



Town of Easton
PLANNING & ZONING BOARD

Minutes
April 25, 2011

The Easton Planning & Zoning Board held a public hearing on Monday, April 25, 2011 in the Simmons Lecture Hall at Oliver Ames High School, Lothrop Street, North Easton, Massachusetts.

Present: Christine Santoro, Chair; Peter Deschenes (Acting Clerk); Gregory Strange; Wayne Benson, Jr. (voting member); Brad Washburn, Planning Director

Absent: Walter Johnson, Dan Smith

Tonight's meeting is being recorded by Town of Easton Planning Department.

Christine Santoro called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Peter Deschenes read the Public Hearing Notice on Bylaw Amendments into the record.
Peter Deschenes read the Public Hearing Notice on Street Acceptances into the record.
(See attached public hearing notices and draft amendments.)

Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Building Height

There have been no substantive changes to the building height bylaw amendment since first introduced. The proposed amendment addresses a loophole in the existing bylaw through which developers can build homes taller than the State Code maximum 35 feet by raising the original mean grade. The bylaw amendment defines mean grade and addresses setbacks from front property lines to ensure that residential building heights more accurately reflect the character and scale of Easton's traditional neighborhoods and to not overshadow neighboring houses. Language on walk-out basements was included to specify that grade plane is calculated using only front and side walls.

Internally Illuminated Signs

No changes have been made since this bylaw amendment was first proposed. The language gives the Planning Board discretion to approve internally illuminated signs.

In-law Apartments

No changes have been made since this bylaw amendment was finalized. In-law apartments will be allowed as-of-right provided conditions in Section C of the new bylaw are met. One of the units must be owner-occupied and a letter stating such must be recorded at the Taunton Registry of Deeds.

Solar Photovoltaic Overlay District (SPOD)

The proposed SPOD bylaw is based off of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs model. Brad Washburn spoke with Town Counsel to address parcel size and wattage. Dimensional setbacks and visual screening are also addressed. The initially proposed overlay districts are the closed landfill on Prospect Street, the Southeast Regional Technical High School, and Town-owned Water Department land. This summer, Brad Washburn will be working on an RFP for the Prospect Street landfill site. If the site is developed for solar, estimated savings for the Town would be approximately \$250K/year reduction in municipal utility costs.

Minor Typo Corrections

Tim Harrigan, Community Housing Planner made corrections to the Zoning Bylaw with regard to the re-naming of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees, formerly known as the Fair & Affordable Housing Partnership.

ZONING MAP CHANGES

Industrial to Residential

A portion of land off of Chestnut Street, currently zoned Industrial but used for residential purposes, is to be rezoned Residential.

Residential to Open Space

A number of individual parcels will be rezoned to open space (see Warrant Article).

Residential to Business (250 Main Street)

The Planning Board agreed to the letter of intent submitted by Attorney O'Shaughnessy. Mr. Ames is agreeable to placing a historic restriction on the home and existing structures and a conservation easement on a portion of the property.

Proposed Zoning map shows all proposed changes: SPOD overlay district and zoning changes mentioned above.

STREET ACCEPTANCES

Possum Run Road has been removed from the Street Acceptance list as there is a significant amount of work left to complete the road. The board received Street Inspection reports for each of the roads proposed for Street Acceptance. Cracking issues have been repaired. The Planning Board recommends the remaining three streets be accepted at Town Meeting (Alderwood Drive, Corey Drive, Oak Leaf Lane).

Peter Deschenes motioned to close the public hearing on Street Acceptances. Wayne Benson seconds. Motion passes 4-0-0.

Peter Deschenes motioned to close the public hearing on Zoning Bylaw and Zoning Map Amendments. Wayne Benson seconds. Motion passes 4-0-0.

Wayne Benson motioned to send articles as amended to Town Meeting. Peter Deschenes seconded. Motion passes 4-0-0.

BOARD BUSINESS

The applicants for Beech Tree Estates off of Depot Street will return before the Planning Board on May 2, 2011 with sketches of their proposed plans incorporating the board's feedback from earlier meetings. The applicant is planning to go before the Conservation Commission as well.

The Town Administrator asked Brad Washburn to be the point person to collect feedback on South Coast Rail mitigation. Mr. Washburn will distribute the South Coast Rail DEIS Executive Summary to the board for review and feedback at the next Planning Board meeting on May 2nd.

There is a South Coast Rail meeting at the Mansfield Middle School on Wednesday, May 4, 2011 at 7:00pm.

Town meeting is on Monday, May 16, 2011. Brad Washburn will put together a Powerpoint presentation for the Zoning Bylaw and map amendments presentation at Town Meeting.

At the May 23, 2011 Planning Board meeting: Mark Perron will come before the board to request bond reductions on four streets. Nelson Rodrigues will come before the Planning Board to discuss his options after submitting an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals to open an antique shop out of his old barn on Bay Road which ZBA denied. 35 Eastman Street is preparing to submit an application for Site Plan Review to rebuild the structure that was demolished after its roof collapsed this winter.

Old Colony Planning Council published its final report on Transit Oriented Development Zoning with recommendations for new zoning around Roche Brothers Plaza. After Town Meeting, the board will review both this report and the study on the Queset Commercial District.

ADJOURN

Peter Deschenes motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:17pm. Wayne Benson seconded. Motion passes 4-0-0.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Randi L. Graham, Recording Secretary.