

(Approved as Amended 5/26/05)

Town of Longmeadow
Planning Board
MINUTES
Of Regular Meeting
April 5, 2005

PRESENT: Chairman Walter Gunn, Roy Johansen, Bruce Colton,
Richard Curran, and Louis Kornet

The Regular meeting of the Longmeadow Planning Board was held at the Longmeadow Community House, 735 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, MA. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Walter Gunn. Mr. Gunn introduced Planning Board members to persons in attendance.

LI BROTHERS, 795 MAPLE ROAD, LONGMEADOW, MA – RE: APPROVAL OF SIGNAGE AT FAR EAST, MAPLE ROAD, LONGMEADOW, MA – There was no representation from Li Brothers. After discussion, Walter Gunn made a motion to order to have the sign for Far East removed immediately. Mr. Gunn indicated that he would notify the Building Department on this issue.

DIAMOND CLUB – BASEBALL SEATING RENOVATIONS AT LONGMEADOW HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY BASEBALL FIELD – Donald Graham, representing the Diamond Club, came before the Planning Board. The work proposed is as follows: construct a seating area 120' in length by 48-60" wide, 20-24' slope up behind the varsity baseball field first base line from home plate to the dug out. They plan on removing six scrub pine trees; a ramp will be made for access to the seated area. It will be a terraced effect, natural seating area. All trees in the upper area will remain. Richard Curran and Walter Gunn indicated that they have met with John Whitney, contractor from the Thomas P. Ryland Company. Mr. Curran and Mr. Gunn stated that they seem satisfied with the plan. Mr. Curran also stated that more earth will be added to the project rather than removed from the site. After the presentation, Walter Gunn made a motion to Waive Site and Design Review for the plan submitted by the Diamond Club for the high school varsity baseball field to construct a seating area as outlined in the Thomas P. Ryland proposal dated April 21, 2004 and September 30, 2004. No more than six trees are to be removed for this project. Richard Curran seconded the motion; it was approved 5-0.

BRUCE MOREHARDT, FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST, 916 WILLIAMS STREET, LONGMEADOW, MA – RE: REQUEST OF APPROVAL OF SIGN OUTSIDE OF READING ROOM – Mr. Morehardt came before the Planning Board for a request for signage on the right side of the reading room of the church. He stated that he would come back to the Planning Board with more details on size and lighting specifications. The Planning Board will contact Mr. Morehardt on the regulations of an accessory sign for their church.

BAYPATH – PARKING LOT A – DISCUSSION – Mr. Curran made a motion to vote on the application of Bay Path College regarding the expansion of Lot A of the plan dated March 1, 2005. Bruce Colton seconded the motion; 5-0 approved the motion for discussion of the application and vote thereafter. Mr. Curran stated that it is the responsibility of Bay Path to follow the zoning by-law guidelines and how it impacts the community. Mr. Curran read a prepared statement discussing several points: Some points that he mentioned are – location of the parking spaces – do they protect abutting properties, preserve the character of the Arlington Road and other neighborhoods, quality of life issues, loss of open space, and removal of a buffer zone of shade trees. The removal of a stand of trees that serves as a buffer zone between the parking lot and Arlington Road neighborhood is also a major issue. Who would benefit from the expansion – who would be adversely affected? When trees are removed, a visual canopy is lost. This will have a detrimental and long-lasting impact on the neighborhood. He indicated that the original plan called for enlarging the rear parking lot A; Mr. Curran stated that the same plan for Lot A is proposed again. It is his opinion that the college is not looking out for the best interests of the neighbors who will be affected by the proposal; there are other alternatives – he respectfully asks that Bay Path come up with a parking plan that everyone can live with.

Mr. Colton stated that the plans have been before the Planning Board for a long time; no additional information has been submitted by Bay Path. He, too, expressed concerns about the cutting down of numerous trees cutting into the hillside would damage the root system and kill abutters' trees, including property not owned by Bay Path. He stated that it is time to take a vote. Mr. Johansen stated that he concurs with Mr. Curran's opinion. He stated that he is not opposed to parking or hindering the college's growth; but he feels that it is too close to neighbors. The plan to eliminate trees will affect topography and will be detrimental to the neighborhood. Louis Kornet stated that he concurs with the other Planning Board member's statements; there should be more reasonable alternatives. Mr. Gunn stated that the Planning Board has not received a Long-Range plan from Bay Path.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Gunn made a motion to vote on Bay Path College's Parking Lot A. Bruce Colton seconded the motion. The plan was opposed 5-0. Mr. Gunn stated that the vote would send a message that Bay Path is a community, Arlington Road Association another, and all parties must work together. Bay Path is a valuable resource; other alternatives must be considered. There were no other comments.

BETSY PORT – DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARING ON AMENDING TOWN BY-LAWS TO DELAY DEMOLITION OF STRUCTURES OF HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE –

Betsy Port put together a petition signed by Town residents to put on the Town meeting warrant to delay demolition of structures of historical or architectural significance. Ms. Port gave a history of several structures that have been delayed before further demolition had taken place. Amherst is in the process of changing their by-laws. Ms. Port reported on some historical and/or architecturally significant sections in Longmeadow, not just necessarily in the historical district. The proposed by-law is basically modeled after Amherst; it is

just a first step. Planning Board members discussed the positive and negative aspects of the proposed by-law. There will be a public hearing on April 28, 2005 at Center School Community Room at 7:00 p.m. to hear more details of the by-law as well as give Planning Board members and the public a chance to voice their opinions.

MISCELLANEOUS – Louis Kornet passed out Guidance for Drafting Local Laws by Robert W. Ritchie and the Massachusetts Land Use Reform Act (at a glance). He stated that it is very good information to have.

There will be a public hearing on April 28, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the demolition delay by-law amendment. At 6:45 p.m. there will be a brief business meeting.

The Planning Board went into Executive Session to discuss impending litigation at 8:35 p.m. The Planning Board went out of Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

There being no further business, Roy Johansen made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting at 8:55 p.m. Bruce Colton seconded the motion; it was approved 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Downie, Secretary
Longmeadow Planning Board