

Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 17, 2017
Library, Community Meeting Room
660 High Street - 7:30 PM
Westwood, MA 02090

The Planning Board attended the Finance and Warrant Commission's public hearing on fall Town Meeting Warrant Articles to participate in the discussion and presentation of the four proposed zoning amendment articles.

Present:

Planning Board members present: Trevor W. Laubenstein, David L. Atkins, Jr., Michael L. McCusker and Brian D. Gorman. Steven Olanoff joined the meeting later. Staff members present: Town Planner Abigail McCabe, Community & Economic Development Director, Nora Loughnane and Planning & Land Use Specialist Janice Barba were also present.

Article G – Zoning Amendment to Limit the Number of Residential Dwelling Units in FMUOD6 & FMUOD7.

Ms. Loughnane, Director of Community and Economic Development, explained that this article was submitted in response to concerns expressed over the last year at various meetings about as many as 600 or 700 multi-family residential units potentially on Washington and High Streets. After last year's annual Town Meeting, the Board of Selectmen discussed submitting an article with a residential cap and asked her to look into a possible zoning article. Staff performed an informal conceptual analysis of all properties within the FMUOD 6 & 7 zones (High Street and Washington Street Business Districts) to see what the maximum number of residential units could possibly be at full build-out if all properties were ever redeveloped with a residential component. The Board of Selectmen were supportive of this zoning amendment and asked that the Planning Board co-sponsor this zoning amendment with them, thus, this article has been submitted jointly by the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board.

Ms. Loughnane explained that her review concluded that it may be possible for as many as 149 dwelling units on Washington Street and 119 on High Street, with many assumptions related to the size of buildings, parking, landscaping, circulation etc. She added that she believed this number is overinflated and not likely to ever be proposed or ever approved. After discussion with staff, the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board, the maximum number was proposed to be no more than 90. The proposed zoning amendment includes a residential cap of 90 residential units total in each district; so 90 maximum on High Street and 90 on Washington Street in the FMUOD zones and language has been added to make it clear that the 12 units on Washington Street and the 6 on High Street that currently exists would be included in that total. There are no other changes to Section 9.5 [FMUOD] of the Zoning Bylaw other than a maximum on the total number of residential that could ever be approved by Planning Board special permit. Essentially, this zoning proposal is to add a maximum to the number of residential dwellings that could ever be approved and is not intended to change the FMUOD zoning but to add a clear maximum for residential dwellings.

Public Comments:

Staff and Planning Board members answered questions asked during the hearing related to how the maximum number was derived, the areas of this district, and what properties are in the zone. There was a comment from a member of the public that the number 90 was too high and thought it should be lowered.

Article H – Zoning Amendment Related to Accessory Uses in Highway Business

Ms. McCabe, Town Planner, and Trevor Laubenstein, Planning Board Chairman, explained that this article is proposed to amend the zoning to allow cafeterias and other similar accessory uses in the HB (Highway Business) zoning district. The zoning currently allows these accessory uses in the Industrial and Administrative-Research-Office zones but not in Highway Business and a property owner recently approached the Board about making this amendment so that he could market his soon to be vacant building to prospective buyers. These accessory uses are fully within a building and are intended to primarily serve the employees.

Public Comment:

A question was asked about who was the property owner that requested the change.

The property owner, Michael Grill of Fairlane Properties, was present and said that he approached the Board with this change.

Article I – Zoning Amendment Related to Medical Uses

Ms. McCabe summarized that this zoning article proposes amending the existing definitions for Medical Centers and Office of Health Care Professionals, adds to new definitions for Hospitals and Substance Rehabilitation Facilities for two uses that are not currently defined in the Zoning Bylaw and also updates the Table of Uses to identify where these uses are allowed.

There were no questions or comments on this article.

Article J – Housekeeping Zoning Articles

Ms. McCabe explained that this article corrects typos and errors discovered while reviewing the zoning and proposes non –substantive updates.

There were no questions.

The public hearing was left open and continued to the Planning Board’s next meeting on October 24, 2017 at 7:00 pm at 50 Carby Street, Westwood.

List of Documents

• Finance and Warrant Commission Public Hearing – Fall Town Meeting Book with Article listings for 10/17/17 hearing (includes full article language).	PDF
• Planning Board zoning recommendations to the Finance and Warrant Commission as voted on October 3, 2017 for four (4) articles (4 pages).	PDF
• Zoning Article PowerPoint Presentation Slides	PDF