



Town of Southwick

Planning Board

MINUTES



Tuesday, May 23, 2023
7:00 PM (recorded)
Town Hall Land Use Hearing Room

Written Minutes

(Not verbatim - comments can be heard on recordings available at www.southwickma.org)

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Doherty, Chair
David Spina, Vice Chair
Richard Utzinger
David Sutton
Jessica Thornton

ABSENT: *None*

TOWN STAFF: Jon Goddard, Town Planner
Meghan Lightcap, Secretary

Also attending the meeting were approximately 14 members of the public and several people via *Zoom*.

The “hybrid” meeting of the Planning Board was scheduled for participation in person and via *Zoom* at the Town Hall Land Use Hearing Room and was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mr. Doherty. He stated that the meeting was being recorded and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting.

TOWN PLANNER’S REPORT: 7:00 p.m.

1. Mr. Goddard received a letter regarding 237 Sheep Pasture Road and some potential unpermitted earth excavation activity on the property. He will keep everyone posted as to any further developments.
2. Mr. Goddard received a call from Atif Khan about 95 Sheep Pasture Road and if it was an appropriate location for a cemetery. It is a protected activity under the Dover Amendment as long as it’s associated with a religious component.
3. Mr. Goddard spoke with Kirk Sanders over family property at Crescent Circle. There is a commercial building that his father occupied for many years. He had a question relating to an ANR plan to establish a new property boundary line between adjacent residential

property where his father resided and the commercial property to potentially include a storage area accessed from the commercial property.

4. Mr. Goddard spoke with Greg Bellino about the retail marijuana bylaw change at the Annual Town Meeting.
5. Mr. Goddard spoke with Wendy Birchall regarding property at 47 Congamond Road. The site contains a single-family home with a detached barn that has improved spaces in the loft area that do not pass as a living space. Mr. Goddard shared that the property was not divisible for two separate building lots nor did the existing condition meet the requirements of a two-family dwelling.
6. Mr. Goddard spoke with Deborah Hebert regarding 101 College Highway about establishing an animal sanctuary.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 7:05 p.m.

No comments were submitted.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:10 p.m.	157 Feeding Hills Road (AC Zone): Special Permit Modification, Wellhead Protection District Special Permit, Nonconforming Use Special Permit, Flood Hazard and Wetlands District Special Permit, and Site Plan Approval.
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Continued Public Hearing

Steve Salvini of Salvini Associates, LLC attended the meeting on behalf of the applicant Crepes Tea House. He said he is looking for a continuance and shared his interpretation of the pre-existing nonconforming bylaw language and how that would allow the Board to approve the addition of the accessory buildings. Mr. Doherty questioned this interpretation and stated Town Counsel would be consulted to verify the bylaws meaning.

Mr. Doherty read two emails by resident Matt McCassey of 145 Feeding Hills Road; one showed pictures of Crepes Tea House using one of the outbuildings to host an event held the previous Saturday, May 6, 2023. Mr. McCassey said he called Southwick Police at the time so they could document the occurrence, the pictures show tables set up inside the buildings with tablecloths and sternos for warming food. The other email was in regards to parking capacity and the limitation this facility has to offer. He showed pictures of parking during an event on June 26, 2021 along the road as well as an overflow on May 9, 2021 to the right of the restaurant that the town uses as an access road to the town well pumping station.

Fire Chief Rich Stefanowicz asked if the first emails pictures occurred after the Cease & Desist was issued and Mr. Goddard said these pictures occurred before that.

Resident Diane Juzba of 145 Feeding Hills Road said she wrote a letter to the Select Board advocating for people with disabilities because these buildings are not compliant with the ADA.

