

**AMHERST PLANNING BOARD**  
**Wednesday, January 15, 2014 – 7:00 PM**  
**Town Room, Town Hall**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** David Webber, Chair, Rob Crowner, Bruce Carson, Connie Kruger, Stephen Schreiber, Sandra Anderson, Richard Roznoy and Greg Stutsman

**ABSENT:** Kathleen Ford

**STAFF:** Christine Brestrup, Senior Planner

Mr. Webber opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

**I. MINUTES**

The Board reviewed the Minutes of the December 4, 2013, Planning Board meeting. Mr. Webber requested an amendment to page 1, paragraph 4 in Section II, to add a phrase to the end of the sentence indicating that the list of questions he had prepared were “based on emails the Board received prior to the meeting”.

Mr. Carson MOVED to approve the Minutes of December 4, 2013, as amended. Mr. Schreiber seconded and the vote was 8-0.

**II. PUBLIC HEARING – SITE PLAN REVIEW**

**SPR2014-00006 – Amherst College – 40 Dickinson Street (Formerly Classic Chevrolet)**

Request Site Plan Review approval to change the use of the building from a car dealership and repair shop to a service building related to Amherst College for the Grounds Department (Map 14B/ Parcel 52, B-L Zoning District)

Mr. Webber recited the preamble and opened the public hearing.

Jim Brassord, Director of Facilities and Associate Treasurer of Amherst College, presented information about how the property at 40 Dickinson Street may fit within the long-term plan for the college. He explained that the College is engaged in a strategic planning process, with goals related to academics, student life and service to a diverse student body, among other things. This process will help the College determine how its facilities should respond as the College moves forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The process is termed a “Framework Plan” rather than a “Master Plan” because it sets up a framework for making decisions but does not predict the outcome. It will include adaptive reuse of existing facilities as well as development of new sites. It will be a “living plan” and will be responsive as the needs of the College change. The process has already begun to shape decisions on campus, including a re-evaluation of the location of the new Science Center and thoughts about where to put new dormitories. Mr. Brassord would like to have an opportunity to share the Framework Plan with the Planning Board.

Mr. Brassord spoke about how the 40 Dickinson Street property fits into the plan. It is a property at the boundary of the campus and provides a strategic opportunity to expand the campus. The property will be used for a range of functions. It may be a new building site or it may provide parking or it may continue to be used in accordance with the current proposal. The College has not yet determined its future use.

The College has a short term need for a home for the Grounds Department, which used to occupy the building known as the “Powerhouse”. The Powerhouse, which was designed by McKim, Mead and White, will be renovated to provide a student center, to serve as a place for

students to hold parties and as a gathering space for students.

The 8,000 square foot building at 40 Dickinson Street will become the temporary operational base for the 11 full-time employees of the Grounds Department.

Ms. Kruger thanked Mr. Brassord for attending the meeting. She said that the Board sees a lot of Amherst College projects presented in a piecemeal fashion and suggested that this would be a good time to begin a process for talking with the College about its plans. Ms. Kruger mentioned the College's recent acquisition of the property at 79 South Pleasant Street, which is also at the edge of campus.

Ms. Kruger asked that the College and the Planning Board engage in conversations while the Framework Plan is being developed. The town also has an interest in and plans for the area around the Depot which she described as an emerging Village Center. Ms. Kruger recommended that the College and the Town engage in a "town-gown" conversation early on in the planning process.

Mr. Brassord welcomed the development of a Village Center in the vicinity of 40 Dickinson Street as well as the continuing development of the Downtown area. He noted that the College had actively participated in the Master Plan process for the town and welcomed the suggestion about setting up conversations between the College and the town.

Ms. Kruger stated that Amherst College has an impact on the downtown and that it is important to have a town-gown partnership with Amherst College. She suggested that the interface between the town and the college campus should be a permeable edge rather than an impermeable edge.

There was further discussion about the interface between the campus and the town.

Mr. Webber thanked Mr. Brassord for presenting the "big picture" as it relates to the property at 40 Dickinson Street.

