

**Westwood Planning Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, December 1, 2015  
Islington Community Center - 288 Washington Street  
7:30 P.M.**

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pfaff at approximately 7:37 p.m. WestCAT was granted permission to videotape the meeting.

**Present:**

Planning Board members present: Chris Pfaff, Steve Olanoff, John Wiggin, Bruce Montgomery and Trevor Laubenstein. Staff members present: Town Planner Abigail McCabe, Community & Economic Development Director Nora Loughnane, and Land Use Specialist Janice Barba Planning, who recorded the minutes.

**New Business:**

**301-315, 317, 323 Washington Street – Public Hearing for Special Permit**

Upon a motion by Mr. Olanoff and seconded by Mr. Montgomery, the Board voted unanimously in favor to open the hearing and waive the reading the full legal notice of public hearing.

**Applicant's Presentation:**

Attorney Peter Zahka introduced the Developer/Applicant Giorgio Petruzzello of Petruzzello Properties, LLC; project traffic engineer Ken Cram of Bayside Engineering, and project architect Mike MacKay of Mackay Architects.

Mr. Zahka gave an introduction with a general overview of the proposal to redevelopment of 301-315, 317, and 323 Washington Street. The proposal includes:

- Demolishing and/or relocating the existing buildings at 317 and 323 Washington St.; to construct a three-story, mixed use building for first floor commercial uses and two stories of one bedroom apartments, eight on each floor for a total of 16 residential units.
- 301-315 Washington Street will receive extensive exterior renovations, façade improvements and reconfiguring of parking and circulation areas are proposed; including a total of 62, onsite parking spaces, three parking spaces on Washington Street and nine spaces in the adjacent municipal parking lot for Wild Blossom Restaurant were dedicated to the restaurant when that was approved by the Board previously.

Architect Mike MacKay presented the following:

- Existing conditions site plan and photographs
- Proposed site plan layout and landscape plan
- Artist renderings of proposed design of buildings, depicting architectural details, elevations of Washington Street, right side, front, rear and left side elevations.
- First, second and third floor plans
- The proposed Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 0.71

Ken Cram of Bayside Engineering summarized traffic study findings:

- In relation to roadway capacity, traffic safety, and traffic impacts upon the surrounding roadway network, the proposed project will meet safety standards and have a minimal impact on existing traffic conditions.
- With the proposed access designed to modify the existing School Street driveway to permit exiting movements only; entering movements at the existing Washington Street driveway, and exiting Washington Street with right-turns out only. The addition of crosswalks and ADA compliant ramps and maintaining sight distances from the driveway, will provide safe and efficient access to the residents and to the motoring public in the area.

Attorney Zahka summarized the Fiscal Impact Report prepared by John Connery of Connery Associates with the following findings:

- An estimated \$88,021 in revenue will be generated with an estimated annual service cost of no more than \$7,700.
- Estimated annual fiscal benefit of the Proposal at stabilization is \$80,000.
- Proposal has a strong fiscal profile that will be sustainable for the long term.
- Total assessed value of the proposal is estimated at \$4,117,825, or 28% great than the current assessed value.
- The anticipated rent would be \$1,500-\$1,600 per unit.
- No school aged children will be generated in any measurable manner with this proposal for one bedroom units.

Attorney Zahka identified the waivers requested:

*Dimensional waivers* from the alternative dimensions in the FMUOD zoning bylaw, Section 9.5.9:

1. Minimum Project Area: 43,560 SF required, 41,363 SF provided (waiver for relief of 2,198 SF)
2. Minimum Residential District Buffer: 20-ft. buffer required, the existing 3.1 ft. along rear of 301-315 Washington St. will remain and 5 ft. proposed along the rear of the new building at 317 & 323 Washington St.

