

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, April 18, 2012 – 7:00 PM
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: David Webber, Chair; Jonathan O’Keeffe, Rob Crouner, Bruce Carson, Connie Kruger, Sandra Anderson, Stephen Schreiber, Richard Roznoy and Kathleen Ford (7:12 PM)

ABSENT: none

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

Mr. Webber opened the meeting at 7:05 PM. He announced that the meeting was being broadcast live by Amherst Media and recorded by Amherst Media and town staff.

I. MINUTES April 4, 2012

Mr. Crouner MOVED to approve the Minutes of April 4, 2012. Mr. Carson seconded and the vote was 7-0-1 (Schreiber abstained).

II. PUBLIC HEARING

SPR2012-00003/M12887 – 1156 N. Pleasant St., Catherine & Morten Jensen-Hole

Request to convert a dimensionally conforming single-family dwelling to a two-family dwelling, under Section 3.321 of the Zoning Bylaw. (Map 5C/Parcel 5; R-VC Zoning District)

Mr. Webber read the preamble and opened the public hearing. The applicant, Cathy Jensen-Hole, of 556 Federal Street, Belchertown, presented the application.

The house is now a four-bedroom single-family dwelling. The applicants wish to convert it to two apartments, with four bedrooms in each. The house will be split vertically, with one unit at the front of the building and the second unit at the rear of the building. Ms. Jensen-Hole referred to the Development Application Report and the Site Visit Report, prepared by Planning Department staff, while giving her presentation.

The Zoning Bylaw requires two parking spaces per dwelling unit. The applicants are expecting that four people will live in each unit. They propose to provide six parking spaces on the south side of the property and two parking spaces in front of the garage, for a total of eight spaces. The cars parked along the south side will be able to turn around in the driveway before exiting the property. The cars parked in front of the garage will need to back down the driveway and turn around in the access road in front of the house, before exiting onto North Pleasant Street. The driveway is currently narrow and in poor condition. The applicants propose to widen it to twelve feet and pave it with asphalt.

Ms. Jensen-Hole referred to revised drawings and documents which show changes from the documents that were submitted with the application.

The original plan called for a border of evergreen plants along the southern property line. Since the site visit, the applicants have met with the owners of the property to the south to discuss screening. The applicants now propose to install a fence along the southern property line to screen the cars and to separate the properties. At the back of the property there will be a chain link fence, along the southern property line. Between the adjacent house to the south and the new parking area there will be a wooden fence to screen the cars. There will be a short section of wooden fence along the front of the parking area to screen the cars from the street. The applicants propose to plant broad-leaved evergreens that will grow to a height of 4 to 6 feet in front of the fence on the street side. Inkberry, Mountain Laurel and Japanese Holly are examples of the types of the plants that would be planted.

The lighting plan has been revised. The new lighting plan shows motion detector security lights

(sensory operated) in three locations – one on the garage, shining on parking spaces 7 and 8, one on the house, shining on parking spaces 1 through 6 and one on the house shining on the path that leads from the parking lot to the front door.

Each egress will have dark-sky compliant sconce lights mounted on the wall. Catalog cuts for the different types of lights were presented.

There will be a stone or asphalt path leading from the parking area to the front door.

Storage areas will be provided in the barn. Garbage and bicycles can be stored in the open barn at the rear of the house.

One existing door on the house will be replaced and two new doors will be added, for emergency egress. The new doors will be fiberglass and will match more closely the existing wooden front door than the steel doors originally proposed. The fiberglass doors can be painted to match the existing wooden door. The applicant noted that the new “Stretch Building Code” is more compatible with fiberglass doors than with wooden doors, which is why fiberglass was chosen.

Ms. Jensen-Hole stated that the low bushes and vines in the vicinity of the new parking area will be removed. The applicants will try to keep the healthy trees.

