

Natick Community & Economic Development

BUILDING • PLANNING • ZONING • CONSERVATION

Town of Natick, 13 E. Central Street Natick, MA 01760
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Meeting Minutes of the Natick Planning Board Hybrid (In-Person and Remote) Dlott Meeting Room, Natick Town Hall September 13, 2023 Broadcast Live on Natick Pegasus

Members of the Planning Board in attendance at the public meeting included Glen B. Glater, Chair; Peter Nottonson, Vice-Chair; Teresa M. Evans, Clerk; Douglas L. Landry; Andrew Meyer; and Chris Therrien, Associate Member. Amanda Loomis, Director of Community and Economic Development was also present.

Mr. Glater called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Public Speak

No requests to speak.

Public Hearings – Development Projects

50 Pleasant Street (PB-22-26)

Applications: Special Permit for Use (Town House) per Section III-J.3. and VI-DD of the Natick Zoning Bylaw with an affordable housing component (Section V-J); Site Plan Review (Section VI-DD of the Zoning Bylaw), Special Permit for Historic Preservation (Section III-J and VI-DD of the Zoning Bylaw); Special Permit for Aquifer Protection District (APD) (Section III-A.5 and VI-DD of the Zoning Bylaw); and Scenic Road Modification Determination (MGL Chapter 40, Sec 15C) (*contd. from August 16, 2023*)

Present for the public hearing: Linda Valentin and Joel Valentin, Applicants; Architect Kent Duckham, Duckham Architecture & Interiors; Attorney Mark Corner, Esq., O'Hagan Meyer Attorney Associates; Engineer Brian Nelson, MetroWest Engineering

Mr. Glater opening the continued public hearing and requested an update from Ms. Loomis. She briefly reviewed the four required elements: Special Permit for Use (Town House); Development Review Team (DRT) Meeting; Advisory Body letters; and the final site plans). She stated that the Applicant met with the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Natick Historical Commission on August 31, 2023, and that both bodies had provided letters to the Board. She added that the Conservation Commission had approved the application for Major Stormwater Management Permit, and that final site plans were in the Planning Board's packets for members' review.

Mr. Glater requested an update from the Applicant.

Ms. Valentin provided a brief overview of the project since the last public hearing, which included the need for each residential unit to have its own opening in the perimeter stone wall along Pleasant Street.

Comments from the Board:

- Mr. Meyer stated that he was present for the Design Review Board (DRB) and Historical Commission meetings on August 31, 2023, and provided a brief summary. He said it would be important for the DRB to continue to review the project throughout the permitting and design process.
- Ms. Evans requested clarification as to how the carriage house was being presented and preserved in the project. Mr. Duckham provided a brief review of the building elevations.
- Mr. Landry said he was not satisfied with the multiple openings in the perimeter stone wall. He said he was not requesting that a sidewalk be installed external to the stone wall on Pleasant Street, but rather that the openings be consolidated by using connected walkways interior to the stone wall. Mr. Nottonson stated that as presented each Townhouse has its own entrance, which does not mean that each unit requires its own opening in the wall.
- Ms. Evans requested clarification as to whether a metal-type fence was to be added on top of the stone wall. Ms. Valentin stated that there would be a short iron fence on top of the stone wall for safety purposes. She stated the iron fence would not be necessary if the Planning Board allowed the stone wall to be increased in height. Ms. Valentin stated that they would be repairing and restoring the stone wall. Ms. Evans urged that the metal fence atop the wall be removed, as it was not in keeping with the character of the wall or of Pleasant Street as a scenic road. Ms. Valentin said she was willing to eliminate the metal fence atop the stone walls.

Mr. Glater opened the floor for public comment:

- Brad Peterson, 7 Dover Road, requested clarification as to whether the underground off-street parking area and basement should be allowed or if it should be part of the habitable floor area. Mr. Meyer reviewed the genesis of the square footage calculations. Attorney Corner provided information regarding clarification as to whether the garages should be calculated as part of the project's habitable floor area.

