



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Select Board Meeting Room / Zoom Conferencing
Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland, Massachusetts 01721

April 27, 2023, at 7:15 PM

Minutes Approved June 29, 2023

1 Present: Tricia Kendall, Chair
2 Anna Tesmenitsky, Vice-Chair
3 Catherine Jurczyk, Clerk
4 Marcelo Arjona, Member
5 Deepa Venkat, Member
6 Kevin McClean, Associate Member
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8 Others: Peter Matchak, Town Planner
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Call to Order

Tricia Kendall called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. She mentioned that the session was being recorded and broadcast. Ms. Kendall reviewed the meeting agenda.

Clerk's Report

Catherine Jurczyk, the Planning Board Clerk, reported that the board had received emails correspondences since the April 13, 2023, meeting.

Joint Meeting with Upper Charles Trail Committee

Preston Crow, Upper Charles Trail Committee member, reviewed the trail layout options along Pond St. He noted a cycle track (an extra-wide sidewalk) that could be constructed and the trail route through the Market Basket parking lot or across Pond St. to the downtown area and beyond, depending on obtaining the required permissions and permits. Mr. Crow described the trail route options throughout the town and mentioned the streets and properties that may be involved that the Planning Board should be aware of. Mr. Crow said the Trail Committee had yet to contact landowners regarding easements, but the proposed map is available. He noted the trail work in Hopkinton, Sherborn, and Framingham going on simultaneously with the Ashland Trail.

Tony Lewis, an Upper Charles Trail Committee member, said he would consult with the Planning Board and provide information about the trail when needed.

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35 Ms. Tesmenitsky suggested the Trail Committee work with the Select Board to create an
36 Implementation Committee to help the trail become real. Ms. Kendall suggested that the Trail
37 Committee provide the Planning Board with a short bullet-point list of items that could help support
38 trails on various projects. The Planning Board will work to notify the Trail Committee of projects
39 along the proposed path in order to get feedback on those sites.

40
41 Joel Arbeitman reiterated the need to foster communication between the Trail Committee and the
42 Planning Board to reach their goals. He said acquiring land is not within the committee's purview, so
43 they would work with the Select Board to begin the process of land acquisitions and would welcome
44 support for GIS mapping. Mr. Arbeitman also felt that Ashland would benefit from a bicycle and
45 pedestrian advisory committee and that it is unfortunate that Main St. is unsafe for bicycles.

46
47 The members thanked the Trail Committee members for attending the meeting and looked forward
48 to consulting with them.

49
50 **Lot Release: Apple Ridge Definitive Subdivision Lot 14**

51 Mr. Matchak explained that Apple Ridge Lot 14 was likely released at an earlier date, perhaps in the
52 1990's, but that he could not find that documentation, and the town took the roadway in 2001. This
53 lot release is a legal mechanism to complete the title paper trail for the property.

54
55 Ms. Kendall motioned to release Lot 14, 42 Wilbur Dr., as shown on the approved definitive
56 subdivision plan Apple Ridge Estates. Ms. Tesmenitsky seconded the motion; Venkat-aye,
57 Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a vote of 5-0-0.

58
59 **Public Hearings:**

60 **9-49 Homer Avenue Site Plan and Special Permit Application – continued from April 13, 2023**

61 Mr. Matchak summarized that at the April 13th meeting, the members asked the applicant to explain
62 their design and questioned whether two buildings could be built where a single building was
63 planned. He also mentioned the memo he drafted on the board's behalf, dated February 22
64 requesting a Design Review Committee evaluation, which he updated to include Ms. Jurczyk's
65 comments.

66
67 Ron Bourque, the project architect, reviewed the 9-49 Homer Avenue mixed-use development plan
68 and explained the single-building concept and architecturally how the site design creates an
69 environment integral to Main St. The building is triangular with underground parking and an access
70 ramp off Alden St. Mr. Bourque pointed out the pocket park outdoor seating area and its walkway
71 materials and patterns that connect the site to the historic train station across the street.

72
73 Mr. Arjona suggested that the applicant explore elevating the entry to the property so the in
74 between of the proposed pocket park and retail area could connect and give a more pedestrian
75 feeling to the downtown. The members agreed that someone working on the downtown project
76 would need to consider an additional crosswalk adjacent to one already studied and established.

77

78 Ms. Kendall asked for an update regarding the work to remove the telephone pole and relocate the
79 utilities underground, the three ground-level residential units, the project's affordability element,
80 and the relief being sought. Regarding the utilities, Mr. Bourque responded that they requested
81 costing details. He also said the three units allowed for on-grade accessible units and are included in
82 the 29 units. Mr. Matchak said he would determine whether the ground floor residential unit facing
83 Alden St. complies with the zoning.