There is one bedroom proposed for the second unit that is located on the second floor. It currently has a large skylight. The applicant met with the Building Commissioner and he determined that the existing skylight does not conform to Building Code as an emergency egress. He suggested that the skylight be replaced and moved lower on the roof line in order to comply with the Building Code. Alternatively a new, wider, sliding window could be installed on the south side of the building to provide emergency egress. This new window could be made to look like the existing windows. The applicants have not yet decided which alternative to choose.

One existing egress door on the first floor, south side, can no longer be used as an emergency egress because it leads to a bedroom. A new, primary egress for the second unit will be provided on the south side. Steps at the new primary egress will be installed in accordance with Building Code. The Building Commissioner agreed that the old egress door could be surrounded by a balcony railing, and therefore no longer available as an emergency egress door.

Mr. Webber reviewed and read from the Site Visit Report. Three members of the Board had attended the site visit.

With regard to cars on the site, Ms. Jensen-Hole noted that the town’s plans for the North Amherst Village Center encourage people to walk and to use public transportation. There is a bus stop nearby, which will be convenient for tenants. The applicants have another property in town with two apartments (one with three tenants and one with four tenants). The tenants at that property rarely have more than two cars per unit.

Mr. Crouner asked about the separation between this house and the Townhouse Apartment complex to the west. Ms. Jensen-Hole stated that there is a chain link fence between the two properties and it is maintained by the apartment complex.

Mr. Roznoy asked questions about the emergency egress from the second floor and whether it would meet Code. Ms. Jensen-Hole explained that the Building Commissioner would be satisfied with a skylight being used for emergency egress if it were lower down on the roof line (no more than 44” above the floor) and if it were of a newer design, with a hinge, opening at the bottom. Mr. Schreiber explained that the requirement for the egress window assumes that someone will be rescued via a ladder, assisted by the Fire Department.

Mr. Webber asked if Board members agreed to waive the Soil Erosion Plan as requested. The applicant explained that there would be no changes to the site, other than improvements to the parking lot. She noted that roof drainage flows away from the house, towards the back of the property. Board members agreed by consensus to waive the Soil Erosion Plan requirement.

There was discussion about whether eight parking spaces should be provided or required. After discussion Board members decided by consensus to agree to a parking plan showing eight spaces.

Mr. Schreiber expressed concern about the asphalt driveway being too close to the house. Ms. Jensen-Hole explained that there are areas of grass near the primary access door for the second unit. These areas of grass do not show on the plan. The asphalt is not as extensive as it appears on the plan.

Ms. Anderson asked about snow removal and snow storage. Ms. Jensen-Hole explained that there is an area between parking spaces 6 and 7 that can be used to store snow. In addition, some of the snow can be removed from the site by the snow plow contractor. There will also be a six foot area between the new wooden fence and the parking spaces that can be used to store snow.

Mr. Webber praised the use of dark-sky compliant lighting and downcast lighting. He asked where the solar lights would be used. Ms. Jensen-Hole explained that the solar lights were no longer being proposed. They had been replaced by a downcast, dark-sky compliant flood lights shining on the pathway from the parking area to the front door.

Mr. Webber noted that a Traffic Impact Statement had been submitted. Mr. Crowner observed that the Traffic Impact Statement did not appear to meet the strict requirements of the Zoning Bylaw or the Planning Board Rules and Regulations and therefore the Board may wish to consider waiving the requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement. After discussion, Ms. Jensen-Hole requested a waiver from the requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement. Board members agreed by consensus to grant a waiver of the requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement.

Mr. Webber noted that a Management Plan had been submitted and that it appeared to contain the necessary information. He also noted that a letter had been received from an abutter of another property owned by the applicants stating that the applicants were responsible landlords.

Ms. Kruger questioned the authority of the Planning Board to review colors and architecture during a Site Plan Review. Ms. Brestrup noted that the Site Plan Review application before the Board was for a two-family dwelling. A recent Bylaw change allows two-family dwellings in certain zoning districts by Site Plan Review. In considering these applications the Planning Board is now required to apply the provisions of Sections 3.2040 and 3.2041 of the Zoning Bylaw (the Design Review Principles and Standards). These Principles and Standards include the consideration of architectural and site details along with color and materials.

