

Town of Amherst

UNOFFICIAL RECORD OF VOTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

Monday, January 4, 2021

6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Members Participating Remotely: Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, Swartz

Members Absent:

Others Participating Remotely: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Planning Director Christine Brestrup, Building Commissioner Rob Morra, Health Director Emma Dragon, Clerk of the Council Athena O’Keeffe, IT Director Sean Hannon

Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this meeting of the Town Council is being conducted via remote participation.

All votes will be taken by roll call.

Per MGL Chapter 30A Section 20(f), this meeting is being recorded and broadcast by Amherst Media.

Special Meeting – 6:30 pm

President Griesemer called the special meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Action Item

a. Zoning Priorities

This motion has been made and seconded; Councilor DuMont used Charter Sec. 2.10(c) Right to postpone to postpone the vote until the next regular or special Council meeting. This motion is now on the table.

MOTION: To direct the Town Manager to present zoning amendments that promote diverse neighborhoods, affordable housing, and new growth in downtown and village centers, in accordance with Town Council annual Policy Goal III Economic Vitality, in the following time periods:

- by March 15, 2021:
 - Adding B-L District to footnote b
 - Adding footnote a to maximum lot coverage and maximum building coverage
 - Proposed a revised SDU bylaw, similar to the 2018 Town Meeting proposal
 - Demolition Delay bylaw revisions
 - Work with the Council to begin a conversation on housing types expansion, in preparation for meeting the September 1, 2021 priorities below
 - Move apartments to SPR in more zoning districts
 - Remove Footnote m
 - Revise the Apartments definition
- by September 1, 2021:
 - Dimensional regulations in the R-G and R-VC
 - Lowering barriers to development of duplexes and triplexes
 - Frontage regulations for Residential zones
 - Look at appropriateness of Use Table for V-C: What kinds of businesses are allowed or encouraged in V-C districts - food, entertainment, services - things that make community and meet basic needs, within walking distance
 - Transportation issues (may not be zoning)
- Use of Consultant money:
 - Form based zoning / design guidelines

Motion by: Hanneke

Seconded by: Ryan

ROLL CALL VOTE: 10-3 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, Griesemer, Hanneke, Ross, Ryan, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz voted Yes; Councilors DuMont, Pam and Schoen voted No)

MOTION: To direct the Town Manager to present zoning amendment- options to the Planning Board and Town Council Community Resources Committee, and ultimately the Town Council that promote diverse neighborhoods, affordable housing, and new growth in downtown and village centers, in accordance with Town Council Economic Vitality Performance Goal for the Town Manager (July 1,2020 to June 30, 2021), and where possible consider Climate Action, Housing Affordability, and Social Justice Goals. in the following time periods:

- Design guidelines: Throughout the coming year begin discussions and development of design guidelines that could be added to current zoning bylaws, with a focus on the central Business District (B-G), Limited Business District (B-L), and Village Centers
- By March 15, 2021 review, assess, and recommend options regarding:
 - B-L (Limited Business) District lot size and building coverage dimensions
 - Assess the reasonableness and impact of adding footnotes “a” (Special Permit authority to modify dimensions) or “b” (applies to residential lot dimensions)
 - Assess parking requirements
 - Assess need for design standards, including set-backs from the street, sidewalk widths, and provision for open space (e.g. small yards, patios)
 - The potential of a revised SDU bylaw, similar to the 2018 Town Meeting proposal
 - Demolition Delay bylaw revisions, including those from the Historical Commission
 - Work with the Council to begin a conversation on housing types expansion, in preparation for meeting the September 1, 2021 priorities below
 - Assess the impact of removing Footnote “m” in R-G District (General Residence) that regulates the lot size required for additional dwelling units
- by September 1, 2021 review, assess, and recommend options regarding:
 - In the B-G District (General Business) assess setbacks from street and whether to add step-back provisions for upper floors
 - Whether to move apartments to SP (special permit) in more zoning districts
 - Potential revisions to the Apartments definition
 - Potential revisions to the Mixed-Use Building Definition
 - Lowering barriers to development of owner-occupied duplexes and triplexes, with design guidelines
 - Look at appropriateness of Use Table for V-C (Village Centers): What kinds of businesses are allowed or encouraged in V-C districts - food, entertainment, services - things that make community and meet basic needs, within walking distance
 - Transportation issues, side-walk width, building setbacks from street standards (may not be zoning)
- Use of Consultant money:
 - Design guidelines and Form based zoning for specific neighborhoods/ zoning districts

Motion by: Schoen

Seconded by: Bahl-Milne

ROLL CALL VOTE: 5-7-1 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, De Angelis, DuMont, Pam, and Schoen voted Yes; Councilors Brewer, Hanneke, Ross, Ryan, Schreiber, Steinberg and Swartz voted No; President Griesemer Abstained) the motion failed.

