

## Background Materials – March 13, 2023– Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 3/10/23

**Cable Access Channel 15** –The Cable Studio has indicated that this meeting will be live streamed on Channel 15.

### AGENDA ITEM #1 Open Comment Period

This 10-minute period is set aside for the public to offer comments on items not on the posted agenda, in accordance with the adopted policy, as amended 8/8/22, posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage here:

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/9842/Open-Comment-Period-Policy---As-Adopted-2022-08-08>

**Action Needed:** Allow members of the public to offer comments to the Board.

### AGENDA ITEM #2 Minutes

Planning and Conservation Coordinator Colleen Canning will forward minutes separately.

**Action Needed:** Vote to approve the minutes.

### AGENDA ITEM #3 Correspondence

A list of correspondence is attached. Planning and Conservation Department Coordinator Colleen Canning will forward any other correspondence received after the issuance of this report separately.

**Action Needed:** No action needed.

### 6:30 PM AGENDA ITEM #4

Illuminated Sign Request Continuance, White Wing Convenience and Gas Station, 568 Newton Street Map 28, Parcel 80)

Application here: <https://www.southhadley.org/1348/13584/Newton-Street-568--White-Wing?activeLiveTab=widgets>

255-85 Signs: <https://ecode360.com/30053735>

The Board opened the meeting on 3/6/23 and continued until 3/13/23 to await guidance from the Building Commission regarding interpretation of some elements of 255-85. The subject property is an existing gas station and convenience store located in the Business A zoning district. Per 255-85 (G), illuminated signs must be approved by the Planning Board by a determination that the sign will not be adverse to the character of the surrounding

neighborhood and community. Signs are required to comply with all other provisions of 255-85, as enforced by the Building Commissioner. As required per the Zoning Bylaw, abutters have been notified of the meeting date and time.

Building Commissioner Damian Cote has stated that a canopy over gas pumps at a gas station would be considered part of the principal use and structure as it is required by fire code due to the fire suppression. Thus, a sign on the canopy would be permissible under 255-85(A)(1). However, there already exists a sign with the name of the gas station on the canopy in the location proposed for the new illuminated sign. See photo below. The bylaw states:

- (1) The sign or signs shall be attached parallel to the wall of the principal building; the aggregate area of such a sign or signs on any one face of a building shall be less than 10% of the area of such building face, including openings; and such signs do not extend above a flat roof or eave line of a pitched roof more than 10% of the average height of the front elevation of such building. No sign shall be painted on the wall of any building.

The applicant stated on 3/6/23 that the illuminated sign will replace the business sign.

The Building Commissioner has provided additional guidance as follows:

“Face of a building” is to be interpreted as the side of a building on any number or collection of buildings for a given business that are viewable from the same direction. Thus, the canopy and the side of the white building are all one face.

“Openings” are to generally defined as doors and windows and not the open space under the canopy. Thus, the area of open space under the canopy would not be considered part of the area calculated to determine total coverage of signs.

*For the illumination*, the sign will not be backlit, and only the numbers on the sign will be illuminated. The application states that the illumination will be by LED lights, 16 hours per day, and is 4' x 2'. As presented, the illumination appears to pose no detriment to the neighborhood or community given its location at an existing business above an already illuminated gas station filling area.

**Recommendation:**

Request the revised illumination sign drawings to scale, and the total calculated coverage of signage for each face of the building that the illuminated sign will be installed. A condition of any illuminated sign approval would be that all other provisions of 255-85 must also be complied with and that the Board’s approval for illumination in no way waives any of those standards and/or requirements.

