

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 11/30/2021 9:27:51 AM

Name: Suzannah Muspratt

Comment: November 28, 2021

To Members of Town Council,

The unseemly rush to force through votes on a number of zoning amendments before year-end is having terrible effects already. Procedures are not being followed properly: for example, the reports in your packet for the meeting on Nov. 29, ostensibly from the Planning Board, were written by and sent to Town Council by the Planning Director without having been approved or in some cases even seen by members of the Planning Board. Volunteer Boards are being circumvented and ignored. Town employees are frazzled and exhausted, working overtime and cutting corners and several have resigned as a result. Town Council members are receiving enormous packets of materials to review at the last moment, without sufficient time to give them the attention they deserve. Residents are disengaged or angry because of competing obligations during this season of religious and family celebrations. Lame-duck Councilors, whom voters defeated in part because of their support for these amendments, are pressing forward although they no longer have the popular mandate to do so. Nobody is looking out for the unintended consequences that result from passing amendments or parts of amendments one at a time, when they should be considered in concert because they affect each other. Language in the proposed amendments is awkward and vague—loopholes in the making.

Community Impact Assessments are not being conducted, although community impacts will be enormous. Environmental and social justice impacts have barely been mentioned, much less explored. Even the most diligent cannot keep all the versions and amendments to amendments straight. Inaccurate assertions are being made, and nobody—even the press—has time to challenge them. Records of meetings—minutes, posting recordings, putting letters up on the Town website—cannot keep pace, so open government to the max is not functioning as it should. Three- or four-hour marathon meetings—extra sessions added to the calendar on short notice—leave all participants drained and numb.

What is the point? To do the best job possible for the good of the Town, or to do a sloppy job but shorten the veto do list and beat the calendar before newly elected members take office? To pass the largest number of amendments, or to make sure that each amendment is carefully and properly guided through the process, that Council members thoroughly understand the issues before they vote?

There is no urgency to most of these amendments, but once passed, they and their effects will be with us for a long time. Please take the time to do a careful, thorough job, for all our sakes, even if consideration of some amendments must be carried over to the new Council. Your individual reputations as inaugural Town Councilors and, more broadly, the public's opinion of the new form of government and the way it's being run hang in the balance. Haste makes waste, or worse.

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/1/2021 12:51:30 PM

Name: John Varner

Comment: I am writing to urge Town Council to develop a comprehensive policy to govern rental properties in Amherst. I have previously sent members of Town Council pages of documents from the zoning manager of State College, PA, that deal with housing policies in that town and could serve as a model for Amherst.

For student rentals, Amherst currently has a set of vague rules that is more aspirational than functional, unfairly relies on the complaints of citizens to identify and address problems, is, at best, sporadically enforced, and almost totally neglects the problem of single family - to - student housing conversion that is sapping the community of affordable single-family housing stock. The result is a reduction in the desirability of living in town as moderate-income families are priced out of the market by investors seeking to cash in by soaking students while lowering the value of neighbors' houses. This further reduces the already declining number of kids in the Amherst School System. It lowers the number of residents who will be using the expanded library. And it reduces the resale value of abutting properties, and ultimately the tax base of the town.

In a first round of rezoning, there has been little attention paid to the problem of rental conversions, and landlords and student renters flouting the law. It is unfortunate that Town is paying lip service to providing 'affordable housing' and is willing to spend millions on a library expansion while failing to establish rules governing student rentals and properly fund and track their enforcement.

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 12:39:37 PM

Name: Victoria Strauss

Comment: I'm writing to express my support for the zoning change for the CVS parking lot.

I do support the eventual building of a parking garage on that spot. However, I'm aware that the issue in question right now isn't the garage itself, but simply the zoning change that will allow the town and private companies to explore the possibility of building it. Despite Amherst's desperate need for more parking options, the garage unfortunately is controversial for the same kinds of reasons that years ago forced the inadequate compromise that is the underground facility on Boltwood Walk. Opposition may ultimately kill the possibility of a new garage. But the zoning change really shouldn't be subject to the same NIMBY hysteria.

I deplore the attacks on Town Council as it considers this issue, and also the attempt by some Amherst residents and Councilors to argue that Council business should essentially be halted because the Council is outgoing (an argument that so unfortunately echoes national politics). I hope that the Council will resist this pressure, and make the sensible decision for the future of Amherst and its infrastructure.