84
85 Regarding the relief being sought, Mr. Matchak said the project is seeking Site Plan approval, but the
86 portions of flat roof and the number of units requires a special permit. The members asked for more
87 details concerning loading and turning radius for delivery trucks, the sizes/numbers of parking
88 spaces, the number of floors/height relative to the bylaws, and affordability. Mr. Matchak explained
89 that a multi-family development in the Pond St. Overlay District requires a minimum of 10%
90 affordable housing, but other areas do not have that requirement. The application team has
91 proposed to include 10% affordability with in the project.

92
93 Mr. Bourque said the emergency vehicle lane would accommodate commercial delivery trucks, and
94 the trucks' length and turning ratio would be documented. Mr. Matchak noted that the interior trash
95 room behind the commercial space and the fire safety plan would be a part of the decision
96 conditions.

97
98 The members agree that resolving the list of open items discussed would be essential before
99 referring the project to the Design Review Committee.

100
101 Ms. Jurczyk motioned to continue the 9-49 Homer Ave. public hearing until May 11, 2023. Ms.
102 Tesmenitsky seconded the motion; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, and
103 Kendall-aye; vote of 5-0-0.

104
105 **Economic Impact Tool**

106 Mr. Matchak reviewed the Economic Impact Tool updated from the version of the tool Craig
107 Seymour, from RKG Consultants, developed when the Cirrus Apartment Development was built.

108
109 Mr. Matchak said the town would need to hire a third-party economic development consultant to
110 complete the economic impact analysis. It is suggested that the Planning Office consult Economic
111 Development Director Beth Reynolds and the MetroWest Economic Research Center at Framingham
112 State University.

t

113
114 **Report on Planning Topics:**

115 **Scenic Roads Outreach**

116 No discussion.

117
118 **MBTA Communities**

119 No discussion.

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121 **Parking Memo**

122 No discussion.

123

124 **Reports on Board Members and Town Planner:**

125 Comprehensive Plan

126 Ms. Tesmenitsky reported that three requests for proposals (RFPs) were received from potential
127 consultants. The project management group is reviewing them and determining the information to
128 present to the joint meeting of the Select Board and Planning Board. The Project Management team
129 voted on the precinct memberships, except for one precinct. Today an email was sent to the known
130 individuals who will be part of the Steering Committee, which will meet at the end of May 2023.

131

132 Sustainability Committee

133 No discussion.

134

135 Design Review Committee (DRC)

136 No discussion.

137

138 Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

139 Ms. Kendall said that CPC members would be invited to an upcoming meeting.

140

141 Other

142 No discussion.

143

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

145 Joint Meeting with the Select Board for Comprehensive Plan Committee Appointments: May 11,
146 2023.

147

148 Mr. McClean suggested a future joint meeting with the Ashland Finance Committee to understand
149 their role better.

150

151 Future Joint Meeting with Ashland Sustainability Committee: TBA

152 No discussion.

153

154 Future Retreat Date

155 No discussion.

156

157 Applications Received

158 Mr. Matchak reported that the application for the definitive subdivision, the Village at Clocktown,
159 was received. The filing of the preliminary subdivision predates the passage of the building
160 moratorium.

161

162 Next Meeting

163 The next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2023.

164

165 Minutes Review

166 Ms. Tesmenitsky motioned to accept January 4, 2022; minutes as drafted. Ms. Kendall seconded the
167 motion; Tesmenitsky-aye, Venkat-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a vote of 3-0-0.

168

169 Ms. Tesmenitsky motioned to accept October 26, 2022; minutes as drafted. Ms. Jurczyk seconded
170 the motion; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Jurczyk-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a vote of 4-0-0.

171

172 Ms. Tesmenitsky motioned to accept January 18, 2023; minutes as amended. Ms. Kendall seconded
173 the motion; Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a vote of 4-0-0.

174

175 Ms. Tesmenitsky motioned to accept February 9, 2023; minutes as drafted. Mr. Arjona seconded the
176 motion; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a
177 vote of 6-0-0.

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179 Ms. Tesmenitsky motioned to accept February 23, 2023; minutes as drafted. Mr. Arjona seconded
180 the motion; Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye,
181 with a vote of 6-0-0.

182

183 ***Adjournment***

184 Ms. Kendall motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 pm. Ms. Tesmenitsky seconded the motion;
185 Venkat-aye, Tesmenitsky-aye, Arjona-aye, Jurczyk-aye, McClean-aye, and Kendall-aye, with a vote of
186 6-0-0.

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