

# Montague Planning Board

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## MEETING MINUTES

**July 27, 2021 6:30 PM**

*Meeting held at Montague Town Hall One Avenue A with a remote participation option.*

**Members Present:** Ron Sicard (chair), George Cooke, Elizabeth Irving, Fred Bowman, Matt Lord, Bob Obear.

**Staff:** Walter Ramsey, Town Planner Present: Jesse O'Donell

**6:30pm: Approval of Minutes:** MOTION to approve the minutes of 6/22/21. VOTE: R. Sicard (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), F. Bowman (AYE) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES.

**6:31pm: Annual Reorganization of the Planning Board for FY 2021**

MOTION by EI to nominate Ron Sicard to serve as chair. Seconded by GC. Nomination accepted by RS. VOTE: VOTE: R. Sicard (Abstain), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), F. Bowman (AYE) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES.

MOTION by GC to nominate Fred Bowman to serve as vice-chair. Seconded by RS. Nomination accepted by FB. VOTE: VOTE: R. Sicard (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), F. Bowman (ABSTAIN) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES

MOTION by GC to nominate Fred Bowman to serve as Capital Improvements Committee Representative. Seconded by RS. Nomination accepted by FB. VOTE: VOTE: R. Sicard (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), F. Bowman (ABSTAIN) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES

MOTION by RS to nominate Elizabeth Irving to serve as Franklin Regional Planning Board Representative. Seconded by GC. Nomination accepted by EI. VOTE: VOTE: R. Sicard (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (ABSTAIN), F. Bowman (AYE) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES

**6:35pm: Consider amendments pertaining to final roadway construction plans for Subdivision Approval DS#2017-01- Sandy Lane, approved 7/25/2017 The applicant is Franklin Regional Transit Authority/Town of Montague for the property located at Sandy Lane, Map 21 Lot 149. Plans were available on-line.**

Planner: A 2017 a definitive subdivision plan was approved which created the lot now being purchased and developed by FRTA. The frontage for the parcel is on Sandy Lane, which is not a public way. Upgrades to the roadway were proposed and approved to bring the roadway to subdivision standards acceptable by Town Meeting. A new engineer (SMMA) is finalizing the roadway plans for bidding and they have identified several amendments to the roadway design. The amendments pertain to stormwater drainage. Ung rounding the electric has been deemed superfluous because new above ground lines and poles were installed in 2018. The amendments have been cleared by DPW, Water Dept, and Judd Wire. Overall the changes to the design are non-substantive and can be approved administratively.

*MOTION by R. Sicard to accept the final plans of DS#2017-01 dated July 20, 2021- Sandy Lane submitted by Franklin Regional Transit for the property located at Sandy Lane, Map 21 Lot 149. Seconded by F. Bowman. VOTE: R. Sicard (AYE), G. Cooke (AYE), E. Irving (AYE), F. Bowman (AYE) Matt Lord (AYE) MOTION PASSES 6:47pm*

**6:50 Subdivision Approval Not Required (ANR) #2021-04**, filed by Elinor S. Wright to establish a boundary line agreement with owner of 144 Taylor Hill Road (Map 50 Lot 14). Subject properties are identified as Assessor's Map 50 Lots 16 and 14 at an unnumbered address between 159 and 199 Old Sunderland Road

Matt Lord : Expresses hesitancy about sign off on a boundary line without the signatures of both parties on the application

Ron Sicard suggests tabling the discussion until there is something in writing from the other affected property owner Miller.

Planner: The plan otherwise is ready for endorsement. Planner will communicate with the applicant so that the necessary permissions are secured ahead of the next meeting. ANR was not endorsed.

### **6:55: Planner Report**

#### **Exploration of 40R Smart Growth Zoning Districts**

At the direction of the Board, the Planner has researched the 40R housing on the local and State level. It allows zoning by-right for multi-family housing with at least 20% income restrictions. The Town gets financial incentives for adopting the zoning and for permitting construction.

E. Irving remarks that having 40R housing can protect the Town if a developer wants to push a 40B project. The Town of Montague is minus about 35 units of low income housing. The new census could will likely increase that gap. 40R is a good way for the Town to direct development and avoid an "unfriendly" 40B project. Across the State some entire downtowns (Easthampton) are entirely 40R, while other communities (Northampton) have 40R districts for single parcels. There is wide variety. There are not many example from small, slow market communities.

Planner recommends that Montague pick specific location(s) instead of zoning a large area of town. The Railroad Salvage site (11 Power Street) is the recommended candidate. It is just over 3 acres. The EPA just completed a cleanup and a replacement bridge is being proposed for 2026. The town would receive an incentive payment of \$75,000 plus \$3000 per unit built with an adder if children move in. The Farren Care site is another potential site for 40R development, but it is not as 'development ready' as Power Street. If 20% of the units are affordable, then all of the units count toward the Town's SHI index. Planner shows the affordable housing income guideline and rental rates at a comparable housing complex in Montague Center. Planner to next look into whether there can be a minimum requirement for market rate housing to ensure an adequate mix of units.

The Board wishes to continue exploring this specifically for the Power Street propert. The Planner will bring some examples of 40R bylaws to the Board in the future.

#### **Short Term Rentals:**

The Department received a memo from counsel, KPLaw regarding short term rentals. Essentially a court ruling established that short term rentals could be considered as a lodging house and not a by-right accessory use to a single family home. The Board has considered this issue in the past and still concurs that regulating short term rentals through zoning is premature in Montague. Short term rentals have not created and know zoning issues and they support the local tourist economy. There are still no other lodging options in Montague.

***MOTION** by E. Irving to ADJOURN. **SECONDED** by F. Bowman. **VOTE: Unanimous. MOTION PASSES. Unanimous. Meeting adjourned 7:17pm***

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_