Staff Comments & Peer Review Comments:

The Planning Board’s professional peer review consultant, Phil Paradis of BETA Group, Inc. and Michael Sinesi of KAO Design Group, Inc. were present to outline findings, provide comments and recommendations as well as answer questions of the Planning Board. Complete information is available in BETA’s memo provided in the Board’s meeting packet. The following points were highlighted:

- Mr. Paradis identified the following sections of the bylaw were not addressed directly: Preservation of Landscape; Advertising Features; Detrimental Effects; Nearby Properties and Specific Standards for Washington Street. The proposed dumpster location is not accessible and the first couple of parking spaces may be problematic and not usable.
- Design improvements and suggestions were identified by Mr. Sinesi. Mr. Sinesi asked for more information and all floor plans to complete his design review. He suggested rearranging the bedrooms, showing the mechanical equipment on the roof and elevator details, elevations for all sides of the building, and the proposed building exterior signage.

Ms. McCabe, Town Planner, said that the application was distributed to the Board’s review staff and summarized the comments received by from the Town Engineer, the Police Department requested a loading and delivery space, the Building Commissioner is concerned about parking particularly when the business tenants are unknown, the Fire Department was not concerned with the proposed new building because a fire alarm and sprinkler system is proposed and there is access to three sides of the proposed building, the Fire Department commented that the fiscal impacts of the development would be relatively minor, the School Department was not particularly concerned with the one-bedroom proposal attracting children but even one special education student is a significant cost with out of district tuition, the Finance Director also commented that the Fiscal Impact Study assumed no children but did not verify that assumption and comparable data should be submitted to the Board. Ms. McCabe asked the Applicant to update the Fiscal Impact Report to include cost estimates for 3-4 children.

Ms. McCabe informed the Board that the applicant is seeking two waivers from the minimum project area and the reduction of the 20 ft. buffer from the residential zone, which is in the rear of the new building and there are three areas that are left to be determined by the Planning Board, which are the number of units, the number of parking spaces and how the Applicant will fulfil the 15% affordable housing requirement (within this project or at another location). Ms. McCabe explained that the Board has the authority to grant waivers if it finds the result is a substantially improved project which meets the performance standards and would not pose substantial detriment to the neighboring properties and in general harmony with the purpose and intent of the FMUOD (Flexible Multiple Use Overlay District). Ms. McCabe said that overall she thinks the proposed project is generally in compliance with the zoning bylaw and master plan by investing in and improving existing property, introducing more housing opportunities,

and new commercial space. She recommended the Board weigh in on the number of units and the waiver requests at tonight's hearing.

Board Questions & Comments:

- The design is vastly improved since the original concept plans presented at a pre-application meeting in August.
- The dumpster should be relocated for better access for trash removal.
- Identify snow storage areas on plan or provide a snow removal plan.
- The sidewalks on School St. should be improved by widened and elevated, the parking spaces may not need to as big as they are there.
- Show on the plans and provide pedestrian access to the building from rear parking lot, pedestrian circulation is important and should be clearly identified, show all doors to building
- Are parking spaces proposed to be located under the building?
- A five foot rear setback buffer is not sufficient for the rear abutters and screening is non-existent.
- Additional renderings of the project with the view from abutting residences should be provided.
- Screening details needed for rooftop equipment.
- Consider designating parking or provide identification signage.
- Asked that an ANR plan to combine lots be submitted or required as a condition so that the lots are combined since they are proposed to be used as one lot.
- The sidewalk crossing the driveway should be up six inches above the street so that the pedestrian sidewalk remains higher than the street and driveway level.
- Consider flipping the parking spaces so they are against the new building rather than against the rear buffer
- Should the front landscape area in the corner of the property on all plans (at School & Washington St. intersection).
- Generally supportive of the mixed use and village concept but the landscape buffer is important and should be improved
- Parking may be a problem, consider commercial use restrictions or look into shared parking options at Applicant's other nearby properties
- Provide more views and perspectives of the proposed building to show the buffer area, from Beacon Street, and what the building will look like compared to the adjacent buildings for context.
- Provide roof layout and sound barrier information.

Chairman Pfaff opened the hearing to public comment.