Mr. Webber proceeded to review the Design Review Principles and Standards with respect the application before the Board. After this review, the Board agreed by consensus that the application met the principles and standards described in Section 3.2040 and 3.2041.

Mr. Schreiber expressed concern about the architectural detailing of the proposed sliding egress window that might be installed as an alternative to a new skylight egress window. He was also concerned about any other alteration that would change the appearance of the building. Ms. Ford suggested that anything being replaced in kind would not be of concern. However, anything that changed the proportion, type or character of the architectural details should be reviewed by the Planning Board.

Mr. Roznoy asked if the roof would be replaced. Ms. Jensen-Hole stated that the slate roof was in good condition and that there were no plans to replace the roof.

Don Lesser of 1164 North Pleasant Street stated that he was a neighbor to the north of the subject property. He was not "anti-student" and was not opposed to the Jensen-Holes renting the house, although he would prefer that it were owner-occupied. He expressed concern about the quality of life in North Amherst and the property values of the neighborhood. He noted that large parties, including hundreds of students, were becoming more common. He asserted that Meadow Street was becoming a "student slum". He would like to prevent 1156 North Pleasant Street from deteriorating in a similar manner. He acknowledged that the Jensen-Hole lease would help to control tenants' behavior. He asked that a barrier be installed on the northern side of the property, on the Jensen-Hole property, so

that it would separate his property from 1156 North Pleasant Street. He explained that his property is lower down, so it would be preferable if the barrier were placed on the higher ground of the Jensen-Hole property so that the screening effect would be maximized. He expressed concern about parking issues and asked that signs saying "No Parking" be installed on the access road. He asked that a barrier be placed at the end of the access road, as had been there in the past, to keep people from driving on the grass.

Mr. Lesser noted that Mr. Holden owns a two-family house across the road and it is model of how a property should be managed. It is quiet and fits into the neighborhood.

Ms. Jensen-Hole offered to install a border of trees along the north boundary. She suggested that arborvitae could work, given the sunny exposure of the area. She offered to talk to Mr. Lesser about this proposal.

Mr. O'Keeffe suggested that the Chair of the Planning Board or Planning Department staff could write to the Department of Public Works and request that the "No Parking" signs and a barrier be installed on the access road. Board members noted that Guilford Mooring, Superintendent of Public Works, was present in the audience.

Ms. Anderson MOVED that the public hearing be suspended to hear from Mr. Mooring regarding street acceptances. Mr. Mooring indicated that he was willing to wait until the end of the public hearing to present information regarding street acceptances. Ms. Anderson withdrew her motion.

Sarah Fisher of 1164 North Pleasant Street stated that she supported her husband's [Mr. Lesser's] comments. She suggested reducing the number of parking spaces on the property because of the proximity of the bus stop. She expressed concern about cars from the house crossing over the sidewalk that leads to the bus stop. She asserted that the Traffic Impact Statement that had been submitted was not adequate and that backing out of the driveway could be treacherous.

Wesley Parker of 1146 North Pleasant Street stated that his family was the third generation to live in his house. His family has been there for 80 years. Over time the area has been transformed into a student housing area. He referred to "lawn sofa properties" proliferating. He noted that there is another property in the neighborhood that is up for sale. He observed that this is a historic district and a beautiful place and has long been an owner-occupied area. Mr. Holden had wanted to add more units to his property and the request was not granted; however he has done an excellent job of managing the two units that he has. He suggested that there were stipulations that the Planning Board could make in granting this approval that would lead to good property management practices. He noted that students climb over the fence that separates the subject property from Townhouse Apartments.

Louise Lavine of 1133 North Pleasant Street stated that she has lost faith in what the town envisions for North Amherst. She asserted the Planning Board was not reviewing what is being done on the inside of the house. Form-based Code is all about appearance, she said. The function of the buildings will cause disintegration of the neighborhood to student slums. She opposed having eight parking spaces on the side of the house and asserted that North Pleasant Street is not well-organized in terms of circulation.

Mr. Roznoy MOVED to close the public hearing. Ms. Kruger seconded and the vote was 9-0.

The Board found under Section 11.24 of the Zoning Bylaw, Site Plan Review, as follows:

11.2400 – The project is in conformance with all appropriate provisions of the Zoning Bylaw;

There was discussion about whether there are regulations in town limiting the use of upholstered furniture outdoors and whether there should be conditions regarding lawn sofas and landscaping on the north side of the property. The Board determined to discuss these topics later in the meeting.

11.2401 – Town amenities and abutting properties will be protected because detrimental or offensive actions will be minimized; the application is within the scope of the

- Zoning Bylaw; the conditions are adequate; a Management Plan and Sample Lease have been presented that address many of the issues brought up by members of the public;
- 11.2402 – Abutting properties will be protected from detrimental site characteristics resulting from the proposed use;
 - 11.2403 – Adequate recreational facilities will be provided; no changes are being proposed to existing recreational areas, open space or amenities;
 - 11.2410 – Unique or important natural, historic or scenic features will be protected; the changes that are being proposed do not change the features of the house, except for doors and windows; no major reconstruction of the interior is proposed;
 - 11.2411 – Proposed methods of refuse disposal are described in the Management Plan and on the plans, they are considered to be adequate;
 - 11.2412 – The ability of the proposed sewage disposal and water supply systems to serve the proposed use is considered to be adequate; the property is connected to the town sewer and water systems;
 - 11.2413 – The ability of the proposed drainage system within and adjacent to the site to handle the increased runoff resulting from the development has been found to be adequate; runoff will not be increased from the house; roof runoff drains to the rear of the site; much of the drainage from the parking area will also flow to the rear of the site;
 - 11.2414 – Provision of adequate landscaping, including screening of adjacent residential uses, has been found to be sufficient; the applicant will meet with the abutter on the north side of the property to reach an agreement on the type of screening needed there; the applicant has already met with the abutter on the south side and has reached an agreement to install a fence on the south side; a revised landscape plan will be submitted to the Board for review showing the agreed upon screening on the north side;
 - 11.2415 – The requirement for a soil erosion plan will be waived because there will not be extensive earthwork on the site that will cause erosion;
 - 11.2416 – Protection of adjacent properties by minimizing the intrusion of various types of environmental pollution and nuisances has been found to be adequate;

There was discussion about reducing the number of parking spaces to six. Ms. Anderson noted that four parking spaces are required. However, she expressed concern about cars being parked on the lawn if the number of parking spaces is reduced. There is no on-street parking allowed on the access road. Ms. Jensen-Hole prefers to keep eight parking spaces to accommodate tenants and guests. Board members agreed by consensus that they would rather see cars (including those of guests) parked in the designated parking spaces, on pavement, rather than being parked on the lawn, and they agreed to approve a plan with eight parking spaces.

Ms. Jensen-Hole offered to stipulate in the lease that there shall be no parking on the access roadway. She noted that she polices parking on her property in the center of town.

Ms. Ford asked how the access road is maintained and policed. Mr. Parker noted that there had been a barrier that prevented cars from driving onto the lawn adjacent to the access road. There had also been “No Parking” signs. It is illegal to park there and the police will come and enforce the parking regulations if called. Board members agreed to add a condition requiring a change in the lease that stipulates no parking on the access road.

Board members also agreed to add a condition expanding the prohibition in the lease regarding sofas. The new provision would require that no sofas or upholstered furniture be kept or used anywhere around the exterior of the house and on the property, including on the porches and entryways, lawns and paved areas.

Board members asked Planning staff to investigate with Town Counsel whether such a provision could be added to the standard list of conditions for Site Plan Reviews.

- 11.2417 – Protection of adjacent properties by minimizing the intrusion of lighting has been discussed and is considered to be adequate; all exterior lighting will be downcast and will not shine onto adjacent properties; fixtures will be dark-sky compliant;
- 11.2418 – N/A
- 11.2419 – N/A
- 11.2420 – The Board has reviewed the Design Review Principles and Standards and has found the application to be in accord with these principles and standards;
- 11.2421 – The development is consistent with respect to setbacks, placement of parking, landscaping and entrances and exits with surrounding buildings and development;
- 11.2422 – N/A
- 11.2423 – N/A
- 11.2424 – Adequate screening will be provided; a revised landscape plan is required to be submitted showing screening on the north side of the property;
- 11.2430 – The site has been designed to provide for the convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement both within the site and in relation to adjoining ways and properties; the Board has reviewed the circulation patterns proposed for the site and found them to be satisfactory;
- 11.2431 – N/A
- 11.2432 – The location and design of parking spaces, bicycle racks and drive aisles will be provided in a safe manner; bicycles are proposed to be stored in the open barn to the rear of the house; the design of the parking area has been reviewed and found to be satisfactory;
- 11.2433 – N/A
- 11.2434 – N/A
- 11.2435 – N/A
- 11.2436 – The requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement will be waived;
- 11.2437 – N/A

Waivers

Soil Erosion Plan
Traffic Impact Statement

Conditions

1. If exterior architectural changes are proposed (changes to the “building envelope”), other than in-kind replacement of architectural features, the proposed changes shall be submitted to the Planning Board at a public meeting for review and approval prior to being constructed or installed.
2. A revised Landscape Plan amended to include a buffer along the northern boundary shall be submitted to the Planning Board at a public meeting for review and approval prior to installation.
3. The lease for the property shall be revised to include a prohibition on parking on the access road along the front of the property.
4. The lease for the property shall be revised to include a requirement that no sofas or upholstered furniture, other than furniture specifically designed as garden furniture, be kept or used anywhere around the exterior of the building and on the property, including on the porches and entryways, lawns and paved areas.
5. Exterior lighting shall be downcast and shall not shine onto adjacent properties.
6. Landscaping shall be installed in accordance with the approved Landscape Plan and, once installed, shall be continually maintained.
7. Four copies of the final revised plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department.

8. This permit will expire in two (2) years if substantial construction has not begun.

Ms. Ford MOVED that the application be approved with the waivers and conditions as listed. Ms. Kruger seconded and the vote was 9-0.

III. TOWN MEETING

- B. Articles 5 and 6 – Recommendation to Select Board regarding acceptance of Sunrise Avenue and altered layout of University Drive

Guilford Mooring, Superintendent of Public Works, presented the articles. Sunrise Avenue was laid out long ago. It was built to town standards but was not accepted by the town. The property on which the road was built is currently owned and managed by the Amherst Housing Authority. At the Housing Authority's request the DPW fixed and paved the road for the AHA. The AHA then requested that the DPW assist it in having the town accept the roadway. The road has a hammerhead at the end that functions as a turnaround.

Ms. Kruger noted that the topic of roadway acceptance came before the Board of Commissioners of the AHA. The Board members were thrilled to have the town fix and pave the road. The AHA owns a duplex for people with special needs at the end of the road. The AHA will speak in support of the roadway acceptance at Town Meeting.

Regarding University Drive, Mr. Mooring stated that the town took the property from Big Y and CVS. The town now owns the sidewalk and a ½ lane. There is a need to accept the new addition to the layout in order for the town to be able to use public funds to repair the area in the future.

Ms. Anderson asked who owns the traffic lights. Mr. Mooring told a lengthy story about why there has been a delay in the installation of the traffic lights.

Board members asked Mr. Mooring about the access road in North Amherst, adjacent to 1156 North Pleasant Street. He stated that the abutters can petition the town to remove the road and connect their driveways directly to North Pleasant Street. He would prefer not to reinstall the "No Parking" signs and the barrier because students steal signs and move barriers. In addition, he would need to find the original Select Board authorization to put up the signs. He stated that the DPW is not funded to keep replacing signs and that they are constantly behind in their work as it is.