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- John McConville, 9 St Thomas Ave, concurred with Mr. Peterson's point and expressed concern about the methodology for the calculation of square footage for the existing buildings and the proposed development.
- Seth Levine, 9 Dover Road, stated that his concern was with the scale of the project. He said he opposed the 10% additional square footage that was being sought by the applicants as a waiver request.
- Robert McNitt, 21 Dover Road, said that as a builder he believed it was rare to calculate habitable square footage for garages but was uncertain whether there was documentation of anyone living there when it was a carriage house.

Ms. Valentin said that when her previous application was reviewed several years ago neighbors stated that the larger projects were too big and that five (5) units would be acceptable.

Mr. Meyer stated that there is little more to discuss regarding the Applications before the Board and briefly reviewed the items to be voted.

Mr. Meyer moved to approve the Special Permit for Use (Town House), seconded by Ms. Evans. Roll call vote, 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved to approve the application for Scenic Roadway Modification as presented, without a metal fence on top of the stone wall, seconded by Ms. Evans.

Mr. Nottonson requested clarification as to whether the motion included the stone wall with five (5) openings. Ms. Evans said the openings were included in the motion but the iron fence along the top of the wall was not.

Roll call vote, 3-0-2 (Nottonson, Landry). MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board allow for a waiver of an additional ten (10) percent be added to the building, per Section V-E for a total habitable gross floor area of 14,143 sf; seconded by Mr. Landry.

Mr. Landry thanked Mr. Meyer for his explanation of the increase in the additional ten (10) percent habitable gross floor area.

Roll call vote 3-0-2 (Evans, Nottonson). MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board allow a waiver of up to fifty (50) square feet of the structure to be in the setback of St. Thomas Street, as permitted per Section V-E; seconded by Mr. Landry.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

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Mr. Meyer moved that the Board approve the application for Site Plan Approval, seconded by Mr. Landry for discussion.

Mr. Landry stated that the project had come a long way.

Roll call vote 4-0-1 (Nottonson). MOTION PASSED

Board members agreed to leave the public hearing open until the decision was drafted.

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board continue the public hearing to October 11, 2023, seconded by Mr. Landry.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

29 Burning Tree Road (PB-23-15)

Applications: Special Permit for a Customary Home Occupation Dog Kennel (Section 200 – Definitions, Section III-A.2.53B - Home Occupation/Customary Home Occupation Dog Kennel, and Section VI-DD) of the Natick Zoning Bylaws (*contd. from August 30, 2023*)

Present for the public hearing Samantha Goldberg, Applicant

Mr. Glater opened the continued public hearing and asked Ms. Loomis for an update. Ms. Loomis provided a brief project update and reviewed the decision. She said she circulated the 7 Cemetery St kennel for comparison, noting that the Board needed to discuss three items in the decision: the maximum number of dogs allowed; procedures for assessment of dogs; and the hours that dogs were permitted to be outside.

The Board and the Applicant discussed the draft decision and agreed as presented on nine (9) dogs in her care, up to three (3) dogs per assessment, not to exceed forty-five (45) minutes per assessment, and thirty (30) minute outdoor periods, detailed in the decision.

Ms. Evans moved that the Board vote to approve the application with conditions, seconded by Mr. Landry.

Roll call vote 4-0-0 (Mr. Meyer did not vote). MOTION PASSED

Ms. Evans moved that the Board vote to sign the decision, as modified tonight, seconded by Mr. Landry.

Roll call vote 4-0-0 (Mr. Meyer did not vote). MOTION PASSED

Ms. Evans moved that the Board vote to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Meyer.

Roll call vote 4-0-0. MOTION PASSED

84 Rockland Street (PB-23-8)

Applications: Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) Special Permit (Section III-A.2, III-F, IV-B, V-E, V-J, and VI-DD); and Site Plan Review (Section VI-DD) of the Natick Zoning Bylaw (*contd. from August 30, 2023*)

Present for the public hearing – no members of the project team were present

Ms. Loomis noted that she had planned to walk through the draft decision with the Board. The applicant requested a postponement of the project to allow their team to work with abutters on several project-related matters.

