

Background Materials – February 9, 2026 – Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 2/6/26

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Background Reports for Planning Board meetings are posted online:
<https://www.southhadley.org/1274/Agenda-Background-Materials>

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 9/11/23, posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage here:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/11705/Policy-on-Open-Comment-Period---As-Adopted-2023-09-11>

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

2) Minutes

Planning and Conservation Coordinator Colleen Canning will forward minutes separately.

Action Needed: Vote to approve the minutes.

3) Correspondence

Correspondence is attached.

Action Needed: No action needed.

6:30PM Public Hearing Continuation

4) 506 Granby Road – SPR and Stormwater Management Permit

Revised application materials online: <https://www.southhadley.org/1500/Granby-Road-506---7-Duplex-14-Unit-Townh>

Public Hearing Status

Public hearing was opened on 10/6/25, continued to 10/20/25, 11/10/25, and 1/26/26. Member Watchilla was absent from the hearing on 10/6 and then recused himself on 10/20. Therefore, the application requires a minimum of three (3) of the four (4) board members to vote in favor of Site Plan Approval and the Stormwater Management Permit.

Background

SAI Shyam, Inc., owner of the 4.02 +/- site at 506 Granby Road (Assessor's Map 32, Parcel 52), is seeking site plan approval to develop 14 dwellings, comprised of 7 detached duplexes constructed as townhomes, on the southerly portion of the site to be accessed by Conti Drive. The site is fully within the Business A-1 zoning district, and also includes Liquor Town, a commercial store and parking lot along the Granby Road frontage. Concurrent with the Site Plan Review application, they have submitted a Stormwater Management Permit and a Notice of Intent to the Conservation Commission. The application states that the approximately 800 SF units will be rental units. Each duplex is designed with a walkout basement in the rear, and two upper-level floors for living space. The housing units surround centralized parking area that has a stormwater infiltration chamber underneath it.

Due to shallow depth to groundwater on the site (approx. 3' below grade), the project proposes to build all components above grade. Beginning at Conti Drive on the south side of the culvert at an intermittent stream, the road elevation would be re-designed with a hump such that the base elevation would be raised approximately 3 feet to the proposed driveway to the housing development, and then graded back down to the existing elevation as the road continues south to the other lots at the rear. These lots have commercial tenants – Pages' Automotive and a landscaping company. The elevation within the driveway and parking lot continues to be elevated to approximately 8' above grade. The duplexes encircle the raised central parking lot thereby necessitating walkout basements in the rear of the units. Between the duplexes, the ground is steeply sloped and proposed to be vegetated with grass.

Applicable Bylaws and Regulations for Planning Board Review:

- **Site Plan Review** [Town of South Hadley, MA Site Plan Review](#)
- **Business A-1 Amendment (ATM May 2024)** – *NOTE: Bylaw and regulation amendments are only incorporated into Ecode once per year through the Town Clerk's Office. The update for bylaws/regulations adopted since May 2023 are currently underway. Therefore, the Town Clerk has advised that the public rely on the Report to Town Meeting related to the Business A-1 amendment. Refer to Attachment B on page 8 of the following report:*
[Article-27---Planning-Board-Report-to-Town-Meeting---Business-A-1-Zoning-Amendment-rev](#)
- **Business A-1 Design Guidelines** [PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- **Chapter 200 Stormwater Management** [Town of South Hadley, MA Stormwater Management](#)
- **Chapter 360 Subdivision Regulations** [Town of South Hadley, MA Subdivision Regulations](#)
Because the project is multiple dwellings for residential purposes on a single parcel, a Form H Plan approval is required. This will be filed for after the SPR appeal period is over.

See list of revisions: [Revision-List---REV-A---506-Granby-Road](#)

Peer reviewer Steve Lee, BETA, has submitted a review of the revised application package:
<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14705/Peer-Review-Report---12126---BETA>

Review Status Updates

1. Parking Standards

Based on discussion at the 1/26/26 meeting, the parking lot design has been revised eliminating the two ADA spots and converting them to a place to back in and turn around. Striped parking spaces have been added to the overflow parking lot behind Liquor Town.

2. Pedestrian Access and Circulation

A striped walkway has been added through the Liquor Town parking lot to provide connectivity to the sidewalk on Granby Road.

3. Trash and Snow Removal

Areas for trash receptacles have been added between the duplexes.