Victoria Strauss

27 Cosby Avenue, Amherst

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 2:23:34 PM

Name: Katharine van Geel

Comment: My husband and I support the zoning changes downtown, so that a parking garage can be built (should Council approve it).

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 3:24:27 PM

Name: Tim Neale

Comment: I would like to register my strong support for a zoning change of the property behind CVS so as to, after careful deliberation, possibly enable a parking garage to be built. Good for flexibility in the pursuit of economic vitality for downtown Amherst.

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 3:41:27 PM

Name: P. Comfort

Comment: To whom it may concern,

Please pursue exploring the possibility of rezoning the CVS parking lot for a parking garage. That site is out of sight from the main street and would seem a decent choice for such a structure. I would not want to see an ugly structure be visible when strolling through town however.

Thank you,

P. Comfort

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 4:21:54 PM

Name: Cathy Neale

Comment: George Ryan, Dorothy Pam, Mandi Jo Hanneke, Andy Steinberg, and Alisa Brewer,

Please support the zoning change for the CVS parking lot area. This change will enable private companies to foot the bills for feasibility studies to help solve our downtown parking issues.

The Town of Amherst cannot afford to do these studies. The information gained, at no cost to the town, will foster discussion of future parking solutions, not mandate infrastructure like a parking garage. Shutting down discussion about possible parking solutions for the future, by denying the zoning change, is a back-handed way of denying the citizens of Amherst the right to consider all possible solutions to a long-term, vexing problem that residents, visitors and businesses have been struggling with for a long time.

Amherst needs a thriving downtown. Please vote to change the zoning so exploration and discussion of parking ideas can take place.

Sincerely,

Cathy Neale, District 4



## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/4/2021 10:06:18 PM

Name: samuel gladstone

Comment: I am against changing the zoning so that a parking garage can be built behind CVS. No such decisions should be made until the new Town Council members are sworn in. All new construction where people will be living should have to provide parking of at least 1 parking space per apartment.

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/5/2021 4:09:05 PM

Name: Barry Roberts

Comment: I would urge the Council to pass the zoning overlay to allow the possibility of the construction of a parking structure. Our downtown needs destination parking to improve the viability of the downtown. I hear time and time again from folks that they want a vibrant downtown. Passing this zoning is one of the steps to make that possible. I think the misconception that a lot of folks have that are pushing against the zoning overlay think if you approve it a garage is a done deal, as you and I both know this is certainly not the case, there will be plenty of opportunities to weigh in on design, traffic and all other details of a structure.

I urge you to move this forward.

Thank you

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/5/2021 9:01:12 PM

Name: Nicola Usher

Comment: Dear Counselors,

I am writing to express my support for the zoning change that would allow the exploration of a potential parking garage on the CVS lot.

I am not certain Iâ€™m in favor of the structure. My understanding is that this is a practical step forward in exploring a possibility that may be economically beneficial to the town.

It sets a dangerous precedent to bend to the interests of abutters. The loudest voice in the room typically comes from the person opposed to something in their backyard. It is your job to consider what is best for the entire town including business and visitors, not just residents of one area.

Thank you.

â€”

Nicola Usher, district 1

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 5:37:20 AM

Name: Ira Bryck

Comment: Downtown West Springfield commercial building aims to usher in "Northampton feel"™

Updated: Dec. 06, 2021, 5:11 a.m. | Published: Dec. 06, 2021, 5:11 a.m.

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West Springfield cuts ribbon for 95 Elm Street "Town Commons" building

By Aprell May Munford | AMunford@repub.com

WEST SPRINGFIELD " Town officials and partners hope newly renovated office and retail space on the town common is a sign of new beginnings for West Springfield's™ downtown.

A grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony was held Tuesday at Town Commons, 95 Elm St. The building is occupied by the Seven Hills Foundation, Future Health, Insurance for Students, Silk Tree Properties, Good Rock LLC, Kindred at Home and Tandem Bagel.

"We're kind of back to that hometown feel with the business fronts. I think it is a good addition for what we're trying to do with Elm Street," said Carly Camossi, the town outreach coordinator. "Almost creating like a Northampton feel down here with the local business. Now we have Tandem Bagel, other business and family-owned restaurants here, which is nice."

