



**Planning Board  
Meeting Minutes of February 7, 2022**

**Board Members:**

**Present:** Chuck Walkovich, Joyce Morrow, David Ganong, Al Patenaude

**Not Present:** Casey Campetti (not present)

**Staff:** Jenny Gingras, Cheryl Lutcza

**Attendees:** April Healey, Pepperell Community Media, Kathy Pries, Andrew MacLean, “Guprecht”, Renee D’Argento, Tony Beattie

**1. Call To Order:**

7:00P.M. The remote public meeting (recorded for future broadcast by Pepperell Community Media) was called to order by Mr. Walkovich (in the absence of Mx. Campetti)

**2. Acceptance of Minutes:**

- a. January 18, 2022: Mr. Walkovich asked for a motion to accept the minutes of January 18, 2022. Ms. Morrow made a motion to accept the January 18, 2022, meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Ganong. All in favor. Mr. Patenaude abstained.

**3. Reports/Correspondence/Discussion: (*Matters may arise that the Chair did not reasonably anticipate*)**

a. **Stormwater Regulations Review:**

Ms. Gingras asked if the Board wanted to wait for Mx. Campetti to return before reviewing. Ms. Morrow said that stormwater drains throughout Town need to be watched, as they are heavily thickened with sand. She also inquired as to how the new products put down on the roads prior to a storm enter into the drains. Mr. Patenaude asked if this runs concurrently with applications for subdivisions or major site plans. Ms. Gingras said it did. Mr. Patenaude asked if it states this in the in the applications. Ms. Gingras said the bylaw runs concurrently with the site plan/subdivision reviews. Discussion ensued.

b. **NMCOG Update/DLTA Funding Request:**

Mr. Walkovich said the DLTA requests are opened up again and we should give some thought on how we want to use their funding this year. Ms. Gingras said she did receive them and the deadline to respond to that is February 9<sup>th</sup>, so she has submitted two projects: 1) update to sub-division regulations site plan review; and 2) developing a 40R Overlay District. She said that she had discussed these two items with NMCOG.

c. **Master Plan Implementation Team Update:**

Mr. Walkovich said that they are in process of starting to collect data for the semi-annual report to Town Meeting, and they plan to provide a status report to the Planning Board prior to presenting at Town Meeting. They will also be sending out a guidance letter for those committees that want to request funds for 2023. There are two types of funds: 1) under \$1,000; and 2) projects over \$1,000. Requests would need to be completed similar to ones submitted this year.

d. **MPIT Budget Request:**

Ms. Gingras said that she has an MPIT Budget Request which was sent to the Board. She provided an overview of the request via screen share and said that the request is for \$3200 to update a previous report done by an architecture firm for the Town Hall Building. The purpose would be to apply for a MA Historical Commission (MHC) grant (matching) to look into renovating the upstairs portion of Town Hall, as the ceiling and floor are in disrepair. There is also some Victorian era artwork that needs to be repainted and renovated. She said that the report from 2007 is out of date. TBA Architects can update specific parts of the report for the second floor of Town Hall and the front doors as well, as the front door's lock system no longer functions. TBA can revise the report for \$3200. Pepperell had a project for the exterior work in 1998. MHC said we need updated pricing and an architect on board for the application to MHC for the grant.

Ms. Morrow said that she had a question about the process. If we move forward with any type of renovation with the Town Hall is this something the community could get involved with as far as helping out. Ms. Gingras said that we would have to hire a contracting company (put it out to bid) under state wages. She said that she did not think volunteers could be used, however she can look into this.

Mr. Patenaude said with regards to this being limited to the renovation outlined for the second floor, could it be disruptive to the ceiling of first floor and the HVAC system and should we look a little broader. Will this retain itself during the construction and not disrupt the first floor. Ms. Gingras said it was more so refinishing the wood floors on the second floor and fixing the ceilings on the second floor. Mr. Patenaude said with the limited amount of insulation above it, are we just doing a piece of it. Ms. Gingras said that part of the recommendation was for putting insulation under the roof, so we would be looking at the price for that. This is a multi-phase project, so this would be phase 1. We are also looking at potentially putting an elevator in, however it is not in the budget. Right now, we are just focusing on phase 1 getting the ceiling repaired, refinishing floors, repairing the front door of Town Hall, and insulation. Mr. Patenaude asked if Ms. Gingras could speak with the architect and ask about impacts of insulation, i.e., how will the attic space be vented once it is insulated, and how will moisture be addressed. If there is any update to the HVAC, all moisture will release instantly and destroy the ceiling and potentially create the same problem we have at the Shattuck School. Ms. Gingras said those points of details will definitely be worked out with the architect and contractor, once hired. She said that the firm they are talking to is familiar with historic properties and did reference some of the concerns Mr. Patenaude raised.