Dr. Robert Stanton, 80 Rockland Street, reviewed the nature and status of the discussions with the applicant, which he had also provided to the Board by email. He urged that the Board consider traffic calming methods in the area.

Ms. Evans moved to continue the public hearing to October 11, 2023, seconded by Mr. Meyer.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

7 Mechanic Street (PB-23-13)

Present for the public hearing – no members of the project team were present

Ms. Evans read into the record a request from the Applicant for a continuance to October 25, 2023, without testimony.

Ms. Evans moved to continue the public hearing for the project at 7 Mechanic Street without testimony at the request of the Applicant to October 25, 2023; seconded by Mr. Meyer.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

69, 77, 85 East Central Street (PB-23-14)

Applications Site Plan Review (Sections III-A.2.32 and .39, IV-A and -B., V-D, VI-DD) for a change of use, Special Permit for Use (Section III-A.2.32. Auto body, soldering, or welding shop), Special Permit for Aquifer Protection District (Section III-A.5 and VI-DD) of the - Zoning Bylaws (*contd. from August 30, 2023*)

Present for the public hearing were John Stournaras, Applicant; Attorney Patrick J. Moynihan, Esq. of McCormack Suny; Chi Man, PE of Hardy + Man Design Group, PC; architect Mark Schryver; and landscape architect Steven Cosmo of Cosmos Associates

Mr. Glater opened the public hearing and requested an update from the Applicant.

Attorney Moynihan provided a brief update of the project since the August 30 public hearing. He said the project team had met with the DRB on August 31 and planned to continue to work with them following receipt of approvals.

Mr. Man reviewed the lighting plan and specifications, which he said complied with Section V-I of the Zoning Bylaws. Members of the Board requested clarification regarding the impact of light fixtures on abutters and other lighting details.

Mr. Schryver presented the revised architectural renderings, which had been updated based on comments from members of the Planning Board and the DRB.

Mr. Cosmo presented the revised landscape plans and renderings, which were updated to reflect amendments to the site plan and comments received.

Board comments:

- Mr. Nottonson requested clarification on the staircase for residents on the west side of the structure and access to the roof, which Mr. Schryver explained.
- Mr. Glater requested clarification regarding rooftop mechanicals and how they would be installed and screen to lessen the impact on abutting residential properties. Mr. Schryver provided an overview of the proposed rooftop mechanical systems. Mr. Glater briefly discussed lighting and requests for lights to be placed and lit so as not to create a hazard for motorists.
- Mr. Landry requested clarification regarding water the easement that would be relocated as part of the project at the Applicant's expense.

Mr. Glater opened the floor for public comment:

- Don Friswell, 59 East Central Street, spoke in support of the project.

The Planning Board reviewed the draft decision with the Applicant.

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to approve the Special Permit for Aquifer Protection District (APD), with conditions; seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to approve the waiver request for a ten (10) percent increase in height from thirty-eight (38) feet to forty-one point eight (41.8) feet, as allowed per Section V-E of the Zoning Bylaws, seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

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Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to approve the waiver request to allow for a decrease in the number of off-street parking spaces by six (6) spaces, as allowed per Section V-D.19.d and V-E of the Zoning Bylaws; seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to approve the application for Site Plan Review, with conditions, seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to approve the Special Permit for Use (Residential Mixed-use Development), with conditions, seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved that the Board vote to sign the decision for the project at 69-77 East Central Street, as modified tonight, seconded by Ms. Evans seconded the motion. The Planning board voted in favor of the motion 5-0-0.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Mr. Meyer moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Ms. Evans.

Roll call vote 5-0-0. MOTION PASSED

Planning Board Business

Ms. Loomis provided a brief update regarding the status of employment in the Community and Economic Development (CED) Office.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Nottenson, seconded by Ms. Evans, the Planning Board adjourned the meeting at 10:24 pm.