Tom Hartman of Coldham and Hartman Architects presented the application. The proposed work on the property is limited. There will be no changes to the paving. The paved area around the building will provide access to the parking spaces and service and delivery for the building. The building will contain an office space and an open garage bay, similar to the current configuration. There will be employee parking at the south side of the site. A double-walled fuel tank will be relocated from elsewhere on the Amherst College campus to a location at the rear of the building. There will be two dumpsters installed at the southeast corner of the building. A small sign reading "Amherst College Grounds Department" will be mounted near the entry door. Inside the building interior walls will be added, the carpet will be replaced and a new boiler will be installed. The garage doors will be replaced if they fail.

Mr. Webber reported that the Planning Board had conducted a site visit on January 14, 2014. He summarized the Site Visit Report. He noted that the building had been used for manufacturing and industrial uses since it was built. There are existing lights on the building – flood lights and three gooseneck lights.

Mr. Hartman stated that the fuel tank will contain biodiesel fuel. It is important to keep the vehicles inside the building in winter because the diesel fuel will gel.

Mr. Webber noted that an air conditioning unit would be added to the west side of the building. He reviewed the questions that had been asked at the site visit as follows:

- Can and should the sidewalk be extended past the building? If so would the town or the applicant pay to do this work? Mr. Hartman stated that the sidewalk could be extended but there are telephone poles along this area. He noted that beyond the

property at 40 Dickinson Street the land drops off and there would be a substantial amount of grading involved with the installation of a sidewalk extending down to Route 9.

Ms. Brestrup noted that the Superintendent of the DPW and the Planning Director had recommended that the two driveways be defined, the expansive curb cut in front of the building be closed down and the area in front of the building be landscaped. The site would then be limited to two driveways, one to the north of the building and one to the south. Given the temporary nature of the proposed use, this work might be linked to a future change in the use of the site.

- There was a question about environmental reports. Mr. Webber noted that environmental reports had been received about the property.
- Would the easements across the property and on adjacent properties allow Amherst College to use the adjacent properties for uses other than passing through the site?

Ms. Kruger reported that Whiting Oil owns the property to the east and that Whiting Oil and Amherst College have easements across each other's land. The Whiting Oil property appears to be continuous with the Amherst College property. Ms. Kruger had a question about whether the College planned to use the Whiting Oil property for anything other than circulation.

Mr. Webber explained that an easement is a right to use someone else's land. It is usually a deeded right.

Mr. Hartman noted that another landowner, New England Central Railroad, also owns land and has easements in the area.

Peter Root, Director of Operations for Amherst College, stated that he was not able to get detailed information about the easements, but that the college doesn't need access across the property of Whiting Oil in order to be able to use the property. He also stated that Amherst College has no intention of using the adjacent property for anything other than informal vehicle circulation.

- There was a question about whether the property is in a historic district and whether the applicant is required to consult with the Historical Commission. Ms. Brestrup stated that the property was not in the Dickinson Historical District or the Local Historic District; however a portion of the building is historic. The applicant is not required to consult with the Historical Commission or the Local Historic District Commission. No changes are being proposed to the historic portion of the building and no demolition is proposed. If the applicant proposes to demolish a portion of the building a Demolition Permit would need to be obtained. This would require interaction with the Historical Commission. If the applicant proposes to change the historical portion of the building the Planning Board could suggest that the applicant go to the Historical Commission for advice, but there would not be a requirement unless demolition is proposed.
- There was a request for catalog cuts for the garage door replacements. Mr. Hartman submitted these catalog cuts. Board members reviewed these submittals. Mr. Hartman stated that one of the door types would be used on the south side of the building where the doors will be visible and the other door type will be used on the east side of the building where the doors will not be visible.

- There was a question about the dumpster location. The dumpsters have been relocated to the southeast corner. Mr. Root explained that the dumpsters will be for the use of the Grounds Department and that they will be emptied once a week.

Mr. Root stated that the Grounds Department is responsible caring for the campus grounds including the following operations:

- Snow removal
- Keeping walkways free of ice
- Mowing lawns
- Caring for trees and plants
- Trash removal and recycling.

The Grounds Department takes care of Amherst College property on both sides of Route 9.

There are eleven staff members in the department. Four or five of them operate pieces of large equipment including a bucket lift which is sometimes fitted with a fork lift attachment for removing snow and moving large items, and a trash truck. There are mid-size vehicles for recycling. The small to medium-sized delivery trucks will not be housed in this location.

