

**Planning Board Minutes
Memorial Town Hall
March 1, 2023**

Members Present: Chair Stephanie Slys, David Bell, John Jeffress, Jimmy Tarr (remote)

Attendees: Jeff Squire, Kenny Patel, Tim Paciorek, Patrick Roche, Ashley Schaffer, Kathy Zeamer, Jan Longstreeth, Ken Longstreeth, Jeff Bruscoe, Greg Omasta, Aaron Mark, Peter Langlois, Ben Langlois, Russ Grant, Chris Banner, Terry Specker, Robert Raymond, Tom Reidy (remote)

Chair opens meeting at 6:02 PM

Public Forum

Chair opens public forum

No public comment

Public Hearing with Patrick Roche and Ashley Schaffer amendment to zoning Bylaws.

Ashley Schaffer and Patrick Roche are present at the meeting. They are interested in purchasing 121 West Street for the purpose of having a pickleball facility. To do so, they would like to propose an amendment to the Town's Bylaws. 121 West Street is currently zoned light industrial. They are proposing to add table of use, 4.22, amusement, recreation services to light industrial zoning. Amusement and recreation services are not allowed in light industrial but are allowed in business zones. Patrick Roche presents the map of 121 West Street. The entire parcel is 30 acres but only a portion is zoned light industrial. Patrick Roche and Ashley Schaffer believe adding amusement/recreation to light industrial will make it more appealing to buyers and developers. They give examples of community building services and potential recreational businesses that the Town could benefit from. Small discussion on these types of businesses in other towns and communities.

Chair Slys opens the hearing to any supporters.

Sue Moorman and Kathy Zeamer of Bridge Street both share their support for this proposed amendment. John Blowers of Scape Builders, which is an abutter to 121 West Street, is also a proponent of this proposal.

Chair Slys opens the hearing to any opposition. No public opposition.

Chair Slys closes the public hearing. Board moves to deliberation.

The Board acknowledges that there needs to be a thorough look at the table of use regulations. Small discussion on the background of zoning light industrial on West Street and creating more business development. The Board feels that this use would encourage more developments along the route 5 corridor. Chair Slys explains that the precedent has been set for the Board to generally move amendment proposals to Town Meeting and let the residents decide. The Board will have to vote on moving this forward with a recommendation, no recommendation, or a neutral stance. David Bell makes a motion to move this proposal to Town meeting with the Board's recommendation. Jimmy Tarr seconds. Motion passes. This proposal will go forward to Town Meeting. Chair Slys reminds the public that amendments to the Bylaws must get a 2/3rd favorable vote.

Public Hearing on proposed zoning amendment at 108 & 104 West Street

Jeff Bruscoe of 108 West Street and Terry Specker of 104 West Street are present for the hearing. They are looking to change their parcels from rural residential to light industrial. Jeff Bruscoe states that he would like to open a doggy day care and coffee shop. He presents his reasoning for having these

businesses at his property. The Board requests that Jeff Bruscoe and Terry Specker present the Board with reasons why changing the zone at these properties would be beneficial to the Town as a whole. Chair Slysyz explains that changing the zone from rural residential to light industrial could open up development to various other operations, not just the operation Jeff Bruscoe is presenting. Small discussion on the procedure of an amendment to the Town's Bylaws. David Bell says he is open to moving this proposal to Town meeting but feels as though there is not a strong enough argument for the Board to recommend the proposal.

Chair opens hearing to supporters. No public comment.

Chair opens hearing to opponents. No public comment.

Continued discussion on the procedure at Town meeting. Jeff Bruscoe and Terry Specker will have to present their case for a zone change at Town meeting and must capture 2/3rd vote for it to pass.

David Bell makes a motion to move this proposal to Town meeting with a neutral stance by the Board. Jimmy Tarr seconds. Motion passes.