Saremi LLP bought the vacant building from People's™ United Bank last year for \$1,550,000, according to records on file with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds.

According to Tyler Saremi, vice president of Saremi LLP, the partners purchased the building for the location and family ties to the town. The partners went in with the idea this development would be a two- to three-year project, specifically created for leasing and redevelopment.

“We are really excited to be a part of revitalizing West Springfield. We made the commitment to bring in a restaurant and coffee shop. So, Tandem Bagel doesn’t just do coffee. They are a full café. Now we are talking to a couple different entities about putting in a restaurant,” Saremi said.

“Right now, there are seven tenants here. By the end of the year there will be over 100 employees in this building,” Saremi said. “We look forward to continuing to fulfill our commitments in West Springfield and our neighboring communities.”

The lot was previously a United Bank, which some say did not generate much foot traffic and left the area desolate when it closed. United Bank underwent a series of mergers in 2018 that led to the relocation of its headquarters to Connecticut in 2019.

“The bank just took off. They left this building vacant and that building vacant. It is just nice to have it filled up again and back to retail,” Saremi said.

Town officials and partners hope the building’s revitalization is a sign of new beginnings for West Springfield’s downtown.

“We are very excited,” Mayor William Reichelt said. “It is great to have the partnership we have in the community. ... To bring this kind of business into our community really brings our downtown back to life. Congratulations and thank you for being here in West Springfield.”

West Springfield’s master plan for commercial development focuses on maximizing assets like the downtown area. It calls for more retail, office and restaurant space with upper-story residential units. Priorities include encouraging increased foot traffic in appropriate places, growing municipal parking, filling storefront vacancies with family businesses and creating jobs.

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 9:26:40 AM

Name: Karinne Syers

Comment: I support rezoning the CVS parking lot in order to explore the possibility for a parking garage downtown.

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 10:01:42 AM

Name: andrew bellak

Comment: Dear Town Council,

I live in District 3 and I support the zoning changes and the current timeline / schedule especially with regard to the parking garage issue.

Sincerely,

Andrew Bellak

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 10:46:17 AM

Name: Claudia Canale-Parola

Comment: Please support the economic and cultural revitalization of downtown by changing the zoning covering the CVS parking lot to allow private companies to explore the feasibility of building a parking garage on that site. It is important to allow this process to move forward to be able to evaluate the best options for Amherst.

Thank you for your service.



Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 10:57:17 AM

Name: Sarah M Eisinger

Comment: To the Town Council: Please consider the planning efforts for a potential new parking garage in downtown Amherst, potentially located in the parking lot behind CVS. I understand that the Town needs to evaluate new zoning requirements. I encourage the Town to start on this thoughtful process.

Thanks,

Sarah Eisinger

Jonathan Hirsh

Pine Street

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 11:50:25 AM

Name: As above

Comment: Why reinvent the wheel? Put the new garage on top of the older oneâ€¦it was designed to bear the additional weight.

You already have entrances and exits; itâ€™s not a historical district ( I.e. no lawsuits); and, it is centrally located

Consider it!

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 11:51:41 AM

Name: Christine Gray-Mullen

Comment: Dear Town Councilors:

As an Amherst resident, former Planning Board, Public Works Committee, Transportation Taskforce and Downtown Parking Working Group member, I strongly recommend you move forward with creating a Parking Facility Overlay District. This would be the right decision towards building a stronger downtown community and increasing economic vitality. So much of our downtown zoning is problematic or severely limiting and for years and years has been talked about, examined and analyzed but it rarely seems to move forward with needed zoning changes. It's one of the strongest reasons why residents voted away the Town Meeting.

I know personally know how complex and challenging it is to understand zoning and then even more difficult to chose the best path forward. As Town Councilors you have had almost three years to study and understand the downtown Amherst zoning situation and contemplate possible solutions. Now is the time to use all this hard earned knowledge and improve zoning by approving some new changes. This isn't a big risky decision; a Parking Facility Overlay doesn't guarantee a facility to be built; it only opens the door to seeing what is possible.

