



# Town of Westminister

MASSACHUSETTS 01473  
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE  
**PLANNING BOARD**  
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. Jon Wyman - Chairman. Marie N. Auger - Vice Chair. Michael Fortin Jay Shenk Joseph Flanagan .

## MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, August 26, 2014  
Room 222, Town Hall

Attendees: Marie Auger, Jon Wyman, Mike Fortin, Joseph Flanagan, Jay Shenk, Town Planner Stephen Wallace

Absent:

Additional Attendees: none

7:00 p.m.

Jon opened the Planning Board meeting and informed those present the meeting was being audio recorded.

7:00p.m. *Minutes*

Jon noted that Marie was listed as absent but was in fact in attendance. Joe made a motion to approve the August 12, 2014 minutes. Seconded Marie. The PB voted AIF to accept the minutes with the correction.

7:01p.m. *PB Discussion on Draft Zoning Amendments for November Special Town Meeting*

Jon asked Stephen to speak about the draft zoning amendments. Stephen reviewed the timeline of Zoning amendments he had created and asked the PB to support the time schedule:

- Revise Parking Standards (to be done in-house): Special Town Meeting November 2014.
- Village Center Bylaw (consultant): ask for funding (\$6,000) at Annual Town Meeting May 2015, start project in July 2015, finish project in time for Annual Town Meeting May 2016.
- Revise Table of Uses, List of Definitions and Dimensional Standards (to be done in-house): start in November 2014 and finish in time for Annual Town Meeting May 2016. We will need to work closely with the Building Commissioner and Zoning Board on these.
- Revise Sign Bylaw (to be done in-house): start in January 2016 and finish in time for Special Town Meeting November 2016.
- Commercial Development Design Guidebook (to be done in-house): start in May 2016 and finish in time for Annual Town Meeting May 2017.
- Address Housing Options including revisions to our cluster bylaw and additional housing options aimed at creating affordable housing (to be done in-house): start in May 2016 and finish in time for Special Town Meeting November 2017.

The PB was in agreement to share the schedule with other department and boards.

*Draft Parking Standards*

Stephen noted that DPW has no changes. Fire would like a definition of loading spaces.

Stephen noted that the PB had asked for a review of the parking standards after the Dollar General site plan review. Joe was concerned that the parking densities in the draft bylaw might be too large for the types of businesses that the Mullins report stated were likely to locate to Westminister in the future.

Mike noted the genesis of the parking standard reduction requests were a result of reviewing Fitchburg and Leominster parking standards in conjunction with the Dollar General Review. Mike also noted that

during recent site plan reviews of DG and Cumberland Farms, the applicants had included loading areas without a bylaw regulating them. Marie suggested that Mike was saying design of loading spaces are self regulating. Mike agreed. There was much discussion about loading area requirements and whether or not they should be regulated. Jon suggested a change of use would warrant new site plan review for loading spaces. Mike also thought it a good idea to think about a case by case basis and not specify a particular number of loading spaces. Some businesses might require huge amounts of floor space to operate but not ship lots of product out the back door.

The PB then discussed shared parking and Stephen showed an example of what he intended with section 205-30. Compatible uses could share parking lots through a connecting road between them rather than force cars back on the frontage roadway to access adjacent lots.

Joe asked about parking right up to lot lines, rather than a setback to lot lines for adjacent commercial and industrial properties, and the possibilities of a boulevard to access rear parking behind adjacent businesses.

Mike said he thought that a setback of only 10 feet to residential property would not protect homeowners. Stephen stated the Town needed to have some uniformity to parking setbacks. Mike said he did not want to regulate businesses adjacent to each other, only protect residential districts next to industrial and commercial districts.

The PB discussed reviewing the zoning map to see how many commercial and industrial properties would be affected by residential setback requirements. Stephen brought out the Zoning map and the board reviewed properties that would be affected. The Board was ok with 10 foot parking setbacks at C-2 districts. The Board was in agreement with 50 foot setbacks to residential land in both I-1 and I-2 districts. Stephen asked Board members to review the Scanlon Use analysis report to determine what might make sense for a setback to residential property in C-1 districts.

#### *Draft Kennel Definitions*

Stephen noted that the Town Clerk and Building Commissioner had asked for definitions to be added to the Town Bylaw to distinguish between personal and commercial kennels and where/what districts they would be allowed.

Stephen noted he had taken the definitions directly from the State. It was up to the PB to decide what would be allowed and where it would be allowed.

There was much discussion about commercial breeder kennels and domestic charitable corporation kennels, definitions and inclusion into the table of use requirements.

#### *Draft Non Criminal Dispositions*

Stephen told the Board the Building Commissioner wanted this Bylaw to allow him to enforce the Town Zoning Bylaw violations, violations of subdivision conditions of approval, site plan condition violations and earth removal bylaw violations. Mike was unclear about what constituted an offense, first, second third and fourth offense and whether four different concurrent offenses were all first time offenses. The Board felt the wording should be clear to the reader. Stephen said he would ask Mike G. to clarify his intentions of the bylaw. The PB also asked how a recipient of a violation/ticket would be able to appeal the ticket.

#### *8 51p.m. Town Planner Update & Planning Board liaison reports.*

- Joe asked if the PB had voted to take a position on the DPW preferred Sewer option of inline storage. There was much discussion of what PB members have been told by DPW commissioners. Permitted flows, sewer capacities, capacity of the Whitman pump station, cost of the fix(s). Stephen told PB members that the DPW's proposed 85%/15% split of costs would make the project ineligible for USDA funding. Stephen wants PB members to ask if the Town can build out all its industrial areas right now without any fix at all.
- Mike distributed copies of "Massachusetts Wildlife" No.4 2013 to PB members and told them it had an article about the old growth forest of Mt. Wachusett and the Brownells involvement of identifying the

old growth trees. He told PB members that he had gathered a new respect for what the Brownells have contributed to Westminster and asked PB members to read the article.

*9:13p.m. Adjourn.*

Joe made a motion to adjourn. Mike seconded. The PB voted AIF to adjourn.

3 Pages of Minutes  
Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Fortin

5 Attachments :

- 1) Zoning Amendment Schedule prepared by Stephen Wallace. 1 page.
- 2) Draft Parking zoning amendment. 4 pages.
- 3) Draft Kennel Definitions. 2 pages.
- 4) Draft Non Criminal Disposition language. 2 pages.
- 5) "Massachusetts Wildlife" No. 4 2013 Magazine.