

# **Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

Benjamin Eddy Bldg., 6 South Killingly Road  
Wednesday, March 1, 2023

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## **A. Call to Order**

Anthony Renzi called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

## **B. Roll Call**

Planning Board Members: Mike Carpenter; Bill Gibb; Susan Joyce; David Paolissi; Anthony Renzi; Secretary, Hilary Downes-Fortune. Warren Ducharme arrived at 7:20 PM.

Excused: None.

Staff present: Grant McGregor, Planner; Joanna Achille, Solicitor

Public present: Robert Moreau; Lynne Rider

## **C. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Renzi asked for a motion to approve the January 18, 2023 minutes. Mr. Carpenter made the motion; Mr. Gibb seconded. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Renzi asked for a motion to approve the January 24, 2023 minutes. Mr. Carpenter made the motion; Mr. Gibb seconded. No discussion. Motion passed 6-0.

## **D. Zoning Map Amendment – Advisory Opinion to the Town Council**

### **South Killingly Road – Plat 20, Lot 9: Change of zoning of parcel to Municipal**

Mr. Renzi stated that regardless of our vote the Town Council will do whatever they want in terms of rezoning this parcel. Ms. Downes-Fortune asked if there are any current plans for the parcel and Mr. Renzi said no. Mr. Gibb asked what about the proposed RIPTA bus lot? Mr. Carpenter stated that the Planning Board should have been notified about this proposed use before the Town Council went ahead and proposed the RIPTA commuter parking lot. He noted that no taxes have been paid on that property for the past three years, and the town already has Municipal-zoned property at Simmons Crossing. Mr. Renzi replied that the intention of the town is to not sell the lot, rather to keep it for municipal uses such as for expansion of the town hall or fairgrounds. He reiterated that the Town Council should have come to us for the RIPTA lot. Mr. Carpenter stated that they should have planned ahead and added an electric vehicle charging station to the lot. Mr. Moreau noted that the Town Hall building has no room for expansion. Ms. Downes Fortune asked about the potential for the town developing a solar farm on the property under a Special Use Permit; Ms. Achille noted that this is allowed whether it is AR or

Municipal. Ms. Rider noted and shared a map showing that the parcel in question is within a National Historic District, so anything built on the property has to conform to historic district design requirements. We then agreed to incorporate this into the motion.

Mr. Renzi asked for a motion. Mr. Carpenter made a motion to provide a positive opinion to the Town Council to rezone Plat 20, Lot 9 from AR to Municipal with the stipulation that any development of the lot conform with Foster Center National Historic District criteria. Mr. Paolissi seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

[At the start of the meeting we agreed to address Item F prior to Item E since it would be a much shorter discussion. Notes below represent the original agenda order, however.]

**E. Zoning Districts/Zoning Map: Discussion of current zoning districts and potential options for amendment(s) to zoning map for Route 6 and abutting parcels to enhance development.**

Mr. Renzi opened the discussion by stating that all commercially zoned property along Route 6 are wetlands. Ms. Joyce stated that Camoin Associates are presenting the draft economic development plan, which addresses this topic, to the whole town in three weeks (on March 22<sup>nd</sup>), so it is premature to have this discussion tonight, and Mr. Renzi acquiesced. We agreed to continue this discussion at the April 5, 2023 meeting. Ms. Rider noted that, from a historical planning perspective, a zoning plan was created that had commercial nodes at the highest and driest parts of the Route 6 corridor. Now two of those nodes are solar farms and a third is the proposed police station site; however, there are others that are still undeveloped. She said that former planning board member Julie Parmentier had a “long plan” that showed the proposed nodes. Mr. Renzi stated that all property owners along Route 6 will benefit from its development. Mr. Moreau noted that he has the ADAC recommendations from 10 years ago and nothing got done; moving forward we should make sure that whatever is proposed is actually done. Mr. Renzi said that there is momentum now and that whatever Camoin recommends we’re going to have to make happen. He also stated that we should invite the Town Recreation Committee to the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Carpenter said that if we don’t see For Sale signs along Route 6 we’ve failed. Ms. Rider stated that she has been going through the new Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Board needs to be the gatekeepers to make sure the plan is followed.

Mr. Renzi asked for a motion to continue Item E to the April 5, 2023 meeting. Ms. Joyce made the motion; Mr. Gibb seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

**F. Recommendation to Zoning Board on Special Use Permit – 86 Foster Center Road, Plat 20, Lots 2 and 5**

Ms. Achille stated that the application for this Special Use Permit was incomplete so this item needs to be postponed until a meeting in April. The application is by a cell tower company called MCM Holdings, which has proposed a deal with the Foster Center Fire Department to replace the existing small emergency communications tower with a much taller cellular communications tower. The purpose of this new tower is to provide income to the fire department and is not for town communication purposes. It was noted that the fire station and tower are located within the historic district.

**G. Adjournment**

Mr. Renzi asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Downes Fortune made a motion to adjourn. Motion passed 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted.

Hilary Downes Fortune, Secretary