

TOWN OF LUNENBURG

Office of the Planning Board

Matthew Brenner *Chair*
Timothy Willsmer *Vice Chair*
Amanda Reid *Clerk*
Matthew Allison *Member*
Glenn McLeod *Member*



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Christopher Reilly – Land Use Director
Logan O'Connell – Admin Asst.

MINUTES 2024-12-09

MEETING POSTED: Yes
ADDRESS: Town Hall – 17 Main St, Lunenburg, MA 01462
TIME: 6:00 P.M.
PRESENT: Matthew Brenner (Chair), Amanda Reid (Clerk), Matthew Allison, Glenn McLeod
ABSENT: Timothy Willsmer (Vice-Chair)

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE

Matthew Brenner called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M. The pledge of allegiance was led by Matthew Allison.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

CHAIR / DIRECTOR'S REPORTⁱ

Per **C. Reilly** – the consultant for the Master Plan Steering Committee had a public meeting (next-to-last one for gathering public input). Wasn't well attended but provided some valuable input. Aiming to close the Master Plan process out by February. **M. Brenner** noted the high response rate to the Master Plan surveys.

A standing agenda item ("Zoning Workshops") will be added in January to address upcoming zoning challenges:

- MBTA Communities Act
- Changes to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) in MGL Ch. 40A
- Flood map updates from Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

C. Reilly will examine model bylaw from DCR for tailoring to Lunenburg's needs, as well as Town Counsel's recommended bylaw for ADUs. Associated updates to Zoning Bylaw aimed for adoption at Annual Town Meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

494 Electric Ave – SPA, SMP (cont. from 2024-11-25)

Per **C. Reilly** – peer review from Graves Engineering Inc (GEI) still pending. Still awaiting response from Town Counsel about ownership status of Pierce Ave. Mentioned possibility of allowing parking waivers to resolve the issue, since the function of “owning” Pierce Ave for the applicant is lots on both sides are “merged” which achieves parking bylaw compliance.

Per **Chris Anderson** of Hannigan Engineering – comments from public are acknowledged, waiting for peer review feedback to incorporate both in one plan revision.

M. Brenner invited public comment.

Michael Lovewell (795 Reservoir Rd) – applicant installed drainage system to new building, alleviated previous flooding from 15 Kirby Ave. Noted serious flooding at Whalom Rd. **M. Brenner** noted flooding is common topic in Town bodies, but Planning Board’s discretion is limited. Mentioned potential for Stormwater Utility & suggested contacting DPW. **C. Reilly** noted the Land Use Dept or Building Dept can be contacted in instances of illegally redirected runoff.

Bob Pease (11 Wintergreen Ct) – understanding is that Planning Board approved applicant putting tent on parking lot during COVID, then approved its conversion it to a building. Opined that if such approval contributed to this problem, the Planning Board has an obligation to support local business and help try to solve it.

A. Reid moved to continue the public hearing for 494 Electric Ave to 2025-01-13 at 6:05 P.M.

M. Allison seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

791 Leominster Rd – SMP (cont. from 2024-11-25)

Per **C. Reilly**, applicant requested a continuance to 2025-01-13 awaiting peer review.

A. Reid moved to continue the public hearings for 791, 795 and 70 Kilburn St to 2025-01-13 at 6:05 P.M.

M. Allison seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

795 Leominster Rd – SMP (cont. from 2024-11-25)

Continued to 2025-01-13 at 6:05 P.M (see motion above).

70 Kilburn St – SMP (cont. from 2024-11-25)

Continued to 2025-01-13 at 6:03 P.M (see motion above).

558 & 560 Goodrich St – SMP, SP for Common Driveway

The Public Hearing opened at 6:34 P.M. **A. Reid** read the Public Hearing Notice.

Chris Anderson of Hannigan Engineering presented, on behalf of applicant Easterbrook Nominee Trust. Two properties in project currently served by common driveway from 1995. Applicant intends to bring current driveway into compliance while providing access to fourth residential lot. Property to the South is also served by common driveway via easement, which will be kept in this redesign. End of the common

driveway will be widened to accommodate current bylaw requirements and additional stormwater features.

