

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 7, 2022



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath
Director
Planning & Development

Members

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

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Members present:

Kelley Brown, Chair
Kevin McCormick, Vice-Chair
Jen Molinsky, Member
Lee Breckenridge, Member
Peter Doeringer, Member
Amy Dain, Member
Barney Heath, *ex officio*

City Staff:

Jini Fairley, ADA/504 Coordinator
Jonathan Yeo, Chief Operating Officer

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

1. Rezoning Petition #355-22 Request to Rezone 2 parcels (11 Florence St/318 Boylston St) to Business Use 4 (BU-4)

Pursuant to the request to postpone this item until the Planning Board's December meeting, this item was postponed to the December meeting.

2. Adoption of 2022 Americans with Disabilities Act/504 Transition Plan

Jini Fairley, the City's ADA/504 Coordinator presented the draft 2022 Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 Transition Plan for the Planning Board's consideration and adoption. The current plan in effect was developed and approved by the Planning Board in 1991. This new plan would identify both the progress achieved to-date and identify future benchmarks that need to be met (found in Appendix A).

Mr. McCormick inquired whether there is a deadline to achieve compliance over the next six years. Ms. Fairley indicated that as long as reasonable progress is being made the City will be likely deemed in compliance by the Department of Justice.

Mr. Yeo noted that the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) included an accessibility factor in ranking priorities for the City and that Ms. Fairley is part of the City's review team. In recent years, the City has been focused on school accessibility.

Mr. Doeringer expressed that he thought the plan was educational. Mr. Doeringer asked if it were possible to get the annual monitoring of progress. Ms. Fairley indicated that she could provide the Planning Board with such an update.

Ms. Molinsky suggest that a table of contents could be helpful in navigating the excellent draft report.

City of Newton Planning and Development Board

Mr. Brown asked if City buildings were subject to state and federal access requirements regarding percentage of improvements planned (30%). Ms. Fairley indicated that the City needs to comply and it is enforced by the Inspectional Services Department.

Ms. Breckenridge asked about the City's role in advocating for accessibility at Newton's commuter rail stations. Ms. Fairley indicated that she and Newton's DPW are the City's contact for advocating for accessibility at these stations.

Upon a motion by Ms. Breckenridge, seconded by Mr. Doeringer, and approved 7-0, the Planning Board adopted the 2022 ADA/504 Transition Plan.

3. Village Center Zoning Update

Chief of Long-Range Planning, Zachery LeMel, presented an overview of version 1.0 of the proposed village center zoning and maps for twelve village centers.

Ms. Breckenridge expressed a concern that there are two sides of Thompsonville, which are connected, and it may be worth to relook at the south side of Route 9 as to appropriate zoning.

Ms. Molinsky offered that defining the extent of the village boundary is important but liked the direction of the proposal.

Mr. McCormick indicated that he expected more in terms of allowed density and more housing.

Mr. Brown echoed Mr. McCormick's sentiments indicating that current housing being built is denser and taller than what is being proposed. Will that limit housing?

Mr. LeMel responded that the proposed zoning is designed to incentivize more numerous but smaller developments as opposed to larger developments.

Mr. Doeringer shared that the zoning had a consistent logic. He suggested that the Special Permit heights should be included on the maps. He also noted that the boundaries should be looked at closely. In particular, he noted that street width should be a consideration for zoning.

4. CPTC Site Plan Review Course

Mr. Heath reminded folks of the upcoming training.

5. Minutes

Mr. Heath presented the minutes from the September 20th regular and joint meetings. Upon a motion by Mr. Doeringer, seconded by Ms. Molinsky, the minutes were approved unanimously (7-0).

7. Adjournment

Upon a motion by Mr. McCormick, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.