4. Building Placement and Landscaping

The location of the buildings have been set back slightly to accommodate a 3' wide planting bed in front of the duplexes.

Department Comments

No additional comments received other than the following:

Conservation Commission – Conservation Commission approved the revised site plan at their meeting on 2/4/26 as part of Order of Conditions 288-0500.

SHELD, Matt Delmonte, 2/4/26 -

Pole 2: move it east to clear the proposed foot bridge, will require guy and anchor

Pole 3: move it to west side of road and install guy and anchor

Pole 4: remains same but anchor and guy added is possible

Business A-1 Design Guidelines

Per 255-XX(A)(4) Multifamily Residential Development in Business A-1 Zoning District, any multifamily development in the Bus A-1 zoning district is subject to design review. The adopted [Business A-1 Design Guidelines](#) are focused on mixed use and in particular, buildings with commercial first floor and residential in upper floors. The application before the Board is for the creation of a mixed use parcel, with a new multifamily development at the rear of the site. However, the design guidelines remain applicable and should be considered. The Board has not adopted a "Planning Board Design Review Process" therefore, I recommend that the Board recognize the design guidelines under their findings below.

Subdivision Waiver Requests

Applicant has requested 10 waivers from the subdivision regulations citing that they are not creating a new roadway but rather a driveway off of an existing way. The Board needs to review each waiver and make a determination.

[506-Granby-Road-SPR-Application-Packet-less-plans---SPR-Narrative](#) (see p.61 of document/ p.59 application).

Standards and Findings

The Board needs to make findings on each of the following:

255-148 Site Plan Review

Draft findings are attached for the Board's review.

255-XX Multifamily Residential Development in Business A-1 Zoning District

The Board adopted Design Guidelines as required by this bylaw amendment, which requires Design Review. The Board should discuss the design guidelines and make a finding about the projects conformity.

Chapter 200 Stormwater Permit

Recommended finding: *Following review of the plans, application materials, Peer Review comments, department comments, and public comments, the Planning Board finds that per the South Hadley General Bylaw Chapter 200 Stormwater Management, Section 11, the stormwater management and erosion and sediment control plan submitted with the permit application meets criteria A thru F.*

Subdivision Regulations – Waiver Requests – Form H Plan

The Board needs to make a finding on the waiver requests.

Conditions of Site Plan Approval and Stormwater Management Permit

The Board needs to discuss potential conditions for approval. The applicant's representative had previously stated that the Board cannot condition Site Plan Approval. The Zoning Bylaw 255-149 clearly states that the Board has the authority to condition approval:

§ 255-149 **Planning Board decision.**

- A. Except in the case of a minor site plan application which is governed by § 255-147B above, the Planning Board shall render a decision within 90 days of the public hearing and shall file its written decision with the Town Clerk's office.
- B. The Planning Board's decision shall consist of either:
 - (1) A written approval of the proposed project;
 - (2) A written denial of the application, stating reason for such denial; or
 - (3) A written approval subject to any conditions, modifications, and restrictions as the Planning Board may deem necessary to satisfy this bylaw.

ACTION NEEDED: Discuss revised materials, discuss peer review comments, discuss special conditions, performance guarantees, make SPR findings, make Stormwater Permit standards findings, and vote on issuance of Site Plan Approval and Stormwater Management Permit.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS:

#1 Motion Site Plan Approval – *Move to issue site plan approval based on the Board's findings for criteria in 255-148, subject to conditions as stated.*

#2 Motion Stormwater Management Permit – *Move to issue a stormwater management permit subject to the conditions as stated.*

5) 577 Granby Road Stormwater Management Permit – Discuss Need for Peer Review

Plans online here: <https://www.southhadley.org/1526/Granby-Road-577---Professional-Office-Sp>

The application is for the construction of 2 new 3,500 SF office buildings to be located behind the existing commercial building which is occupied by Taylor Rental and Get Movin' Fitness. Site disturbance for the new buildings, associated parking, and stormwater management system site modifications is approximately 65,000 SF. In addition to an application for Site Plan Review, they have submitted a Stormwater Management Permit application.

Does the Board wish to engage a third-party peer review for the Stormwater Management Permit? Typically, peer review has been used for larger developments, but it is at the discretion of the Board.

ACTION NEEDED: Determine if peer review of the stormwater management application is necessary.