Councilor Hanneke called the previous question (alternative motion).

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

Councilor Hanneke called the previous question (original motion).

ROLL CALL VOTE: 8-5 (Councilors Brewer, Griesemer, Hanneke, Ross, Ryan, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz voted Yes; Councilors Bahl-Milne, De Angelis, DuMont, Pam and Schoen voted No) the motion failed.

Councilor De Angelis called the previous question (original motion).

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

The special meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Public Forum - 6:45 p.m.

President Griesemer called the public forum to order at 8:27 p.m.

The public forum was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Regular Meeting – 7:00 p.m.

President Griesemer called the meeting of the Town Council to order at 8:49 p.m.

5. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda: The following items were selected because they were considered to be routine and it was reasonable to expect they would pass with no controversy. To remove an item from the consent agenda for discussion later in the meeting, ask that it be removed when the President lists the consent agenda items. The request to remove an item from the consent agenda does not require a second.

MOTION: To move the following items, and the printed motions thereunder and approve those items as a single unit:

- 6.a. To proclaim January 18, 2021 as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and to adopt the REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR PROCLAMATION, as presented.
- 6.b. To proclaim February 2021 as Black History Month, and to adopt the Amherst Black History Month Proclamation, as presented.

Motion by: Griesemer

Seconded by: Hanneke

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

6. Resolutions and Proclamations

a. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Proclamation

VOTED VIA CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION: To proclaim January 18, 2021 as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and to adopt the REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR PROCLAMATION, as presented.

b. Amherst Black History Month Proclamation

VOTED VIA CONSENT AGENDA:

MOTION: To proclaim February 2021 as Black History Month, and to adopt the Amherst Black History Month Proclamation, as presented.

14. Topics Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL DAY OF RECOLLECTION TO HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES TO COVID-19

MOTION: To waive Town Council Rules of Procedure rule 8.6 for the current agenda item.

Motion by: Griesemer

Seconded by: De Angelis

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

MOTION: To adopt the PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT OF A NATIONAL DAY OF RECOLLECTION TO HONOR THOSE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES TO COVID-19, as presented.

Motion by: Griesemer

Seconded by: De Angelis

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

8. Action Items

a. Capital Inventory

MOTION: To suspend Rule of Procedure rule 8.4 for the current agenda item.

Motion by: Griesemer

Seconded by: Hanneke

ROLL CALL VOTE: 12-0-1 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, 1Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz voted Yes; Councilor DuMont Abstained)

MOTION: In accordance with Charter Sec. 5.7(a), and as recommended by the December 7, 2020 Finance Committee 2021 Inventory Recommendations, to establish the following requirements for the 2021 capital inventory:

Buildings (including strategic infrastructure from enterprise funds)

- Age
- Condition
- Maintenance and repair history (renovation or major repair history)
- Amount for which it is insured
- Comment field to note plans for building (note empty buildings)
- Options for future use of buildings not currently in use

Vehicles/Moveable equipment

- Age
- Condition
- Remaining useful life
- Mileage (will include two years in the second year)
- Purpose of Vehicle
- Frequency of Use (weekly, monthly, seasonally)
- Type of Fuel (include MPG if known)
- Budgeted Replacement Price

Motion by: Steinberg

Seconded by: Schoen

ROLL CALL VOTE: unanimous, 13-0

b. Retreat Follow-Up

(1) Memo to Library Trustees re: Repair, Renovation, and Addition

MOTION: To authorize the Town Council President to send the revised Memo dated January 3, 2021, "Request for Financial Information Regarding the Proposed Library Expansion Project" to the Jones Library Trustees on behalf of the Town Council, as amended.

Motion by: Griesemer

Seconded by: Ryan

ROLL CALL VOTE: 12-0-1 (Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, 1Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz voted Yes; Councilor DuMont Abstained)

15. Election of Officers

a. President – for a term to expire January 3, 2022

Nominations: Hanneke was nominated by Steinberg, Griesemer was nominated by Pam

VOTED:

12 votes for Griesemer: Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz

1 vote for Hanneke: Hanneke

b. Vice President – for a term to expire January 3, 2022

Nominations: Ross was nominated by Brewer, Schoen was nominated by Schreiber

VOTED:

8 votes for Ross: Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, Hanneke, Ross, Ryan, Steinberg, and Swartz

4 votes for Schoen: DuMont, Pam, Schoen, Schreiber

1 abstention: Griesemer

The Council adjourned at 11:23 p.m.