There are also some pieces of small equipment such as riding lawn mowers, small snow removal equipment to clear sidewalks and small power equipment.

The small equipment will be maintained at 40 Dickinson Street. The large equipment will be maintained in the garage on the south side of Route 9.

Ms. Anderson asked about used oil and oil filters and where these would be stored. Mr. Root explained that these will be stored inside the building until they are properly disposed of.

Ms. Brestrup reported that the Planning Director and the Superintendent of Public Works had both recommended that in the long run the driveways should be defined and a sidewalk created in front of the building, but in the interim at least the snow should be removed, allowing people to walk on the pavement between the building and the street.

Mr. Webber reviewed the Development Application Report. He noted that the side and front setbacks are non-conforming. The change from a car dealership to a service building associated with the Grounds Department is a limited change in use. A new gas line will serve the building. The fuel tank will be moved from another location on campus and dumpsters and an air conditioning unit will be added.

Mr. Webber listed the waivers that had been requested and the Board discussed the waiver requests, including waivers for:

- Landscape Plan
- Erosion Control Plan
- Lighting Plan
- Sign Plan
- Traffic Impact Statement

Landscape Plan – Mr. Hartman noted that the site was almost 100% paved and there was no landscaping proposed at this time. Board members discussed whether there should be some modest landscaping installed between the street and the front of the building, facing Dickinson Street. Ms. Kruger suggested the use of movable planters, given the temporary nature of the use of the site. Other Board members agreed with this approach and Mr. Root stated that the College would consider using movable planters.

Lighting Plan – Mr. Webber noted that there were three existing gooseneck lamps on the building and that these were downcast, which agrees with the Board’s policy of requiring that exterior lights be downcast. Mr. Root stated that the existing lights are adequate since the hours of operation of the building are 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Snow events sometimes come in the middle of the night but the existing lights would be adequate to allow access into the building to start the equipment. Mr. Webber recommended that the Board accept the photograph of the existing lights as the Lighting Plan. After further discussion later in the meeting the Board imposed a condition requiring the submission of a Lighting Plan.

Sign Plan – Mr. Webber recommended accepting the [photo-shopped] photograph of the sign on the side of the building as the “Sign Plan”. Mr. Roznoy clarified that the sign should say “Amherst College Grounds Department”. Board members agreed to this recommendation.

Soil Erosion Plan – The Board agreed by consensus to waive the requirement for a Soil Erosion Plan. Ms. Brestrup reported that the gas line had already been installed.

Management Plan – Mr. Webber stated that the Board had already received information on most of the required items. Ms. Kruger asked about the noise of small mowers and snow blowers. There was discussion about the fact that there is ambient noise as a result of the proximity to Route 9. Mr. Hartman stated that there was already a lot of activity crossing the street because the equipment is currently stored on the south side of Route 9 and must come across the street and up Dickinson Street to serve the Amherst College properties in the vicinity of Lessey Street. He noted that the activity would be confined to normal business hours except for snow emergencies. Mr. Root noted that small equipment will be started and then taken off-site for use. This will cut down on the noise level.

Traffic Impact Statement – Equipment will exit the building through the south doors. Ms. Anderson asked about the backing-up noise that larger vehicles and snow removal vehicles make. Mr. Webber suggested that vehicles can be backed into the garage before a snow emergency so there would be minimal backing-up noise once the vehicles are activated. After discussion the Board agreed to grant the waiver of the requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement.

Drainage – Mr. Webber noted that the drainage on the site was not proposed to change.

Fuel Tank – Mr. Webber noted that the fuel tank would be installed on the east side of the building.

Dumpsters – Mr. Webber noted that the dumpsters would be located at the southeast corner of the building, away from the residential property to the north. Ms. Kruger asked about the need for screening. After discussion the Board agreed that there was no need to screen the dumpsters at this time because they were not a striking visual element and the proposed use is considered to be an interim use of the site.

Parking – There will be 11 parking spaces for 11 employees and one handicapped parking space near the building. There was discussion about whether screening would be necessary for the parking area. After discussion the Board agreed that there was no need for screening for the 11 employee parking spaces. Ms. Kruger noted that there was plenty of space on the site for overflow parking if it were needed.

Conservation Commission – Mr. Webber stated that there were no issues related to the Conservation Commission.