**Action Needed:** Motion to vote on approval of the illuminated sign.



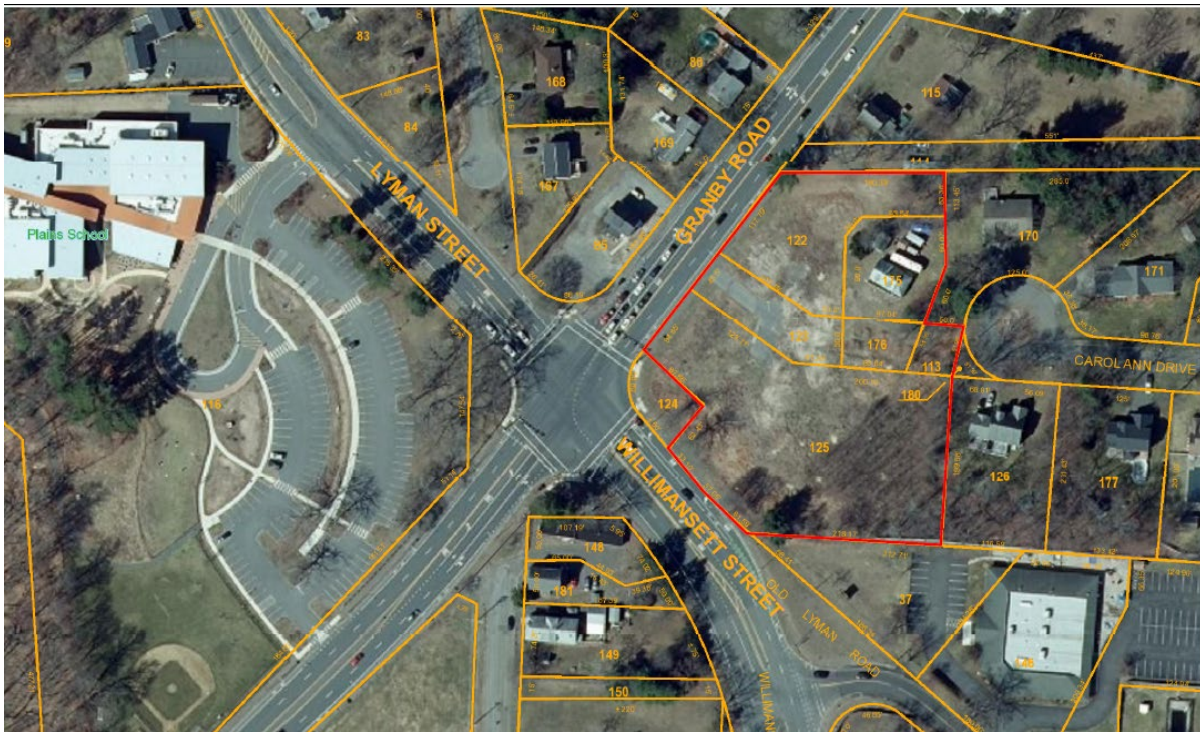
**Action Needed:** The Board should vote on the request for illuminated sign approval if all questions are answered or continue for 1 week.

6:30 PM AGENDA ITEM #5 Public Hearing for Zoning Map Amendment  
Landowner Petition – 280 and 286 Granby Road (Map 15, Parcels 122, 123, 124, 125,  
175, 176 and 113)

Landowner petition online here:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/10729/Granby-Road-280-and-286---Zone-Change-Petition?bidId=>

