

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, April 7, 2010 – 7:00 PM
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: Jonathan Shefftz, Chair; Jonathan O’Keeffe, Denise Barberet, David Webber, Stephen Schreiber, Bruce Carson, Rob Crouner and Sandra Anderson

ABSENT: Richard Roznoy

STAFF: Jonathan Tucker, Planning Director; Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner

Mr. Shefftz opened the meeting at 7:10 PM. He introduced new Planning Board member, Sandra Anderson. Ms. Anderson said that she has lived in South Amherst for 36 years and worked for the University of Massachusetts for most of that time. She recently retired.

I. MINUTES Meeting of: March 17, 2010

Ms. Barberet noted several substantive changes.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED to approve the Minutes of March 17, 2010, as amended. Mr. Webber seconded and the vote was 7-0-1 (Anderson abstained).

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS – SITE PLAN REVIEW

SPR2010-00009/M4678 – 264 Harkness Road, Hampshire Mosque

Request approval to operate a non-profit religious institution (Hampshire Mosque) under Section 3.330 of the Zoning Bylaw (Map 18D, Parcel 100, R-N Zoning District)

Mr. Shefftz read the preamble and opened the public hearing.

Dr. Mohamed Ali Hazratji (Dr. Ali) presented the application. The Hampshire Mosque is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization. Its activities at the site will include prayer, religious instruction, meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation, providing counseling and advice for members and inter-faith dialogue. There will be no residential use of the building.

For one and a half years Hampshire Mosque has rented space in the center of town. Before that the congregation used a space in Echo Hill. Membership at the Mosque is steady and increasing. The Mosque has members from Deerfield Academy, Smith College and Mount Holyoke College. The members held an open house when they moved to the center of town, including an ethnic food festival, which members of the community attended. The members would like to have a place of their own. There is an Islamic Center in West Springfield, but it is not as convenient for local people.

Amherst is a good place for an Islamic Center. Dr. Hazratji said that when he met with the Town Manager to discuss establishing a Mosque in Amherst, he was encouraged to locate here. The property on Harkness Road is affordable. The Mosque has limited resources and Muslims do not take out loans. They are seeking approval of the Site Plan Review without conditions. They are concerned that the price of significant modifications required for the site and building may make the property too expensive. Dr. Hazratji requested leniency in the granting of waivers for non-essential items.

The Mosque will help to promote peace and understanding, in order to combat issues of bias, bigotry and lack of understanding.

There are five times for daily prayers. The times and the number of people attending these prayers were outlined in a letter from Dr. Hazratji to the Planning Department.

Before sunrise	2 – 5 people attend
Mid-day	2 – 5 people attend
Late afternoon	2 – 5 people attend
Sunset	4 – 8 people attend
After sunset	5 – 10 people attend

Prayer services last from 10 to 30 minutes. There are usually 3 or 4 cars during the day and 5 or 6 cars at night. The holy day is Friday, with services at 1 p.m. The service lasts for one hour and is usually attended by 50 people. There are 10 – 15 cars on Friday. There are similar prayer services at UMass so the students usually go to the service on campus. On Wednesday evening there is religious instruction that lasts about 1 ½ hours. Usually 15 – 30 people attend and there are about 5 to 10 cars. On Sunday there is religious instruction for children from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. About 38 children attend, plus teachers. Parents drop off and pick up the children. There are about 10 cars for the religious instruction.

During the holy month of Ramadan there are services in the evening, starting at sunset and lasting for two hours. These services are attended by 20 to 40 people.

Twice a year there are special holy days, at the end of Ramadan and at the time of the pilgrimage to Mecca. On these two days there will be two prayer services, one at 9:00 a.m. and one at 10:30 a.m. There will be a maximum of 65 people for each of those two services. The property has an area for overflow parking. As many as 30 cars can be accommodated on site, including in the overflow parking area.

Volunteers will help people to find parking spaces. The Mosque is willing to hire police, if necessary, to help direct traffic. There are no employees, no paid clergy and no paid teachers associated with the Mosque.

Members of the Mosque have met with Architect Bill Gillen concerning the site. Mr. Gillen has stated that the building can accommodate the Mosque with minor modifications, such as new doors and door handles. Mr. Gillen does not anticipate major renovations being necessary and considers that the existing handicapped access ramp is adequate.

There are three driveways currently serving the property. One gravel driveway leads to the gravel parking area at the north of the property. Two other paved driveways lead to a small parking area in front of the building and a garage on the south side of the building.

The site plan submitted shows 14 parking spaces plus one van-accessible space. The van-accessible space will be marked with a handicapped parking sign on the ground. The Mosque does not plan to install a vertical handicapped parking sign. Members do not expect traffic congestion. They will explore the possibility of having a carpool or van to bring people from the nearby bus stop [on Route 9] to the Mosque.

Members of the Mosque are sensitive to the needs of the neighbor to the south. They will not use the southern driveway for regular use, but will use the middle driveway instead.

The applicants do not plan to have a dumpster, but will use trash cans that can be stored in the garage. They do not expect to generate a lot of trash.

The applicants recognize that noise is a concern for people in the neighborhood. They do not plan to have a traditional “call to prayer” or have any sound-producing equipment outside of the building. Muslims have strict rules about neighbors. They invite neighbors to come and share food and they

welcome neighbors for the holiday services. They take the rights of neighbors seriously. Dr. Ali asserted that the Mosque will be an asset to the neighborhood.

The members of the Mosque plan to use the two rooms on the north side of the building for assembly, for a maximum of 65 people.

Dr. Ali asserted that handicapped access requirements have been met by the existing ramp. The applicants do not wish to install a second ramp; however they do plan to install a handicapped bathroom. All of the fire code requirements will be met. Dr. Ali stated that there is a "code-compliant" sign on the property that will be repaired and repainted. Lighting has been shown on the site plan at every entrance.

The existing parking lot light is downcast and shielded. The applicants do not plan to install floodlights. The lights will be turned off at 11:00 p.m. There is existing landscaping on the north side and around the main parking lot. They do not plan to remove any plantings. The south side has a partial fence. The applicants plan to extend the fence with plantings, to shield the southern neighbor.

Dr. Ali stated that there are no erosion control issues. He reviewed the site plan and showed where proposed parking would be located.

The site plan proposes a van-accessible handicapped parking space plus 8 other spaces in front of the building. On the south side, 3 parking spaces will be located in the garage and 2 or 3 will be in the driveway. Dr. Ali stated that the overflow parking area north of the building can accommodate about 17 extra parking spaces, for a total of approximately 32 parking spaces on site.

Dr. Ali reviewed the proposed uses of the spaces inside the building.

Mr. Shefftz questioned the estimate of attendees. He asked if the Mosque would draw some people from the West Springfield Islamic Center.

Dr. Ali responded that people in Northampton would continue to attend services in West Springfield, because of the ease of access down Route 91. He added that most members of the Hampshire Mosque are graduate students who don't have cars, and many of the graduate students attend Friday services at UMass.

Mr. Shefftz reviewed the Site Visit Report and read through the questions at the end.

Dr. Ali stated that the Mosque does not intend to install another ramp. Ms. Brestrup explained that the Building Commissioner, Bonnie Weeks, had stated that a second ramp would be necessary since a change in use is being proposed for the building and therefore it will need to be brought up to the most current state code. Mr. Schreiber stated that Chapter 34 of the Building Code requires two means of egress if the occupant load is 50 or more.

Dr. Ali stated that the applicants are not proposing to spend more than \$30,000 on renovations.

Mr. Tucker noted for the Board and members of the public present that the hearing being conducted was a Site Plan Review hearing and that the use of the building is "by right", meaning that the use is allowed and that the Planning Board is looking at how the use will occur on the site.

Mr. Shefftz asked why the application had been filed under Section 3.330 [Non-profit educational and religious institutions], and not under Section 3.333 of the Zoning Bylaw [Church or other place of worship]. Mr. Tucker stated that Hampshire Mosque was registered as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, but that it didn't really matter because both uses were allowed by Site Plan Review. He acknowledged that Section 3.333 was equally applicable.

Dr. Ali asked the Board about the extent of the screening that would be required on the south side of the property. He stated that the applicants were planning to install screening where the parking is located and that the area is already partially screened by an existing fence.

Ms. Brestrup stated that she had spoken with the Town Engineer about allowing three driveways for one property. The Town Engineer had agreed to allow the third driveway because it already exists and because it will provide access to the gravel parking area.

Dr. Ali stated that the parking areas will have turnaround spaces so that cars will not need to back out onto Harkness Road. The parking has been redesigned to avoid blocking the door or the ramp. The applicants may eliminate one parking space so that they don't need to widen the driveway on the south side of the building.

Ms. Barberet observed that she is concerned about the speed of the traffic on Harkness Road. She asked that the Mosque communicate with its members that they should not speed. Dr. Ali agreed to speak with the congregation about speed.

Mr. Webber asked if there were any requirement in the Zoning Bylaw for overflow parking.

Ms. Brestrup stated that there was no requirement in the Zoning Bylaw for overflow parking, but explained that the applicants had offered to provide overflow parking to accommodate their needs for special occasions, when there may be more people than normal attending services.

Mr. Shefftz reiterated that this was a Site Plan Review hearing and it was not about use. The use is allowed by right.

Warren Hall of 60 Harkness Road (Pelham), Chair of the Pelham Planning Board, asserted that no one in Pelham had been notified about the hearing. The Planning Board, the Select Board, the Conservation Commission, the Police Department and the DPW had not been notified.

Ms. Brestrup stated that abutters within 300 feet of the property in both Pelham and Amherst had been notified.

Mr. Hall noted that people in Pelham have concerns about traffic.

Joseph Horowitz of 340 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that traffic is an issue. The road is straight with no sidewalk. This project requires a Traffic Impact Statement, he said. Mr. Horowitz estimated the number of car trips per day that would be generated by the various services planned at the Mosque. For the two special holidays he estimated an average of 132 trips per day.

Mr. Webber asked if this would be considered a significant impact. He doubted that it would. Mr. Horowitz asserted that it would be a significant impact since this is a rural road with no sidewalk.

Mr. Shefftz stated that compared to a recent case that the Board had reviewed on Meadow Street, the numbers of vehicle trips for this application seemed negligible.

Howard Singer of 116 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that the line in the middle of the road is the dividing line between the towns. He was concerned that the Board members seemed to be viewing the issue of traffic on this road as a frivolous issue. He asked if Board members had walked on the road and stated that he had lived there for 10 years. The speed is too high. Harkness is a minor road, but people need to wear reflective clothing to walk on the road at night. The road is narrow and there is not enough room to walk on the road when two cars are passing. People cannot walk on the road in the winter when snow is on the ground. It would cause a liability to allow more use [the mosque] on the road without installing sidewalks and building improvements to the road. He stated that children walk to the school bus stop and people walk to the [PVRTA] bus stop on Route 9. He asserted that people have been hit. He encouraged Planning Board members to walk on the road.

Mr. Shefftz stated that Board members do not view traffic as a frivolous issue, but the Board is judging by a recent experience with another project. Traffic Impact Statements look at whether there is degradation in the Level of Service at key intersections and other points along a roadway. Mr. Shefftz asserted that, based on past experience, the traffic generated by the Mosque would not come near to the

level that would degrade the Level of Service. He added that the Mosque had offered to hire a police officer to direct traffic when necessary.

Ms. Barberet stated that a Traffic Impact Statement (TIS) looks at what can be done to the intersections and the intersections are well away from this property. A TIS will not accomplish the goal of making the road safer. People need to slow down. She was not sure that requiring a TIS would produce the results that the Board and the public were looking for.

Mr. Shefftz stated that the Board needed to consider whether the proposed development would make the road less safe.

Mr. Webber stated that the Board didn't mean to be dismissive of traffic issues and he acknowledged that there would be added traffic on the special holidays. However, when the number of trips is broken down over the course of the day he did not believe the impact would be large.

Mr. O'Keeffe stated that this was a time to hear from the public and that the applicant had requested a waiver of the requirement for a TIS. The Board would have an opportunity to discuss this issue later.

Mr. Shefftz noted that the previous Traffic Impact Statement [for another project] had estimated that there would be an increase of 50 trips per peak hour and that this was not considered to be significant.

Terry Singer of 116 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that she is an owner of a for-profit business. She expects that the Mosque may grow in the future. Once an organization obtains a facility, one assumes that it will grow and the traffic will increase.

Paul Goulston of 22 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that he had no problem with the proposed use, but he questioned the numbers of people who would be present on the property at one time. The numbers presented did not account for people being in all of the rooms of the building at the same time. A large percentage of the congregation will come without cars and will walk down Harkness Road from the bus stop on Route 9. He questioned how 60 people would get to the site.

Ms. Brestrup explained the Zoning Bylaw requirements with respect to parking and stated that the requirements are based on square footage of the various spaces within the building and whether they would all be occupied simultaneously.

Mr. Goulston asked if the building would be rented out for weddings and other events. He asserted that a sidewalk is needed and that the roadway is too dangerous.

Mr. Schreiber asked the applicant for calculations of the occupancy load of the building. He stated that the existing building will have other restrictions on how many people can be in the building, other than square footage. The other restrictions will include means of egress, bathrooms, doorways, and other things. There is missing information, he said.

Mr. Tucker suggested that the Board finish hearing from the public. He also stated that occupancy of the interior of the building is not part of Site Plan Review, but a matter dealt with by the fire code. Mr. Schreiber noted that occupancy of the interior might bear on the issue of parking.

Patti Prunhuber of 57 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that this is a welcoming community. She suggested that the community and Board figure out how to make this proposal work. She made several suggestions about how potential traffic problems might be alleviated, including some that have been used when neighbors have weddings at their homes. She reiterated that the concerns of the neighbors are real and that there is a dangerous situation at the intersection of Amherst Road and Harkness Road. She suggested that the neighbors work together with the members of the Mosque to have improvements made to the road and the intersections.

Glen Brown of 62 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that the property has a septic system. He asked if it is adequate and up to standard and if it can handle the proposed use. He asked for information about the quality and size of the septic system.

Claudette Boudreau, the realtor for the seller, stated that the septic system is new, that it was installed in 2008 and that it was designed for 6 bedrooms. She asserted that this is a large capacity.

Steve Prothers of 256 Harkness Road stated that he appreciated the Mosque members' respect for the neighbors. He stated that there needs to be a growth plan in place for the Mosque. His home is 15 feet from the property line and he doesn't want to fence in his whole property. He stated that the old septic system on the property had failed and that the water wells in the area sometimes dry up. All of the residents have individual wells for drinking water.

Tom Marchands of 38 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that he is an engineer and that he was upset that the traffic impacts were being dismissed. He stated that traffic needs to be addressed and he asserted that a septic system for a 6 bedroom house will not handle the number of people who will be attending the Mosque. He expressed concern about the level of detail on the site plan and the number of people who will be arriving by car. He asked about other events that might occur on the property, aside from religious services.

Mr. Shefftz stated that the septic system is an issue for the Board of Health to consider. He questioned whether a Traffic Impact Statement would be of use and whether it would show a change in the Level of Service on the road.

Mr. Schreiber stated that the Board should not use a previous TIS as an example. Everything is different in this case.

Mr. Tucker stated that the Board could add a condition requiring review of the project at a future date to assess traffic impacts. He added that the fire code would limit the occupancy of the building.

Mary McCarthy, attending with her husband, Bob Hawley, of 11 Harkness Road (Pelham), stated that she and Mr. Hawley had gone to the opening of the Hampshire Mosque as members of the Grace Episcopal Church and she encouraged the groups to work on problems together.

Jeff Kris of 202 Harkness Road (Amherst) stated that his children had almost been hit by cars on the road and that people speed in front of his house. He asserted that there are two different speed limits on the road.

Mr. Shefftz noted that drivers on Harkness Road need more reminders of speed limits.

Mr. Kris stated that in Hadley, where there are gravel parking lots, there is a requirement for a reservoir to contain oil spills from cars in order to protect neighboring wells. He is concerned about traffic and parking.

Mr. Tucker stated that the application meets the [Bylaw] requirements for permanent parking spaces. The applicant is providing the gravel area as an overflow parking lot for infrequent annual events.

Mr. Kris stated that for a 30-car parking lot at a commercial project in Hadley the applicant was required to put in oil retention measures. His house has a shallow well and he is concerned about water quality.

Ruth Elcan of 92 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that she would like to have the Mosque in the neighborhood but she is concerned about traffic. She has lived in her house for 36 years and she has been a member of the Pelham Zoning Board of Appeals. A few properties in the area are used for businesses or home occupations. The Pelham ZBA is always concerned with parking, the number of cars visiting a property and traffic. She referred to the business owned by Jeff Weeks, Amherst Welding. Ms. Elcan also referred to the Shumway Landscaping business that moved its business to Route 9 because of traffic issues.

Mr. Carson asked about the traffic situation when the building was used as a school. Ms. Elcan stated that the traffic was "not a lot". Students were dropped off and she was not aware of traffic.

Anne Maggs of 284 Harkness Road (Amherst) stated that the previous occupants of the property [Sunbow 5 Foundation] had been farmers. They sold their produce on the Common. They moved to Hadley because the farmland was better. They also had healing ceremonies. There was not a lot of impact. The school didn't have much traffic, either. The previous occupants, the Owens, processed but did not raise chickens on the property. Ms. Maggs noted that her well is on the south side of her property and she is concerned about it.

Na'imah Muhammad of Belchertown, a member of the Mosque and a former counselor at Amherst Regional High School, acknowledged the neighbors' concerns about the growth of the Mosque community. She stated that the Mosque has few permanent members and that it has grown very slowly. Many people who attend services are foreign academics associated with the university and colleges. The Mosque members "need a place of our own" she said. The Mosque in its present location doesn't see a lot of traffic. Most of the students go to services at UMass or in West Springfield. She has had some students in the elementary school and high school who have been interested in coming to services with her. The Islamic religion follows the lunar calendar. The holidays sometimes occur when students are not here.

Ms. Muhammad stated that the Hampshire Mosque would look for a better spot if the community were to grow in the future. The members would like to become an integral part of the community.

Karen Wiemokly of 218 Harkness Road (Amherst) asked about the students who come from Deerfield and Smith. She asked how many students come to services and whether they come by car or bus. She asked if the educational aspect of the Mosque's mission would cause more people to come to the property.

Dr. Ali stated that there are about 9 to 12 students who come from Deerfield Academy, in a mini-van. About 3 to 6 students come from Smith. The Mosque does not operate a formal school, but does teach children about their faith. The paid membership of the Mosque is about 35 people. There are 15 families who are members. Students and other transients also attend services. Dr. Ali noted that if the road is dangerous then the two towns should work together to make it a safer place.

Karen Wiemokly stated that the Mormon Church near Amity Street often hosts community events. She asked if the Mosque property would be rented out and used for community events.

Dr. Ali stated that the Muslim population usually holds its "iftars" [the evening meal when Muslims break their fast during the Islamic month of Ramadan] at the Campus Center at UMass. The Mosque does not plan to rent out the building for other uses. The two prayer rooms need to be used five times a day for prayer. The members also do not plan to hold other events, such as weddings, here, because the space is too small.