Ms. Kruger encouraged Mr. Mooring and the DPW to reinstall the signs and the barrier as a show of responsiveness on the part of the town to the concerns of the residents of North Amherst.

Mr. Webber thanked Mr. Mooring for the presentation.

Mr. O'Keeffe MOVED that the Planning Board recommend to the Select Board the adoption of Articles 5 and 6 [of the 2012 Annual Town Meeting Warrant] regarding Sunrise Avenue and University Drive. Mr. Schreiber seconded and the vote was 9-0.

- A. Zoning Article Issues - Board member responsibilities

Mr. Tucker encouraged Planning Board members to take responsibility for certain aspects of Articles 24 and 25 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, regarding Village Center Rezoning. He offered to provide any back-up information that they thought would be useful. Mr. Webber asked for volunteers.

Ms. Kruger volunteered to talk about South Amherst and Atkins Corners issues, specifically noise at the gun club and the way the new roadway design will function in the new Village Center. She suggested asking Guilford Mooring to attend the

Town Meeting session at which the Atkins Corner Village Center will be discussed to answer questions about road design.

Ms. Ford volunteered to talk about the discrepancy between the use and character of the outside of a building and the relationship between those two things.

Mr. O’Keeffe stated that it’s not just about how buildings look on the outside but it’s also about how buildings relate to each other and how they create and define public spaces that are suitable for the community. Ms. Ford agreed to speak about form versus function and about how the zoning code can help to define public space.

Mr. Tucker noted that state law forbids a town from using zoning to regulate the inside of a building, especially the inside of a single-family house.

Ms. Anderson had previously volunteered to speak about the residential parking amendment. She noted that the proposed zoning change would grandfather all pre-existing conditions. She asked for help from other Board members to address the ways in which the town is approaching problem properties and conversions of single-family houses to rentals. There are other methods outside of zoning that are being developed to deal with these issues.

Ms. Anderson noted that she would not be in town on Monday, May 14th, but she would be in town on Wednesday, May 16th. If the residential parking amendment comes up on May 14th, someone else will need to address the issues related to it. There was discussion about requesting that this amendment be considered on a certain night, but some members of the Board felt that the schedule of Town Meeting should be allowed to proceed without requesting such a change.

Mr. O’Keeffe noted that it is desirable to limit the amount of time that is taken to explain the zoning amendment upfront. It is better to generally explain the amendment and then answer questions.

- C. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting – none

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Upcoming Planning Board schedule – public hearings for 67 Northampton Road

The Board discussed the upcoming Planning Board schedule, noting that May 16th might still be a Town Meeting night. The Board members decided to schedule the public hearings for the Site Plan Review and Special Permit applications for Amherst College regarding 67 Northampton Road (Seligman Dormitory) on May 16th, with the understanding that they may need to be continued to May 23rd, if May 16th is still a Town Meeting night. The meetings on May 16th and 23rd will be scheduled for 7:00 in the Town Room, Town Hall.

It was noted that the May 2nd Planning Board meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. in the Town Room, Town Hall.

- B. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

Ms. Kruger suggested that, after listening to neighbors, the Board might wish to take up the topic of housing issues throughout town. Mr. Roznoy suggested that the Board invite the new zoning enforcement officer to a future Planning Board meeting to discuss housing issues and what is being done to resolve problems.

Mr. Carson asked why UMass cannot allow private dormitories to be built on public university property. Ms. Brestrup noted that Town Counsel, Joel Bard, stated at a recent staff meeting that UMass may be able to allow private dormitories to be built on campus. Planning Department staff intends to pursue this topic with Town

Counsel.

Ms. Kruger suggested that the Board generate a list of invitees who might be helpful in discussions about housing issues. She suggested putting this topic on the Planning Board's work list for the summer meetings.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

Mr. Webber noted that the Planning Board had received invitations from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to attend the 50th Anniversary Open House for PVPC scheduled for April 23rd.