Public Hearing, hotel proposal at 16 West Street

Jeff Squire of Berkshire Design is presenting a proposed Hotel at 16 West Street. The property owner is Shields Hotels, LLC and owner Kenny Patel is present for the hearing as well. The entire property at 16 West Street is just about 60,00 SF. Jeff Squire explains that there is an existing structure on site, which is about 3500 SF. The proposed project would see the construction of a 3-story, 35 room "boutique" hotel, at the same area of the existing structure. The applicant would like to make use of the accessory allowance of storage units on both southern and northern sides of the proposed hotel, in order to maximize the property. There would be roughly 10 units on each side. Jeff Squire says the proposal calls for units of 10x10 FT and 10x12 FT. In their plan, they also included a Stormwater Report. Jeff Squire states all of the stormwater runoff proposed follows the Mass State guidelines.

Chair Slysyz opens the hearing to supporters.

Robert Raymond speaks in support, although he has questions about screening of the proposed storage units.

Peter Langlois speaks in support of the project. He too has questions about screening and aesthetics. He also has some concern on the traffic during construction. Small discussion on the traffic. The Board would follow up with DPW for more information. Peter Langlois asks if there will be any plans for retail on the ground level. No plans for retail or a restaurant at ground level.

Russ Grant brings up the importance of the aesthetics and design of the building. Small discussion on Hatfield Design Guidelines. These were proposed several years ago but never got voted to be adopted into the Bylaws. Small discussion on long term stays hotel vs short term stay. Kenny Patel confirms that this is an open market, short term stay proposed hotel. There will be continental breakfast offered to hotel guests only.

Chair opens hearing to any opponents to the project. No public comments.

Chair moves to Board deliberations. The Board appreciates the public interest in the aesthetics of the proposed project. Chair Slysyz says that it is important to residents that the plans of the hotel keep up with the character of the Town. Jimmy Tarr states that he would like to see plans for green screening along the property to make it more aesthetically pleasing. David Bell agrees. Chair Slysyz would also like to see some of the lighting plans. She believes continuing the hearing to their next meeting will allow the applicant to address some of those concerns. Jimmy Tarr makes a motion to continue the hearing until their next meeting in April. David Bell seconds. Motion passes. Hearing for proposed hotel at 16 West Street is continued to April 5, 2023.

Public Hearing, proposed zoning amendment 127, 129, 131 N. Hatfield Rd

Greg Omasta is present for the hearing. He would like to make the entirety of his parcels, 127, 129 and 131 North Hatfield Rd be zoned light industrial. The front portion of these parcels currently are zoned rural residential as the rest of the parcels are zoned light industrial. Greg Omasta explains that he took this to Town meeting back in 2021, and the amendment loss by only 4 votes. His intent is to move his landscaping business from Hadley to Hatfield, where he resides. Tom Reidy, attorney for Greg Omasta, is also at the hearing, remotely. Greg Omasta and Tom Reidy believe that bringing their business to North Hatfield Rd will help keep the characteristics of the neighborhood. Greg Omasta states that there will be no increase in traffic flow, which was the biggest concern neighbors had 2 years ago. Small discussion on spot zoning. Tom Reidy does not believe this is spot zoning since the majority of Greg Omasta's property is zoned light industrial.

Chair opens hearing to supporters. No public comment.

Chair opens hearing to opponents. Kim Baker of North Hatfield Rd is an opponent of this proposed change. She doesn't think this type of zone and business operation is appropriate so close to a residential area.

No other public comments

Chair closes public hearing. Chair moves to Board deliberation.

David Bell understands what Greg Omasta would like to do at the same time, has taken in consideration the concerns of Kim Baker. He believes this should be moved to Town meeting but is uncertain if the Board should recommend it. Jimmy Tarr agrees. Small discussion on the amendment article in 2021. Jimmy Tarr makes a motion to move this amendment proposal to Town meeting with a natural stance. David Bell seconds. Motion passes.

No other Board discussion or updates

Approval of meeting minutes.

John Jeffress makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 1, 2023 with corrections. David Bell seconds. Motion passes.

Next Scheduled meeting is April 5, 2023

Chair announces to the public that the Planning Board will be moving into Executive Session and that they will vote to close the meeting at the conclusion of Executive Session.

Chair Slysyz opens Executive Session:

Pursuant to MGL, Ch. 30A, §21a, #8: To consider applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening