



**TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH
PLANNING BOARD**

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Cindy Markowitz, Chair Mark White, Clerk Nancy Fillmore Abby Reip Rebecca Verner

Approved on April 27, 2020

**Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2020
7:00PM
Remote Meeting**

Members Present: Cindy Markowitz, Mark White, Nancy Fillmore, Rebecca Verner

Not Present: Abby Reip

Also Present: Simon Corson (Town Planner)

Ms. Markowitz called the meeting to order at 7:16pm.

Mr. Corson outlined that there are many opportunities for the public to provide input to the Board regarding the Zoning Bylaw Amendments. He noted avenues such as virtually attending or calling into the remote Planning Board meetings, sending an electronic communication to him, or speaking on the floor during Town Meeting.

Administrative Business

Ms. Markowitz provided an update on the status of the Warrant and on the schedule for Town Meeting. She shared that on March 30, 2020, the Select Board will decide whether to sign the Warrant which contains all Articles to be voted on at Town Meeting. If the Warrant is signed, then materials will be sent to households in late-April. On March 30 the Select Board will also determine whether the Annual Town Meeting will be held as planned on May 11 or be rescheduled to a future date. She highlighted that at this point, any further substantial changes to the Amendments will need to be done on the floor at Town Meeting.

Public Hearing - Zoning Bylaw Amendments

Ms. Markowitz explained that this Public Hearing is an opportunity for the Board to receive further comments and feedback from members of the public regarding the proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 2100 (Definitions): Article 175-2A

Ms. Markowitz outlined that the proposed amendment provides a definition for “Specialty Food Shop”. The Board collaborated with the Economic Development Committee to reach the proposed definition which reflects the Town’s aspirations.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 4000 (Use Regulation): Article 175-2A

Ms. Markowitz outlined the proposed addition of Specialty Food Shop to the use table with respect to gross-floor area. The Board discussed the current requirement which outlines gross-

floor area greater than and less than 3,000 square feet but not spaces equal to the area. The Board agreed to the minor edit which now reads “less than or equal to...” as this will encompass all scenarios. Ms. Markowitz also referenced a memo provided by Mr. Corson from the Board of Health outlining minimum wastewater capacity requirements for restaurants by seating capacity.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 6003 (Common Parking Areas) & Section 6006 (Off-Street Parking Requirements): Article 175-2B

Ms. Markowitz outlined that the proposed amendment to Section 6003 addresses a modification which will allow for flexibility to applicants demonstrating different parking volume needs. Section 6006 amendments are in reference to the table and focus on gross-floor area. It will increase the gross floor area requirements for three groups of commercial uses per parking space allowing for more efficient use of parking areas.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 6204 (Lighting, Screening, and Outdoor Lighting): Article 175-3

Ms. Markowitz outlined that the proposed bylaw amendment clarifies the existing bylaw’s intent to reduce light pollution in Town. She highlighted the addition of the terms “outdoor lighting” and “dark sky compliant” to the Bylaw. The amendment expands existing language related to light fixture shielding in order to prevent glare from the source. She noted that the amendment will provide additional context to existing requirements within the Bylaw. It was noted that the proposed Section 6204 (6) requiring outdoor lights for recreation areas to be extinguished by 11:00PM does not apply to private residential uses. With respect to special permits, the amendment would provide the designated granting authority with flexibility to provide guidance under the Bylaw.

Ms. Verner outlined that the added definitions and figures will provide clarity and guidance to the community and those reviewing the Bylaw, as these terms and figures are a standard guideline for many neighboring towns.

Ms. Markowitz confirmed with Ms. Verner that the amendment will apply to replacement and new fixtures but will not impact anything already in place.

Citizen, Robin Lazarow, asked if this information could be provided in a location outside of the Bylaws, such as in a handout since there are figures and definitions. She also asked if there is now an additional obligation to enforce the requirements. She highlighted the difference in scale compared to that of larger towns with more commercial development.

Ms. Verner responded that this is a standard bylaw format used by surrounding communities such as Acton, Weston, and Wellesley. She noted that the amendment provided more of a prescription of how to understand and follow what the Bylaw already states and would have no change to current enforcement costs. She further explained that the definitions speak to what the requirements mean and provide a visual representation of any terms referenced in the Bylaw.

Robin Lazarow asked if the requirements are applicable to residential in addition to commercial fixtures.

