



NORTHBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2024



Recognizing the presence of a quorum Rebecca Rushford, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with the following other members in attendance: James Berkowitz, Michael Baker, and Michael Wilkes. Abdul Kafal 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: No one.

**I. CITIZENS FORUM**

None

**II. FORM A'S**

None

**III. NORTHBRIDGE SMART GROWTH ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICT -REVIEW/DISCUSSION**

Providence Road -Assessor Map 14 Parcel 17 & AP 24-21

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40R

G Bechtholdt, Town Planner updated the Planning Board on the review of the State's 40R Smart Growth zoning provision, which as noted by G Bechtholdt for local adoption needs to be consistent with the state's zoning template. G Bechtholdt mentioned he is still reviewing provisions, where Owners of the subject property along Providence Road may petition the town for zoning amendment to allow for mixed-used as shown on conceptual plan previously to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. G Bechtholdt reiterated that he has been in contact with William Reyelt, a representative from the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities (formally DHCD) on 40R and requirements for local adoption. G Bechtholdt hopes to have an initial draft to the state by the end of the month.

G Bechtholdt explained the proposed market-rate Senior Housing component (conceptual plan) would not qualify (be allowed) under the 40R provision and as such the 40R District (proposed) would not include portion(s) of property for senior housing. G Bechtholdt suggested portion of property may be considered for rezoning to adjacent R3 Zoning District to allow for senior housing in accordance with the town's existing Senior Living Development bylaw.

Board clarified if the Owners of the subject property submitted zoning amendment(s) via petition, the Planning Board would still need to hold a public hearing and offer a report/recommendation at Town Meeting. G Bechtholdt reminded the Board, 40R is a recommended strategy aimed to address the housing needs of the town as recommended in the recently completed Housing Production Plan.

J. Berkowitz inquired about the allowable density within 40R; G Bechtholdt acknowledged density is somewhat aggressive, however suggested the limit on the actual number of units may be determined by a

number of factors, including setbacks, wetlands, parking, and building height; noting the Fire Chief has initially expressed concerns with potential number of stories proposed in the conceptual plan. G Bechtholdt advised the Board that he will continue to review the state's template on 40R and prepare a draft provision for others to consider and submit via petition at a Town Meeting (Spring/Fall 2024). G Bechtholdt indicated the density of senior housing component would need to be in accordance with the existing Senior Living bylaw.

G Bechtholdt expressed the need for other departments to review conceptual plan once again, hoping to have Owners agree to such a meeting with DPW, Fire, Water/Sewer, and others soon.

Planning Board shall continue its review and discussion on 40R Smart Growth zoning at its next meeting.

#### IV. OLD/NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes -December 12, 2023

*Upon motion duly made (J. Berkowitz) and seconded (M. Wilkes), the Planning Board voted 4-0 to approve the minutes of December 12, 2023.*

b. Planning Board Meeting -January 09, 2024 (Cancelation)

The Planning Board was reminded that if they are not able to attend a Planning Board meeting, they are to contact the Planning Office ASAP so a determination of a quorum can be reached.

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

Placeholder for a future discussion.

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

Northbridge is waiting for review from State regarding compliance.

e. Inclusionary Zoning -Smart Growth Zoning Templates

Summary brief and sample bylaw(s) provided to Board for review and consideration, where Inclusionary Zoning is an identified strategy in the recently completed Housing Production Plan.

f. 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting -Tuesday, May 07, 2024

Point of Information.

g. 2024 SATM Warrant Closes -Friday, March 15, 2024

Point of Information.

h. Planning Board Vote to Sponsor Article(s) -2024 SATM

If the Planning Board wishes to sponsor any article, they will have to submit the article before the March 15, 2024 deadline.

i. 2023 Annual Report -Planning Board

Annual Report (draft) provided; Board members will have until Monday, January 19, 2024 to provide any comments before submission.

j. Site Plan/Subdivision Developments -Status  
Tabled at this time.

k. Planning Board Comments/Concerns

B Rushford, Chair at its next meeting shall look to Board members on general status of their various committees they are on representing the Planning Board.