Requested waivers for requirements 250-6.4(7)(c)[4] (minimum curb radius of 30 ft) and 250-6.4(7)(c)[7] (turnarounds at intervals of 300 ft).

Will review emergency accessibility with Fire Department in upcoming revisions.

Primary purpose is to avoid creating a *new* driveway, which would require construction through wetlands.

M. Brenner opined this was a good use of the updated Common Driveway bylaw.

M. Allison asked if current bylaw allows for frontage on one road to be accessed from a different road through the common driveway. Per **C. Anderson**, all access would come off Goodridge St—no frontage is being *created*, just relocating egress point to the lot.

M. Brenner invited public comment.

Eric Sullender (558 Goodrich St) explained this was part of preserving a house lot for his children.

The Board briefly discussed peer review. **G. McLeod** asked about the function and necessity of peer review in this context, and opined it was an excessive financial burden on the applicant. Per **C. Anderson**, an applicant's engineer common has their work checked for bylaw compliance by the Town's engineer.

A. Reid moved to authorize Graves Engineering Inc as the peer reviewer for this application in the amount of \$3,000.

M. Allison seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

A. Reid moved to continue the public hearing for 558 & 560 Goodrich St to 2025-01-13 at 6:05 P.M.

M. Allison seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

171 Arbor St – SMP, SP

The Public Hearing opened at 6:52 P.M. **A. Reid** read the Public Hearing Notice.

Brian Marchetti of McCarty Engineering presented on behalf of applicant PSG Realty. Had previously filed for conventional 4-lot subdivision in September but stopped application when a priority turtle habitat was uncovered in review with Conservation Commission. Worked with neighbor & developed mutually agreeable development plan for 3-lot layout served by common driveway after habitat review by LEC Environmental.

Common Driveway is 18 ft wide, includes 24 ft easement, max grade of 10%. Site is highly porous sand & gravel, includes pea stone diaphragms and grading for water to run into rain gardens. Project approved by Conservation Commission subject to order of conditions. Will revise plans according to Fire Dept and peer review feedback as needed.

Due to turtle habitat, any local permits will be sent back to the National Heritage Program for final conditions of approval.

M. Allison commended working with neighbors & general creativity of plan, questioned ability of rain gardens to sustain vegetation. **B. Marchetti** said similar ones had succeeded at 680 Reservoir Rd.

M. Brenner invited public comment.

Kyle Edmonds (201 Arbor St) was concerned about runoff impacts on his property given site's history as a gravel pit. Per **B. Marchetti**, the site doesn't have much runoff & is graded to direct runoff into pre-existing wetlands, all peak flow increases are contained entirely within the site. Disputed characterization of site as a gravel pit. **M. Brenner** asked how much more water would flow into the wetlands after development. Per **B. Marchetti**, the 50-year storm event has .89 CFS increase and 100-year storm event had 2.15 CFS, but no noticeable change is expected given project's small size and the breadth of wetlands.

M. Brenner noted that the peer review process would verify compliance with the Town bylaw. **K. Edmonds** asked if the peer reviewer would visit the site in-person, **C. Reilly** confirmed.

M. Allison moved to authorize Graves Engineering Inc as the peer reviewer for the Stormwater and Common Driveway applications at 171 Arbor St in the amount of \$3,000.

A. Reid seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

C. Reilly noted he expects the Fire Dept and peer reviewer to request a turn-out at the driveway's fork and a one-car turnout at the top.

A. Reid moved to continue the public hearing for 171 Arbor St to 2025-01-13 at 6:05 P.M.

M. Allison seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously.

DECISIONS

1260 Reservoir Rd – SPA (PJ Keatings)

Per **C. Reilly** all scriveners' errors were fixed, and the Standard Conditions for Site Plan Approval (including the hours of construction) are explicitly included, as requested at the last meeting.

The Board reviewed, found no issues, and endorsed the decision.