Ms. Verner responded that the proposed amendment 6204 (6) relates to non-residential privately owned and public facilities. However, the current lighting Bylaw (Section 6204) as well as the proposed lighting Bylaw amendments apply to all residential and commercial lighting for replacement of existing fixtures and new fixtures.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 6300 (Signs): Article 175-3

Ms. Markowitz outlined that the amendment adds the requirement that no sign be lit more than 30 minutes “before opening” in addition to “after closing”. It expands the list of zoning districts where internally lit signage is discouraged to include Business 1 and Office Parks and it adds that in Zoning District Residential-1 it is prohibited. Regarding external light sources, the intent of the amendment is to limit excess light pollution and eliminate glare from lit signage.

Ms. Verner shared that this is an attempt to provide guidance around the existing Bylaws and promote strategies to reduce light pollution from allowed, but discouraged signage types.

Robin Lazarow asked if there are any signs in Town which currently do not comply with the Bylaws and if this will lead to all signs looking the same?

Ms. Verner responded that the Blanchard School sign is an example of internally lit signage not allowed in the district it is in (Agricultural-Residential), and therefore is not allowed to be illuminated. For signs deemed allowable, the amendment to the Bylaw will provide guidance on what is allowed in those districts.

Robin Lazarow cited that this could limit creativity. She asked if this would eliminate certain colors allowed for signage.

Ms. Verner responded that the ZBA and Design Review Board have guidelines for signage allowable in Town and what can and cannot be installed within the community. The amendment is intended to promote black and white signs.

Robin Lazarow asked if existing signs in Town will require updates in order to comply with the amendment updates.

Ms. Verner responded that all existing signage will not be subject to an amended bylaw, this would all be prospective, not retroactive.

Amend Zoning Bylaw Section 3002 (Location of Districts): Article 175-1

Ms. Markowitz outlined the proposed amendment which is a result of the settlement agreement between the Town and Boxborough Town Center, LLC. to change the zoning designation of approximately 3.65 acres at the end of Priest Lane from “Town Center” to “Agricultural Residential”. She noted that the Planning Board is sponsoring this amendment.

Mr. Corson shared that in the Warrant, it will say that the Select Board will endorse the amendment and the Planning Board has voted to recommend it.

Ms. Fillmore shared her concern that the land boundaries have been changed many times. Mr. Corson noted that the Town's lawyers have conducted a full review and that the designated areas where the zoning will be changed have been confirmed. Ms. Markowitz shared that the schematic is intended to represent the area as close as possible, but the exact metes and bounds plan will be provided as part of this bylaw amendment.

Update from Town Planner

Mr. Corson provided an update on the following items:

The Zoning Board of Appeals hearing on the Notice of Violation letter for the Enclave has been postponed to April 21, 2020.

He received correspondence from a Fire Department Captain regarding site blasting. Blasting will only occur two days during the current week and then blasting will suspend due to the response to COVID-19.

Ms. Markowitz asked if this meant that blasting was complete or if it was just paused. Mr. Corson responded that blasting will be stopped at this time because the Fire Department cannot provide the necessary detailing at the site due to the focus on COVID-19 response efforts.

Mr. White asked what the current status on the blasting is. Mr. Corson responded that they are very close to the completion of blasting. He expects that it may be completed within the two days during the week.

Mr. White asked if any complaints have been received. Mr. Corson responded that he has spoken with Ms. Fillmore regarding the blasting but has had no other conversations with community members.

Ms. Markowitz shared that she will provide any further updates regarding the Warrant as they arise.

Mr. White motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Verner. Motion passed unanimously 4-0 at 8:10PM.

Meeting Documents

Article 175-1 Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Amend Zoning Map Appendix B

Article 175-2A Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Amend Zoning Bylaws 2100, and 4000 (Table 4003(4)) - Specialty Food Shop

Article 175-2B Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Amend Zoning Bylaws 6003, 6006 - Common Parking Areas and Parking Schedule

Article 175-3 Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Amend Zoning Bylaws 6204 and 6300- Outdoor Lighting and Signs

Board of Health Summary on Food Service Establishment and Sewage Flow Calculations

ZOOM ACCESS PROTOCOLS

Topic: Boxborough Planning Board

Time: March 23, 2020 7:00 Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android:

<https://zoom.us/j/383990774?pwd=VWFKOTl4TnNBekhVY1FDd2JHb2JXQT09>

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