure on the police and fire departments. Another resident stated his concerns with the traffic, road safety and current road conditions. A resident, via zoom, questioned about reaching capacity on pumping water and sewer affecting development.

Mr. Salisbury questioned the petitioner about the language in the amendment and wanted to be sure it is thoroughly vetted.

The Chairman noted that this Citizen's Petition was not sponsored by the Bellingham Planning Board and the board was not consulted in its development.

Mr. Devine made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously.

The board would like to send it to the town meeting without a recommendation.

Mr. Mobilia made a motion to take no action on the Citizens Petition Article. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION PUBLIC HEARING(Seeking Continuation to May 9, 2024)

306 Maple Street:

The applicant, 306 Maple LLC, and owner, Andrew Sacher, the project will consist of a single-story warehouse building containing 59,400 sq.ft. which includes approximately 4,950 sq. ft. of accessory office space at 306 Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 11.5 acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 37, Parcel 6B zoned Industrial.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to May 9, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION PUBLIC HEARING (Seeking Continuation to May 9, 2024)

Scenic Road Permit 306 Maple Street:

The applicant, 306 Maple LLC, and owner, Andrew Sacher, the project will consist of a single-story warehouse building containing 59,400 sq.ft. which includes approximately 4,950 sq. ft. of accessory office space at 306 Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 11.5 acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 37, Parcel 6A zoned Industrial. The plans were prepared by Allen Engineering & Associates, 140 Hartford Ave., Hopedale, MA 01747.

Mr. Devine made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to May 9, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION PUBLIC HEARING:

57 Mendon Street(Seeking Continuation to May 9, 2024)

The applicant and owner, Hiawatha Properties, LTD is seeking under the Town of Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-16, Development Plan Approval and §240-54, Stormwater Management, a site improvement plan dated May 20, 2019 to the existing commercial site which proposes a land disturbance of 15,000 sf. +/- at 57 Mendon Street, approximately 2.14 +/- acre of land, shown on Assessor's Map 44-69, zoned Business 1 and Residential. The plans were prepared by Land Planning, Inc.

The applicant is looking for a continuation in order to revise the application that they have submitted.

Mr. Mobilia made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to May 23, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

CONTINUATION PUBLIC HEARING:

North & Blackstone Street:

The applicant, Ravens Homes, Inc, and owner, Raven Homes, propose to construct (12) 3-unit townhouses with associated improvements at North/Blackstone Street in Bellingham, approximately 20.8 +/- acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 59-Lot 60A, zoned Agriculture. This application falls under the Town of Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-101, Special Residential Use-Townhouse Dwellings, §240-16, Development Plan Approval, § 240-54 and Stormwater Management, and §240-60.

The representatives for the applicants were in attendance at tonight's meeting. Two remaining issues include the placement of the driveway and the neighboring resident being able to access his field. Regarding the placement of the driveway, stakes were put out and emails were exchanged with neighbors. The representative does not believe that the car lights exiting the driveway will impact the neighbors, therefore no screening trees are necessary. However, the applicant has agreed to plant three trees for the neighbor and the neighbor will take down the one tree currently there. In regard to the neighbor wanting to access his field, the representatives noted that there is a Conservation Restriction with National Heritage that does not allow motorized vehicles in the area. Mr. Salisbury noted that this is a civil issue between the applicant and the resident.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

In regard to the plan, the peer reviewer has suggested adding a handicap parking space to the visitor parking and the applicant would like to have that waived considering each townhouse has its own driveway. The board ultimately decided that they are unable to waive this item.

The board suggested adding a paragraph about screening and landscaping will be preserved in perpetuity.

Mr. Devine made a motion to approve the North and Blackstone Street Special Residential Use Townhouse Dwellings, Development Plan and Stormwater Management decision as amended. Motion was seconded by Mr. Salisbury and the voice vote passes unanimously.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to approve the North and Blackstone Street Special Residential Use Townhouse Dwellings Special Permit decision as amended. Motion was seconded by Mr. Devine and the voice vote passes unanimously.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

•ANR Plan–WS Development

This Board noted that there is adequate frontage; everything from a technical point of view is sufficient in the ANR Plan.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to endorse the ANR for WS Development. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Maple Street, Assessor's Map 37, Lots 3 & 3A:

The applicant and owner, Maple Street Development, LLC, NERT LLC, is seeking under the Town of Bellingham's Zoning By-Laws §240-16, Development Plan Approval, §240-54, Stormwater Management, and Site Plan Approval to propose to construct an industrial trades building 19,525 square foot for two lease units each 9,762 sf. located south of 495 and on the western side of Maple Street in Bellingham, approximately 7.2 acres of land, shown on Assessor's Map 37, Lots 3 and 3A zoned Industrial. The plans were prepared by Independence Engineering, LLC, 161 East Grove Street, Suite 3, Middleboro, MA 02346

The representative for the applicant, Mr. O'Connell, summarized the plans for the building plans on parcels 3 and 3A. He explained to the board and residents that this building is significantly smaller than other buildings in the area and will be used for trades such as granite companies or plumbers. It is considered a Trade Building, not a warehouse.

Mr. Oates from Independence Engineering had a second meeting with the Conservation Commission, and they are drafting an Order of Conditions. They will be reviewing the Order of Conditions at the next meeting. Mr. Oates shared his screen to show and summarize the site layout plan, utility plan, and landscaping plan. They are requesting 2 waivers, traffic study and required parking.

Fire chief had some issues with the width of the paths and driveways being adequate for the fire trucks to access, he is requiring a Swept Path Analysis on corners and entrance and exit to access the building completely and having a fire hydrant within 100ft.

Mr. Lussier suggested soil testing where septic will be, sooner rather than later, so the peer review will not be delayed. He also questioned the width of the 15ft wall, and the materials used as well as including a 5ft buffer in front of the bay doors.

Mr. Salisbury suggested screening the building from Maple Street and 495 and putting bay doors in the rear of the building so it cannot be seen from Maple Street.

The representative for the applicant would like to request that proposals begin from the peer review consultant.

A resident from 314 Maple St. questioned tree removal and historical landmarks on the site. There will be three trees removed and there are no stone walls or historical landmarks on the site.

Mr. Salisbury made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to May 23, 2024. Motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the voice vote passes unanimously.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Planning Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 7:00 pm. This meeting will take place both in-person and via Zoom.

Mr. O'Connell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mobilia and the motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katelyn Duquette

Recording Secretary
Approved May 9, 2024