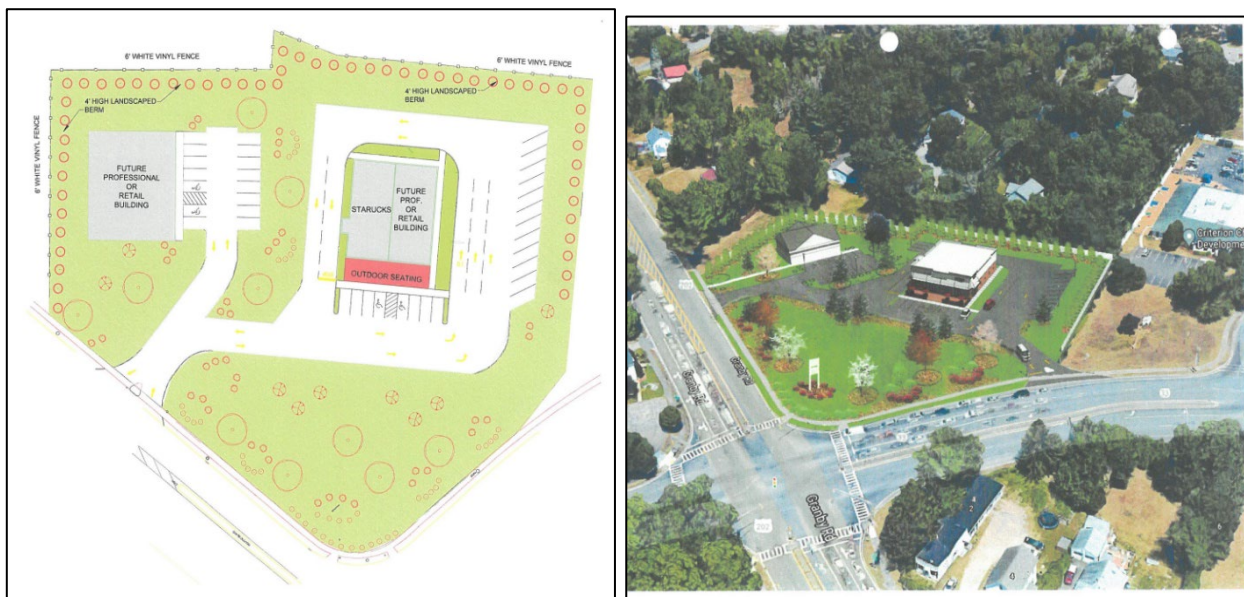
A landowner petition for a Zoning Map amendment has been submitted by Robert Bolduc, Manager for RLB Management, a.k.a. Pride Limited Partnership LLC, for the above referenced parcels, located on the southeast corner at the intersection of Route 33/Lyman Street and Route 202/Granby Road. The petitioner requests an amendment from the current Residential A-1 (RA1) zoning for the six parcels totaling 2.72 acres to Business A (BA) for the construction of a Starbucks Coffee Shop with attached retail/professional use, plus a free standing building for additional retail/professional use. Site plans of the proposed development are included at the link above. NOTE - Any action on a zoning map amendment does NOT grant any permit approval for the project he seeks to develop. All required permitting under the respective zoning district would still be required.



Parcel ID	Street Address	Parcel Size* (Sq. Ft.)	Parcel Size* (Acres)	Zoning
15-122	286 Granby Road	22,584	0.52	RA1
15-123	Granby Road	8,374	0.19	RA1
15-125	280 Granby Road	43,560.46	1.46	RA1
15-175	Granby Road	12,080	0.28	RA1
15-176	Granby Road	4,517	0.10	RA1
15-113	Carol Ann Drive	2,481	0.06	RA1
<b>TOTAL AREA FOR ZONE AMENDMENT PETITION</b>		<b>93,596.46</b>	<b>2.61</b>	
15-124	Granby Road	4,770	0.11	BA

\*Parcel size as noted above is from the South Hadley Assessor's Property Tax Parcel Database.

Proposed development concept plans as submitted with the Zone Change Petition:



The following errors are noted in the petitioner's request dated January 20, 2023:

1. The total area subject to the zoning map amendment petition include six (6) parcels not seven (7), totaling 2.72 acres of land not 3.17.
2. Parcel 15-124 is already zoned Business A and therefore is not subject to the zoning map amendment request.
3. The petitioner states that the requested zone change to Business A is recommended in the "2021 Corridor Plan". This is a reference to the Route 33/202 Corridor Study completed in January 2022. The Study actually recommends a proposed zone change for this area as the creation of a new zoning district called "Low-density Mixed Use District".

**Relationship to the 2020 Master Plan (adopted March 2022)**

Within the Master Plan, the intersection for Routes 202 and 33 is defined as one of four "sub-areas" with identified priorities. The priorities for this sub-area are as follows (p.11-12):

- Preserve the existing clusters of single-family homes; consider adding more open space such as a small park, community garden, or dog park.
- Increase commercial activity such as restaurants, ice cream shops, or retail between the neighborhood core and periphery.
- Increase the variety of housing choices.

