

Joint Meeting
Hamilton Planning Board and Select Board
Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2023
Memorial Room, Town Hall
577 Bay Rd., Hamilton, MA

This meeting was held in person for Board members and by Zoom webinar for all other participants and interested parties.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Members Present:

Planning Board: Jonathan Poore, Bill Wheaton, Emil Dalquist, Rick Mitchell, Richard Boroff, Marnie Crouch (Chair), Beth Herr

On Zoom: Pat Norton, Matt Hamill, Alex Weisheit of KP Law, Attorney John Witten, Dr. Ken Barnes

Others Present: Patrick Reffett, Planning Director, Tim Olsen, DPW Director, National Grid representatives

Documents:

Memorandum from Board Chair identifying issues related to Stormwater Management Amendments with proposed definition by Attorney Weisheit of KP Law

Draft Overlay District Bylaw

Assets and Preferences Maps

1. Public Hearing on Tree Removal/Trim

Mr. Tim Olson appeared seeking the Board's approval for the removal of trees on a scenic road tree, namely Highland Street, as well as a hearing on the DPW 's request for removal of trees on Linden and Railroad Streets. The Chair of the Planning Board pointed out that the Board only has jurisdiction to authorize the pruning or removal of trees on scenic roads, namely Highland Street.

The Chair requested a motion to authorize the DPW or National Grid to remove the five trees on Highland Street that were identified. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

2. Review and Discussion of Potential Amendments for Chapter XXIX, Stormwater Management Town Bylaw.

The Board, with Alex Weisheit of KP Law, discussed the three possible definitions of a “common plan of development or sale.” After discussion, the Board agreed to use definition three with some examples from definition two for a future final review. Mr. Weisheit stated he was prepared to draft the Bylaw for review and then begin work on the regulations. He expressed optimism that the Bylaw would be passed at Town Meeting next year following which time the Board could finalize regulations and conduct the necessary public hearing.

3. Discussion of Town Pursuit of Strategic Plan for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, the Reuse Initiative

Attorney Jon Witten provided a second draft Overlay District Bylaw for the Board to review. The Chair detailed her concerns with the following elements as delineated in the draft:

- Approval of concept plans
- The provisions for site plan review
- The proposed use for the senior housing

The Board, after discussion with Jon Witten, decided that focusing on potential usages for each campus would be beneficial and would inform the draft overlay district. The Board examined the zoning map referenced in the proposed Draft Overlay District Bylaw. The Board's preferences are predicated on the heritage landscape being protected, which includes: preserving internal buffers, protecting historic buildings, maintaining scenic vistas, preserving trail and walk networks, and preserving mature trees. The Board reviewed maps and discussed developable acreage and the heritage landscape in terms of size, density, value, and use.

The Board, together with Mr. Witten and Dr. Barnes, discussed the Overlay District Bylaw, concept plan, development agreement, relationship of the Overlay District Bylaw to Senior Housing Bylaw and site plan reviews. The Board also discussed the zoning map of 2/23/23 attached to the draft Overlay District Bylaw and the sector map introduced in this meeting of 3/21/23 which is a refinement of the zoning map. Dr. Barnes will attend the Planning Board meeting on April 4th to continue discussion of the goals of the Seminary and the Town.

E. Dahlquist moved to accept as a point of departure the sector plan dated 3/21/23. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

4. Board Business

The Board discussed the role of the Planning Board at Town Meeting. The Planning Board will have 10 minutes of floor time to describe the process of the reuse initiative for Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. The Chair asked that people forward ideas of what should be in that script to Patrick Reffett who will then forward them to the Chair.

P. Reffett stated that the Select Board at their meeting of March 20, 2023 voted to hold a Special Town Meeting on June 14, 2023. A handout for the Annual Town Meeting that delineates the Planning Board's goals and next steps regarding the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary site has been approved by the Select Board and Town Moderator and will be distributed.

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Joan E. Dolamore