VI. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – none

VII. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS – The Planning Board declined to review the following applications:

ZBA FY2012-00021 – Michael Ben-Chaim – To convert a dimensionally non-conforming single family dwelling to a two family dwelling, under Section 3.321 and 9.22 of the Zoning Bylaw, at 28 Shays Street (Map 20A, Parcel 15, R-N Zoning District)

ZBA FY2012-00022 – GP Amherst, LLC - To modify Condition # 1 of ZBA FY1996-0039, to remove an owner occupancy requirement, under Section 10.33 of the Zoning Bylaw at 321 Lincoln Avenue (Map 11C-93, R-G Zoning District)

VIII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS

SPR2012-00005 – Trustees of Amherst College – Request approval to renovate and construct a new addition for an existing dormitory, including parking lot and site improvements, at 67 Northampton Road (Map 14A-223, R-G Zoning District)

SPP2012-00002 – Trustees of Amherst College – Request Special Permit under Footnote "a" of Table 3 and Section 6.6 of the Zoning Bylaw to modify the front setback requirement, at 67 Northampton Road (Map 14A-223, R-G Zoning District)

SPR2012-00006 – Amherst College – Request approval to convert dwelling from single family residence to a duplex per Section 3.321 of the Zoning Bylaw (Map 14C-93, R-G Zoning District)

IX. PLANNING BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Zoning – no report

X. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – Mr. Schreiber reported that the PVPC had met last week. Due to the lateness of the hour he did not elaborate.

Community Preservation Act Committee – Ms. Anderson reported that CPAC had finished its work a few weeks ago and had recommended amounts to be spent in four categories plus administrative costs, for a total of \$532,834.

56% for Affordable Housing – approximately \$300,000

22% for Historical Preservation – approximately \$115,000

9% for Open Space – approximately \$50,000

13% for Recreation – approximately \$70,000

< 1% for Administration – approximately \$2,000

The largest amount of money being recommended is for the HAP project on Olympia Drive. Ms. Anderson reminded the Board that CPAC gets its funding from a 1 ½% surcharge on local real estate taxes and a 25% contribution from the state. She was reluctant to call it a “match”. More information about the CPAC funding can be found on the town website and on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Agricultural Commission – Mr. Webber reported that the Ag Com met last week. There was much discussion about the Farmers Market and how local Amherst farmers might be better represented there. There are only three Amherst farmers out of thirty-three farmers who participate in the Market. The Select Board has just renewed the Farmers Market’s permit to operate in the Spring Street parking lot. The Ag Com and the Select Board are undertaking a survey of all Amherst growers and producers of agricultural products and they are doing some strategic planning on marketing of local agricultural products. Dave Ziomek reported to the Ag Com on town licensing of larger plots of conservation land for agricultural use. The Conservation Commission is reviewing the applications for these licenses. The Kendrick Park Farmers Market will be continuing on Wednesday afternoons. There are also Farmers Markets at Joe Swartz’s farm in North Amherst on Saturday morning and at the Middle School on Saturdays in the winter.

Transportation Plan Task Force – Mr. Roznoy reported that the RFP for consultant services has been out for a few weeks, seeking a firm to develop a transportation plan for the town. Responses to the RFP are due in May. The next meeting of the TPTF is scheduled for early May, after questions from the RFP responders have been submitted. Interviews are expected to happen in mid-May.

Amherst Redevelopment Authority – Ms. Kruger reported that the ARA has not met in a while.

Design Review Board – Ms. Ford reported that she had attended her first DRB meeting and that it was “short and sweet”. The focus of the meeting was on a review of signs, although there was also a review of an Amherst College proposal to add exterior stairways to one of the college-owned houses on Spring Street.

Other Boards and Committees

XI. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – none

XII. REPORT OF STAFF – Ms. Brestrup reported that there had been a scribner’s error the last time the Zoning Bylaw was published having to do with the definition of apartments. She distributed copies of the corrected definition to Planning Board members.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

Christine M. Brestrup,
Senior Planner

David Webber, Chair

DATE: _____