I am confident that a modern well designed parking facility will be far more attractive than the current very ugly parking lots with the broken pavement, metal guardrails, lack of landscaping and overly bright lighting. You see all the cars on a spread of asphalt. With a parking facility you would see a site-specific architecturally designed building with landscaping. These new parking facilities can really be attractive—even look like historic buildings or incorporate art. Can modern buildings (including parking facilities) be created to blend and even enhance historic areas? Yes. And keep in mind that all these old historic houses have their own asphalt driveways with modern cars and often their own mini parking facilities. Automobile transportation is completely integrated with all of our neighborhoods and to deny that is shortsighted. The cars are already driving by and parking right there on those historic streets. Hiding some of them in an attractive parking facility would only be an improvement.

The possibilities are endless and at a minimum should be explored. The fact that the private sector would be willing to invest in this kind of project would be a gift benefiting the Town and its whole economy. This is an opportunity to take advantage of, not ignore or shun. As Covid eventually fades away, Amherst needs to be ready to jumpstart its local economy and provide the needed downtown infrastructure to support growth and its businesses. Our town desperately

needs to increase its commercial tax base to help supplement all the absolutely-necessary long-overdue capital building projects.

You've been deeply educated on Amherst's zoning, parking and economic development issues. Don't let all that knowledge go to waste by passing it to a new Town Council that will need to come up to speed. You have earned this moment to approve new zoning opportunities. Please take one small step forward by creating a Parking Facility Overlay District. This will then begin a true process of exploration, not construction.

Thank you for your time, consideration and service,  
Christine Gray-Mullen

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 1:10:59 PM

Name: Suzannah Muspratt

Comment: I urge the Council not to approve the four amendments coming up for a reading at tonight's Town Council meeting (Dec. 6). Many cogent comments have been made--at last week's Council meeting and at Town meetings before the Planning Board and CRC over the preceding months. Too little time has been allotted for discussion at the Council, and it was ridiculous to limit Councilors to three-minute comments at last week's meeting. Is the goal to air the issues and make sure the Council understands what it's being asked to vote on, or simply to rush through a packed agenda at a five-plus-hour meeting in order to precipitate a vote before year-end? There is not time urgency to any of these amendments. No Community Impact Assessment has been performed, or at least put in a place where the community can read it. Once voted, these amendments are difficult to undo. Do not do a disservice to our community by rushing them through until they have been given very careful consideration and Councilors' questions have been addressed. Listen to ALL your constituents, not just the developers. We deserve more!

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 1:38:08 PM

Name: Ira Bryck

Comment: To the Amherst Town Council,

I urge you again to not pass the zoning bylaws that will create an overlay district for a garage behind CVS, and to not define mixed use buildings in a way that will be bad for downtown and our community.

Regarding the garage, it is far from proven to be the best site, will disrupt the quiet enjoyment of a historic neighborhood, go against the advice of experts who studied Amherst's parking situation, is hard to find and even harder to enter and exit, will need removal of parking that already functions fine in a residential district, may have been picked due to individual vested interests rather than for the good of our community, and will not have the setbacks and other restrictions that might make a garage well designed.

Furthermore, there is no reason why this overlay district needs to be created, to study if a parking garage will work there. And even further, the Planning Board reports that the reason they are focused on this location, instead of others, is that they were directed to only look at this one option.

Regarding the mixed-use definition, the results of this poor planning will leave us with dorm-style apartments with little commercial presence. Thirty percent of the first floor is all you are requiring, after you reduced that minimum from 50%. And allowing that 30% to appear not where shoppers can access, but a rooftop bar, or averaged among several buildings (some with none, others with businesses located throughout the building) will make Amherst's downtown unusable and uninteresting. You rejected the notion of many apartment buildings downtown, but then define a mixed use building so that it quacks like an apartment! (except that the mixed use building won't require a 500 foot buffer, as an apartment building would)

Also, the excuse that retail is hard to find strikes me as lackadaisical. We have the region's major employer abutting the downtown, our community spends \$22mm per year on groceries, and we have a history of very few empty stores, over the years.

As an ex-retailer who owned a building with 5 stores to fill (ours being 1 of 5), all that was needed to rent the other stores was some initiative, promotion, proper pricing, and being a good landlord.

