



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, December 12, 2023



Recognizing the presence of a quorum James Berkowitz, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with the following other members in attendance: Michael Baker, Abdul Kafal, and Michael Wilkes. Becky Rushford and Andrew Howden, Associate Member, were absent. R. Gary Bechtholdt, Planning & Community Development Director and Barbara Kinney, Administrative Assistant, were also present.

Attendees of the Public: Bill Renaud.

**I. CITIZENS FORUM**

None

**II. FORM A'S**

None

**III. PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENT (DRAFT) -DISCUSSION/REVIEW**

Planned Residential Commercial/Retail Mixed-Use Development  
Providence Road -Assessor Map 14 Parcel 17 & Map 24 Parcel 21

MGL Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlay District – The Planning Board feels establishing a MGL Chapter 40R District may be a good option & opportunity for the Town to address its affordable housing needs (see recently completed Housing Production Plan). The State's Smart Growth zoning, enacted in 2004, encourages municipalities to adopt local zoning for dense residential and mixed-use developments which includes a percentage of affordable housing units to be located within downtown centers, near transit stations, and/or other areas of suitable location. The State has developed a sample bylaw to comply with MGL Chapter 40R regulations and municipalities that elect to adopt MGL Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning are eligible to receive payment from the State and other financial incentives. Where after local adoption and upon receipt of a letter of approval from the State (Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities), municipalities are entitled to zoning incentive payments based upon number of dwelling units (e.g., \$200,000 for 101 to 200-units). Once a MGL Chapter 40R project is approved locally and upon the issuance of building permits, a municipality may also be eligible for additional one-time payments of \$3,000 for so-called "bonus units" within the approved MGL Chapter 40R District. Reference is made to 760 CMR 59.00 [Smart Growth Zoning Districts] and a companion provision, MGL Chapter 40S provides municipalities means to seek Smart Growth School Cost Reimbursements.

Providence Road Property – The Planning Board hosted ongoing discussions for the two (2) properties located on Providence Road/Route 122 (including town-owned parcel). Bill Renaud, representing the private property, presented an updated conceptual plan for mixed-use development with access to town ballfields, extended buffer to abutters, and designation of open space. The Planning Board directed the Planning Office to prepare a draft zoning provision utilizing the State's MGL Chapter 40R sample bylaw and identifying Providence Road as a subject property for a Northbridge Smart Growth Overlay District. The Planning Office

is to contact the State (Bill Reyelt, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities) to confirm state/local adoption process and to (hopefully) expedite the State's review and pre-approval(s) in conjunction with the Spring Annual Town Meeting consideration. The Planning Board will host another working session (January 09, 2024 at 7:00PM -Town Hall) and the public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

#### IV. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes -November 28, 2023

*Upon motion duly made (M. Wilkes) and seconded (M. Baker), the Planning Board voted 4-0 to approve the Planning Board meeting minutes of November 28, 2023.*

b. MGL Chapter 40R -Smart Growth Zoning & Housing Production

See Proposed Zoning Amendment discussion above.

c. Comprehensive Master Plan -MGL Chapter 41 Section 81D

This is a placeholder for a future discussion.

d. MBTA Communities -MGL Chapter 40A Section 3A

Northridge is waiting for an answer from the State regarding approval of the documents submitted.

e. Site Plan/Subdivision Developments -Status

The Planning Board is waiting for construction schedules for Hemlock Estates and The Camelot. The Review & Inspection account for Hemlock Estates needs to be replenished. Construction continues at Moon Hill Estates. The Planning Office is in receipt of the new contact information for Mike's Way.

f. Planning Board Comments/Concerns

None

g. Mail -Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached), the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: Planning Board Agenda dated December 12, 2023; Draft Planning Board Agenda dated January 09, 2024; Citizens Forum Document; Commerce Park Providence Road Concept Site Plan dated November 13, 2023; Photo of an Apartment Complex; Providence Road Smart Growth Overlay District Mixed-Use Development (Proposed); Smart Growth Zoning Districts Map of Massachusetts; Sustainable Development Principles; Email dated December 05, 2023 to Town Planner from Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities regarding Smart Growth Overlay District; 760 CMR 59:00 Smart Growth Zoning Districts and Starter Home Zoning Districts; Chapter 40R Smart Growth Zoning and Housing Production; Chapter 40S Smart Growth School Cost Reimbursement; Chapter 40R Local Zoning Bylaw Guidance Document; Smart Growth Overlay Districts (SGODs); 40R District/Zoning Application Form Preliminary Determination of Eligibility; Draft Planning Board Minutes of November 28, 2023; Section 81D Master Plan: Economic Development Supplement; 2023 Planning Board Meeting Schedule; 2024 Planning Board Meeting Schedule.

h. Other

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Having no additional business, the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at or about 7:29PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board:



Barbara A. Kinney  
Planning Administrative Assistant



Cc: Town Clerk /File

December 12, 2023

Planning Board

FROM	DATE	SUBJECT

Upton ZBA

- Decision – Approved the Special Permit to reconstruct a pre-existing nonconforming single-family dwelling for Eugene & Lynne DiPoto at 93 Crockett Road.
- Decision – Approved the Special Permit for an accessory apartment to be attached to the existing home above a garage for Lee & Janet Maglione at 125 Warren Street.
- Decision – Approved the Special Permit for an accessory apartment, originally constructed in 2017 for Hayley Mozart at 10 Pearl Street.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of David Duffy, Jr. for a Variance to allow for front set back of 42 feet where 50 feet is required at 126 Elm Street; Application of Felipe Coelho & Darcilane Oliveira for a Special Permit to approve an existing accessory apartment existing above the garage at 106 Taft Street; Application of Stephen & Joy Rehn for a Special Permit to add a deck on the lakeside for the home which is pre-existing nonconforming single-family dwelling at 55 Crockett Road; Application for a Variance for a garage/bedroom which was built within 20 feet of the front setback at 50 Plain Street; Administrative Appeal by Burak Yilmaz of the Building Commissioner/Zoning Enforcement Officer's Notice of Violation to remove or relocate an existing yurt, accessory structure, which was subject to a previous Zoning Board of Appeals decision at 58 East Street; Application of Ian Simpson for a Variance for setback relief for the addition of a raised four season room at the back of the pre-existing nonconforming house at 32 Shore Drive.