

AMHERST PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, April 16, 2014 – 7:00 PM
Town Room, Town Hall
MINUTES

PRESENT: David Webber, Chair, Stephen Schreiber, Rob Crouner, Bruce Carson, Richard Roznoy, Kathleen Ford, Greg Stutsman and Sandra Anderson

ABSENT: none

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

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

I. MINUTES

Ms. Anderson MOVED to approve the Minutes of March 19, 2014. Mr. Roznoy seconded and the vote was 6-0-2 (Carson and Ford abstained).

The Board turned to the Minutes of April 2, 2014. Mr. Crouner noted that page 7 includes positive comments made by Ms. Kruger about her tenure on the Planning Board and complimentary comments about Planning Board members. Mr. Tucker had then offered complimentary comments about Ms. Kruger, but these were not included in the Minutes. Mr. Crouner wished to acknowledge these positive comments about Ms. Kruger, but did not request that the Minutes of April 2nd be amended.

Mr. Roznoy MOVED to approve the Minutes of April 2, 2014. Ms. Ford seconded and the vote was 6-0-2 (Anderson and Webber abstained).

II. PUBLIC HEARING – SCENIC ROADS

Proposed Building and Streetscape Construction – 57 East Pleasant Street (Kendrick Place)

Public Shade Trees impacted by this project include the following trees (Sizes indicate “diameter at breast height” – DBH):

One – Sugar Maple – 36” – removal

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

Kyle Wilson, applicant, presented the existing conditions plan and showed the location of the existing 36” Maple that is proposed for removal, explaining that it would be better to remove the tree now rather than later. The storm water management plan for Kendrick Place calls for containment of the 1, 10 and 100 year storms on site. Construction of the necessary underground stormwater detention containers will have an impact on the tree roots. The containers will be 5 feet in diameter, and will consist of HDPE piping. These containers will detain the stormwater which will then be released slowly over time. There are two segments of piping – 150 feet on private property [between the new building and Bertucci’s] and 80 feet on town property, under the sidewalk and under the canopy of the tree. Excavation will damage the roots of the tree. Mr. Wilson proposes to remove the tree now and replace it with a new tree.

Mr. Wilson explained that there were options for constructing the stormwater storage containers out of concrete, but these would have required even more excavation. The pipes need to be relatively high in relation to the finished grade so that the outlet of the containers

is higher than the pipe into which the stormwater will flow.

New plantings along East Pleasant Street will replace the tree that will be removed. Along Triangle Street, 7 street trees are proposed. Along East Pleasant Street, 4 street trees are proposed. There will also be a place for public art along the East Pleasant Street side of the building. Mr. Wilson stated that a columnar Red Maple may be a good choice for this street tree planting.

Mr. Webber reviewed the Site Visit Report. Ms. Anderson reported on the site visit. There was snow in the morning. Members of the Planning Board met on site with the Tree Warden and learned that growth (roots and crown) of the subject tree is in the direction of the proposed building. Ms. Anderson referred to a photograph of the tree showing this growth pattern. In addition to the tree being one-sided in its growth, it also contains holes where branches have been removed in the past and sections of existing branches that are dead. The tree has not been well-pruned over time, but has been pruned to allow room for overhead wires.

Ms. Anderson noted that the Board had heard from the Town Engineer about potential plans for the intersection of Triangle Street and East Pleasant Street. Two out of three design scenarios for the intersection would cause damage to the tree. Therefore, the construction of the building is not the only cause of potential damage to the tree. The applicant is proposing to install new shade trees in place of the tree proposed for removal. There is one other tree within the town Right of Way that is proposed for removal [but it is not located on a Scenic Road and was therefore not part of this hearing]. Ms. Anderson concluded that, in her opinion, the landscape will be improved by the removal of the Maple tree and its replacement with new trees.

Ms. Brestrup noted that there are four options for the intersection: 1) do nothing; 2) change the timing of the existing traffic lights; 3) add turning lanes; 4) construct a roundabout. The Public Works Committee is working with the DPW on these options and will be discussing them over the next few months. No decisions have been made on plans for the intersection.

