

Background Materials - July 19, 2021 - Planning Board Meeting

Persons may join the meeting and/or public hearing using the login information on the posted agenda.

Channel 15 Streaming

Cable Studio staff has indicated that this meeting will be viewable on Channel 15.

Questions and Comments

During the meeting, persons who are not joining the meeting but watching via the online streaming may submit questions or comments via the Google Form (link on the posted agenda) or the dedicated email address: SHPlanBoard@southhadleyma.gov

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 posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8160/Policy-on-Open-Comment-Period--As-Adopted-2021-03-08>

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

AGENDA ITEM #2 Minutes

Senior Clerk Colleen Canning sent the following minutes to the Board for review on 7/15 at 5:03pm: 5/6, 5/15, 6/14, and 6/21. The following minutes are still pending, all of which were Planning Director Selection Special Meetings and the Planning Director Interview Meeting: 4/22, 4/27, 5/13, 6/3, and 6/7.

Action Needed: The Board needs to vote to approve the minutes submitted or with edits.

AGENDA ITEM #3 Correspondence

A list of correspondence is attached.

Action Needed: No action is required.

AGENDA ITEM #4 Public Hearing Continuance – McKinley Avenue

Application for a Special Permit for proposed new two-family dwelling by Anthony Wheeler. Property Location: South side of McKinley Avenue approximately 151 feet east of its intersection with Newton Street (Assessor's Map #27 – Parcel #179).

The application, original plans, and revised plans are posted at bottom of page at the following link: <https://southhadley.org/316/Project-Plans-M-through-Z>

The Public Hearing was opened on 5/24/21. Anthony Wheeler submitted an application for a Special Permit for a new, two-family dwelling on a lot which appears to be a pre-existing non-conforming lot on McKinley Avenue. The project site is situated along the south side of McKinley Avenue approximately 151 feet from its intersection with Newton Street (see aerial photo below). The subject property lies within the Residence A-2 zoning district and not within any special zoning districts. The applicant is proposing to construct a 2,400 +/-SF residential building consisting of two dwelling units. In the Residence A-2 zoning district, a two-family dwelling is permitted only by Special Permit.



Approval of a Special Permit requires an affirmative vote of at least 4 Planning Board members – the Associate Member may participate in the vote if a Regular Member is unable to do so.

Minutes of the 5/24/21 Public Hearing are posted online here:

https://www.southhadley.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Minutes/_05242021-4235

At the 5/24/21 public hearing, members identified that the parking capacity and lot size were of concern for the proposed duplex, but no member indicated they were fully opposed to the concept and welcomed submittal of revised plans that addressed the expressed concerns.

The applicant submitted revised plans on 6/11/21 (two alternative driveway layouts, building elevation, and building rendering):

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8622/McKinley-Avenue-SP---Duplex---2021-06-11-Revised-Plans-Alt-1>

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8623/McKinley-Avenue-SP---Duplex---2021-06-11-Revised-Plans-Alt-2>

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8624/McKinley-Avenue-SP---Duplex---2021-06-11-Revised-Plans-Elevations>

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8625/McKinley-Avenue-SP---Duplex---2021-06-11-Revised-Plans-Renderings>

At the 5/24/21 hearing , the applicant indicated that a side entry for the driveway and parking area on the west side of the lot might be feasible, however the revised plans show the driveways and garages oriented toward McKinley Drive on the north side of the lot. Former Planning Director Richard Harris inquired about the alternatives proposed and why they do not address side entry, and the applicant provided the following statement:

June 15, 2021 statement regarding side entry garage issues

Retaining walls and large amounts of steps would create unnecessary safety concerns. The 17 McKinley did not want me to close to her property so I tried to accommodate them. I have two drive way layouts one is the same as my neighbor and one has an area of grass between for snow collection, to accommodate the neighbors across the street. My proposed design will have gradual front and backyard design. A side entrance would direct all water towards lower neighbors. I can discuss this idea at our next meeting, but I designed and paid for what was asked of me at our last meeting.

Thank you,
Anthony Wheeler

Review Criteria – Special Permit

The review criteria for Special Permits are detailed in Section 255-129 of the Zoning Bylaw <https://ecode360.com/30053888>

Requests to speak: None received to date.

Google Form Responses and Emails – Comments: None received to date.

The public hearing continuation was properly noticed at the May 24, 2021 for July 19, 2021 at 6:45 p.m. (per May 24, 2021 meeting minutes). Abutters were mailed notice of the May 24th hearing.

Action Needed: Conduct the Public Hearing. Make a determination as to whether the proposed plan changes meet the standards for granting a Special Permit.

AGENDA ITEM #5 Set Fall 2021 Regular Meeting Schedule

Next regular scheduled meetings:

- August 16, 2021 at 6:30pm
- September 13, 2021 at 6:30pm
- September 27, 2021 at 6:30pm

I kindly request the Planning Board keep their usual meeting schedule of the 2nd and 4th Monday nights. I am currently staffing both the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and will be doing so through the Fall, at least. The Conservation Commission has adopted a new meeting schedule of the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. This would allow the boards to meet on opposite weeks and provide staff with the time needed to devote to permit review and developing appropriate guidance for each board. With this schedule, the meeting dates would be as follows:

- October 11 – Columbus Day Holiday – alternative date?
- October 25
- November 8
- November 22
- December 13
- December 27 – Christmas Day Holiday – alternative date?
- January 10 – *I already have plane tickets for a trip that week, booked 6 months ago.*
- January 24
- February 14
- February 28

There is a pending ANR plan that may be submitted in the next few days. If that happens, the Board must take action within 21 days which means we might need to schedule a special meeting the week of August 9th. Let's discuss possible meeting dates for that week.

