



Town of Westminster

MASSACHUSETTS 01473
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
PLANNING BOARD
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Jon Wyman - Chairman, Marie N. Auger - Vice Chair, Michael Fortin Andrew Rice

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING WITH ZONING BOARD

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Room 112, Town Hall

Attendees: Jon Wyman, Mike Fortin, Marie Auger, Andy Rice, Town Planner Stephen Wallace

Additional Attendees: Mr. Don Frigoletto Jr. /ZBA Chair, Mr. Aime DeNault, Mr. John Bowen.

5:04 p.m.

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

Stephen outlined the purpose of the meeting. The PB is working on revising the Table of Uses for Industrial and Commercial Properties and Definitions Section pertaining to those sections. Presently the Planning Board is responsible for Site Plan Review of all Industrial and Commercial properties and in most cases, the Zoning Board is the Special Permit Granting Authority for those properties when a special permit is required by the Table of Uses. In an effort to promote a more streamlined permitting process, the Planning Board is asking the Zoning Board if they would entertain the idea of giving any or all of the Special Permit Granting Authority tasks under their purview to the PB so that both site plan review and any special permitting required could run concurrently.

A robust discussion between all members ensued. Of considerable note:

- Much of the Industrial property in Westminster is located at the three 43D Priority Development sites which requires a 180 day streamlined permitting process.
- The PB and Economic Development Committee are trying to promote a business friendly atmosphere
- The Town Planner now holds Joint Technical Departmental Reviews of all Commercial and Industrial projects in town in an effort to have all major town departments and boards sitting at the same table with the developer. Combining the review of a project gives the developer and the departments "real time" information about any concerns/issues that will need to be addressed.
- The PB now conducts site plan review of all commercial and industrial projects.
- The ZBA is the special permit granting authority for most projects requiring a special permit.
- Having two Boards review projects provides a "second set of eyes" "checks and balances" system.
- The ZBA case load is very light at the present time.
- The ZBA case load may increase once the sewer infrastructure improvements are completed.
- The sewer infrastructure improvements are intended to spur economic industrial and commercial growth.
- The main concerns of both Boards are to protect the citizens of Westminster while providing what is best for the growth of the town.

After much discussion, the Zoning Board appeared hesitant to change their present role as SPGA. It was agreed by both Boards that they should review what towns similar in size to Westminster do. The Towns of Lunenburg, Sterling, Lancaster, Hubbardston, Templeton and Ashburnham were chosen to compare. Stephen will gather details of the process in those communities and forward http links. The PB asked the ZBA to consider allowing special permitting in Sections D, E, F, and G of the Table of

Uses to become the responsibility of the PB. It was also agreed to request the services of Town Counsel to comment of how the filing of decisions from any joint review process (site plan and Special permitting running concurrently) should proceed. The ZBA will review the material presented, the material requested, and get back to the Town Planner by November 24th.

6:13 p.m. Adjourn.

The joint meeting was adjourned.

2 Pages of Minutes
Respectfully submitted,
Michael Fortin

2 Attachments :

- 1) Revised Table of Uses – Draft #4 dated August 17, 2015 5 Pages.
- 2) Revised Section II Definitions - Draft Revision #3 dated Oct. 2, 2015. 8 pages.