Alan Snow, Tree Warden, presented his report. The central leader of the tree is in a state of decline. The top 1/3 of the tree is dead. The central leader has 3 cavities. The northern leader has more vigor but is in the beginning stages of decline. Mr. Snow will know more about the various parts of the tree if and when they leaf out. The town could prune the tree and keep it for now, but it would probably need to be removed in the future. The replacement fee to be paid to the town for removal of this public shade tree is based on a \$90 per inch rate, with the diameter measured at 4 ½ feet above grade (diameter at breast height or DBH). The replacement fee for removal of this tree will be \$3,240. This fee is in addition to the cost of removal, which will be borne by the applicant.

Mr. Roznoy referred to the Site Visit Report and asked if the new trees would have their roots damaged when overhead wires are placed underground.

Mr. Wilson explained that he is holding discussions with WMECO about the power lines and is hoping that at least 1,000 feet of overhead wires will be buried. He explained where he hopes the lines will be buried.

Ms. Brestrup explained that the root balls of the new trees will be smaller than the roots of the existing tree and therefore less affected by construction around them.

Mr. Wilson noted that the new trees will be installed after construction of this building and its associated site improvements, and after the burial of the overhead wires. Eventually a

number of trees will be installed along this stretch of East Pleasant Street, along with streetlights, as in the downtown area.

In all, there will be 11 new trees planted on Triangle Street and East Pleasant Street, as part of the Kendrick Place project.

Mr. Snow stated that he would work with the applicant to choose replacement species.

There was discussion about whether the town would help the applicant with the cost of removal. Mr. Snow stated that there is no precedent for the town helping the applicant with the cost of removal. However, if the applicant proposes to plant new trees it may make sense to reduce the replacement cost.

Mr. Wilson stated that he agreed with paying the replacement fee for removal of the tree “up front” and then resolving a possible reduction of that fee in the future, when new trees are planted.

Henry Lappen, Chair of the Public Shade Tree Committee, stated that the PSTC had held a public hearing a week ago and had voted to oppose the removal of the tree. It is the only tree in the area and will leave a sizable gap when it is gone. New replacement trees will be small and their growth will be bound by the wires overhead or underground.

Mr. Lappen spoke in opposition to a precedent where we remove old existing trees and replace them with new trees which, he predicted, would not live for long. Mr. Lappen and the PSTC favor leaving the tree for as long as it survives.

Mr. Wilson stated that excavation for the underground stormwater containers is planned to occur after the foundation is poured, sometime this summer.

There was discussion about whether there would be more disruption in taking the tree down in the future, after a new sidewalk is in place.

Mr. Snow reported that if a utility company wanted to take the tree down to put the wires underground, he would have them pay the replacement fee, too.

Board members noted the following:

- That there may be merit in leaving the tree, but “its days are numbered” even without the development of the new building;
- That there is already wounding and damage to the tree;
- That the view of the tree, looking north, shows that it has been pruned for utilities.
- That the aesthetic value of the tree is lacking; when the tree is leafed out it will look worse;
- That one misshapen tree with a group of intentionally planted urban trees will not be visually pleasing;
- That newly planted streets trees would look better
- That removing the tree in the future, after a new sidewalk is installed may damage the new site improvements.

Ms. Anderson noted that the height of the lighting in the vicinity of this site is like highway lighting. She suggested that this lighting be replaced with street level lighting, as is found in the downtown.

Mr. Snow acknowledged that it will be noticeable when the tree is taken down. He will work with the applicant to build a good root zone for the new trees so that they will have a healthy environment. Mr. Wilson suggested that the root areas below ground could be linked along Triangle and East Pleasant Street, rather than having individual tree pits for each tree. He

promised to work with the Tree Warden to foster robust street trees.

Mr. Webber suggested that the stormwater detention chambers could be used to water the new trees, considering that the pipes are perforated. They can moisten the soil for the new trees.

