

**Meeting of the Planning Board
Thursday, September 14, 2023**

The 6th meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2024 convened at 7:05 p.m. in the Blute Conference Room of Milton Town Hall.

Present: Planning Board Members Meredith Hall (Chair) Cheryl Tougias (Secretary) Sean Fahy, Maggie Oldfield and Jim Davis; Director of Planning and Community Development Tim Czerwienski, Assistant Town Planner Josh Eckart-Lee and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

1. Administrative Items:

The meeting minutes were deferred on a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Fahy. A public forum on open space was confirmed for September 18th and an MBTA Communities Zoning forum was confirmed for September 25th. The staff update was deferred.

2. Citizen's Speak:

Jeanne Bronk of 40 Caroline Dr. believed it was "essential" to reduce the number of cars and trucks on the road and to increase housing in Milton. She urged the Board to comply with the MBTA Communities Zoning mandate.

Diane DiTullio Agostino of 147 Ridgewood Rd. stated that construction of an assisted living facility at 111 Highland St. was not allowed according to Town regulations and that the Conservation Commission (Con Comm) approved the project without consulting a hydrologist. She said that the December deadline to comply with the MBTA zoning mandate was "not a possibility."

Matthew Morong of 136 Eliot St., noting that the PB voted to submit Mark Christo's letter to the MBTA requesting reclassification as a non-rapid transit community, asked if all members of the public would be allowed to do submit letters to the board for official action

as well. He said he had issues with the Christo letter, mentioned Milton's history of exclusionary zoning, encouraged expanding affordable housing opportunities and suggested that the town "build on what is great."

Tosia Welz of 179 Highland St. expressed concerns about the effects on wetlands and traffic the proposed memory care facility at 111 Highland St. may have.

3. Public Hearing: 111 Highland St. Memory Care Facility

Attorney Edward Corcoran, representing Northridge Communities, gave a presentation on the newly resubmitted application which included modifications from the Conservation Commission review process, which voted Sept. 12th to grant an Order of Conditions for the project. He provided a history of the site, said that Town Meeting voted in 2022 to approve the zoning and that the Master Plan suggested an assisted living use at this location.

Former Fuller Village Director Deborah Felton of 20 Willoughby Rd. said that the F.V. Board of Directors supported the project, said she was impressed by Northridge's facility in Needham, and that she believed it would benefit the community.

Molly Welch, Executive Director of F.V., discussed the importance of having seniors stay close to home and said there are very few opportunities for them to do so in Milton. She believed the facility, called Avita, would be an asset to the community.

Denise Queally of 584 Randolph Ave. discussed the challenges of caring for a dementia patient at home and how hard it is to find services in Milton. She said the facility would benefit elderly parents as well as their children.

Wendy Nowokunski of Northbridge encouraged visits to other Northbridge facilities, mentioned the high demand for such facilities and pointed out that Northbridge is community-oriented, as neighbors, owners, and operators.

Civil Engineer Paul Avery gave a presentation on the revised civil site plans. Existing conditions and the demolition plan, emergency vehicle and delivery truck access and turnarounds, the grading and drainage plans, utilities, the sewer system and treatment of wetlands were discussed. Mr. Corcoran said that the drainage plans had been reviewed by a hydrologist approved by Con Comm. It was suggested that Civil Engineer Sean Reardon of Tetra Tech and Conservation Agent Steve Ivas attend the PB's Sept. 28th meeting. On motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Ms. Oldfield, the hearing was continued to Sept. 28th, 5/0/0.

4. Site Plan Approval Modification: 7-9 Pleasant St. (Bents)

Attorney Marion McEttrick, representing the Falconi Family, discussed the site plan approved in 2019 and the proposal to add parking to the mixed-use property which includes a catering business, café, 5 small apartments and office space. She said that the Falconies had purchased the abutting house at 672 Randolph Ave. which will remain a residential property with its own driveway but that a portion of the lot would be used for parking, which would require a variance. She said that Morse Engineering has done soil borings of the site and developed designs for management of stormwater. Topography and landscaping were addressed. The dangers of parking on Pleasant Street, due to the speed and volume of traffic coming from Randolph Ave. were addressed. It was noted that a minimal amount of parking was approved in the 2019 site plan approval and that the modification would include 15 new spaces. Parking requirements for commercial spaces, protections for significant trees and lighting plans were discussed.

Public Speak:

Nick Sesso of 688 Randolph Ave. said that the area is residential and the parking lot would "be in someone's backyard." He said that it was a "quality of life" issue and that those who had invested in their homes expected the area to remain residential. He said that numerous variances have been granted to Bent's and that Randolph Ave. is extremely busy and his back yard is the only place he and his family get to enjoy outdoor space.