Action Needed: Set meeting dates.

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

A. Development Activity

- Skinnerwoods, Amherst Road – The Letter of Credit has been finalized and a copy retained. The Form H plan has been signed by former Director Richard Harris, and the applicant's attorney has picked up the mylar set for recording at the Registry of Deeds.
- MassWorks Lyman Street Project – The Invitation for Bids for construction was issued on July 7th. Bids are due 7/28/21. We anticipate awarding a contract in August, and have construction start in August. The construction cycle will run through July, 30, 2022.

- The Park at Woodlawn, 501 Newton Street (Received Plan Approval under the Newton Street Smart Growth Zoning District in October 2020) – 7/15/21 Press Release from Governor Baker – “**Plaza Apartments** is a new construction project for families to be built in **South Hadley**. The sponsor is South Hadley Plaza LLC. DHCD is supporting the project with federal and state low-income housing tax credits and subsidy funds. The town of South Hadley also is supporting the project with funds of its own. When completed, Plaza Apartments will offer 60 total units. All 60 units will be affordable to families earning less than 60% of area median income (AMI), with 18 units further restricted for extremely low-income families earning less than 30% of AMI, including families transitioning from homelessness.” Construction is anticipated to begin no earlier than Spring 2022.

Full press release here:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-139-million-in-funding-and-tax-credits-to-produce-and-preserve-1346-units-of-affordable-rental-housing>

B. Bylaw and Map Updates

Overlay District GIS Layers – Currently on the Assessor’s GIS data viewer, the existing overlay districts cannot be viewed. This includes both 40R Districts, the South Hadley Falls Overlay District, and the Water Supply Protection Overlay District. These maps exist as PDFs posted to the website. This makes it difficult for residents, developers, and project applicants to find them and understand how they relate to their land/project. Thus, I am creating digitized GIS files for these overlay districts so that they can be added to the Assessor’s GIS data viewer. Work will be completed by the end of July. The GIS data viewer maintained by the Assessor’s Office is a great tool for exploring existing conditions on any parcel in town:

https://www.axisgis.com/South_HadleyMA/

C. Master Plan Update

I have begun to make the edits to the Implementation Plan. It will take a few weeks to make the updates, and then the plan will be sent to our consultant Emily Innes for her to make the rest of the edits, hopefully by the end of August. Thus, we won’t have a revised plan back from her until end of September/October.

D. Planning and Conservation Department Grant Activity

MVP Action Grant – Titus Pond Dam Removal Feasibility Study and BATTERY Brook Watershed Assessment, \$125,000 – We received notice yesterday that we are being awarded this grant.

MassTrails Grant application for an ADA accessible parking lot and sitting area for the Leaping Well Nature Trail on Mosier Street remains outstanding.

SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD

LIST OF CORRESPONDENCES

June 22- July 16, 2021

Letters and Memorandums

- Skinner Woods Form H Plan and Letter of Credit received July 6, 2021.
- Certificate of Assessment received July 6, 2021 from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.
- Illuminated Sign Request received July 13, 2021 for a replacement illuminated sign at the South Hadley High School located at 153 Newton Street.

Google Forms- July 19, 2021 Planning Board Regular Meeting

No forms have been submitted as of July 16, 2021.

Google Forms – July 19, 2021 0 McKinley Avenue Special Permit Public Hearing

No forms have been submitted as of July 16, 2021.

Legal Notices

Amherst

- Notice received June 24, 2021 from the Amherst Planning Board for public hearings on July 7, 2021 to consider: 1) amendments to the zoning map and 2) a site plan to install a drive-through ATM at Greenfield Savings Bank located at 6-22 University Drive.
- Notice received July 7, 2021 from the Amherst Community Resource Committee for a public hearing on July 13, 2021 to consider amendments to the zoning map.

Chicopee

- Notice received July 6, 2021 from the Chicopee Zoning Board of Appeals for public hearings on July 14, 2021 to consider: 1) a variance to create two new building lots at Arnold Ave and 2) a variance to construct a single-family home at Monger Street.
- Decision received July 6, 2021 from the Chicopee Zoning Board of Appeals for variance approval to install a temporary sign at East Main Street.

Granby

- Notice received July 6, 2021 from the Granby Planning Board for a public hearing on July 26, 2021 to consider a site plan for a fine aggregate/reclaimed asphalt pavement shelter at 17 New Ludlow Road.

Hadley

-

Holyoke

-

Publications

- **Zoning Practice:** July 2021 *Issue Number 7 Practice Disaster Recovery*
- **Planning** The Magazine of the American Planning Association: Summer 2021 *EVs on the Rise, Community Cybersecurity, Supporting Street Vendors, Japan's Tsunami Recovery*
- **JAPA** The Journal of the American Planning Association: *Vol. 87 No. 3 2021*