Gary Tobin, Chief of the Pelham Police Department, stated that traffic on Harkness Road is controlled by the Town of Pelham. He further stated that larger groups using the site twice a year won't be a big problem.

Linda Prothers of 256 Harkness Road (Amherst) asked about trips in and out of the driveway. She noted that the southern driveway is directly next to her house. It is important for her to maintain her peace. She finds peace at her home and she will be home all summer. Ms. Prothers would like screening from cars. She would like the applicants to extend the existing fence. Ms. Prothers asked if the parking on the other side would affect the conservation area to the north.

Ms. Brestrup stated that she had talked to Wetlands Administrator, Stephanie Ciccarello, about wetlands issues. If the applicants plan to do construction within 100 feet of a wetland area they will need to notify the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Prothers asked about soundproofing and the use of air conditioning.

Mr. Tucker stated that he was not aware of any [proposed or existing] air-conditioning and that the Board could require screening of air-conditioning units and could prohibit exterior amplification.

Mr. Webber asked about screening – what kind of screening, how much and of what type?

Ms. Prothers reiterated that she would like to see the fencing continued. She would like a combination of fencing and planting. She asked that the existing fence be extended towards the road and towards the back of the property.

Kevin Hartzel of 1 Harkness Road (Pelham) asked that the Board look harder at the configuration of the parking lot. He recommended that the parking on the north side of the building be more organized.

Mr. Goulston stated that the site plan should be revised to show a second handicapped access, and that the issues of water, sewer, fire and safety should be addressed. He also asked if parking is allowed on the road.

Ms. Brestrup responded that the Planning Department had strongly encouraged the applicant to provide the appropriate number of parking spaces on the site so that there would be no need to park on the road.

Mr. Tucker stated that the Planning staff did not know if the road was currently posted “No Parking” but he offered to find out. He added that the issues of water, septic, Building Code and fire protection would be addressed by others within the town government.

Mr. Shefftz asked about a waiver for the second handicapped ramp and whether a state board would decide this matter. He noted that the applicant had requested four waivers: Landscape Plan, Lighting Plan, Soil Erosion Plan and Traffic Impact Statement.

Mr. Goulston asked if the waivers had been discussed. Mr. Singer stated that the requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement had been discussed and he asserted that the road was inadequate.

Mr. Tucker noted that the requirements for a Traffic Impact Statement were listed in the Zoning Bylaw. TIS’s deal primarily with what happens at adjacent intersections. The Level of Service of a road or intersection cannot be degraded by more than one level without mitigation being required. The roadway has problems that the towns of Amherst and Pelham have not addressed for a long time. He recommended that the Select Boards, Town Engineers, Police Departments and DPW’s of both towns get together to deal with the issues that have been brought up. This is a pre-existing problem and the communities need to deal with it, he said. The traffic on adjacent streets may not exceed the design capacity, which is based on traffic engineering standards, but safety hazards should not be created. If the road is hazardous the issues of fast driving, sight line problems, no lights and no sidewalks should be addressed.

Glen Brown of 62 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that some particularly dangerous spots are the intersection of Harkness Road with Stony Hill Road where there is a blind spot and the intersection of Harkness Road and Amherst Road where there are high banks and a blind curve. There are tractor trailers and heavy dump trucks that use Harkness Road. It has become a major cut through.

Ruth Elcan of 92 Harkness Road (Pelham) stated that there are lots of walkers on Harkness Road. The road is used as a cut through. She asked that the Board take seriously the request for fencing along the southern property line. She referred to the large backyard that could be used to park 20 or 30 cars and stated that there is a need for fencing and trees.

Naz Mohamed, a resident of Hadley and a member of the Mosque, stated that there will be no parking in back of the building because of the locations of the septic system and well. The traffic along the road is a pre-existing condition. In the 20 to 25 years that she has been here the Muslim population has grown very slowly from 2 to about 60.

