



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Remote via Zoom Video Conferencing

May 13, 2021, at 7:15 PM – Approved at June 10, 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 and 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 Peter Matchak explained that the applicant requested an additional continuance to allow more
18 time to provide the required renderings and project documents.
19

20
21 Mr. Rubertone made a motion to continue the 0 Megunko public hearing until June 10, 2021, at
22 7:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye,
23 Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.
24

25 **Public Hearing – Covered Porch Bylaw Amendment**

26 Mr. Buchanan reopened the hearing continued from April 22, 2021, and read the public notice.
27

28 The proposal is to amend Section 4 – Dimensional Requirements of Chapter 282 of the Town of
29 Ashland Zoning Bylaw by adding a new section 4.1.6 Covered Open-Air Front Porch: The
30 Dimensional Requirements requiring minimum front yard setbacks in residential districts
31 shall not apply to a Covered Open-Air Front Porch, where at least ninety (90) percent of the
32 Porch is located between the front of the residential structure and the front lot line, provided
33 that no portion of the Covered Open-Air Front Porch shall be:
34

35 (1) enclosed by screen, glass, or building walls, whether full or partial (open handrails and
36 guardrails shall be allowed up to a height of 38 inches);
37

38 (2) of a depth (including all roof lines and columns, but not stairs) greater than ten (10) feet;
39

40 (3) of a height greater than one story (as related to the adjoining building) and with habitable
41 space or balconies located above the Covered Open-Air Front Porch;
42

43 (4) located closer to the front lot line than a distance in feet equal to sixty (60%) percent of
44 the applicable front yard setback requirement;
45

46 (5) covered with a flat, non-sloped roof, unless such roof is an open trellis; and
47

48 (6) constructed in non-compliance with all other requirements of the underlying zone
49 including, without limitation, side yard setbacks and lot coverage requirements.
50

51 Or take any other action related thereto.
52

53 Mr. Matchak explained that Town Council recommended adding the seventh requirement to the
54 amendment concerning the exclusion of a porch from the volume of a rebuilt non-conforming
55 structure.

56
57 (7) The volume of a Covered Open-Air Front Porch shall not be considered part of the volume of a
58 non-conforming structure being rebuilt under section 3.3.7. However, the Covered Open-Air Front
59 Porch may be rebuilt in kind after a demolition, destruction, or catastrophe.

60
61 The members agreed that an eighth requirement was necessary to stipulate that the bylaw would only
62 apply to residences built and in existence at the time of the adoption of the bylaw amendment. They
63 also discussed that the amendment is intended for residential structures in residential districts, and
64 commercial businesses in residential districts would require a Special Permit.

65
66 Catherine Jurczyk commented on Item 7 and the need to add the term “footprint” to the requirement.
67 She also commented briefly regarding the commercial business concern.

68
69 Mr. Rubertone made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms.
70 Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote
71 of 5-0-0.

72
73 Ms. Kendall made a motion to support and move this article forward into a warrant for Town
74 Meeting with the change to Item 7 to include the term “footprint”, and the addition of Item 8
75 concerning the date of effectiveness as just read by Peter Matchak. The motion was seconded
76 by Mr. Rubertone; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with
77 a vote of 5-0-0.

78
79

80 **Downtown Zoning Amendment Discussion**

81 Mr. Buchanan opened the hearing and read the public notice.

82
83 Chris Kuschel, Consultant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) reviewed a
84 PowerPoint presentation titled Downtown Ashland Zoning Modifications Project that covered
85 the project’s background, goals, and process. He also went over the proposed changes to the
86 Consolidated Dimensional Standards Table and several design elements that were clarified in
87 the amendment.

88
89 Mr. Buchanan commented on 8.5.6, Section 4 – Lot Dimensions and Standards, and the need to
90 edit the wording concerning rear yards to ensure the limit of no less than 12 ft. was clear. He
91 also commented on the proposed building height, 38 ft., or 3-stories, and whether the intent is
92 to limit the number of floors, and if 4-floors at the 10 to 50 Main St. Mill Building or
93 commercial sites could be considered. Mr. Matchak recommended modifying the language and
94 remove the number of floors and specify a height of 38 ft. would be measured from the Main St.
95 street-plane. The members settled on language that stated that 3-stories could be increased to
96 4-stories by Special Permit and the measurement of the 38 ft. height limit would be from the
97 street-plane moving vertically, and to change the language concerning the rear yard 12ft. limit.

98
99 Mark Dasoni commented on the proposed language concerning the height specifications.

100
101 Catherine Jurczyk asked for clarification concerning the addition of the building diagrams and
102 the future status of form-based code. Mr. Matchak responded that form-based code would not
103 be eliminated.

104
105 Ms. Kendall made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Ms.
106 Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote
107 of 5-0-0.

108
109 Ms. Krishnan made a motion to change the wording in 8.5.6, Item 4 to the following: Where the
110 property abuts a residential district, the rear yard must be a minimum of 30 ft. which may be
111 reduced to no less than 12 ft. rear yard through a Special Permit. The motion was seconded by
112 Ms. Kendall; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a
113 vote of 5-0-0.

