

**SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING  
MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 8, 2023**

**Present:** Diane Mulvaney, Chair; Nate Therien, Vice-Chair; Joanna Brown, Clerk; Brad Hutchison, Member; Michael Davis, Member; Michael Adelman; Associate Member; Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation; Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

Chair Mulvaney called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and reviewed the virtual meeting protocols.

**Agenda Item #1 --- Open Comment Period**

Preston Smith, 95 Woodbridge Street, addressed the Board. He submitted an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) comment sheet (attached) prior to the meeting. The comment sheet had been shared with the Board.

**Agenda Item #2 --- Minutes**

Draft minutes of the March 20 regular meeting and March 27 regular meeting and public hearing were sent to the Board for review. Spelling and grammar errors were corrected in revised drafts.

**Motion:** Clerk Brown moved to approve the revised regular meeting minutes of March 20 and March 27. Member Davis seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

**Motion:** Clerk Brown moved to approve the revised public hearing minutes of March 27. Vice-Chair Therien seconded the motion. Four (4) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call. Member Hutchison abstained from the vote as he abstained from participating in the hearing.

**Agenda Item #3 --- Correspondence**

Correspondence and additional correspondence were sent to the Board prior to the meeting. The correspondence included a status report on redevelopment at 27 Bardwell Street.

**Agenda Item #4 --- Virtual Open House on Zoning Related Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

As Town meeting was just days away, the Board decided to host an 'open house' to allow members of the public to ask questions on zoning related warrant articles.

Hector Lomelin, 24 Ranger Street, asked how the 1 ½ story height limit proposed in the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaw would be defined. In response to the inquiry, it was stated that no explicit height limit in feet had been included. The Building Commissioner would determine the allowable height based on building code.

Denise Presley, 19 The Knolls, submitted a google form (attached) and asked what provisions were in the proposed ADU bylaw that required ADU dwellings to be affordable. In response to the inquiry, it was indicated that affordability requirements were not in the bylaw. Vice-Chair Therien responded that ADUs were small dwellings which would have a lower market rate than other types of housing, such as single family homes. Clerk Brown shared a different opinion than Vice-Chair Therien and stated that the cost of constructing an ADU was highly variable.

Jodi Miller, 11 Brockway Lane, observed that support was divided for allowing detached ADUs. Jodi Miller asked what the benefits of allowing detached ADUs would be outside of accessibility and privacy. Chair Mulvaney, Vice-Chair Therien, and Member Hutchison all supported detached ADUs as it offered flexibility to property owners in deciding what type of ADU best suited their needs. Member Hutchison added that certain homes would not be able to pursue an attached ADU due to expensive building code requirements or dimensional limitations under zoning. Clerk Brown disagreed with her fellow board members as detached ADUs could have negative impacts on existing neighborhoods.

Director Capra answered 'Question and Answers (Q&A)' that were submitted through the zoom webinar platform.

Director Capra responded to a question regarding the presence of ADUs in other local communities. She indicated that Easthampton passed their ADU bylaw in 2016 and very few permits for development had been issued.

Director Capra responded to questions asking how the ADU bylaw related to open space protection. She indicated that no deed restrictions protecting open space were in the proposed bylaw. The understanding was that development within areas of existing residential development would lessen the need to develop in undeveloped areas.

Director Capra also addressed comments and concerns she had received through phone calls and conversations with residents. Some comments related to the need to further increase development in the Town's existing 40R districts. This was challenging as 40R development had minimum dwelling requirements and did not enable the type of housing that an ADU bylaw would. A variety of planning tools could allow opportunities for a variety of housing types. Director Capra also heard comments regarding implementation of ADUs in South Hadley Falls. This was not likely as an ADU could only be built on a single-family home lot and most residential lots in South Hadley Falls consisted of multifamily homes. Additionally, many lots in South Hadley Falls did not conform to current dimensional requirements.

#### **Agenda Item #5 --- Planning Board Appointment to Town Meeting Review Committee**

The Board had been asked to appoint a representative to the Town Meeting Review Committee. The committee was charged with making recommendations on how Town Meeting process and procedures could be improved upon.

**Motion:** Vice-Chair Therien moved to appoint Member Davis as Planning Board representative to the Town Meeting Review Committee. Member Hutchison seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

### **Agenda Item #6 --- Planning & Conservation Department Report**

Director Capra detailed the following items:

- *Housing Production Plan* – The second community forum would be held in the upcoming weeks.
- *Master Plan Joint Meeting* – The Board would hold a joint meeting on June 6 with the Selectboard and Master Plan Implementation Committee to discuss the challenges and successes of Master Plan implementation.
- *Future Planning Board Meetings* – The next Planning Board meeting would be held on May 22. The Board could anticipate considering an illuminated sign request at 532 Newton Street and a special permit request at 2078 Memorial Drive.

### **Agenda Item #7 ---Other New Business**

Clerk Brown expressed interest in placing discussion of affordable housing on a future agenda. Associate Member Adelman noted that the ongoing Housing Production Plan update considered affordable housing.

Member Hutchison reviewed the material provided on ADUs as mentioned under *Agenda Item #1 --- Open Comment Period* and found it to be a helpful fact sheet.

At a previous meeting, the board re-organized and appointed members to the position of Chair, Vice-Chair, Clerk, and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) representative. The Board could also appoint a member as Alternate PVPC Representative. Since the Board's last discussion on the topic, it was found that the alternate member needed to be a South Hadley resident so Director Capra was not eligible for the position.

**Motion:** Member Brown nominated herself to the position of PVPC Alternate Representative. Member Hutchison seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

### **Agenda Item #8 --- Adjournment**

**Motion:** Clerk Brown moved to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Therien seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

### **Appendix**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Preston Smith – ADU Fact Sheet	Attached
Denise Presley – Google From	Attached