Ronald Sena of 149 Feeding Hills Road said he spoke with the restaurant owner when it was purchased and said he was told the restaurant would not have anything outdoors. He is concerned with safety and noise issues.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Sutton to continue the public hearing for 157 Feeding Hills Road to June 6, 2023, at 7:10 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

7:30 p.m. 159 Berkshire Avenue (Residential 20 Zone) – Stormwater Management Permit
Continued Public Hearing

Derrick Hale attended the meeting on behalf of the applicant and stated that he sent in what he said should be a final completed product. Mr. Goddard stated he will need time to review the document sent that day to him and Randy Brown, DPW Director.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to continue the public hearing for 159 Berkshire Avenue to June 6, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

7:40 p.m. 662 A College Highway (Industrial Restricted Zone) – Special Permit, Site Plan Approval and Stormwater Management Permit
Public Hearing

Applicant Jim Boyle and Engineer Chris Chamberland attended the meeting. Mr. Chamberland shared the plans for a two-story storage facility project on the 3-acre parcel with frontage on College Highway between O'Reilly Auto Parts and the Southwick Community Episcopal Church.

Mr. Doherty read into the record letters with comments from SFD, DPW, SPD, and the Town Planner. He also asked how many storage units were proposed and the applicant responded that the number would approximately be 450-500 units.

Mr. Utzinger asked if there would be any site lighting, and Mr. Boyle responded that exterior lighting was motion-activated and that there would be no access after 10:00 P.M.

Mr. Spina asked how pedestrian access would be safeguarded at the exterior doorways and Mr. Chamberland responded that they would stripe restricted areas by the doors.

Fire Chief Rich Stefanowicz attended the meeting and said there was an issue with accessibility around the building. His concern is that there will not be enough room for emergency vehicles to access the area especially when there is snow accumulation or patrons parked in order to access

their unit. He is also uncertain if the culvert across the driveway will support the weight of the fire equipment.

Mr. Sutton asked about emergency egress between floors and at the western end of the second floor; Mr. Chamberland indicated that the only access in and out was from the designated side and front/rear entrances. Mr. Boyle noted that the building was reviewed by an architect for access/egress concerns but would provide clarification. Mr. Sutton also expressed concern that the building mechanicals would impact the emergency vehicle circulation areas around the proposed buildings.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Sutton to continue the public hearing for 662 A College Highway to June 27, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

Discussions

- Planning Board Composition-

A **MOTION** was made by Mrs. Thornton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to nominate Michael Doherty as Chair of the Planning Board.

The motion passed unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mrs. Thornton to nominate David Spina as the Vice-Chair of the Planning Board.

The motion passed unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by Mrs. Thornton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Doherty to nominate David Spina to continue on as the Planning Board Representative to the Community Preservation Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Spina and **SECONDED** by Mr. Utzinger to nominate Jessica Thornton as the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission representative.

The motion passed unanimously.

Sign Application Review

- 141 Congamond Road – Proposed Façade signage for GEM Marina/Ken’s Lakeside Plaza

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to make a positive recommendation for the sign application for 141 Congamond Road.

The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Plans Not Requiring Approval under Subdivision Control Law

- 72 Mort Vining Road

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to endorse the Approval Not Required plan for 72 Mort Vining Road.

The motion passed unanimously.

- 24 & 26 Nicholson Hill Road

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to endorse the Approval Not Required plan for 24 & 26 Nicholson Hill Road.

The motion passed unanimously.

Routine Business

- Master Plan Advisory Committee Update: Mr. Spina said they will be hosting a “Did we hear you?” workshop for the public on June 1, 2023 at 6:00pm. They will also host a workshop session on June 15, 2023.

- Minutes Approval: April 25 & May 2, 2023

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mrs. Thornton to approve the meeting minutes of April 25, 2023 with edits.

The motion passed unanimously.

A **MOTION** was made by Mr. Utzinger and **SECONDED** by Mrs. Thornton to approve the meeting minutes of May 2, 2023.

The motion passed unanimously.

Being no further business to be brought before the board, a **MOTION** was made by Mr. Sutton and **SECONDED** by Mr. Spina to close the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Next Scheduled Meeting is June 6, 2023.

Electronic signatures have been affixed in accordance with M.G.L. c.110G and pursuant to the Board's electronic signature authorization vote of January 4, 2022, as recorded at the Hampden County Registry of Deeds in Book 24401, Page 596.

Michael Doherty, Chair	/s/ Michael Doherty
David Spina, Vice Chair	/s/ David Spina
Richard Utzinger	/s/ Richard Utzinger
David Sutton	/s/ David Sutton
Jessica Thornton	/s/ Jessica Thornton