Fire Department Review – Ms. Brestrup reported that the Fire Department had sent an email stating that the Department had no comments on this project at this time.

Matt Cornell of 34 Dickinson Street, an abutter to the north of 40 Dickinson Street, offered comments and asked questions about the project. Having lived next to a commercial property since 1999 he had concerns about hours of operation, noise and lighting. He asked how the alley to the north of the commercial building would be used and stated that oil delivery trucks had used this alley in the past. Mr. Cornell asked about traffic heading south on Dickinson Street and turning onto Route 9. He expressed concern about a possible blockage of traffic and worsening of the existing left turn problem.

Mr. Hartman stated that the two floodlights on the building were mounted on the south side of the building, facing south. Mr. Hartman stated that most of the access to the 40 Dickinson Street building would be from the south driveway. Mr. Hartman stated that smaller vehicles cross Route 9 on the sidewalk, so they will not block the traffic lanes.

Mr. Webber stated that there are 11 employees, 5 of whom will be equipment operators.

Ms. Kruger noted that the property had contained an active car dealership and auto repair establishment, with employees and customers coming and going. She predicted that the level of traffic with the proposed use would be less than the level of traffic with the former use.

Mr. Cornell asked about deliveries, the emptying of the dumpsters, filling of the fuel tank and delivery of parts.

Mr. Root stated that the fuel tank would be filled about once a month. Dumpsters would be emptied once a week. There will be little material brought to this building (no fertilizer for instance) and there would be occasional delivery of parts.

Mr. Cornell stated that he was looking forward to a good-neighbor relationship with the College. He was happy that the large sign would be gone and stated that the lights on the south side of the building were satisfactory.

Mr. Cornell asked about idling of vehicles. He referred to a town Bylaw limiting idling of vehicles to 5 minute or less.

Ms. Anderson observed that there is a state regulation about idling of vehicles. She recommended that the cinder block wall on the north side of the building be painted and that the College consider installing a buffer between the Service Building property and the property to the north. She recommended that the College eliminate the one giant curb cut at some point and create two defined driveways instead.

Mr. Root stated that Amherst College is aware of the regulations regarding idling of vehicles. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety issues updates on environmental regulations.

Ms. Kruger suggested that the circulation on the site could be organized, perhaps with one driveway designated as an entrance and one driveway designated as an exit. After discussion the Board declined to take action to re-organize circulation on the site, at this time, especially in light of the absence of a representative of Whiting Oil.

Mr. Root reiterated that the main service entrance to the site will be on the south side and almost all of the traffic will be on the south side of the building.

In response to a question about the location of exhaust tubes, Mr. Root explained that there will not be a lot of idling of vehicles in the building. Most of the work on vehicles will be done across Route 9 in the existing Amherst College garage.

Mr. Cornell expressed the following thoughts and recommendations about the proposal:

- Concern about the location of air compressor that is proposed for the west side of the building and the amount of noise that it might produce;

- That deliveries to the building and emptying of dumpsters be done at normal business hours;
- That there be minimal use of the north door;
- That the public be involved if any changes are proposed on the site;
- That automatic equipment be turned off at night;
- That smoking only be allowed on the south side of the building.

Mr. Root explained that the proposed air conditioning compressor will be a small residential sized unit. The proposed location on the west side of the building is preferable because it will be close to the area to be cooled. Planters could be located to screen the unit. The air compressor will be put on a timer and would only operate during normal business hours. Deliveries will also occur during normal business hours.

Mr. Webber stated that future changes to the site would be brought before the Planning Board in a public process. He praised Amherst College for its excellent participation in the public process.

In response to concerns about possible changes to the site that might occur without a public process, Ms. Brestrup noted that the Building Commissioner is vigilant about enforcing the Zoning Bylaw with respect to changes in use and activities on property in town.

Mr. Root stated that Amherst College has a policy that prohibits smoking within 25' of college buildings. They will add a policy for this site that requires smokers to smoke on the south side of the building.

