



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

PLANNING BOARD

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

MEMBERS

MIKE PROSCIA, CHAIR
TED DOOLEY, VICE CHAIR
ANGELA IPPOLITO
BILL QUINN
JOE SHERIDAN

STAFF

MARZIE GALAZKA, DIR. OF COMM. DEV.
PETE KANE, DIR. OF PLANNING
MARISSA MEANEY, COORDINATOR

Received by Town Clerk
January 17, 2024 9:50am

DECEMBER 12, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:08PM – 9:02PM
Location: Remote via Microsoft Teams
Members Present: T. Dooley, A. Ippolito, J. Sheridan, B. Quinn
Members Absent: M. Proscia
Others Present: Pete Kane (Director of Planning)

1. PETITION 23-19: 491 HUMPHREY STREET

Application was only partially submitted; Board requested that applicant submit outstanding items. If materials are submitted in time, it will be handled at the January meeting.

P. Kane stated there's no requirement that the Design Review (which was intent of applicant for tonight's meeting) be conducted in any particular sequencing or alongside the Site Plan Special Permit which will also be necessary.

2. 3A ZONING

A. Ippolito provided an update on the timeline to the Board

- Recently gave a presentation on Swampscott's work thus far
- Met with staff at the Town of Lexington who have gone through the process and will provide her with additional information

Plan is to bring the bylaw amendment to the 2024 Annual Town Meeting

- This will include public meetings as well as updated guidance from the Commonwealth
- Suggested posting videos online for those who cannot attend public forum (likely week of March 25)
- Public hearing has been set for April 22nd; ATM is set for May 22nd

Focus of public forum is to discuss the draft amendment, which will be made available for viewing online. Forum will help explain to residents where in Town the amendment applies, what it means, and what the requirement is from the Commonwealth. Want to ensure that bylaw is meaningful to the Town in terms of housing in the community.

3. VINNIN SQUARE DESIGN GUIDELINES

A Ippolito explained how Board reviewed latest draft of guidelines at last meeting, which was very comprehensive. She noted that draft was published online was happy to report that feedback and comment received were very thorough and in-depth.

A Ippolito further explained that at the 2023 ATM, the Board committed to adopting the guidelines by October 2023. The Board did as such, having adopted the draft guidelines, with the expectation that they would garner additional public input.

Noted again the differences between guidelines and standards

- Guidelines – recommendations based on past practices which developers in Swampscott have followed
- Standards – are the “must do,” and should be separated from the guidelines and thus included in the zoning bylaw

Board could proceed in one of the two following ways:

- Adopt the entire document as all guidelines
- Adopt the guidelines and pull out the standards to set aside for a future Town Meeting at which they will be voted to be adopted into the zoning bylaw

Based on suggestion from P. Kane, the Board agreed to adopt the entire document while separating standards from guidelines, but include a note that the Board intends to move the “standards” to the Zoning Bylaw and therefore expect that any applicant will follow both guidelines and standards until Town Meeting approves adoption of standards into bylaw. This would mean, however, that standards would not be enforceable until they officially become part of the bylaw.

Board went through the comments that were submitted in advance from various residents as well as boards and committees. A. Ippolito noted that it is important to remember that Vinnin Square is the focus of the community’s commercial activity, is all privately owned, and there are pre-existing leases that should be considered. **Comments are attached to minutes.**

T. Dooley liked the idea of electric charging stations for public use. He also inquired, based on the question being raised in the comments, if this area of Town could be required to follow different energy codes. P. Kane suggested to have the Building Commissioner or Town Counsel provide insight.

J. Sheridan inquired about next steps and if Josh (MAPC consultant) will be providing an updated draft. A. Ippolito noted what needs to be edited from the draft and that the Board will have to make decisions as to how to proceed. The Board agreed that they would tighten the guidelines as they are and then set aside standards to be adopted into the zoning bylaw at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2024. T. Dooley suggested a second meeting in January to finalize the guidelines.

The floor was opened to public comment:

- Jim Olivetti – Chair of the Tree Committee. He hopes their feedback will be shared with the Planning Board in its entirety. AI confirmed it has been shared with the Board since submittal. He noted that the guidelines has a bigger vision than the one presented by AI regarding a retrofitting of the mall. He asked if things were discretionary to the developer such as including the electric charging. He wants to emphasize that pocket parks and tree groves etc. should be required. He clarified that the “connectivity” they reference was regarding the

wetland to the southwest of Stop & Shop and then connect from there to the cemetery and other trails. He then asked what the next step is for the feedback that's been submitted.

- Swampscott Renewable Committee (Martha Smith) – she suggested that the Town adopt the second stage of the stretch energy code. She noted the code doesn't prohibit fossil fuel but encourages electric. She said she couldn't find reference in the draft guidelines for electric charging.
- Richard Frenkel – he noted the Board has a lot of work to do. He suggested having other boards to help out craft the standards if needed to get their expertise. He feels strongly about solar panels on rooftops. He was surprised that LEED and Green Communities don't require solar panels. He noted that Watertown requires all buildings have solar panels on roofs and suggested something similar for Swampscott. TD noted that the Board has been making advancements and at least making roofs solar ready.
- Doug Thompson – thanked the Board for the summary and the comments. He asked about the process. If everything is adopted as guidelines and application comes in March, what happens. PK noted that when a legal ad is run for bylaw amendments, applications after that ad can be required to meet those requirements but could be problematic if Town Meeting doesn't approve the amendment.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

Housing Production Plan – deferred to January

- Board has not yet received a new draft, nor any feedback from the Affordable Housing Trust

January meeting – Board set two January meetings – the 8th and 16th – to accommodate a lengthy agenda.

Stretch code – question about the process to adopt the second phase of Stretch Code as requested by the Renewable Energy Committee. P. Kane noted that Stretch Code is a General Bylaw and therefore won't require the Board to hold a public hearing.