Mr. Snow stated that there may be opportunities for cleaning the stormwater before it goes through the pipe which contains Tan Brook and before the water goes into the Campus Pond. There was discussion about providing a “sand well” under the sidewalk which would allow the water to run through the sand and be cleaned.

Ms. Anderson MOVED that the Board recommends that the tree be removed. Ms. Ford seconded.

Mr. Roznoy asked about the Tree Warden’s views on the matter. Mr. Snow stated that he was in favor of removing the tree at this stage instead of waiting. He would like to see the streetscape improvements made.

Ms. Anderson withdrew her previous motion.

Ms. Anderson MOVED that the Planning Board concur with the recommendation of the Tree Warden. Ms. Ford seconded and the vote was 8-0-0.

III. ZONING

A. Zoning Subcommittee Report – Mr. Crouner reported that at the last Zoning Subcommittee meeting the ZSC voted to recommend that the Planning Board ask the Select Board to schedule a Special Town Meeting to consider a revised version of the Inclusionary Zoning amendment. The ZSC took up the issue of revisions to Inclusionary Zoning. There was a vigorous discussion. The ZSC developed a “good revised version”.

Mr. Webber noted that the Planning Board now had in hand a redlined version dated April 16, 2014, as revised at the Zoning Subcommittee meeting earlier in the evening.

Mr. Crouner reported that there were certain issues that prompted the ZSC to look at Inclusionary Zoning again:

- 1) A claim that the original process had been muddled, that the ZSC was making changes up to the end of its meeting and that there was no time to prepare a “clean” version for the Planning Board meeting;
- 2) There were lingering concerns about how Inclusionary Zoning would be applied to downtown and the business districts in general and concerns that the effect of Inclusionary Zoning would be to stifle development rather than promote affordable housing and claims that the balance was not correct [between requirements for affordable housing and offsets to help developers pay for the units].

Mr. Crouner reported that the ZSC had dialed back the requirements and proposed more offsets in the newer version. There was still a concern about the long and short term effectiveness of the amendment.

Mr. Crouner reviewed the changes that the ZSC had made.

- 1) Exempt Chapter 40B projects (Comprehensive Permits) from the Inclusionary Zoning bylaw;
- 2) In Section 15.101 change the requirements for the business districts (B-VC, B-N and B-G) so that developments that are residential only would be required to provide 10% affordable units, but developments that are mixed use would only be

- required to provide 7.5% affordable units;
- 3) In Section 15.011, make it clear that the modification of dimensional requirements focuses on developments with affordable units;
 - 4) In Section 15.1040, refer to the Housing Trust;
 - 5) There would be no change to the calculation of fee in lieu; it would remain at 3 times 80% the AMI [Area Median Income] for all districts outside of the B-G and would be 1 time 80% of the AMI for the B-G district;
 - 6) In Section 15.110, change where affordable units can be provided, to allow off-site units to be built within 500 feet of the development site, while allowing the subject property to remain eligible for cost offsets;
 - 7) Allow dimensional modifications in mixed-use districts so that the number of floors and height can be changed in the B-N and B-VC districts also;
 - 8) In Section 15.113, define the term “attached units”.

Mr. Crowner stated that, in his opinion, these changes reflected a good compromise.

The ZSC would like the Planning Board to ask the Select Board to call a Special Town Meeting to consider the revised article.

B. Public Comment Period

Sarah la Cour, Executive Director of the BID, commented as follows:

- Progress has been made, but the changes have not been substantial enough for the B-G district; current language still stifles development;
- A previous draft had a 6th floor as an option;
- The bylaw needs incentives that work;
- A modification that allows 85% lot coverage is potentially more costly for developers and the permitting process will be more complicated;
- The current language still makes it more costly to develop in the B-G district;
- The BID would like to talk about tax incentives and tax increment financing;
- The BID supports affordable housing, but if the town approves this bylaw no housing and no affordable housing will be built in the downtown area.