Mindi Sahner, owner of property at 16-18 and 20 Dickinson Street, and a resident of Dickinson Street spoke about landscaping. She owns residential property as well as a Barn Studio and Blue Line Design, which operate out of her property on Dickinson Street. Ms. Sahner stated that Dickinson Street is an entrance to the Dickinson Historic District. She urged the Board to be cognizant of the way Dickinson Street looks. She recommended that if the site remains a maintenance facility the Planning Board should review a Landscape Plan for the site. She recommended landscaping for the south side of the building to break up the impact of all of the cars and asphalt in that vicinity. Ms. Sahner noted that the paving in front of the property is not handicapped accessible and there is no sidewalk. People need to walk on the berm along the lower part of Dickinson Street. She recommended extending the sidewalk down to Route 9, installing plantings that are tall enough to alleviate the look of the asphalt pavement and concrete block building, painting the north side which is currently an unpainted concrete block wall, and that there be no late night activity on the north side of the building.

Mr. Webber noted that there were two environmental reports that had been provided to the Planning Board. Phase I and Phase II environmental analyses, including testing and installation of monitoring wells, had been done. The levels of contaminants have been determined to be in accordance with the proposed use of the site. No major contamination was found. The nature of the fill on the property includes coal ash. As long as it remains undisturbed and there is no change in use or excavation it should not pose a risk to workers or visitors to the site. Mr. Root noted that if the College finds any contaminated material it will be properly disposed of.

Ms. Sahner asked whether the compressor can be screened, whether the floodlights would light up the whole parking lot and if the floodlights would be on all night.

Mr. Hartman explained that there are 5 existing lights altogether – 3 goosenecks and 2 floodlights. Mr. Root stated that the College would be willing to change the lights to shielded, energy-efficient fixtures. Mr. Hartman noted that there was another light on the Whiting Oil property. Board members agreed that the College should assess its lighting needs and provide

the Planning Board with a Lighting Plan with fixtures that are dark-sky compliant.

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 except for the existing non-conformities having to do with setbacks and lot coverage;
- 11.2401 – Town amenities and abutting properties will be protected because of the conditions of the Site Plan Review approval;
- 11.2402 – Abutting properties will be protected from detrimental site characteristics resulting from the proposed use because of the conditions of the Site Plan Review approval;
- 11.2403 – N/A
- 11.2410 – Unique or important natural, historic or scenic features will be protected;
- 11.2411 – Methods of refuse disposal will be adequate; the Management Plan explains how refuse will be disposed of, the applicant clarified issues of disposal during his testimony and the Site Plan shows that the dumpsters will be located at the rear, southeast corner of the building;
- 11.2412 – The ability of the proposed sewage disposal and water supply systems within and adjacent to the site to serve the proposed use is adequate; the Town Engineer has not expressed any concerns about this issue;
- 11.2413 – N/A; there will be no change in the amount of runoff from the site as a result of this project;
- 11.2414 – Provision of adequate landscaping will be addressed with a condition requiring the submission of a Landscape Plan if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years;
- 11.2415 – The requirement for submission of a Soil Erosion Plan will be waived; excavation on the site be conducted in accordance with the Phase II environmental study and state requirements regarding contaminated materials;
- 11.2416 – Adjacent properties will be protected from the intrusion of various types of nuisances, including pollution and noise;
- 11.2417 – Adjacent properties will be protected by minimizing the intrusion of lighting, because a condition of the Site Plan Review approval will require the submission of a Lighting Plan and will require that exterior lighting be downcast and not shine onto adjacent properties;
- 11.2418 – N/A;
- 11.2419 – N/A;
- 11.2420 – Within the B-L District the Board, if it deems the proposal likely to have a significant impact on its surroundings, may be permitted to use the design principles and standards set forth in Sections 3.2040 and 3.2041 of the Zoning Bylaw, to evaluate the design of the proposed architecture and landscape alterations; in this case the Board reviewed and discussed the proposed architectural alteration (replacements for the garage doors) and found them to be satisfactory; regarding landscape, the Board will impose a condition requiring the submittal of a Landscape Plan if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years;
- 11.2421 – The development is reasonably consistent with respect to setbacks, placement of parking, landscaping and entrances and exits with surrounding buildings and development, except for the non-conformities as to setbacks and lot coverage; the Board will impose conditions regarding landscaping and entrances and exits if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years;
- 11.2422 – N/A;
- 11.2423 – N/A;
- 11.2424 – With respect to screening, the Board will impose a condition requiring the applicant to submit a Landscape Plan which will address issues related to screening;