The Master Plan identifies the intersection of Routes 33 and 202 as an area of opportunity for economic development as follows (p.40): “South Hadley already has several existing commercially oriented nodes, which could be further developed to increase access to economic opportunities for small businesses, which would help address the narrow tax base and stated concerns about the lack of retail. This includes the four areas discussed earlier in the plan: the neighborhood centered on the Village Commons and Mount Holyoke College at Route 47 and Route 116; the Woodlawn neighborhood (centered on the intersection of Routes 116 and 33); South Hadley Falls; *and the intersection of Routes 202 and 33.*” The Plan further recognizes that this area is subject to a parallel planning study, referring to the Route 202/33 Corridor Study.

The Plan also recommends the following for this location (p.53): “Modify existing regulatory and permitting requirements to diversify and stimulate new commercial uses compatible with neighborhood characteristics:

- Neighborhood centered on the Village Commons and Mount Holyoke College at Route 47 and Route 116
- Woodlawn Neighborhood (centered on the intersection of Routes 116 and 33)
- South Hadley Falls
- *Routes 202 and 33 Corridor*”

### **Relationship to Other Community Plans – Route 202/33 Corridor Study (January 2022)**

The purpose of this study was to implement some of the 2010 Master Plan’s recommendations for this corridor and develop a framework for successful development of the corridor in coordination with the properties that lie close to but beyond the corridor in Chicopee and Granby. The Study provides an in depth analysis of the corridor and offers the following major findings regarding its existing land use characteristics (p.22):

- A significant mix of land uses along the corridor which includes low-density residential, commercial, educational, recreational, and open space. Multifamily developments are accessed from the corridor, but the majority of the buildings are not visible from the street.
- Significant recreational and natural assets provide visual variety along the corridor and act as both neighborhood and regional amenities.
- Routes 202/33 provide connections to other commercial areas within South Hadley and beyond, including regional access to Interstates 90 and 91. However, the proximity of these commercial areas creates potential competition for uses along this corridor.
- Non-vehicular access is poor. The corridor is not linked to either public transit or regional bicycle trails and paths. Sidewalks vary in quality and location, making walking a

less-accessible alternative despite the destinations (Buttery Brook Park, the South Hadley Square Shopping Center) within easy walking distances of neighborhoods. Public transit on the corridor within South Hadley does border with South Hadley at a stop on New Ludlow Road.

- Most of the traffic along the corridor does not originate within South Hadley. The 2018 Complete Streets Prioritization Plan (prepared for South Hadley by PVPC) has an average weekday traffic count of 7,411 vehicles southbound and 7,871 vehicles northbound on Route 33 at Old Lyman Road (total average of 15,282 vehicles per weekday). Capturing these drivers as customers, or possibly as new residents, would increase the economic viability of the corridor.

In discussing the relationship between zoning, economic development and housing, the Study recommends the following (p.36): “Over the long-term, for South Hadley to develop a competitive advantage, it should focus on attracting businesses that serve the surrounding neighborhoods and professional offices while also encouraging additional housing at appropriate locations. The Town should consider adding design standards to any zoning changes to maintain certain physical characteristics of the buildings and sites along the corridor while allowing new businesses which can capitalize on the relatively high through traffic.”

The Study also recognizes that the subject location is within the Westover Airport/ARB Accident Potential Zone II (APZII) due to its alignment with the airport flight path. Westover has issued certain recommendations for these zones: “Within the APZ II zone, single unit detached residential development is acceptable along with certain manufacturing uses.” It is my understanding that this is guidance only, with no actual regulatory authority.

In summary, on pgs. 40-42, the Study recommends the creation of a “Low-density Mixed Use” zoning district at the intersection of Route 33 and 202, described as follows: “Village Center development with a mix of retail, restaurant and professional office. Conversions from single-family homes to professional offices will be allowed... The LDMU considers the recommendations for restricted density and limited uses due to its location within the APZ II zone. Any mixed-use development should leverage the Big Y as an anchoring tenant in the area by encouraging other office and retail uses in the plaza area”.

### **Existing Zoning**

Below are images and maps excerpted from the existing South Hadley Zoning Map of the parcels subject to the petition. While a portion of the subject site is Business A (Map 15, Parcel 124), and there are several small sites nearby also zoned Business A, and rather large Business C zoning district to the south, most of the existing zoning in the area appears to be predominately Residence A-1. However, it also appears that most of the parcels zoned RA1 are also dimensionally non-conforming for the RA1 district. The minimum lot size for the RA1 district is 22,500 square feet. A large portion of the of the RA1 lots in the district in this area, with existing residential development, appear to be roughly half that size.