Mr. Tucker reported that a public hearing for the revised version of Inclusionary Zoning has been scheduled for May 7th, if the Planning Board decides that it would like to proceed with this option. The following week the Select Board would meet and schedule a Special Town Meeting and sign a STM Warrant.

Julie Marcus, an Amherst resident and the Vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce, made the following comments:

- The Chamber membership is concerned about the application of this article to the downtown, but is also concerned about affordable housing;
- The community wants development to occur in the downtown;
- The business climate has changed and, although money is “cheap” it is not available from banks and equity partners are needed to finance projects;
- When there are requirements with no incentives there is a loss of profits;
- The requirements take away the “cushion” that makes a project profitable;
- The proposed Inclusionary Zoning amendment threatens the ability to develop a property that is now almost empty of tenants;
- Inclusionary Zoning doesn’t work as applied to the downtown;

- Inclusionary Zoning is similar to the concept of APR's in that everyone contributes to APR's; everyone should contribute to the development of affordable housing;
- Inclusionary Zoning provides no help to developers in the downtown area because there is no "give back";
- The town will miss out on Inclusionary Zoning in other districts because people are concerned about how this applies to the downtown.

Ms. Anderson asked if there is a remedy to make Inclusionary Zoning palatable to the Chamber.

Ms. Marcus commented as follows:

- The concern is mostly focused on the B-G district, but there is also concern about the B-VC and B-N;
- Other communities have developed ways of making Inclusionary Zoning work;
- There should be an effort to work on the front end of projects, before financing has been obtained;
- She asked how the Chamber could provide feedback to the Planning Board

Mr. Crowner stated that the evidence regarding the B-G district is anecdotal. If the B-G district is not included people will not support the Inclusionary Zoning amendment. He would like to see a spreadsheet that shows that the offsets offered in the downtown are not enough. The current IZ amendment requires 7.5% affordable units but allows enough lot coverage for more than 7.5% to be added.

Barry Roberts, President of the BID, made the following comments:

- The BID made an effort to allow Ms. la Cour to be involved in the zoning amendment process because the BID wants development in the downtown area; the BID is not opposed to Inclusionary Zoning but it needs to be palatable to developers;
- Redevelopment of properties is expensive; this makes development in the downtown area more expensive than development elsewhere in town.

Ms. Ford asked what the issues were regarding a possible 6th floor and why it was not included in the amendment.

Mr. Crowner explained that the possibility of a 6th floor was proposed as a cost offset. But the ZSC doesn't recommend this because the town recently increased the height allowed in the downtown from 4 to 5 stories and people are still adjusting to that change. Also, the ZSC was told that allowing the possibility of a 6th floor should also include increasing the allowable height to 72 feet. The ZSC determined that the offsets being offered already were sufficient.

Mr. Webber asked if the principle of allowing a 6th floor was appropriate if political issues were set aside. Six stories is not extreme, he said.

Mr. Crowner acknowledged that allowing a 6th story is not, in principle, objectionable. But it is a concern, following closely on the recent change.

Mr. Stutsman stated that his sense was that a 6th floor was "a step too far".

Mr. Carson reported that the community at large seems very concerned about a 6th floor.

Ms. Ford asked about what a 6th floor mean would mean architecturally. What is the relationship between the extra height and wanting extra stories in town? Could the Board make an argument in support of a 6th story?

Ms. Anderson asked why 72 feet is necessary.

Mr. Schreiber explained that a 12 foot height, floor to floor, is useful. There is space between floors that is used for mechanicals. Also, there is a desire to have a higher ceiling on the ground floor, and there is usually a parapet on a flat roofed building.

There was further discussion about appropriate height for buildings in the downtown. Mr. Schreiber stated that the typical 4 story building in the downtown was built before the time of elevators. Character is a consideration. Also, the type of construction changes with a 6th floor. Mr. Schreiber stated that 6 stories is “beyond the typical New England downtown character”.

