

## Planning Board – Regular Meeting

Zoom Virtual Platform – [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us), P: 646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 998 1081 3332, Password: 704568  
*Tuesday June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 7:00 p.m., after Public Hearing*

**Members Present:** Donald Holland, Chair; Walter Gunn, Clerk; Josh Levine, Bruce Colton.

**Members Absent:** Ken Taylor

**Others Present:** Cameron Burke, Andrew Anderlonis, Kristen Joyce, Peter LaPointe, Jeffrey Roberts, Frank Colaccino, Matthew Wittmer, Dan Zwirko.

The *Planning Board Virtual Regular Meeting* was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Chair Donald Holland.

### **Vote - To recommend for Fall Special Town Meeting a proposed zoning change on property known as 916 Williams St. from Residence Zone A-1 district to the Business district:**

Clerk Walter Gunn expressed that, as part of his nearly 20 years of experience as a Planning Board member as well as his extensive involvement in the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for a number of years, he has seen firsthand Longmeadow's evolution into a fully developed municipality and it's this capacity limit that leads him to strongly advocate for critical thinking when it comes to uses of the very few open spaces still available. In recent times, Longmeadow has witnessed important zoning changes with projects such as JGS Lifecare, the Longmeadow Shops expansion and the Brewer-Young Mansion, with all three having the common denominator of being proposed in lots originally deemed "residential" and all three zoning change requests presenting detailed designs and drawings that reflect the specific intent in each case. While he understands that the Covid19 pandemic has upended the economic environment, a scenario that may prevent real estate developers from confidently conceiving detailed projects, he feels the drawings submitted by Colvest at the April hearing are too schematic and may not reflect the lot's true potential. He cited a 1986 case law called "Prudential vs. Board of Appeals of Westwood, MA", where the courts ruled that a Site Review process allows for a "regulation of use and not a prohibition", which signals Planning Boards' diminished influence in the project development process after a zoning change has been approved. While acknowledging the economic benefit of developing this parcel in the near future, he encouraged the applicant to submit a more specific design that will better educate town residents prior to casting their votes or, as an alternate scenario, that the applicant reconsider other ideas, such as proposing a "Mixed Use" that may offer more flexibility in design options and approval procedures.

Bruce Colton echoed the statements made by Mr. Gunn and raised some concerns over the parcel's density as depicted on the drawings presented back in April. Additionally, he noted that town residents are not bound to follow a Planning Board recommendation and, as the legislative body, they are the final decision makers by casting their votes at Town Meeting.

While Josh Levine understands and agrees with the statements made by fellow members, he deems the project drawings in question as acceptable and encourages the board to move forward with the zoning change recommendation for 916 Williams Street without delay, considering that any drawings submitted at a Planning Board hearing or Town Meeting are non-binding and the parcel's development will increase the town's revenue while bringing additional services that residents may welcome.

Walter Gunn made a motion, and was seconded by Josh Levine, to recommend for Fall Special Town Meeting a proposed zoning change on property known as 916 Williams St. from Residence Zone A-1 district to the Business District. Roll call vote - Mr. Levine: yes; Mr. Gunn: no; Mr. Holland: no; Mr. Colton: no. 1 in favor and 3 opposed, motion failed.

### **Meeting Minutes Review:**

1. **Regular Meeting May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021:** Walter Gunn made a motion, which was seconded by Josh Levine, to accept the minutes as amended. Roll call vote - Mr. Colton: abstained; Mr. Levine: yes; Mr. Gunn: yes; Mr. Holland: yes. All in favor 3-0, motion passed.

Walter Gunn made a motion, and was seconded by Josh Levine, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote - Mr. Colton: yes; Mr. Levine: yes; Mr. Gunn: yes; Mr. Holland: yes. All in favor 4-0, motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 7:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bianca Damiano*