BOARD DISCUSSIONS

512 Northfield Rd Stormwater Management Permit (SMP) – Release of Performance Guarantee

C. Reilly explained – the SMP here included a 6-month requirement for survival for the required vegetation. He visited the site, confirmed the vegetation was alive and recommended release of the full \$6,000 performance guarantee.

M. Allison noted that the Town's peer reviewer previously provided recommendations on this procedure. Per **C. Reilly**, post-permitting construction reviews are within the Board's authority, but this was simple enough for an in-person check and recommendation by the Land Use Director.

A. Reid moved to release the performance guarantee for the Stormwater Management Permit for 512 Northfield Rd in the sum of \$6,000. M. Allison seconded. Voice vote, passed unanimously.

Master Plan Steering Committee Composition

Per **M. Brenner**, MPSC is having continued difficulties reaching quorum. Wants **T. Willsmer's** input before considering changes to composition of committee. Noted impact of previous MPSC Chair **Joeci Gilchrest's** departure.

M. Allison proposed changing the number of *voting* members (which defines a quorum) rather than removing seats.

A. Reid noted scheduling difficulties and interpersonal conflict from procedural discussions with husband (a member-at-large of MPSC). Emphasized lack of effective public communication.

M. Brenner he was asked if the Planning Board can facilitate the re-organization of the MPSC by a member and will research this.

ABUTTING COMMUNITY NOTICES

Notice of Decision – Townsend Planning Board granted a Stormwater Management Permit to Starbucks location.

Public Hearing Notice – Fitchburg Planning Board reviewing a marijuana shop, site conversion from office to 10-unit residential, and site conversion from 4-family to 3-family residential.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Master Plan Steering Committee

Covered during Board Discussions.

Open Space Committee

Per G. McLeod – Nothing to report.

Municipal Bldg. Design Committee

Per M. Allison – Met last Monday but unable to attend. Discussed space needs with consultants.

Capital Planning Committee

Per M. Brenner – Members cautious about fixes to Ritter Building being made redundant by Municipal Building Design Committee plans. Will be on time with recommendations of Interim Town Manager, will continue work on 5-Year Capital Plan in January.

Economic Development Committee

Per G. McLeod – Nothing to report. Next meeting 2024-12-19.

Storm Water Task Force

T. Willsmer absent.

Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

Per A. Reid – Met on 2024-12-05, unable to attend.

Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee

Per A. Reid – Will meet on 2024-12-11.

Town Manager Screening Committee

Per M. Brenner – Interviews to choose candidates for second round (Select Board interviews) coming up shortly.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Upcoming meetings are **2025-01-13** and **2025-01-27** at 6:00 P.M. (No meeting 2024-12-23).

PUBLIC COMMENT

None at this time.

BOARD COMMENT / CONCERNS

M. Allison noted substantial puddling in the road on Route 2A after the first large rain since the development on Mass Ave between Townsend Harbor Rd and Jaxx Country Store, suggested mentioning to Building Inspector or DPW since it's a state road. **C. Reilly** will follow up.

G. McLeod approved of C. Reilly's introduction at the Select Board meeting, as well as the explanations he gave of upcoming Zoning issues like the MBTA Communities Act and changes to Accessory Dwelling Unit statute. **C. Reilly** offered to bring board members' topics or concerns to the Select Board as they arise.

C. Reilly noted the Town has requested \$20,000 for the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission's consultancy with available options for compliance with the MBTA Communities Act.

M. Allison asked about the flood maps discussed at the beginning of the meeting. **C. Reilly** explained – *floodplain maps* show areas prone to flooding and are primarily for zoning, while *FIRMs (flood insurance rate maps)* are created by FEMA and primarily used for help determining flood insurance rates.

ADJOURNMENT

A. Reid moved to adjourn. **M. Allison** seconded.

Voice vote, passed unanimously. Adjourned 7:57 P.M.

Minutes by Logan O'Connell, Admin Asst.

DOCUMENTS REFERENCED

ⁱ Staff Report