Mr. Tucker noted that we have some very tall 4 story buildings in the downtown. Clark House is a 6 story building. Northampton may have older 5 and 6 story buildings. There is no set of absolute calculations that makes the argument one way or another. Mr. Tucker recommended that the Planning Board err on the side that will permit new development, which will in turn allow affordable units to be built. We can always adjust this going forward. The only way to know is to try it, to create the regulations and see what happens. He encouraged the Planning Board to move forward with this amendment.

Janet Keller of Precinct 1 thanked the Board and staff for all of its work, including research. She offered the following comments:

- There is a need for all developers to contribute to a fair share of affordable housing;
- She would like to work on other ways to encourage affordable housing;
- There is a need for standards to help regulating boards make decisions about the donation of land; she referred to Falmouth’s list of standards; land donated for affordable housing should be near public sewer and water, school and jobs;
- Exemption of Chapter 40B projects is good;
- She supports compact development in the downtown area and village centers with green belts around them.

Mr. Carson suggested that one way to make 6 story buildings more acceptable to the community would be to require them to step back at the upper story, which would allow room for a terrace on the top floor.

The Board began to summarize the current incentives provided in the amendment:

- Two market rate units would be allowed as cost offsets for one affordable unit;
- Allow developers to increase the lot coverage from 70% to 85%, in the B-G district, which would allow them to build more units on a property;
- Require payment in lieu at only one time 80% of the AMI.

Mr. Crowner pointed out that in the B-G district additional units are meaningless because there is no limit on the number of units in a building.

Mr. Carson noted that the requirement for affordable units had been reduced from 10% to 7.5% for mixed-use buildings in the B-G district.

There was discussion about the graphic illustration submitted by the BID concerning setbacks and lot coverage. Ms. Ford commented that few properties would benefit from the increase in floor area if developers can't put windows in the wall of a building that lies within 10 feet of a property line.

Mr. Webber noted that if the town imposes restrictions and doesn't provide incentives then the town may run into a "takings" problem. Dimensional modifications do not seem to provide meaningful incentives in the B-G district. The only meaningful incentive seems to be "going up" a story.

Mr. Stutsman argued that the 1 time 80% of the AMI payment-in-lieu is a good incentive. He likened it to a tax abatement. Mr. Stutsman stated that the Board worked with PVPC to develop the requirements and incentives. PVPC has stated that the payment-in-lieu should be 3 times 80% of the AMI in the B-G district in order to provide enough money to build affordable units and to give developers an incentive to build the units rather than just pay the fee.

Mr. Schreiber referred to the BID diagrams. He noted that the issue of the windows and the setbacks is complicated by the fact that lots are small in the downtown. However, a developer can assemble lots and could approach the allowed 85% lot coverage. He suggested that some buildings in the downtown could be built up to the property line with no windows on some walls, but an atrium or courtyard in the middle and with windows on the courtyard side.

Ms. la Cour stated that the issue is cost and the vision that the town has for downtown. Atriums focus a building inward. Such buildings would cause a loss of streetscape and a loss of the feeling of "downtown". Ms. Armington of PVPC had suggested that more research would be necessary to make Inclusionary Zoning work in the downtown. There is an ongoing vision for the downtown, which includes growth, density and mixed use.

Mr. Webber stated that he would like to see the number of floors allowed in the B-G district for buildings providing affordable units to be increased to 6 stories and 72 feet in height. There is already a large, 6 story building in town – the Clark House. The Master Plan calls for increasing density in the downtown and village centers. The town needs more housing as well as more affordable housing. The revised zoning amendment will improve incentives and will help to increase housing and affordable housing. Mr. Webber opposes removing the B-G, B-N and B-VC zoning districts from the requirements for Inclusionary Zoning. He would rather provide more incentives to developers in these districts.

Ms. Ford agreed. She questioned which version of Inclusionary Zoning has the best chance of passing in Town Meeting and would like to hear more arguments about why a 6th floor and 72 feet would not be acceptable to Town Meeting.

Mr. Tucker pointed out that the 6th floor option would only be available to projects that include affordable units.

Ms. Anderson would like to know what developers think.