This is the obvious "Job One" of every landlord, developer, town economic director, business improvement district, and chamber of commerce. It's depressing to hear the excuse that even in the age of online shopping, that you think nobody will rent a store in our town. There are many vibrant towns in our region and planet. There is no special reason Amherst can't fill our town with interesting businesses. Walk around Brattleboro, Easthampton, Great Barrington, Columbus, OH, for some ideas.

Lastly, it is the opinion of many that the town council has not lived up to its stated goals, of providing more democracy and transparency, plus public participation, than town meeting. One would think you'd be a bit more appropriate than to jam in weekly meetings during the holiday season, where people want to enjoy their family, not this push during a lame duck session.

Sincerely,

Ira Bryck

Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 1:52:40 PM

Name: Bennett Hazlip

Comment: I'm not yet sure whether I support a new parking garage. But I also know that in order to think strategically about whether one should be built, we need to at least be able to explore the options, which is why I support rezoning.

I also find the coordinated, personal attacks on councilors seeking to make this change - particularly from their fellow council members - to be distasteful, disingenuous, and counterproductive.

Thank you all for your work on this and so many other issues.

Best,

Bennett Hazlip

32 Thayer Street



## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 3:36:53 PM

Name: Pam Rooney

Comment: The Parcel 33 Rezoning proposal is not ready for adoption and should be referred back to the Planning Board for further study.

Many people want strong economic development in our Town Centers; Iâ€™m one of them. Iâ€™m also someone who believes we should look holistically at the problem and identify the best options. Councilors who introduced this zoning reacted to a Destination Amherst presentation. They did not ask the Planning Department to review past parking studies and make a recommendation to them on best practices/best locations for a parking structure, should a structure be needed. The CRC then, did not take it the step further that it deservedâ€¦with a request to do the homework and explore the potential of building a parking garage anywhere appropriate in town. There are several locations, but the Planning Department has stated in public forums that they simply were not tasked with doing this legwork; they were handed a proposal from the councilors and have made the best of what they were given.

Some think that supporting a parking structure on N. Prospect St. indicates open mindedness about our Townâ€™s future. I believe it is short-sighted in that it did not explore any other options. Take it a step furtherâ€¦ by sending it back; then something can come forward to Council as a fully thought-through proposal.

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 4:35:55 PM

Name: Jay B Silverstein

Comment: DATA AND OPINIONS REGARDING THE NORTH PROSPECT STREET GARAGE

It has been stated, although there has been no proof, only conjecture, for a need of a structured garage on North Prospect Street in the historic residential area of Amherst Massachusetts. These concerns are due in part to the following areas; Spring Street Apartments; Jones Library; Kendrick Park; Kendrick Apartments; Amherst Cinema and The proposed Drake. Here are some of my thoughts regarding these subjects.

Spring Street Apartments â€“ The North Prospect Street garage should not be considered satisfactory parking for Spring Street Apartments, considering parking for tenants and guests would be better served from the Municipal Parking Lot in front of Town Hall on Boltwood Avenue, Amity Street Parking, the Boltwood Lot and the Boltwood Garage on Boltwood Walk. All are closer to the apartments than the Proposed North Prospect Street Garage.

Jones Library â€“ Since the Library is increasing their footprint, and the plans are in the initial stage, it would better serve their patrons if the Jones Library includes their own subsurface parking garage. If Jones Library adds only 30-40 subsurface parking spaces, that should be enough to eliminate the need for additional parking in the area for 5-10 years, as well as creating goodwill with a third of the townspeople who did not vote for the expanded library budget.

Kendrick Park â€“ The new playground looks great, however, it is certainly not large enough to be considered a destination attraction. There is ample parking on the perimeter streets.

Kendrick Place Apartments â€“ It is a stretch to even think that the Town Councilors would be seeking additional parking spaces for a 36 unit apartment house that opened in 2015.

Amherst Cinema â€“ There is ample parking on Amity Street, the Amity Street Municipal lot as well as provisional parking at the Bank of America parking lot.