114
115 Mr. Rubertone made a motion to amend the draft amendment to Downtown Zoning bylaw
116 Section 8.5.6 – Lot Dimensions and Standards, and add Item 9 – The height of all building shall
117 be measured from the fronting street-plan level vertically to the highest point of the roof,
118 which shall be no greater than 38 ft. The motion was seconded by Mr. Buchanan; Ms.
119 Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote
120 of 5-0-0.

121
122 Mr. Rubertone made a motion to amend the draft amendment 8.5.6 Downtown Zoning bylaw
123 and add Item 10 – Through a Special Permit by the Planning Board in accordance with Section
124 9.3 an applicant shall apply for the addition of a 4th-story to a proposed core structure. The
125 motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye,
126 Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

127
128 Ms. Kendall made a motion to put forth this proposal to the town Warrant with the approved
129 amendments. The motion was seconded by Ms. Krishnan; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-
130 aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

131
132 **12 Pond St. Color and Window Review**

133 Ms. Kendall explained that on Wednesday Mr. Matchak, Ms. Venkat and she met at 12 Pond St.
134 to view the building and the project’s current status. At that time, a general discussion with
135 Charles Zammuto, the applicant, took place concerning the project status and pertinent
136 updates to present to the Planning Board.

137
138 Charles Zammuto, the Applicant, and Jim Chen, Architect, were in attendance on the call. The
139 board reviewed the exterior renderings submitted to the Planning Board today. Mr. Zammuto
140 and Ms. Kendall explained that they suggested changing the red brick to gray brick siding, as
141 depicted in the updated rendering, to complement the building’s modern style. The members
142 asked the applicant to provide the board with revised renderings, color, material options, and
143 samples to review that will support the building’s design style and theme. They discussed the
144 width of the ground floor doors and windows and reducing the wall space.

145
146 Ms. Krishnan made a motion to approve the 12 Pond St. Avante garage doors. The motion was
147 seconded by Mr. Rubertone; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye,
148 Buchanan-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

149
150 Mr. Chen stated that the requested items would be provided. Mr. Buchanan indicated that this
151 item would be added to an upcoming meeting agenda.

152
153 **Review and Approval of Minutes**

154 The board asked for a rewrite of the Downtown Zoning section in the March 25, 2021, and
155 April 8, 2021, minutes, to better explain the board’s decision-making process concerning the
156 recommended design elements.

157
158 **Administrative Matters: future meetings, public hearings**

159 The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for May 27, 2021.

160
161 **Report from Board Members and Town Planner**
162 **Peter Matchak**

163 Mr. Matchak provided the following updates.

164
165 A resident made a public information request concerning the Front Porch bylaw and asked how
166 many residents had requested the bylaw modification. Mr. Buchanan indicated that
167 approximately ten residents had approached him about the proposed bylaw change. The other
168 members stated that they had not been approached.

169
170 Concerning the town’s Housing Production Plan, he reported that the Housing Production
171 Committee has prepared an Executive Summary for the changes and modifications to the
172 plan that he will distribute tomorrow, and the full report will go out next Monday or
173 Tuesday. A joint meeting with the Planning Board and the Select Board to review the plan

174 will be held next Wednesday, May 19, 2021. Mr. Matchak explained how the plan and the
175 40B Arbella development off of Memorial Dr. approval timeline is important, as the
176 development will increase the town's affordable housing count from 6.3% to 8.3% and
177 provide the town two years of safe harbor from other 40B developments.

178
179 The Village of the America's Phase VII will be coming before the board within the next one to
180 two months. He will draft a memo to brief the members on the history of the development.
181 A suggestion was made to consult with Preston Crow, as he may have insight from his time
182 on the Planning Board.

183
184 **Emma Snellings**

185 Ms. Snellings reported that at the result of the last concurrent meeting with the Design
186 Review Committee, the committee has made recommendations concerning parking
187 guidelines to make parking lots more aesthetically pleasing as well as sustainable. A
188 working group has been proposed to review the parking lot bylaws, and she asked members
189 interested in participating to reach out to her directly.

190
191 **Dale Buchanan**

192 Mr. Buchanan announced that his five-year term on the board has come to an end and
193 expressed his appreciation of his time on the board. The members, Mr. Matchak and Ms.
194 Snellings thanked Dale for his participation and service.

195
196 ***Adjournment***

197 Ms. Kendall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:59 pm. The motion was seconded by
198 Mr. Rubertone.; Kendall-aye, Krishnan-aye, Venkat-aye, Rubertone-aye, Buchanan-aye; with a
199 vote of 5-0-0.

200
201 ***Documents***

- 202 1. May 13, 2021 Agenda
 - 203 2. MAPC Presentation on the proposed changes to Downtown Zoning
 - 204 3. 12 Pond Street Renderings dated April 22, 2021
 - 205 4. 12 Pond Street Avante Garage Door Brochure
 - 206 5. Draft minutes for March 25, 2021 and April 8, 2021 meetings
- 207