Mr. Tucker noted that the Board had voted at its last meeting to ask the Select Board to schedule a Special Town Meeting to consider an alternative version of the Inclusionary Zoning amendment. The Board has time to hold a public hearing on May 7th and that will leave time for the Select Board to advertise a Special Town Meeting for early June.

Mr. Crowner stated that the Zoning Subcommittee may not want to do any more work on this zoning amendment at this time. He recommended that Board members think about what was discussed tonight.

Mr. Carson asked that staff provide examples of 5 and 6 story buildings and examples of the economic consequences of the various scenarios.

Mr. Tucker stated that the Special Town Meeting could be held on June 2nd. Article 24, the current Inclusionary Zoning amendment, could be considered after the Special Town Meeting is adjourned.

Mr. Webber encouraged people to submit feedback on what they had heard tonight. He offered to meet with the Select Board to explain the zoning articles.

Mr. Tucker noted that there were copies of all of the Planning Board reports to Town Meeting on the back table at tonight's Planning Board meeting. Board members discussed who would attend the Precinct meetings, prior to Town Meeting.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

B. SPR2013-00010 – Unitarian Universalist Society of Amherst – 121 North Pleasant Street

Review of Landscape Plan and Lighting Plan submitted in accordance with Conditions 1 through 5 of the Site Plan Review approval

Mr. Roznoy recused himself.

Liv Wyatt of Kuhn Riddle Architects presented the Landscape and Lighting Plans for the Unitarian Church. She noted that the Landscape Plan does not show proposed plantings south of the Unitarian property, because the church does not control that property.

Ms. Wyatt that the pavement on the property between the church and 103 North Pleasant Street had been dug up to deal with an oil leak on Barry Roberts' property. Ms. Brestrup explained that the town was working with Mr. Roberts and the church to determine how this area should be dealt with. The town has an easement over Mr. Roberts' property that gives the town the right to make site improvements there.

Ms. Wyatt explained that the Planning Board had required that a screen be installed along the north side of the property to screen the condensers for the air conditioning system. She presented a drawing showing a 4 foot high fence with lattice on top. Ms. Wyatt questioned whether a 4 foot high fence would be appropriate or might provide a place for trash to collect and people to hang out and hide. She noted that the equipment is up against the building and all in a row and is not unsightly. It is in line with the existing entry and sits between the gable and the lower entry. She presented photographs of the area and the condenser equipment which is less than 36" high. Ms. Wyatt suggested that no screening or a screening of low plants might be more appropriate.

Ms. Wyatt described the other plantings proposed for the front of the building and the south side. The north side has no room for plantings and the disturbed areas will be loamed and seeded. There are also plantings proposed for the southeast corner. All plantings will be native and will include shrubs and ferns.

Ms. Wyatt described the Lighting Plan and showed where the light would be cast. There will be lighting at entrances and exits and light to illuminate the parking lot in back of the church. This parking lot has been leased to the town. The fixture that illuminates the parking lot will be an aimable LED floodlight. All the other lights are downlights, she said.

Mr. Webber noted that the Board had received catalog cuts of the proposed light fixtures.

Ms. Wyatt reported that there is a pole light at Rao's.

There is enough illumination on the building to meet exit requirements. There are occasional events that occur at night, and sometimes there is a board meeting in the evening. The exterior lights will be on a timer and will go off at 1:00 a.m.

Mr. Carson asked if the church is concerned about lights being off after 1:00 a.m. and whether this would encourage vandals. Ms. Wyatt stated that the timing of the lights can be adjusted. Mr. Webber suggested that the church consider leaving the lights on from dusk to dawn.

Ms. Anderson suggested that the church not install a fence to screen the condensers, but instead install low plantings and screen the equipment naturally. She suggested small, soft plantings or a low fence with plantings on it. There was discussion about the need to keep a certain area around the equipment for air flow and for service.

Ms. Ford, who had originally raised the question of screening of the equipment, agreed that plantings would be an acceptable alternative to a fence.