l. Mail -Review

In addition to the mail listed (see attached), the Planning Board noted receipt of the following communications: Planning Board Agenda dated January 23, 2024; Draft Planning Board Agenda dated February 13, 2024; Citizens Forum Document; Maps of property on Providence Road; Inclusionary Zoning: for Community/neighborhood groups; Understanding Inclusionary Zoning; Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw; Draft Planning Board Minutes of December 12, 2023; Draft Planning Board annual report; Letter dated December 18, 2023 from Whitinsville Water Company to Planning Board regarding the Walmart Addition; Letter dated January 03, 2024 from Community Planning & Development to Narragansett Bay Estuary Program concerning the Blackstone Watershed Collaborative; Memo dated January 09, 2024 from Town Planner to Town Manager regarding FY2025 Budget Request; FY25 Draft Budget Summary Sheet; Community Planning & Development -Weekly Report December 18-22, 2023; CDBG Funding Opportunity; House Bill 3555 An Act relative to Associate Members of Planning Boards; 2024 Planning Board Meeting Schedule.

m. Other

Planning Board acknowledged receipt of FY2025 Planning Board budget request. Copy of House Bill No. 3555 included in the packet regarding the duties of the Associate Member; where Associate Member of Planning Board can only currently vote on Special Permits, in the absence of other member; Bill would change duties, to allow the Associate Member to vote on all applications in the absence of members.

## ADJOURNMENT

Having no additional business, the Planning Board adjourned its meeting of Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at or about 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Planning Board:



Barbara A. Kinney  
Planning Administrative Assistant



Cc: Town Clerk /File

January 23, 2023

Planning Board

FROM	DATE	SUBJECT

Grafton

- Decision – Approved with Conditions the Special Permit for Broadmeadow Realty, LLC for five 24-unit apartment buildings and one sales center at 188 Providence Road.

Sutton

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Andre & Chelsea Kozaczka for an attached +/-960 square foot accessory apartment at 16 Carr Street.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Anthony McAvey to create a retreat lot at 81 Uxbridge Road.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Pyne Sand & Stone Co., Inc. for an Earth Removal Permit for ongoing operations at 47 Hough Road.
- Decision – Granted with Conditions the Special Permit for an Accessory Apartment to Andre & Chelsea Kozaczka at 16 Carr Street.
- Decision – Granted with Conditions the Earth Removal Permit for ongoing operations to Pyne Sand & Stone at 47 Hough Road.
- Decision – Granted with Conditions the Special Permit for a Retreat Lot to Anthony McAvey at 81 Uxbridge Road.
- Memo – Eastland Partners, Inc. has filed applications for Site Plan Review and Groundwater Protection District Special Permit as well as Route 146 Overlay District Special Permit for land owned by Sutton Motor-In Trust to construct a 28,800 square foot building for service and repair of semi-trailers with associated site work at 100 Worcester Providence Turnpike.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Chad Boardman of Eastland Partners, Inc. for Site Plan Review and Groundwater Protection District Special Permit as well as Route 146 Overlay District Special Permit for land owned by Sutton Motor-In Trust to construct a 28,800 square foot building for service and repair of semi-trailers with associated site work at 100 Worcester Providence Turnpike.
- Public Hearing Notice – Application of John & Michele Hicks to construct a detached 3-car garage with an Accessory Apartment at 31 Pleasant Street.

Upton

- Public Hearing Notice – Application of Upton Recreation Commission for a Major Site Plan Modification to the Site Plan entitled “Kiwanis Upper Parking Lot” at 99 Kiwanis Beach Road and the Application of Mendon Upton Youth Soccer Association for a Site Plan Approval for lighting to be installed at the Kiwanis Beach upper field for night events.
- Public Hearing Notice **CANCELLED**– Application of Upton Recreation Commission for a Major Site Plan Modification to the Site Plan entitled “Kiwanis Upper Parking Lot” at 99 Kiwanis Beach Road and the Application of Mendon Upton Youth Soccer Association for a Site Plan Approval for lighting to be installed at the Kiwanis Beach upper field for night events.

ZBA

- Agenda – Application of KEE Properties, LLC (applicant) and Whitinsville Redevelopment Trust (owner) for a Special Permit for construction within the 100 year flood plain as they permit the proposed contractor’s yard at the corner of Main Street and Water Street.