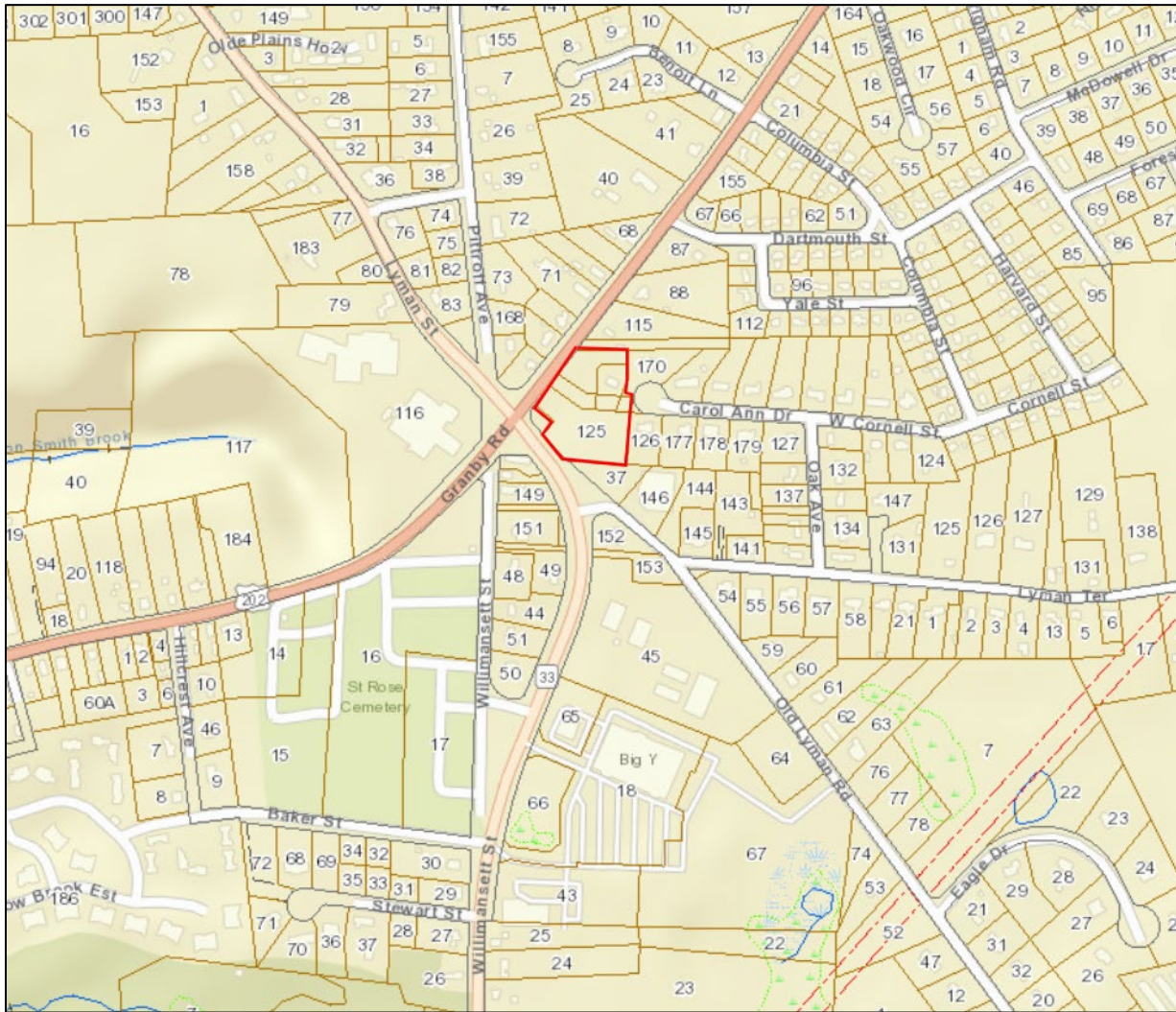
The following uses within the existing and proposed zoning districts are allowed:

