

TOWN OF WENHAM
Planning Board Meeting of December 10, 2020
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday December 10, 2020 at 7:30 pm. *Due to the COVID19 Virus pandemic & restrictions concerning in-person gatherings ordered by the Governor, this meeting took place virtually on Zoom.*

The Planning Board oversees the Rules & Regulations governing the subdivision of land, site plan review, and special permits according to the Wenham Zoning By-Law and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 41, §81. The Board consists of five elected members, with one member to be elected each year at the Annual Town Meeting: A. Weeks (2021); V. Rogers (2022); D. Pasquarello (2023); P. Clay (2024); D. Anderson (2025)

Mr. Clay is the Planning Board representative to the Community Preservation Committee.

- Call to order - *With a quorum present, Ms. Weeks called the meeting to order at 7:38 pm.*

Board members present: Ann Weeks, Chair; Virginia Rogers, Vice Chair; David Anderson; Peter Clay(A-7:53pm); Dan Pasquarello

Also present: Margaret Hoffman, Planning Coordinator; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Officials present not participating: Selectman Chair Cheeseman (L 8:22pm)

Continued Public Hearings

- 60 Arbor Street – Definitive Subdivision – Public Hearing in accordance with the Town of Wenham Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, on the petition of Jeffrey R. & Susan M. Hamilton, 60 Arbor Street, Wenham MA, to approve a Definitive Subdivision Plan for land located at 60 Arbor Street (Map 13, Lots 84 and 84A).
(Continued from November 17, 2020)

➤ Request for continuance from J. Decoulos, December 9, 2020

➤ Letter from Attorney Deborah Eliason, Eliason Law Office, 63 Middle Street Gloucester 01930 December 10, 2020

➤ Planning Board members Ann Weeks and Dan Pasquarello recused themselves from this agenda item as abutters to the proposed project.

Ms. Rogers chaired this agenda item.

Ms. Hoffman told the Board that because the peer review has not been completed to date for the latest set of plans submitted for 60 Arbor Street, she recommended the public hearing be continued to the February meeting to allow the Board time to consider all related documents and materials. She also observed with the upcoming holidays there may not be significant time to prepare for a January meeting.

Ms. Hoffman noted the peer review was expected to be completed by end of next week (12.18.2020) and that the applicant needed to respond, and if necessary, submit a revised set of plans that meets all criteria and addresses all comments; Ms. Hoffman will determine the submittal deadline for the applicant based on the peer review.

Ms. Hoffman will post the peer review and most recent plans on the town's web site for public review; this information was anticipated to be posted by January 22, 2021.

The Planning Board members will have the February meeting packet by January 29, 2021.

Vote: The Board members voted unanimously by roll call to continue the public hearing, at the request of the applicant, for 60 Arbor Street to a date certain of February 11, 2021 at 7:30 pm.

Ann Weeks and Dan Pasquarello returned to meeting.

Administrative

- Spring Hill Subdivision – Discuss possible issues regarding location of sprinklers and trees in right of way and other issues around development. *This agenda item was held for a future meeting.*

- Discuss potential for Master Plan project

Ms. Hoffman pointed out that Wenham's last Master Plan was in 1960. Ms. Hoffman referenced a slide presentation and initiated a discussion on a new Master Plan beginning by reviewing some reasons to support a master plan.

- Consistency in decision making
- Ability to make informed decision
- Achieve predictability
- Wise use of resources
- Preserving community character
- Produce positive economic development

Ms. Hoffman identified components required for Master Plan per Mass General Law as:

- Statement of goals and policies
- Land use
- Housing
- Economic development
- Natural & Cultural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Services and facilities
- Circulation (transportation)
- Implementation

Communities may add their own priorities

In Massachusetts, a Master Plan adoption requires a majority vote of the Planning Board only and does not require adoption by the local legislative body (town meeting).

The Board was supportive of going forward with the first steps for a new/updated Master Plan.

Mr. Anderson commented on the importance of hiring the right firm for the Master Plan for Wenham and noted the value of a Master Plan as an investment for a cash positive future.

The Board members discussed the benefit of this being a multi-year project as to not overwhelm town resources and budget.

Ms. Hoffman will be asked local communities that recently had Master Plans done for a review of their experience.

The committee requested a copy of the 1960 Master Plan be provided.

The Board discussed holding a public forum to discuss and promote the need for a Master Plan in advance of Town Meeting (May 1, 2021).

- Update on Planning Grant and next steps for Regulation Update project

Ms. Hoffman received two grants to update the Subdivision Rules & Regulations, Zoning Bylaws, and General Bylaws. One grant was from the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs for \$18,000 and the other grant was from MAPC for Climate Resiliency for \$49,875. The two grants will be combined to have all the rules and regulations updated at the same time with one firm. Ms. Hoffman is putting together a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a firm to work with the Planning Board.

- Meeting Minutes – October 8, 2020 and November 17, 2020

Vote: The Board members voted unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes of October 8, 2020 as edited

Vote: The Board members voted unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes of November 17, 2020 as edited

- Other matters, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Ms. Hoffman informed the Board that the Town/Board of Selectmen received a *Notice of Intent to Sell* from the property owner of 62 Maple Street of his intention to sell the property to Harborlight/Maple Woods (age restricted affordable housing).

Because this is a Chapter 62 property, the Town/Board of Selectmen has a right of first refusal.

- Calendar: Planning Board meeting February 11, 2021

- Adjournment – *The Board members voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn at 9:09pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

12.11.2020