Paul Hogan, representing Emma and Trung Mai of 678 Randolph Ave., expressed concerns about privacy, headlights and property values. He questioned if the number of spaces being proposed could be reduced, asked that the parking be moved further away from the Mai's property line, and requested a privacy fence and the planting of trees. Ms. Mai mentioned the number of families that live in the area and its residential character.

Ms. Tougias requested a parking analysis demonstrating the number of spaces needed for the uses. Mr. Fahy asked if alternative configurations could be explored by the engineer, which Ms. McEttrick agreed to. On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Mr. Fahy, the hearing was continued to October 12th at 7:05, 5/0/0.

5. New Business: Discussion of Local Historic District Study Committee Report on Milton Village

Larry Lawfer of 96 Cliff Rd., Chair of the Historic District Study Committee, said that the HDSC has been studying federal, state and local historic districts for two years. He said that six districts were studied in Milton and that the HDSC's proposal to choose Milton Village as the first historic district had been accepted by the state and will be voted on at Town Meeting. He said that the proposal would be sent to all property owners in Milton Village and that a survey will be conducted. Protections awarded to significant buildings within a historic district and the Master Plan Implementation Committee's (MPIC) support were discussed. On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Ms. Oldfield, the Board voted to support making the Milton Village Overly area a Local Historic District.

6. Old Business: MBTA Communities Zoning Update

Zoe Mueller of Utile Consultants updated the Board on the compliance model based on feedback from the Sept. 7th PB meeting. She discussed timelines for submitting materials to the state, maximum building coverage and parking, minimal lot sizes, unit capacity, acreage density targets, height restrictions, and revised boundaries for the transit area triplex, Blue Hills Parkway corridor, Granite Ave., Blue Hill Ave. triplex, Milton Station and Mattapan Station districts. Eliminating the Blue Hills triplex area and adding a transit area fourplex was discussed.

Ms. Oldfield mentioned that Eileen Franklin of 51 Courtland Circle had provided documents expressing opposition to the proposed density at the Granite Ave. subdistrict and the Board discussed alternatives for the area. The Board discussed including Fuller Village and adhering to a 15-units-per-acre minimum.

Matthew Littell of Utile discussed buffer buildouts, lot coverage, setbacks, units per volume, and how to define height within the subdistricts. Zoning for the Extra Space Storage building and 2 Granite Ave. was discussed.

It was agreed that there was potential for an article that had been forced upon the Town within a short time frame to fail at Town Meeting. The risk of tear downs, opportunities for build-outs on 5,000 SF lots, and limiting lot sizes to 7,500 SF were discussed. Fuller Village and the Brush Hill Care Center were considered “fallbacks” for the zoning. Ms. Mueller stated that the submission to the state could be “tweaked,” and that the state would provide feedback on a draft submission. Exhibiting strong efforts towards reaching compliance was the main focus, Mr. Littell said.

Discussion of Zoning Language

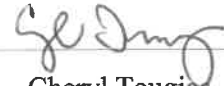
Ms. Hall said she believed the goal of the PB was to have a separate article from what had been drafted by the Select Board and that a “placeholder” would need to be submitted to the Warrant Committee before the close of the warrant Sept. 22nd. Ms. Tougias noted that the SB’s article had been written by Mr. Czerwienski and believed it should be used as the starting point for the board as opposed to “starting from scratch” with a separate PB article. Mr. Czerwienski believed that the SB intended for the PB to edit and improve the SB’s article. He mentioned that the SB -approved zoning had dimensional parameters, development standards, and site plan review procedures. Ms. Tougias suggested that other members of the Board read the SB’s article before dismissing it and believed that submitting two articles to Town Meeting would be confusing. Ms. Hall believed the article should come straight from the PB after the months of work that had been done on the zoning. Ms. Tougias questioned who would be responsible to write the actual zoning language, noting that the task is daunting, and whether it could be done in such a short timeframe. On a motion by Ms. Oldfield, seconded by Mr. Davis, the Board voted 4/1/0 to submit a separate article to the warrant. Ms. Tougias voted against it.

Upcoming meetings were confirmed for September 28th, October 5th and October 12th.

Ms. Oldfield discussed a scope of work she had drafted for the attorney reviewing the zoning. Ms. Tougias noted that other board members had not received a copy of the draft scope and that the board had not taken a vote on it. Mr. Czerwienski stated that the scope would need to go through the Town Administrator.

A letter written to MBTA Board members and other state officials requesting reclassification as a non-rapid transit community was discussed. On a motion by Ms. Oldfield, seconded by Mr. Davis, the Board voted 4/1/0 to send the letter, with Ms. Tougias voting against. A letter to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities requesting an extension for providing zoning for MBTA Communities was discussed. On a motion by Ms. Oldfield, seconded by Mr. Fahy, the Board voted 5/0/0 to send the letter.

7. Adjourn: On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Ms. Oldfield, the meeting was adjourned at 11:57 p.m.



Cheryl Tougas, Secretary