<https://ecode360.com/attachment/SO1428/SO1428-255a%20Use%20Regulations%20Schedule.pdf>

Use Classifications	Districts						
	Residence				Agri.	Busin	
	A-1	A-2	B	C		A-1	A
<b>Residential Uses</b>							
Single-family dwellings	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Single-family dwellings – flag lot	SP	SP	N	N	SP	N	N
Conversions of single-family to two-family dwellings, as provided in Article VII	N	SP	Y	N	SP	N	Y
Two-family dwellings (new)	SP	SP	Y	N	N	N	SP
Three-family dwellings	SP	SP	SPR	Y	N	N	SP
Multifamily dwellings for more than three families/	SP	SP	SP	SPR	N	N	SP
g							
Home Occupation I, as provided in Article VII	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Home Occupation II, as provided in Article VII	SPR	SPR	SPR	N	SPR	N	SPR
Mobile homes (as provided in §§ 255-31 and 255-33)	SP	SP	SP	N	N	N	N
Mobile home parks	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Continuing care retirement communities	N	SP	N	N	N	N	N
Bed-and-breakfasts	SP	SP	N	N	SP	N	N
Flexible residential developments, as provided in Article VII	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	N	N

Use Classifications	Districts						
	Residence				Agri.	Busin	
	A-1	A-2	B	C		A-1	A
<b>Business Uses</b>							
Drive-in services	N	N	N	N	N	SP	SP
Retail sales	N	N	N	N	N	SPR	SPR
Personal, business, and professional services	N	N	N	N	N	SPR	SPR
Gasoline filling stations	N	N	N	N	N	SP/a	SP/a
Automotive repair and services	N	N	N	N	N	SP/h	SP/h
Open-air parking for 25 vehicles or fewer/d	N	N	N	N	N	N	SPR
Public parking areas and garages (unrestricted capacity)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
New and secondhand car dealers	N	N	N	N	N	SP	SP
Marinas	N	N	N	N	N	SPR	SPR
Offices	N	N	N	N	N	SPR	SPR
Wholesale sales and warehousing	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Telephone exchange buildings	N	SPR	SPR	N	N	N	SPR
Railroad or bus passenger stations or shelters and rights-of-way	N	SPR	SPR	SP	N	SP	SPR
Amusement parks, bowling alleys, roller skating rinks	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Motels – hotels	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Figure 1 - Parcels subject to Zoning Map amendment petition highlighted in red.





