



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 1, 2023

Members present:

Kelley Brown, Chair
Kevin McCormick, Vice-Chair
Amy Dain, Member
Peter Doeringer, Member
Jennifer Molinsky, Member
Laxmi Rao, Alternate
Barney Heath, *ex officio*

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Staff present: Zachery LeMel, Chief of Long-Range Planning

Meeting held virtually by Zoom Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Barney Heath
Director
Planning & Development

1. Deliberation/Potential Vote on Rezoning Petition

- a. Petition #355-22 Request to Rezone 2 parcels (11 Florence Street/318 Boylston Street) to Business Use-4

Stephen Buchbinder and Katherine Adams from Schlesinger & Buchbinder, LLP appeared on behalf of the petitioner, Sunrise Development, Inc. Attorney Buchbinder shared that an agreement had been reached with the abutting condominium complex's ("the Residences") 59 owners concerning their support for the project and requested zone change to BU-4 to allow for a 5-story assisted living building consisting of 125 beds. Attorney Adams presented an overview of the project.

Following the presentation, Chair Brown reopened the public hearing. Attorney Ed Allcock reported that an agreement had been reached with all 58 of the owners at "the Residences" and they support the project and zoning request.

Chair Brown asked if assisted living is allowed in a residential districts. Attorney Buchbinder responded that the assisted living use is only allowed in business zones. Diane Prunte of 305 Winchester Street asked if the anticipated assisted living residents would largely need outside help. Attorney Buchbinder responded that most residents' needs would be accommodated by Sunrise staff.

Upon a motion by Mr. Doeringer and unanimously approved the public hearing was closed.

Upon a motion by Ms. Molinsky, seconded by Mr. McCormick and Mr. Doeringer, the Planning Board voted to recommend approval of the requested zone changed 6-0-1 (Director Heath abstaining).

2. Village Center Zoning Version 2.0/ MBTA Law Communities Compliance Discussion

Zachery LeMel, Chief of Long-Range Planning, presented an update on the proposed Village Center Overlay District.

Ms. Molinsky asked about the segment of Washington Street between West Newton and Newtonville. Mr. LeMel responded that that segment will be addressed in a future phase.

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Mr. Doeringer inquired about the front set-back language in the proposed ordinance. Mr. Doeringer asked about why some VC3 zones did not have an adjacent zone buffer from residential zones. Mr. LeMel responded that not all zoned parcels laid-out to allow an intervening zone but that there were set-back and step-down requirements when a VC3 zone was immediately adjacent to a residential zone.

Mr. McCormick expressed concern about the metrics for the MRT zone in that they may not be as economically attractive as the current zoning allows. Mr. LeMel indicated that the Planning team and Utile are looking for ways to allow multi-family homes in a manner that competes with a teardown alternative to build large two-unit condominiums.

3. Landmark Update

Director Heath provided the Board with an update on potential landmarking—including 89-93 Wyman Street (Waban Hall) which has advanced to the landmarking nomination stage at the upcoming Newton Historical Commission. Mr. Heath reminded the Board that should this property advance to an actual landmark vote—the Planning Board would have an opportunity to provide a recommendation on whether the property, in terms of its surrounding context and City plans and policies, is appropriate to be landmarked.

4. Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Doeringer, the minutes of the March 6 meeting passed 6-0-1 (Director Heath abstaining).

5. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. McCormick, and unanimously approved 7-0, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.