Public Comments:

Chairman John Cummings (7 Chickadee Ln.) of Westwood Affordable Housing Associates (WAHA) and Westwood Housing Authority was present at the meeting and read a letter into the record expressing the position of the Authority in four points regarding the critical shortage and need for affordable housing units within the Town of Westwood. This project requires three affordable units. (A copy of this letter dated 12/1/15 is available with these minutes.)

J. Previtera (16 Dean St.) commented that the 5' buffer is insufficient; asked if traffic lights at Washington St. and East St. will be reprogrammed; asked if all 16 residential units would be counted toward the affordable housing inventory.

Ms. Loughnane, Director of Community and Economic Development, responded that not all proposed units would be included on the Town's inventory, only the provided affordable ones would count, and this proposal requires 15% of the units according to Westwood's zoning.

C. Poreda, (155 Willard Circle) – commented that he wants pedestrian safety as a top priority and there should be no turn on red allowed and have a green arrow instead; asked that the Town to not assume there won't be any school-aged kids living in the residential units.

H. Gordon (44 Brookfield Rd.) – submitted a comment letter to the Planning Board (a copy is available with these minutes) Added the comment that Islington is not an urban center but a village center, was concerned with the HVAC units and how they will be viewed, thought the setback was a concern and project size should decreased.

Laura Fitzhenry (57 Brookfield Rd.) – requested that the Board decline all waiver requests of the Applicant; said that this project is a substantial detriment to the neighbors; suggested a smaller footprint for the new building or to deny the special permit and read exerts from the zoning bylaw related to the bylaw’s purpose and findings. (A copy of Ms. Fitzhenry’s letter was entered into the record and is available with these minutes, letter dated 12/1/15).

P. Kelly (107 Willard Circle) – commented about the importance of providing a buffer zone between the project and the neighbors, buffer is important to shield parking and lighting.

B. Gorman (145 School St.) – commented that he does not support the reduced landscape buffer, believes the scale of the proposal is too much, emphasized importance of an unloading/delivery area, commented that he has a petition with signatures of the neighbors against the project. He is also against use of the municipal for parking for this project.

A. Drainville (57 Wentworth St.) - expressed concern about delivery trucks so close to the neighboring properties and how they will maneuver through site.

C. Capozzi (8 Webster St.) – asked about the purpose and benefit of the proposed project.

Liz Fitzhenry (57 Brookfield Rd.) – asked why the building on the corner at 301-315 Washington Street was being included as part of this project. She believes the only reason the building is being included is so the project will not exceed the 50% housing limit.

Ms. McCabe responded that the existing building is included and considered as part of this project as significant improvements are being made to this building and the properties are being used as one for parking and circulation. Façade improvements alone require the Board’s review.

M. Grant (195 Washington St.) – requested that a traffic study be done for School Street; asked about preservation of the Blue Heart Tavern. Concerned that proposal will increase traffic and be dangerous for children at the nearby playground.

P. Meredith (53 Beacon St.) – commented that he is against the request for waiver of the 20’ required buffer, encouraged more of a buffer and would like to see the proposed view from Beacon Street.

H. Rajakulendran (132 Willard Circle) – commented that he is against the proposal for apartments.

S. David (453 High St.) – commented in favor of the project, would like to see more of a downtown area.

N. Pickard (37 Brookfield Rd.) – commented that residents are not supportive of the request to waive the required minimum buffer.

P. Kelly (107 Willard Circle) – asked if the curb cut for Islington Pizza will change, the first couple of spaces from the street should be revisited.

D. Atkins (85 Parker St.) – commented that the number of residential units is too high; he wants the Blue Heart Tavern saved, asked that the residential units be spread to the existing building on the corner at 301-315 Washington.

T. Buccari (70 Fairview St.) – commented that he is concerned with the density and has concerns overall.

T. O'Leary (22 School St.) – concerned with views, building too high and will block sun.

J. Roper (34 Brookfield Rd.) – encouraged residents to be open-minded and willing to negotiate.

S. Rafsky (646 Canton St.) – commented that this project will improve the quality of life in Islington with the proposed enhancement; this project could be a catalyst to further improve properties in the area on Washington Street and on Route 1, this proposal could give Washington Street more of a village feel.