7:00 Public Hearing

6) Subdivision Regulations Amendment

DRAFT Subdivision Regulations: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

Existing Chapter 360 Subdivision Regulations: <https://ecode360.com/30055069#30055069>

Subdivision Regulations Updates

- [Subdivision Regulations - Final Draft Revised 2/4/26](#)
- [Subdivision Regulations - Final Draft 12/30/25](#)
- [Appendices A thru G - Final Draft 12/30/25](#)
- [Subdivision Regulations Appendix H Tree and Shrub Planting Guide](#)
- [Recommended Tree and Shrub Planting Guide - August 2025](#)

The Planning Board will hold a public hearing for the full repeal and replace of the Subdivision Regulations. The Planning Board began working on updates to the 1995 Subdivision Regulations in July 2023. Below is a table of all meeting dates and section of the regulations reviewed.

The Board had a few outstanding questions for legal review. See attached response from MTC. Based on this review, final edits have been made to the draft dated 2/4/26.

Meeting Date	Topic
July 24, 2023 Minutes	Introductory presentation
September 11, 2023 Minutes	Article IX Design Principles and Standards
September 25, 2023 Minutes	Article IX Design Principles and Standards
October 2, 2023 Minutes	Article IX Design Principles and Standards
November 27, 2023 Minutes	Article X Required Improvements for Subdivisions
December 4, 2023 Minutes	Article I Authority and Purpose Article II General Article III Definitions Article IV Pre-submission Review Article V Plan Believed Not to Require Approval (ANR Plans) Article VI Preliminary Plans
December 18, 2023 Minutes	Article VII Definitive Plan (360-26 General, 360-27 Submission)
January 8, 2024 Minutes	Article VII Definitive Plan (360-28)

Jan – November 2024	Tabled Subdivision Regs. Discussion to work on amendment to Flexible Development Bylaw and proposed NEW Common Driveway bylaw; November Town Meeting 2024 – not passed
February 24, 2025 Minutes	Revised draft regulations to address failed Flexible Development and Common Driveway bylaws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article VIII Submission and Approval of Plans for More Than One Building for Dwelling Purposes Per Lot has been added. • Articles VIII thru XII have been renumbered to accommodate the insertion of Article noted above. • Article XI Required Improvements for Subdivisions has been expanded to include “and Developments for More than One Building for Dwelling Purposes per Lot”
May 2025 Town Meeting	ADU Bylaw adopted
June 9, 2025 Minutes	Revised multiple sections to include “Developments for More than one <i>PRINCIPAL</i> Building for Dwelling Purposes” to address adoption of <i>Accessory</i> Dwelling Units which will result in multiple buildings for dwelling purposes on one lot.
December 8, 2025	Article XII Administration Appendices

ACTION NEEDED: Conduct public hearing on repeal and replace of Chapter 360 Subdivision Regulations.

7) Floodplain Bylaw Amendments – Schedule Public Hearing

Draft Bylaw and other materials online: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

South Hadley is under mandate by FEMA and MassDCR (the State coordinating office for the National Flood Insurance Program) to update the existing floodplain regulations to meet current standards. We have been awaiting the release of updated flood maps for the lower Connecticut River before undertaking this. The currently effective FIRM maps are from 1979/1980. Preliminary maps for our area were released in August 2025 and DCR is advising municipalities to proceed utilizing these maps.

Draft model bylaw:

[255-91-Floodplain-Regulations---Draft-Amendment---2526](#)

FEMA Map Viewer – Look up your property here and explore the online map viewer:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5852ea902db44e55bfce395799315f9c>

ACTION NEEDED: Discuss public hearing date.

8) Planning & Conservation Department Report on Planning Projects and Development Updates

Zone Change Petition – 115 Woodbridge Street

Received a request from the applicant to postpone the public hearing date.

Falls Digest – February 2026 Edition

The Redevelopment Authority has released their 4th quarterly newsletter called the Falls Digest. The newsletter promotes the people, businesses and history of the Falls.

[Redevelopment Authority | South Hadley, MA - Official Website](https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14707/February-2026-Newsletter)

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14707/February-2026-Newsletter>

Upcoming Meetings

2/23/26 <i>Virtual</i>	• Adoption of Subdivision Regulations
3/9/26	• Agricultural Bylaw Amendments Discussion
3/23/26	• Agricultural Bylaw Amendments Public Listening Session
4/13/26	
4/27/26	
5/4/26	
5/13/26	<i>Annual Town Meeting</i>
5/18/26	

9) Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)

No additional business has been submitted to me as of the date of this notice.