

Montague Planning Board

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December 17, 2019 6:30 PM

Town Hall – **Second Floor** Meeting Room

One Avenue A

Turners Falls, MA 01376

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Fred Bowman (Vice- Chair), George Cooke, Elizabeth Irving, and Matt Lord (associate)

Member Absent: Bob Obear, Ron Sicard (Chair)

Staff Present: Walter Ramsey-Town Planner

Recorded

Meeting was opened by Fred Bowman at 6:30 PM in his capacity as vice chair in the absence of the chair.

Approval of Minutes: *Motion by G.C. to approve the November 19, 2019 Minutes, as amended. Seconded by E.I. Motion passes.*

6:30: Planner’s Report: Overview of Current Planning Efforts by Walter Ramsey.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: Plan is in final stages of being updated from 5 years ago. Public hearing was held last week. Changes reflect extreme weather (i.e. new flood plain maps, fire hydrants near Montague Plains, sewer infrastructure...) Approved plan makes the community eligible for grant funds.

Turners Falls Livability Plan: “Community Check-in” planned for early February- for the purpose of presenting upcoming building projects in Turners Falls to the public. A panel discussion will be part of the event. Questions of housing- and the impact of new/ different types of housing- was discussed. Event is still being developed.

Millers on the Move Strategic Plan: Plan has been approved by the Select Board. Walter describes uses for the strategic plan, plus several examples of projects that are being advanced out of the plan.

Findings from Parking Study in the vicinity of 38 Avenue A: Used Planning intern to study 108 parking spaces at 16 different points during October. Heaviest use is during Shea Theater events on weekend evenings. Average is about 20% occupancy during the day. Study numbers suggest significant underutilization. Walter is meeting with DCR to talk about parking concerns related to this building project.

Follow up discussion: Zoning Designation Assessment of land around 500 Avenue A

Walter reports that largest landowner in the district was not initially amenable with zoning changes to his property. General discussion of current zoning in the area, pros/cons of various designations. Department will continue to advance thinking on this area- especially in light of the DPW being vacated this summer.

Memo on 2/19/19 Zoning Bylaws

Planner has been keeping a running list zoning errors, omissions, clarifications needed for the new bylaws. These have emerged as the town has been administering the new bylaws since February. Planner reviewed those with the Board.

- 8.4.3- Is keeping of livestock allowed in NB? CB?- regs are not clear.
- 8.9.4- Site Plan review required (instead of Special Permit) for accessory ground-mounts exceeding 500 square feet of surface area in certain districts. Did we mean to be so restrictive in rural areas?
- 9.1.2 (e) clarify that site plan review is not required for accessory apartments within existing SFH
- 8.5.4 (b) “utilities and supply water shall be integrated with the single family dwelling”. Clarify: do we mean septic and water supply? Does it matter if there are separate sewer/ water? It is common for the electric to be separate.
- 5.2.6 (b) Lodging houses were previously allowed by SP in Central Business. This was an omission.
- 5.4 How do we address Accessory uses (shed, garages) that don’t (yet) have primary use on site?
- 6.3.3(c)- remove “governmental facilities and services” from list of allowable uses by Special Permit in Agriculture Business Overlay” This section of bylaw cannot interfere with operation of state or federal entities (per AG’s comments)

The plan is for the board to consider these changes in detail at upcoming meetings when the full board is in attendance.

7:51PM Motion by F.B. to adjourn the meeting. ***Seconded*** by E.I. **Motion passes.**

Approved by: _____ Date: _____