A. Butters (63 Cobleigh St.) – expressed frustration and asked what is next for the other properties in the area.

J. Kineavy (22 Redwood Rd.) – commented against apartments and asked what happens if they do not get fully occupied, was concerned with the number of apartments within three miles of this area.

J. Onderdonk (28 Lynne Terrace) – commented that one bedroom apartments have to meet occupancy requirements and that multiple children will not live in these apartments; commented in favor of requiring affordable residential units in this project, specifically requiring three affordable units as opposed to two to meet the 15% zoning requirement.

M. Gallagher (25 Ash St.) – Believes the apartments in Norwood will increase traffic.

#### Board Final Comments and Action:

Chairman Pfaff requested that the development team update the project plans to reflect the discussion tonight, the findings and recommendations of Town Staff, the peer review consultants, and Planning Board comments.

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Laubenstein, the Board voted unanimously in favor to continue this hearing until Tuesday, January 12, 2016 at 7:30 p.m., at the Islington Community Center Hall, 288 Washington St.

#### **Old Business:**

#### **Planning Board Rules & Regulations Update – Public Hearing (Continued from October 20, 2015 and Request for Continuance)**

Ms. McCabe's requested more time to make additional changes and allow changes to be reviewed with the department of public works and Phil Paradis.

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Wiggin, the Board voted unanimously in favor to continue this hearing until 01/19/16, at 7:30 p.m. in the Champagne Meeting Room, 50 Carby St.

#### **Review & Signing of Decisions from Prior Meetings**

- The appeal period has ended and the Board endorsed the Deerfield Avenue Extension – Definitive Subdivision plan

Ms. McCabe asked that the Board provide any final edits to her on the following two draft decisions by Friday so they can be finalized.

- Far Reach Road - OSRD-EIDR & OSRD Subdivision
- 75-85 Providence Highway –Earth Material Movement Special Permit

#### **Adjournment:**

Upon a motion by Mr. Montgomery and seconded by Mr. Wiggin, the Board voted unanimously in favor to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:42 p.m.

## List of Documents

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Planner's Meeting summary for 12/01/15 Planning Board Meeting, dated 11/24/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Planner's Memo to Planning Board Members, dated 11/24/15 re: FMUOD Special Permit - 301-315, 317 &amp; 323 Washington St.</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copy of Applicant's Power Point Presentation</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic Impact Study, prepared by Bayside Engineering, dated 11/2/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fiscal Impact Study, prepared by Connery Associates of Melrose, MA, dated 10/19/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BETA Group, Inc. Peer Review Comment letter (14 pages) to A. McCabe, Town Planner, dated 11-23-15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorandum from Building Commissioner, Joe Doyle, dated 11/22/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter from Finance Director Pam Dukeman, to Town Planner, dated 11/17/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorandum from Health Director, Linda Shea, to Town Planner, dated 11/19/15.</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic Mail comments from Sgt. Paul Sicard, to Abigail McCabe, sent 11/20/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Memorandum from Town Engineer, Jeffrey Bina, to Abigail McCabe, dated 11/23/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic comments from Dedham Westwood Water District, dated 11/23/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notice of Action of WHA/WAHA Authority Members, dated 12/1/15</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter from Helen Gordon, 44 Brookfield Rd. to PB, dated 11/30/15 re: comments on FMUOD SP - Washington St.</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One page exhibit submitted at 12/1/15 public hearing by Joe Previtera, re: Washington St at East St Intersection Bayside Engineering 11-3-15 Development 301-323 Washington St Westwood, MA</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter from WHA/WAHA Action of Authority Members submitted at 12/1/15 public hearing and read into the record by Chairman John Cummings.</li> </ul>	PDF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter (3 pages) from Laura Fitzhenry, 57 Brookfield Road, Westwood, MA; submitted at 12/1/15 public hearing, dated 12/1/15.</li> </ul>	PDF