

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 6, 2020



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath
Director
Planning & Development

Members

Peter Doeringer, Chair
Kelley Brown, Member
Sudha Maheshwari, Member
Jennifer Molinsky, Member
Sonia Parisca, Vice Chair
Chris Steele, Member
Barney Heath, *ex officio*
Kevin McCormick, Alternate
James Robertson, Alternate

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Full Members Present:

Peter Doeringer, Chair
Sonia Parisca, Vice Chair
Kelley Brown, Member
Chris Steele, Member
Jennifer Molinsky, Member
Barney Heath, Ex-Officio

Staff Present:

Amanda Berman, Director of Housing and Community Development

Meeting held in Room 204, Newton City Hall

1. Approval of Minutes of November 25th and December 11th

Chair Doeringer opened the meeting at 7:07 p.m. Upon a motion by Ms. Molinsky seconded by Ms. Parisca, the minutes of the meeting held on November 25th were approved, 6-0, and the minutes of the meeting held on December 11th were approved, 5-0-1, Mr. Steele abstaining.

2. Revised Certificate of Action for Farwell St Subdivision

The revised certificate has been signed by all except James Robertson.

3. Consolidated Plan Update

Ms. Berman, Director of Housing and Community Development, provided an update on the progress of the five-year Consolidated Plan for the planned use of CDBG, HOME and Emergency Solutions Grant Program funds. Ms. Berman shared that since September the staff has been meeting with agencies, the public, and relevant City department heads on the needs for these funds in the community. A public hearing on the draft five-year plan will be held at the Planning Board on February 3rd. Ms. Berman indicated that in the past the Planning Board has participated in the review of both the Human Service and Emergency Solutions Grants. This year she is proposing a different approach for the Planning Board involvement in the review. Rather than have the Planning Board representative involved in the direct review and evaluation of grant applications, the initial vetting of the applications will be conducted by both Planning staff and staff from the Health and Human Service department. Planning Board representatives would then be presented with a set of draft funding recommendations where staff could present their evaluation process for how they arrived at their funding recommendation. For the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) members of the former Brookline, Waltham, Watertown Continuum of Care would be invited to evaluate the ESG grant applications.

Staff would be looking for two Planning Board representatives for the Human Services Grant and two for the Emergency Solutions Grant, a total of four volunteers. Ms. Berman indicated that a preference would be for Planning Board members who have not been part of the previous review efforts to help familiarize them with the organizations and funding requests. Mr. Doeringer expressed some

reservations about the new format having participated previously in the process. He has participated in the review in the past and found it very worthwhile. He suggested that the review for the Planning Board members include all the rankings so that the Planning Board could understand how all the applications were evaluated. Mr. Doeringer also expressed a desire to explore how to expand the number of organizations who might apply for these funds.

The following Planning Board members offered to participated in the evaluation discussion: Ms. Molinsky and Mr. Doeringer in the Human Service discussion, and Mr. Steele in the Emergency Solutions Grant.

4. Zoning Update

Director Heath shared that Zoning Redesign is beginning again. A new team will be leading the effort—Jennifer Caira--Deputy Director, Zachery LeMel—Chief of Long-Range Planning and Gabriel Holbrow—Community Planner-Engagement Specialist. The initial approach will be to review the Zoning Redesign in pieces. The goal would be to bring the Planning Board along at the same time as the Zoning and Planning Committee.

Director Heath mentioned one early action item might be to look at creating a Hospital Zone to regulate the Newton Wellesley Hospital area. This idea had been proposed as part of Zoning Redesign.

There was discussion about the upcoming Riverside Zoning request before the Land Use Committee on January 28th. The request only concerns the expansion of the previously approved MU-3 zone text for the four acres on the site that are not presently included in the MU-3 boundary. The discussion centered around the Planning Board approving this request at the initial meeting of Land Use on January 28th in recognition that the neighborhood and developer had come to a consensus of the zoning standards. Mr. Heath indicated that he could propose some language for the Board to consider in advance of the Planning Board meeting with Land Use on January 28th.

5. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Ms. Molinsky, seconded by Mr. Steele and unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes approved by the Board on March 2, 2020.