Mr. Tucker suggested that the Board continue the public hearing to April 21st at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Shefftz asked if this would provide enough time if a TIS is needed.

Ms. Barberet stated that she had lived at 57 South Valley Road and has also lived on Harkness Road. Widening the road would exacerbate the problem and requiring a TIS still will not address the problem. The problem is speed. The community would like to see results.

Mr. Tucker stated that the mechanism for changing the speed limit is through the two Select Boards and setting a common speed limit for the two towns would help.

Mr. Shefftz stated that the Board needed to decide whether the TIS is going to be required.

Mr. Webber MOVED to continue the public hearing to April 21st at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Schreiber seconded and the vote was 9-0.

Mr. Tucker offered to see if there is any existing traffic data on Harkness Road.

There was discussion about whether a second handicapped ramp was needed for the Mosque. Mr. Schreiber stated that this project requires a registered architect. It is over 35,000 cubic feet of volume. He stated that the Board needs full architectural plans and that the occupant load inside the building has an impact on the number of cars visiting the site. The use is being changed and it is becoming an assembly building. The Board needs architectural plans by an architect with occupant calculations. He expressed doubts about the occupant load described in the application. He stated that it may be lower than what has been presented.

The Board listed the items that it would like to see addressed by the applicant:

- 1) Architectural plans showing the occupant load of the building;
- 2) A Site Plan with accurate information regarding parking, access, site improvements and lighting.

Mr. Tucker noted that full architectural plans of the interior are not required by the Bylaw for Site Plan Review and he asked if occupancy information [for the various spaces in the building] would suffice. Mr. Schreiber agreed. Mr. Schreiber and Mr. O’Keeffe supported having a Site Plan prepared by a qualified professional – a landscape architect, surveyor, engineer or architect.

Mr. Webber asked that the Site Plan show the parking spaces and screening (in the form of trees and/or fencing). He asked that the type of trees be noted on the plan. Mr. O’Keeffe would like to see landscaping beyond what was shown on the plan that had been submitted.

Mr. Shefftz stated that the road has safety issues. The parking on site must be adequate to handle peak usage.

Dana McDonald of 59 South Valley Road, Chair of the Pelham Conservation Commission, suggested that Board members travel Harkness Road to “get a feel for the road”.

Mr. Shefftz noted that Mr. Crowner had biked to the site for the Site Visit and had encountered no traffic at all. Ms. Anderson stated that when she left the site visit she headed north and passed through the terrible intersection at Harkness Road and Amherst/Pelham Road.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. **Signing of decisions** – The Board signed the following decisions:

SPR2010-00005/M3724 – Meadow Street, Leigh F. Andrews and Donald A. LaVerdiere, Amherst Enterprise Park, Office Building

SPP2010-00010/M4721 – 14 Gray Street, Hills House LLC (Russ Wilson)

B. **Other** – None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Town Meeting – The Board postponed discussion of Town Meeting to the next Planning Board meeting on April 21st.
 - 1) Warrant Review
 - 2) Movers and Speakers
 - 3) Upcoming Meeting Schedule
- B. Subcommittees – Master Plan Subcommittee? – The Board postponed discussion to the next Planning Board meeting.
- C. Other

V. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS

The Board signed ANR 2010-00009 – Ronald LaVerdiere – Meadow Street – Creation of two lots out of three – Map 4D, Parcels 1, 2 and 3.

Mr. Shefftz noted that he had recently declined to endorse an ANR plan on advice of Town Counsel, for a property on Adams Street, since the road on which the lot was proposed did not provide legal frontage.

VI. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS – None

VII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS – None

VIII. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS – None
Zoning

IX. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

- A. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
- B. Community Preservation Act Committee
- C. Agricultural Commission
- D. Save Our Stop Committee
- E. Puffer's Pond 2020 Committee

X. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – None

XI. REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – None

XII. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Christine M. Brestrup, Senior Planner

Approved:

Jonathan Shefftz, Chair

DATE: _____