Mr. Walkovich asked Ms. Morrow to read the letter of recommendation to the Planning Board from Andrew MacLean (Town Administrator), into the record. Ms. Morrow complied. Mr. Walkovich asked for a motion. Mr. Patenaude made a motion to approve the \$3200 request to update the plan as required, seconded by Ms. Morrow. Mr. Walkovich asked for a roll call vote:

**Roll Call Vote:**

Ms. Morrow: Aye  
Mr. Ganong: Aye  
Mr. Patenaude: Aye  
Mr. Walkovich: Aye

Mr. Walkovich said that the motion has carried.

e. **Adaptive Reuse Overlay District Review (debrief from Civic Engagement Night (CEN)):**

Ms. Gingras shared her screen and explained that after the Civic Engagement Night (CEN) she revised the draft bylaw taking out historic structures from being included. The purpose of CEN was to review the draft bylaw and give us feedback on what the public wanted to see. The Master Plan (MP) does talk about adaptive re-use (Peter Fitz and historic preservations). The original draft of the article merges those together. After the feedback, the proposed bylaw is just for religious and municipal structures. She explained that she has revised the name to “Adaptive Reuse of Significant Structures”, and the use either has to be municipal or religious and would still need to go through the Historical Commission (HC) for a recommendation and then Planning Board for a Special Permit. Even with it narrowed down to just municipal and religious buildings, the actual list of buildings this applies to is very small. The primary goal of this is for allowing the Peter Fitz to have the uses that it wants to have and keep the original building in the same way that it originally was. The Purpose is still the same but takes out historic buildings. She made edits to the document removing references to historic structures and overlay district. Discussion ensued regarding edits. Ms. Gingras provided a screenshare of the actual list of what the “Adaptive Reuse of Significant Structures” applies to.

Ms. Gingras spoke on the difference between a Mixed-Use Overlay District (MUOD) and Adaptive Reuse. The MUOD is still in beginning talks. They have a consultant but have only had one meeting so far. Best case scenario they would only have a draft by Fall Town Meeting. She discussed the differences between a MUOD and an AR. An AR is very specific about keeping an existing structure and historic presentation. The MUOD would apply to the whole area, and you would still have to meet requirements and design standards, but a developer would have more flexibility in doing what they want to do. The AR is going to be on Spring Town Meeting, and if passed, would apply immediately to the Peter Fitz and allow them to do what they want to do through a Special Permit from the Planning Board. It is similar to the MUOD, however the MUOD is just an idea right now. The AR is an action and promotes preservation of the actual building. A MUOD is not promoting preservation of an existing building.

Mr. Patenaude asked about list of uses, specifically dwellings above a first floor. The Peter Fitz has multiple buildings connected, so he is curious why it is limited to just above the first floor. Ms. Gingras said the Peter Fitz is unique and it would be a decision the Planning Board would have to make. Mr. Patenaude said it gets confusing, and maybe that piece should be left out and just allow for multi-family dwellings, especially in relation to the Peter Fitz building. Discussion ensued about changing/leaving out language and letting the Planning Board make that decision during the hearing process.

Mr. Patenaude asked about #10, retail, one of the biggest problems we had with failure to get Peter Fitz rezoned was retail. Does it make sense to limit the overall square footage of retail to limit the ability to bring in a big box store? Ms. Gingras said that those types of establishments are not going to go into a building such as Peter Fitz, however we can add language for retail up to so many square feet. Mr. Ganong said that limiting that may be “shooting yourself in the foot”. Mr. Patenaude said he does not think having that in there will get past Town Meeting floor. Ms. Gingras said you could even narrow it down to specific types of retail. Most of the structures it will apply to are very small structures. Ms. Gingras referred to the current Table of Uses. Discussion ensued regarding possibility of defining types of retail establishments/uses, as well as setting a limit on square footage (7500 square feet) of these retail spaces and providing examples of square footage of some of the current retail establishments are. Mr. Patenaude asked if this prohibits municipal uses. Ms. Gingras said anything currently allowed in a zoning district is still allowed; and anything not allowed in a zoning district is still not allowed. Ms. Morrow said she agreed with the 7500 square foot limit. Discussion ensued on the next steps that need to be taken, Ms. Gingras provided an overview of those steps (notices of public hearing, public hearing, report, Town Meeting). Mr. Walkovich asked if Ms. Gingras has everything she needs, from the Planning Board, to go forward. Ms. Gingras said yes. Discussion ensued. Town Counsel will review.

Ms. Gingras said that this will go to the Planning Board for a public hearing on March 21, 2022. Ms. Morrow read questions that were being asked in the “Chat” and Ms. Gingras responded to those questions.

**f. IZ Bylaw Review (debrief from CEN):**

Ms. Gingras provided an overview of the Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw (via screen share) and said she had no changes to this article.

Mr. Walkovich asked if the Board Members had any questions. Ms. Morrow said that she did not have any questions. Mr. Patenaude asked about 3731 and the applicability and how that reads and thought we were going to try to clarify that. Ms. Gingras said she took out “net” and it now says results in the creation of five new dwelling units. Discussion ensued. Mr. Patenaude said he was thinking more of a re-use/renovation, based on the way it is written would the net increase be one, not five. Discussion ensued. Mr. Walkovich asked if Ms. Gingras needed anything else from the Planning Board on this. Ms. Gingras said they will be going to the Select Board on February 14, 2022, and the first public hearing will be on March 21, 2022, with the Planning Board, and then it will go to Town Meeting.

**g. Staff Updates:**

Ms. Gingras said that she submitted an Expression of Interest for One Stop for Growth and a request for updates for Zoning Bylaws. She is also working on Shared Streets and Spaces; Complete Streets and DLTA Funding.

**4. Future Meetings:**

- February 22, 2022 (Tuesday)
- March 7, 2022
- March 21, 2022

**Adjournment:**

Mr. Walkovich asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Morrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15p.m., seconded by Mr. Patenaude. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Lutcza, Planning Assistant