

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

April 26, 2022

PRESENT: Robert Domnitz (Chair), Lynn DeLisi (Vice-Chair), Ephraim Flint, Margaret Olson, Gary Taylor

STAFF: Paula Vaughn-MacKenzie, Jennifer Curtin

7:00 PM **(WITHDRAWN) Public Hearing, Section 12.6, Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District: T-Mobile Northeast, LLC, (Sprint) 9 Mary's Way/37 Cambridge Turnpike, Parcel 111-9-0.** Special Permit to maintain an existing wireless facility for a new term. **Continued from March 8, 2022.**

BD reopened the hearing.

The applicant has withdrawn their request for a renewal of the Special Permit since Crown Castle will be decommissioning the Tower this summer.

MO moved to close the hearing. EF seconded. Roll call: LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye, EF aye

MO moved to accept the withdrawal. GT seconded. LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye, EF aye

The Board requested at their initial hearings on March 8, 2022 that the applicant submit updated emissions reports, plans, agreements to notify the board of future communications with the FAA, and statements of whether the applicant has any knowledge of future facilities planned for the next 20 months. The applicant has submitted those documents for the following 4 renewal requests.

7:01 PM **Public Hearing, Section 12.6, Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District: T-Mobile Northeast, LLC, 0 Bedford Road/131 Cambridge Turnpike, Parcel 127-13-0.** Special Permit to maintain an existing wireless facility for a new term. **Continued from March 8, 2022.** Vote expected.

BD reopened the hearing.

MO moved to close the public hearing. LD seconded. Roll; Call: LD aye, BD aye, EF aye, GT aye, MO aye

EF moved to approve the special permit for a term of 5 years. LD seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, GT aye, MO aye, EF aye

7:05 PM **Public Hearing, Section 12.6, Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District: T-Mobile Northeast, LLC, (MetroPCS) 169 Lincoln Road, Parcel 161-11-0.** Special Permit to maintain an existing wireless facility for a new term. **Continued from March 8, 2022.** Vote expected.

BD reopened the hearing.

We received one comment from an abutter regarding this property. Garrick Niemiec of 177 Lincoln Road expressed via email that he is concerned with trash and lack of maintenance in the area and that he believed the plantings are insufficient.

BD said that he and Ms. Curtin conducted a site visit. He added that the complaints by the neighbor were not pertinent to the application.

MO moved to close the public hearing and issue a special permit for a term of 5 years. LD seconded. Roll Call: LD aye BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

7:10 PM Public Hearing, Section 12.6, Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District: T-Mobile Northeast, LLC, (Sprint) 169 Lincoln Road, Parcel 161-11-0. Special Permit to maintain an existing wireless facility for a new term. **Continued from March 8, 2022.** Vote expected.

BD reopened the hearing.

MO moved to close the public hearing and issue a special permit for a term of 5 years. LD seconded. LD aye BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

7:15 PM Public Hearing, Section 12.6, Wireless Communications Facilities Overlay District: T-Mobile Northeast, LLC, (MetroPCS) 295 Cambridge Turnpike, Parcel 132-25-0. Special Permit to maintain an existing wireless facility for a new term. **Continued from March 8, 2022.** Vote expected.

BD reopened the hearing.

MO moved to close the public hearing and issue a special permit for a term of 5 years. Roll Call: LD aye BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

7:20 PM Determination of Minor Change, Section 17, Non-Residential Site Plan Review: 9 Lewis Street Realty, LLC, 25 9-11 Lewis Street, Parcel 161-5-0. Request for a Determination of Minor Change to an approved site plan for minor additions and safety improvements to the existing structure to accommodate the height of ambulances and comply with building code. Vote Expected.

Susan Murphy represented the applicant and gave an overview of the project.

Professional Ambulance and Oxygen Service Inc. (Pro EMS) has been a tenant and operated an ambulance service from 11A Lewis Street for the past 11 years, and a new owner acquired the property 6 years ago. ProEMS is the Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider for the towns of Lincoln, Weston, Concord, Carlisle, Maynard, Boxboro, and Stow. Two paramedics are housed at 11 Lewis Street 24/7. Very little upkeep had been done by the prior owner of the building. The current property owner has committed to fully updating the space.

The Board discussed the proposed lighting and thought it should be reduced to lower lumen fixtures.

GT moved to consider this a minor change. MO seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

GT moved to approve the admin approval with the condition that the applicant submit final lighting to Planning staff for approval. MO seconded. Roll Call: LD aye BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

7:25 PM Recommendation for Accessory Apartment, Section 14.3.3: Almut and Martin Werminghausen, 141 South Great Road, Parcel 173-12-0. Request for a recommendation to the ZBA for an accessory apartment. Vote expected.

Martin Werminghausen said that this apartment is for their son and daughter in law to be able to live on their property. The applicant received approval from the Conservation Commission for the project.

