



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Remote via Zoom Video Conferencing

April 8, 2021, at 7:15 PM – Approved at June 24, 2021 meeting

1 Present: Dale Buchanan
2 Tricia Kendall
3 Lakshmi Krishnan
4 Joe Rubertone
5 Deepa Venkat
6
7 Others: Peter Matchak, Town Planner
8 Emma Snellings, Assistant Town Planner
9

10 ***Call to Order***

11 Dale Buchanan, Planning Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM and reviewed the
12 meeting agenda. Emma Snellings, Assistant Planner, explained that the meeting was being
13 held via Zoom recorded by WACA TV. She provided instructions on how to access the video
14 conference meeting access numbers and passcodes.
15

16 **Public Hearing – 0 Megunko Site Plan Review**

17 Mr. Matchak explained that the applicant requested a continuance to allow additional time to
18 provide the required project documents.
19

20 Ms. Kendall made a motion to continue the 0 Megunko public hearing until April 22, 2021, at
21 7:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye,
22 Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.
23

24 **Downtown Zoning Tour and Zoning Amendment Discussion**

25 Mr. Matchak summarized the zoning amendment discussions from the past four to five
26 Planning Board meetings to date. He explained that Chris Kuschel, Consultant from the
27 Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), would provide an update on the changes to the
28 proposed zoning bylaw.
29

30 Concerning the architectural design, setbacks, and height specifications considered at the
31 March 25th Planning Board meeting for the proposed Ashland Downtown District (ADD)
32 bylaw, Mr. Kuschel indicated that feedback and changes received from the board and the
33 Planning Office that primarily focused on the design and dimensional standards had been
34 incorporated, such as specific details concerning mansard and flat roofs allowed by Special
35 Permit, and articulation elements, as noted below.
36

37
38 **Setback Requirements:** Minimum 8 ft. and maximum 15 ft. Multi-level structures, the
39 setback distance is from the level furthest extended. Additional language was added to
40 the front yard standard to allow for greater front yards that contribute to an improved
41 public area.
42

43 **Building Height:** The provision to allow a four-story building was removed and the
44 height decreased from 45 ft. to 38 ft. with a Special Permit height to accommodate a
45 special roofline feature, i.e., a pinnacle, cupola, clocktower, widow's walk, etc.
46

47 **Building Design Standards – Massing:** Horizontal dimension 60 ft. or greater in width
48 along the public right-of-way, vertical articulation at a minimum every 45 ft. A
49 provision was added to specify that the vertical articulation elements include a
50 combination of changes in the vertical plane of the building a minimum of two feet and
51 a maximum of 4 feet.
52

53 Building Design Standards – Building Details: Concerning bylaw 8.5.12, Section 4 stated
54 that a Special Permit is needed to allow a flat roof, a mansard roof was added and
55 removed from the by right roof types.

56
57 The proposed zoning change: A building shall have one of the following roof types, flat
58 gable, front gable, side-gable, or hip roof. The Planning Board may grant a Special
59 Permit for a flat roof, mansard, or other roof styles if the applicant can demonstrate that
60 a proposed design will enhance the character of the neighborhood through inclusions of
61 historical and appropriate details such as cornice moldings and others of the like.
62 Diagrams of various roof types were changed accordingly. The board discussed the
63 need to add language to specify the minimum roof pitch, and Mr. Kuschel agreed to
64 detail and include.

65
66 Lot sizes: District A - 35,000 sq. ft.; District B – 20,000 sq. ft., District C – 8,000 sq. ft.
67 With a Special Permit allow lots that do not meet the required minimum sq. footage.
68 The board discussed a future consideration to add an open space requirement for lots
69 greater than 60,000 and or a larger front setback.

70
71 Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 2.0. The board requested a graphic that depicts the FAR for a
72 large site for their review.

73
74 Mr. Kuschel explained that several topics from the survey should be vetted further in the next
75 phase, such as extending the boundaries and changing the zoning to mixed-used in the
76 northside of Pleasant St., and the southeast of downtown towards Rte. 135. Detailing proposed
77 lot and frontage dimensional changes in the ADD-A overlay district, creating a light industrial
78 zone, and floor area ratio (FAR) and open space requirements were also recommended for a
79 later phase.

80
81 The board reviewed the draft bylaw and confirmed the specific agreed-upon language. There
82 was a discussion concerning a minimum roof pitch and confirming Town Hall and 21 Main St.
83 as precedents, and other roof types that could be considered by-right or with a Special Permit.
84 Mr. Kuschel indicated that he would include these details in the draft bylaw.

85
86 Mark Dasoni commented on the ADD-A district and potentially combining commercial and
87 light industrial in the proposed zoning bylaw.

88 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

89 Ms. Kendall made a motion to approve the subcommittee minutes from January 20, 2021, as
90 amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye,
91 Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

92
93 Ms. Kendall made a motion to approve the minutes from March 11, 2021, as amended. The
94 motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan.; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-
95 aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

96 **Administrative Matters: future meetings, public hearings**

97
98 The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled on April 22, 2021.

99 **Report from Board Members and Town Planner**

100 **Peter Matchak**

101 Mr. Matchak provided the following updates.

102
103 Regarding 0 Memorial Dr., the developer UGC submitted revised plans for the 180-unit 40B
104 project that are posted online. The second hearing is scheduled for Monday, April 12th.

105
106 The 12 Pond St. project renderings were received, and this item will be on the next Planning
107 Board agenda.

108
109 The porch bylaw public hearing is scheduled for the next Planning Board meeting.

113
114 A pre-construction meeting was held today for the Downtown Project. The project includes
115 streetscape improvements and relocating the overhead utilities underground.
116
117 The Housing Production Plan is in progress and the document will be distributed to the board in
118 early May.
119
120 Ms. Snellings oversaw the town's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) self-evaluation, and the
121 development of an ADA Transition Plan that will support the town's efforts to apply for ADA
122 grant funding to address accessibility improvements.
123
124 ***Adjournment***
125 Ms. Kendall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 pm. The motion was seconded by
126 Ms. Krishnan.; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a
127 vote of 5-0-0.
128
129 ***Documents***
130 1. April 8, 2021 Agenda
131 2. 0 Megunko Continuance Request
132 3. Downtown Zoning Dimensional Comparison handout
133 4. Draft Minutes for January 20, 2021
134 5. Draft Minutes for March 11, 2021
135