



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Zoom Video Conferencing

Town Hall, 101 Main Street, Ashland Massachusetts 01721

May 14, 2020 – Approved at June 11, 2020 meeting

1 ***Call to Order***

2 Preston Crow, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm and announced the meeting is
3 being conducted via Zoom Video Conferencing and recorded and broadcast live by WACA TV.
4 Mr. Crow reviewed the remote meeting logistics and the meeting agenda. Mr. Crow explained
5 that due to a posting error the meeting agenda only included the 5 Homer St. hearing and all
6 other items must be postponed.

7
8 Also attending remotely were Joe Rubertone, Member; Dale Buchanan, Member; Tricia Kendall,
9 Member, and Phil Williams, Member. Peter Matchak, Town Planner and Emma Snellings,
10 Assistant Town Planner were also in attendance.

11
12 **Public Hearing – 5 Homer Ave Site Plan Review**

13 Mr. Crow opened the hearing and read the public hearing notice.

14
15 Jerry Effren, Attorney representing the applicant Tej Shah, addressed the board. Mr. Effren
16 explained that Mr. Shah has entered into a Purchase and Sales Agreement with the current
17 owner of 5 Homer St. and intends to change the site's present use to a dental office, an As of
18 Right use under the bylaw. Mr. Effren summarized the property's history and the proposed
19 project scope. He indicated the applicant's obligation to close on the property is contingent
20 upon the receipt of all necessary approval to operate as a full-service dental office, including
21 Site Plan Review, Design Review, and a Building Permit. Mr. Effren reviewed the minor
22 exterior alterations include removing the window awnings, the frosting of the windows for
23 patient privacy, and building signage. He also reported that the interior would be gutted and
24 fully renovated to meet the needs of a dentist office. Parking will be accommodated in the
25 Municipal Lot, and the office at full capacity will require approximately fifteen parking
26 spaces for staff and patients.

27
28 Mr. Effren indicated that the Design Review Committee (DRC) recommended an onsite
29 dumpster that cannot be accommodated due to the size of the trash area. As an alternative
30 trash barrels for non-medical waste were proposed, and medical waste would be segregated
31 and disposed of separately. The DRC suggested installing flower baskets and translucent
32 windows, and the applicant declined both for several reasons.

33
34 Dr. Shah introduced himself and provided an overview of his professional background,
35 experience, and his interest in owning his own dental practice in Ashland. Dr. Shah
36 reviewed his staffing plan that will include approximately six employees.

37
38 Mr. Crow stated that the board will wait for the DRC complete review before making their
39 decision.

40
41 The board asked about the parking plan and other parking options given the distance to the
42 Municipal Lot and how competitive parking can be at times. The applicant responded that
43 the Municipal Lot offers ample parking and the zoning district does not require a certain
44 number of spaces, and the potential for parking in the lot across the street is being pursued.

45
46 Dr. Shah clarified that the two exterior building signs will be metal with acrylic vinyl colored
47 accents and lit with the existing three overhang lights. Radiological equipment will be new

48 and will go through the standard licensing requirements. Dr. Shah indicated that approval is
49 required from the State of Massachusetts, not from Ashland.

50

51 Mr. Crow asked for comments from the public.

52

53 Mark Dassoni asked about the sidewalk snow clearing, whether parking for the practice will
54 be reserved in the Municipal Lot and will handicap parking be included. Mr. Crow
55 responded that changes to the Municipal Lot would be outside of the scope of this hearing
56 and existing ADA codes requirements will remain in place.

57

58 Cathy Rooney, DRC member, suggested the applicant install planter boxes. The board also
59 expressed interest in the applicant upgrading the exterior design.

60

61 Mr. Crow summarized Permit conditions that included specifying parking locations and the
62 addition of roof solar panel would be at the applicant's discretion and not trigger additional
63 Site Plan Review.

64

65 Mr. Rubertone made a motion to continue the 5 Homer St. public hearing until May 28, 2020 at
66 7:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kendall; Rubertone-aye, Kendall-aye, Buchanan-
67 aye, Williams-aye, Crow-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

68

69 **Public Hearing – 81 West Union Street Phase II Special Permit and Amended Site Review – Site**
70 **Review hearing continued from April 9 meeting**

71 Mr. Crow reopened the 81 West Union St. public hearing and explained that due to a posting
72 error the hearing was not included in tonight's meeting agenda. Mr. Matchak apologized for
73 the mistake.

74

75 Mr. Barbieri expressed concern with the resulting time constraint and asked the board to
76 consider meeting options to expedite providing their feedback.

77

78 Mr. Buchanan made a motion to continue the 81 W. Union St. public hearing until May 19, 2020
79 at 7:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kendall; Buchanan-aye, Kendall-aye; Williams-
80 aye, Rubertone-aye, Crow-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

81

82 **Public Hearing –Section 10 Zoning Amendment – Continued from April 23 meeting**

83 Mr. Buchanan made a motion to continue the Animal Kennel definition public hearing until
84 May 28, 2020 at 7:15 pm. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kendall; Buchanan-aye, Kendall-
85 aye; Williams-aye, Rubertone-aye, Crow-aye; with a vote of 5-0-0.

86

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

88 Concerning the Valentine Property, Mr. Buchanan raised the possibility of moving the
89 historical building to a park or alternate location. Mr. Matchak agreed to investigate the
90 potential.

91

92 ***Adjournment***

93 Mr. Buchanan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 pm. The motion was seconded by
94 Mr. Williams; Buchanan-aye, Kendall-aye, Rubertone-aye, Williams-aye, Crow-aye; with a vote
95 of 5-0-0.