- 11.2430 – With regard to the convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement both within the site and in relation to adjoining ways and properties, the Board will impose a condition requiring the applicant to submit a plan showing improvements to vehicular and pedestrian circulation if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years;
- 11.2431 – The location and number of curb cuts will be such as to minimize turning movements, and hazardous exits and entrances because the Board will impose a condition requiring the submission of a plan showing improvements to vehicular and pedestrian circulation if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years;
- 11.2432 – The location and design of parking spaces, bicycle racks, drive aisles, loading areas and sidewalks will be provided in a safe and convenient manner because the Board will impose a condition requiring the applicant to submit a plan showing improvements to vehicular and pedestrian circulation if the proposed limited use extends beyond a period of three years; bicycles belonging to employees will be parked inside the building;
- 11.2433 – Provisions have been provided for access to adjoining properties;
- 11.2434 – N/A;
- 11.2435 – A joint access driveway between adjoining properties has been provided;
- 11.2436 – The requirement for a Traffic Impact Statement will be waived;
- 11.2437 – N/A

The Board discussed the need for a sidewalk in front of the 40 Dickinson Street property and also the need for a sidewalk from 40 Dickinson Street to Route 9. Although Mr. Brassord was reluctant to commit to a sidewalk extending to Route 9, he was amenable to considering the installation of a sidewalk along the 40 Dickinson Street property.

The Board discussed screening for the compressor and agreed that a plan to screen the compressor could be part of the Landscape Plan that will be required to be submitted in three years if the proposed limited use of the property extends beyond that period.

The Board discussed the need for painting the north side of the building, but declined to impose a condition. Mr. Brassord agreed that the College would paint the north side of the building.

Mr. Roznoy MOVED to close the public hearing. Ms. Anderson seconded and the vote was 8-0.

Mr. Stutsman MOVED to approve the application with conditions and waivers as discussed. Mr. Roznoy seconded and the vote was 8-0.

#### Waivers

- Erosion Control Plan
- Traffic Impact Statement

#### Conditions

1. The hours of operation for the Grounds Department at 40 Dickinson Street shall be 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. except for winter snow removal operations.
2. Mechanical equipment, including the air compressor, shall be on timers that are set to minimize the impact of this equipment on the neighborhood, and to operate in an energy-conserving and efficient manner.
3. Use of vehicular and mechanical equipment outside of the building shall occur during business hours, except for snow removal operations.
4. Deliveries shall be on the south side of the building.
5. Smoking shall be limited to the south side of the building.

6. In three years, if the use of the property does not change, the applicant shall submit a Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation Plan to the Board for review and approval. This plan shall address issues related to vehicular and pedestrian circulation, including sidewalks, driveway curb cuts and traffic flow.
7. In three years, if the use of the property does not change, the applicant shall submit a Landscape Plan to the Board for review and approval.
8. The applicant shall submit a Lighting Plan. All exterior lighting shall be dark sky compliant and shall not shine onto adjacent properties or streets.
9. Planters shall be placed along Dickinson Street to define the pedestrian area in front of the building. A plan showing the proposed location and type of planters shall be submitted to the Board for review and approval.
10. One (1) hard copy of the final revised plans shall be submitted to the Planning Department.

### **III. ZONING**

- A. Zoning Subcommittee Report – Mr. Crowner presented the ZSC report. He listed the zoning amendments that the ZSC is currently working on, including Inclusionary Zoning, Multi-family Housing Overlay, Atkins Corner, Dormitory definition, Small House Development. Mr. Stutsman noted that the ZSC would be meeting again on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Kruger noted that the ZSC needed to set a date for a site visit to Atkins Corner and a date for a public forum about rezoning Atkins Corner. She also noted that the Planning Board had agreed to send a letter to PVPC requesting technical assistance, but the letter that was drafted doesn't reflect the scope agreed upon by the Board. The letter needs to be modified to include technical assistance on Multi-family Housing Overlay and Small House Development.

- B. Public Comment Period – none

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. PVPC (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission)

1. 2014 Top Ten Resolves – Mr. Carson stated that Resolve #9 regarding regional railroad planning needed updating. He added that there would be a PVPC meeting next week and he will then be able to make a report on what is happening and what will happen with regard to high speed rail.
2. 2013 Major Accomplishments – Mr. Webber encouraged Board members and others to read about the accomplishments of PVPC in 2013. Copies of this document are available in the Planning Department and were included in Planning Board packets.