MO moved to give a positive recommendation to the ZBA. EF seconded. Roll Call: LD aye, BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

Business

Climate Action Plan

Ms. Curtin explained her work on the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant for the development of a Lincoln Climate Action Plan and asked that the Board write a letter of support for this grant application.

MO said that she would write the letter.

Work Plan Discussion

MO drafted a document for rethinking zoning regulations which is attached to these minutes below.

The Board discussed problems with the affordability and availability of housing in town and what changes could be made to zoning to improve the situation. Maintaining rural character while increasing housing diversity are major concerns. The board discussed permitting multiple dwelling units in buildings that have the same appearance as a single-family house, thus preserving the character of the town's landscapes and neighborhoods. This would require that the town enact regulations that require any additional units be in the main building, limit the size and number of doors facing the street, limit lots to a single curb cut, and develop design guidelines for houses with multiple units. BD expressed the need for more data on housing prices and housing trends. The Board agreed that a clear first step would be liberalizing the accessory apartment bylaw through such measures as allowing them by right when in the main building and increase size maximum. This can be drafted for next year's Town Meeting.

The Board discussed how to respond to Lincolntalk posts. The Board decided that MO could respond to factual inaccuracies herself and for more contentious issues she will send around her proposed responses and give an hour for direct comments from the Board members before posting. The Board also discussed holding time at each meeting for public discussions.

The Board reviewed the different issues under the purview of SLPAC. BD and LD expressed concern about zoning discussions being held at SLPAC meetings instead of Planning Board meetings. LD suggested that SLPAC should continue, but that discussion of zoning changes be taken out and be placed in the Planning Board Meetings.

BD suggested that SLPAC turn into an ad-hoc committee with specific issues delegated by the Planning Board and SLPAC members could attend Planning Board meetings to discuss other issues if necessary.

The Board will discuss the future of SLPAC at upcoming meetings.

GT moved to adjourn. BD seconded. Roll Call: LD aye BD aye, EF aye, MO aye, GT aye.

Approved on May 10, 2022.

Rethinking Lincoln's Zoning Regulations

From the introduction to our Zoning By-law to the Master Plan and the Lincoln Vision and many documents in between Lincoln has always envisioned itself as a town where everyone is welcome and people of all income levels can find a place to live and enjoy the beautiful town with trails and open space that citizens have worked over the years to create.

Today we find ourselves in a situation where few young families can afford to live in Lincoln. Although 30% of our housing is multi-family, a good portion of that is either income restricted (Lincoln Woods) or age restricted (The Commons, Ryan Estates). Relatively little of what remains is suitable for a young family. Most young families need three bedrooms: boys, girls, and parents. Although we have some suitable multi-family housing, we don't have much. This means that young families looking to move into town have few options aside from purchasing a single family home. On April 21st 2022 Zillow listed four single family homes for sale in Lincoln, the least expensive of which was listed for \$1.89 million. Of the 200 single family houses sold in Lincoln since 2019, 13 were \$700,000 or less, and 51 were \$1,000,000 or less. Assuming you have the \$200,000 down payment, a million dollar house requires an income of \$180,000. This is above Lincoln's 2019 median income. The anecdotal observations that the town is getting wealthier are correct.

As a practical matter we can only create more moderate income housing by creating more housing. Subsidizing even a small portion of our single family housing stock is prohibitively expensive. Lincoln looks the way it does today because we have 2 acre zoning, a great deal of open space, and 80 miles of trails. Changes that would increase the density of buildings will inevitably change the characteristics of the town's built environment. Generally speaking, if Lincoln residents wanted to live in Lexington or Newton we would. We are here because we like the characteristics of the town's built environment. So the question becomes: how do we create housing diversity while retaining Lincoln's idyllic character?

One of the effects of serving on the planning board is exposure to the types and sizes of buildings that are being built in town. The planning board regularly sees properties with 10,000 and even 20,000 square feet of enclosed space, plus associated driveways and hardscape. If you think a three bedroom dwelling unit requires 2500 square feet, a 10,000 square foot house is potentially 4 dwellings. Our zoning permits one family to live in 10,000 square feet but doesn't permit 4 families to live in the same building with the same footprint. This strikes me as neither reasonable nor consistent with Lincoln's values.

Altering our zoning to permit more units in a building that is similar to what is being built in town today is not a particularly easy set of changes to make. The logical place to start is accessory apartments:

- a. Allow accessory apartments in the main dwelling building by right
- b. Remove size limits on accessory apartments (or make it 35% of the square footage)
- c. Continue to require a special permit for any rental of less than 30 days. In other words, do not permit people to build air bnb hotels by right.
- d. Continue to require a special permit for accessory apartments in accessory buildings
- e. Expressly state that adding an accessory apartment to a non-conforming lot shall not be considered "detrimental to the neighborhood" so long as no additional non-conformity is created and the unit is in the main building. "Detrimental to the neighborhood" is an entirely subjective assessment and we should in this case remove ambiguity.