Mr. Crowner suggested approving the fence as shown, but allowing the applicant to submit an alternative plan to the Planning Department for the Board's review at a future meeting.

Mr. Webber reviewed the conditions of the decision for SPR2013-00010.

Ms. Wyatt noted that there were concerns about providing a permanent bike rack at the front of the building. She stated that the church could provide a portable bike rack in case it needs to be moved in the future.

Mr. Webber objected to the proposed location in front of the church building, stating that this is a congregating spot, a little plaza area.

The Board discussed alternative locations for the bike rack, including a location at the rear of the property. Board members recalled that there was an existing public bike rack in the vicinity. There was further discussion about a preferred location for a bike rack and whether it should be permanent or portable.

Ms. Wyatt offered to take a photograph of the existing bike rack near Rao's and send it to staff for presentation to the Planning Board. The Board could then decide if this existing bike rack was sufficient for now, in light of the fact that the area is likely to be reconstructed in the future, or if the applicant should submit an alternative location for a bike rack.

Mr. Webber recommended leaving the resolution of Condition #3 (having to do with the bike rack) open. He recommended that Condition #5 could be satisfied if the floodlight in the parking lot were pointed down.

Ms. Anderson MOVED that Conditions 1, 2, 4 and 5 of SPR2013-00010 have been satisfied, with the understanding that the screening of the condensers is to be provided but it is to be at the discretion of the Unitarian Society as to whether it is in the form of a fence or vegetation. Mr. Stutsman seconded and the vote was 7-0-0.

Mr. Webber noted that the Board had not approved the location of the permanent bike rack as shown on the Landscape Plan in front of the building.

Mr. Roznoy rejoined the meeting.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Signing of Decisions

SPR2014-00010 and SPP2014-00005 – South Congregational Church – 1066 South East St. – The Board signed the decisions.

C. Planning Board Application Fees – Site Plan Review for Cluster – Ms. Brestrup reported that the Planning Board had approved changes in fees for Planning Board applications at its March 19, 2014 meeting. The fee changes included deleting a separate fee for Site Plan Review for Cluster Subdivisions and using the fee structure for regular SPR applications for these SPR - Cluster applications. Ms. Brestrup reported that the fee structure as voted on March 19th results in fees that may be excessive for SPR-Cluster applications, especially for large subdivisions, possibly in excess of \$100,000. She asked the Board members if they wished to reconsider this fee structure for Site Plan Review for Cluster Subdivisions, since these applications are usually accompanied by Definitive Subdivision Plan applications, which in themselves generate substantial fees. Board members asked Ms. Brestrup to research what other towns charge for Site Plan Review for Cluster Subdivisions, but agreed to reinstate a separate fee for Site Plan Review for Cluster Subdivisions.

Mr. Crouner MOVED to approve a fee of \$1,000 for Site Plan Review for Cluster Subdivisions. Ms. Ford seconded and the vote was 8-0-0.

D. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

Mr. Webber reported that the Conservation Commission would be hearing an application related to Kendrick Place at its April 23rd meeting. The application was the result of a discovery that some of the work for Kendrick Place would occur within the 100 foot buffer of an intermittent stream (a day-lighted portion of a tributary of Tan Brook). Mr. Webber recommended that the Board forward the Minutes of the March 19, 2014, Planning Board meeting to the Conservation Commission, because at that meeting the Town Engineer had met with the Planning Board and had discussed drainage issues in the vicinity of Kendrick Place. The March 19th Minutes may be of use to the Conservation Commission in clarifying issues related to drainage. Board members agreed by consensus to send these Minutes to the Conservation Commission.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Converse Hall, Amherst College – presentation of site plan for pedestrian bridge in the ED zoning district in accordance with Section 3.211 of the Zoning Bylaw

Ms. Brestrup presented the site plan for a pedestrian bridge in the ED zoning district at Converse Hall in accordance with Section 3.3211 of the Zoning Bylaw. There was no representative of Amherst College present. The Planning Board had no comment about this proposal.