# Zoning Map

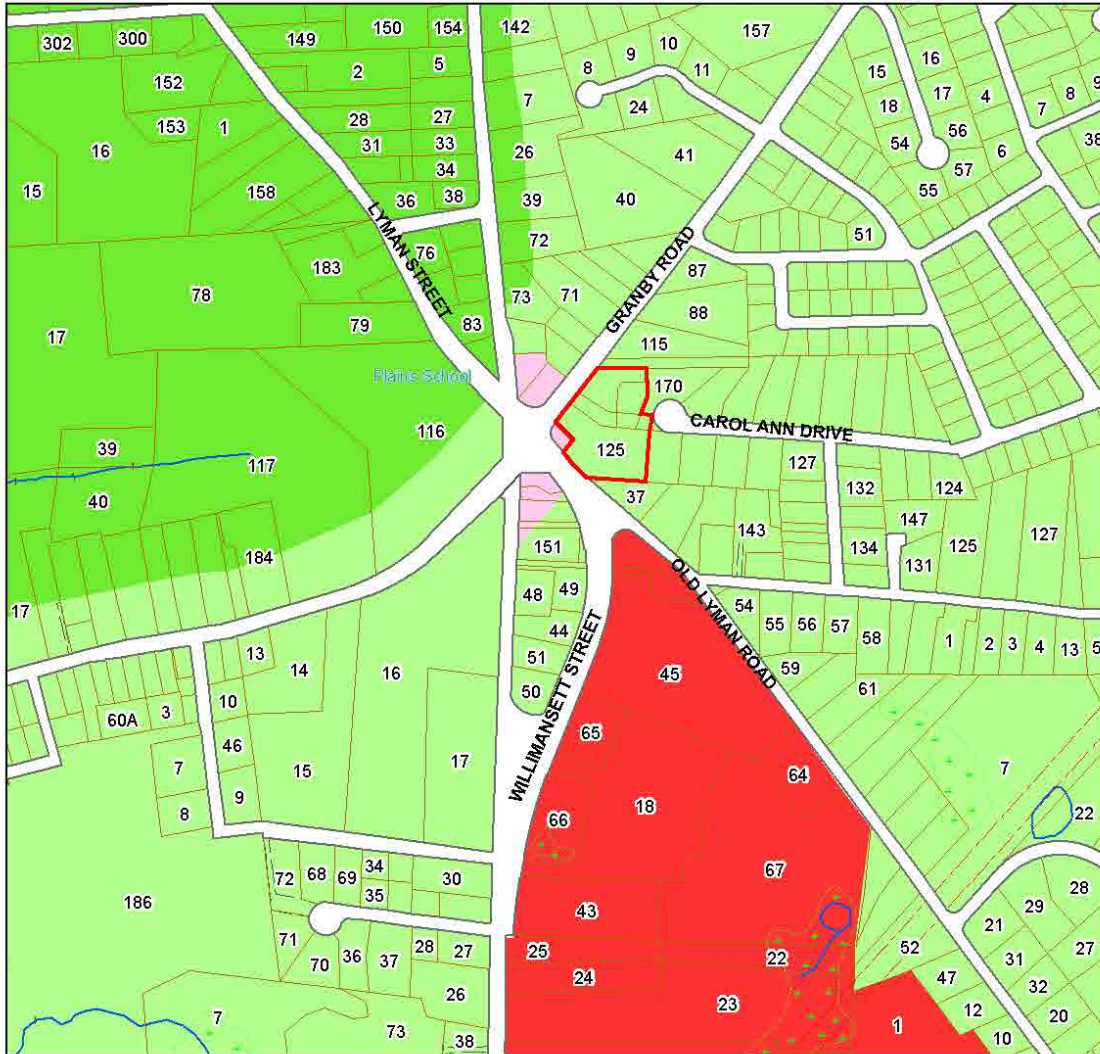
South Hadley, MA



March 10, 2023

1 inch = 557 Feet

www.cai-tech.com



AOI_Points	RoadNotPar	Water Lines	Residence A-1
PROPERTYLINE	WETLAND	Wet Areas	Residence A-2
ROAD	Right of Way	Business A	
HOOK	Utility	Business C	

Data shown on this map is provided for planning and informational purposes only. The municipality and CAI Technologies are not responsible for any use for other purposes or misuse or misrepresentation of this map.

**Recommendation:**

There are many factors to consider in reviewing this petition for a zoning map amendment. The Selectboard have placed the petition for the zoning map amendment on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant, scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup> for a vote for adoption. The Planning Board’s role is to hold a public hearing regarding the petition and submit a recommendation to Town Meeting as to whether they should adopt the amendment or not.

**Action Needed:**

Open the public hearing, receive public comment and begin deliberations on a recommendation to submit to Town Meeting regarding the petition.

**AGENDA ITEM #6 Planning & Conservation Department Report on Planning Projects and Development Updates**

**Next Meetings and Posted/Pending Agendas**

3/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short Term Rental Bylaws Public Hearing Continuation/Board Deliberation (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
3/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 N Sycamore Knolls SP- Expansion of a nonconforming structure (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> </ul>
4/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>93 Mountainview St SPR- Home Occupation Dog Groomer (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>Amherst Road Zone Change (<a href="#">link</a>)</li> <li>27 Bardwell Street – Library Condo Conversion, Special Permit Extension Request</li> </ul>
4/24	MPIC Bylaw Update Review Housing Production Plan Public Hearing
5/8	
5/10	Annual Town Meeting
5/22	Week of 5/15 or 5/22 – Schedule joint meeting with Selectboard for Housing Production Plan Adoption

**AGENDA ITEM #8 Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)**

No new business had been submitted to me as of today.