- B. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting – Mr. Webber reported that Town Counsel Joel Bard had sent an email regarding a very old Land Court case (from 1995) stating that the parties in the case (Cohen v. Planning Board) appear ready to dismiss the case. The case involved the Planning Board because the Board had granted Site Plan Review approval to a church to site a building in the Meadowbrook subdivision. Residents of the subdivision filed suit. The church gave up and sold the land. The owners' attorney has circulated a Stipulation of Dismissal. Mr. Bard requested that the Planning Board give its

assent to dismissal of the case.

Mr. Schreiber MOVED that the Board assent to dismissal of the case. Ms. Kruger seconded and the vote was 8-0.

## V. OLD BUSINESS

### A. The Retreat (SUB2014-00001)

1. Discussion about potential Scope of Work for independent consultant to be hired by Planning Board under M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 53G to review plans and reports related to expected Definitive Subdivision Plan and Site Plan Review applications – The Board discussed the potential Scope of Work for the consultant and asked that staff bring a draft of the RFP to the next Planning Board meeting. Items that they listed as potential parts of the Scope of Work included review of the following:

- Roadway design
- Traffic Impact Statement
- Grading around the dwelling units
- Placement of the buildings on the lots and relationship of buildings to each other
- Driveway and parking areas
- Parking location
- Pedestrian circulation
- Site design and layout
- Fabric of the community
- Connectivity
- Landscape design

Board members discussed the timing of the RFP. Some Board members would like the RFP to be published soon and to have a consultant ready to review the applications as soon as they are submitted. Others questioned whether a consultant could be chosen before the applications are received.

Ms. Kruger recommended that the RFP be put out and the consultant chosen before the submission of the applications. She recommended a short list of items to be included in the Scope of Work:

- Roadway design
- Intersection design
- Traffic Impact
- Utilities in the roadway

2. Two recent letters from citizens – Mr. Webber acknowledged receipt of two letters from citizens regarding The Retreat.

### C. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

The Board discussed whether to hold a Planning Board meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup> or not, given the fact that they would meet on January 29<sup>th</sup> and there are no public

hearings scheduled for February 5<sup>th</sup>. Board members agreed to decide this issue at the next meeting.

Board members also reminded staff that they had requested a meeting with the Town Engineer, Jason Skeels, to discuss drainage issues in the vicinity of Kendrick Place.

**VI. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – none**

**VII. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS**

The Board declined to review the following ZBA application:

ZBA FY2014-00015 – Michael Ben-Chaim – 28 Shays Street – to modify conditions of ZBA FY2014-00021

**VIII. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS**

**SPR2014-00007 – The Works Bakery Cafe – 48 North Pleasant Street**

Request Site Plan Review approval for operation of a bakery café with seasonal outdoor dining (Map 14A, Parcel 40, B-G Zoning District)

**IX. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS**

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – Bruce Carson had given a brief report earlier in the meeting.

Community Preservation Act Committee – Sandra Anderson reported on requests for CPAC funds totaling \$596,653.03. She gave a detailed report on the requests and stated that CPAC would be hearing the requests at two upcoming meetings, on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and February 6<sup>th</sup>. She noted that there was more money available this year as a result of a one-time higher-than-usual state contribution.

Agricultural Commission – vacant

Transportation Plan Task Force – Richard Roznoy and Rob Crowner – no report

Amherst Redevelopment Authority – Constance Kruger – no report

Design Review Board – Kathleen Ford – no report

Housing and Sheltering Committee – Greg Stutsman reported on the draft article that HSC is working on for Town Meeting. Ms. Kruger noted that the request for \$150,000 to CPAC to fund the housing voucher program would probably not be needed because the federal budget would be adequate to meet the needs of this program.

Town Gown Study Steering Committee – David Webber and Greg Stutsman – no report

Master Plan Implementation Committee – vacant

**X. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – none**

**XI. REPORT OF STAFF – none**

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Christine M. Brestrup  
Senior Planner

\_\_\_\_\_  
David Webber, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_