Drake â€“ As advertised, the Drake is slated as a live performance arts and cultural center which is a wonderful idea. My concerns are the various channels that are being followed in obtaining their goals. According to Gabrielle Gould, Executive Director of Amherst BID, there will be between 130-150 seating capacity at the Drake. Even if the Drake is sold out at every event, does this type of capacity warrant building a multi-million dollar parking structure and destroying a historic residential area to boot. Furthermore, there are no reports claiming that additional parking spaces or structures are needed. The following is pretty interesting. The Massachusetts Office of Business Development Regional Projects Grant is giving \$175,000.00 to fund the Drake. The Amherst Business Improvement Development (BID) is giving \$80,000.00 to fund the Drake. The Drake is asking for another \$300,000.00 from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) which is federal funding provided by federal Covid expenditures to state and local governments to make strategic investments for loss of employment and/or healthcare. Is the Drake entitled to

the ARPA funds since this is a new venture? These funds are requested by the Drake through the Town of Amherst. The Drake is also requesting \$250,000.00 through donations which they say they will do matching funds of \$250,000.00. My questions are: If federal funding is unsuccessful, will the Drake seek private equity or will it cease moving forward with the project and the parking structure? Are donations the same as shares? Why is the Drake not using Banks and Financial Institutions? Where is the matching funding money coming from? Who is the managing partner of the Drake and will the managing partner be the operating manager (CEO, CIO, CFO, COO)? Who are the Board of Directors for the Drake? Who are the partners and/or shareholders of the Drake? Do any past or present Town Councilors or Town Councilor family members or Town of Amherst employees past or present or their families have any financial stake in the Drake and/or have any financial stake in the proposed North Prospect Street garage?

As rumor has it, Barry Roberts is spearheading the drives for the Drake as well as North Prospect Street Garage. Since Mr. Roberts is the President of Amherst BID, is his action of taking taxpayer funds from the BID unethical? He is certainly a benefactor to the Town of Amherst. What's even more impressive is that he has not been using his own money. So far, according to Gabrielle Gould, who has mentioned that the funds are from government grants. There is nothing wrong with that, most socialist societies work like that. An issue I feel is problematic to me, is the fact that the profits are not going to the people of Amherst, although the taxpayers are asked to fund the Drake through government funding. If true, the profits will go to Mr. Roberts, his existing properties and to the business people supporting his agenda. Another subject of interest is who will be on the Boards of Directors for these projects, now and in one year or two years from now? I would prefer that the funding comes from either private venture or floating an Economic Development Municipal Bond that Mr. Roberts and Associates will pay interest to the Town of Amherst for their gratitude to us.

In addition, I would like to quote Lynn Griesemer, President, Town Council, Town of Amherst and 31 years of distinguished service at University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. "Many of the tensions we feel today were set in motion many years ago. But what we can do today is own them and work on overcoming them about working out solutions that respond to our most important values. I believe it is extremely important to highlight VALUES are of the utmost importance. Although there are few in number but powerful people that want to rezone the North Prospect Street "Lincoln" Sunset Historic District to accommodate a North Prospect Street Garage without establishing need, in exchange to devastate the North Prospect- Lincoln "Sunset Historic District. Furthermore, Ms. Griesemer is correct in stating that voters want a full time, year round government. I believe that the residents wants are lost here, the majority of comments by a 2.5:1 ratio over all, came from Amherst residents that do not want the rezoning of the North Street Garage and their wishes should be recognized and granted.

The Town of Amherst has the highest real estate tax rate in Hampshire County, Massachusetts at \$21.82 per \$1,000.00. In most communities across the USA, real estate taxes are higher for commercial properties than homeowner properties, however, in the Town of Amherst the real estate taxes are the same for commercial and homeowners, therefore, I believe the homeowners

already contribute more than their fair share to promote business. What else does the Town Council want the homeowners of Amherst to sacrifice, our homes for a commercial garage?

Thank you for your consideration, Jay Silverstein

[jaybsilverstein@gmail.com](mailto:jaybsilverstein@gmail.com)

## Town Council Public Comment

Submission Date: 12/6/2021 6:55:10 PM

Name: Debra Jacobson

Comment: I oppose the doubling up of council meetings, including lame duck members who have been defeated for reelection, in order to rush through zoning bylaws without proper review, including some contradicting the findings of research studies (such as the parking review).

I would add that I find it reprehensible that the serious discussion of zoning issues and citizen involvement has been deferred to the end of today's meeting (6 December), as if this increasingly autocratic council majority is seeking to rush through its agenda before losing its grip on power.

You are in a lame duck period, where you should act in a caretaker role, and should not be making significant changes in our zoning or other matters.