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

VI. TOWN MEETING

- A.** Zoning Amendment Issues – The Planning Board discussed whether to hold another meeting between April 16 and May 7 to discuss revisions to the Inclusionary Zoning amendment, in addition to those that had been discussed tonight. Ms. Ford pointed out that there were only two items that seemed to be unresolved – building height and number of stories that could be allowed as cost offsets for affordable housing requirements. Board members discussed whether the version of Inclusionary Zoning that would be presented to the public on May 7th should include reference to a 6th floor and increased height. Mr. Schreiber noted that a height of 67 feet would be equal to a building as tall as Boltwood Place (55') plus 12 feet. After discussion the Board decided to include a building height of 6 stories and 68 feet as a possible cost offset for affordable housing requirements.

Ms. Anderson MOVED that the amendment to Inclusionary Zoning to be considered on May 7th include a provision to allow a height up to 6 stories and 68 feet in the B-G district. Mr. Carson seconded and the vote was 8-0-0.

Mr. Webber noted that the next Planning Board meeting would be held on Wednesday, May 7, 2014, in the Town Room, Town Hall, at 5:00 p.m.

- B.** Warrant Review – There were no comments on the Warrant. Board members estimated that zoning articles may come before Town Meeting on the 4th or 5th night.
- C.** Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting – none

VII. FORM A (ANR) SUBDIVISION APPLICATIONS – none

VIII. UPCOMING ZBA APPLICATIONS

The Planning Board declined to review the following ZBA applications:

ZBA FY2014-00029 – Catherine & Morten Jensen-Hole – 58 North Prospect Street
ZBA FY2014-00030 – Ping Geng – 106 Gray Street
ZBA FY2014-00031 – G. Jeffrey Bohne – 77 Shays Street
ZBA FY2014-00032 – Peter Jacoby – 98 Spring Street
ZBA FY2014-00034 – Inge Ackermann – 59 Sunset Avenue
ZBA FY2014-00035 – Bistro 63 Monkey Bar, LLC – 63-67 North Pleasant Street

IX. UPCOMING SPP/SPR/SUB APPLICATIONS

Chabad House of the Five Colleges, to build an addition to use as a sanctuary assembly space at 194 Amity Street;

Barrie & Elizabeth Tan, to reconfigure their existing two-family home at 49 Northampton Road.

X. PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – Bruce Carson reported that the PVPC had met last week and focused on two topics:

- 1) They discussed “Our Next Future Action Plan for a Smart, Sustainable & Resilient Pioneer Valley” a publication of the PVPC. Northampton asked that PVPC provide formal recognition for communities that adopt this plan so that communities can use this recognition when applying for state grants. Mr. Carson suggested that the Board discuss this document at a future meeting. Mr. Carson has a copy that he is willing to lend to Board members.
- 2) They discussed a report prepared by the UMass Donahue Institute entitled “Long Term Population Projections for Massachusetts Regions and Municipalities”. Mr. Carson asked that staff copy and distribute the section of this report dealing with the Lower Pioneer Valley. Projections show that our area is slowly losing population, including student population. This could have ramifications for labor shortages and town retirement plans. This document is available on the PVPC website.

Community Preservation Act Committee – Sandra Anderson reported that projects recommended by CPAC are contained in Article 20 on the Town Meeting Warrant.

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 reported that the DRB had recently held a very short meeting to approve a sign for a hair salon, Casimir Kocot, which recently moved to 196 North Pleasant Street as a result of changes at the Carriages Shops.

Housing and Sheltering Committee – Greg Stutsman – no report

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

Master Plan Implementation Committee – vacant

XI. REPORT OF THE CHAIR – Mr. Webber reported that he had recently attended Stan Rosenberg’s municipal conference. It was well-attended. The conference was sponsored by the Franklin and Hampshire County Council of Governments. Mr. Webber attended a presentation on Green Energy. Elizabeth Warren gave a very good keynote speech.

XII. REPORT OF STAFF – none

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted: Approved:

Christine M. Brestrup
Senior Planner

David Webber, Chair

DATE: _____