



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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By Town Clerk GP at 10:16 am, Jul 16, 2024

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Community Planning and Development Commission

Date: 2024-6-10

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Town Hall

Location: Hybrid Meeting – Zoom and Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Hybrid Meeting

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members In person:** Tony D’Arezzo, Vice Chair; Heather Clish
Members Remote: John Weston, Chair; Hillary Mateev
Members Not Present: Tom Armstrong, Mark Wetzel

Others Present in person: Community Development Director Andrew MacNichol, Senior Planner Olivia Knightly, Aram Boornazian, Frank Lanzillo, Khanh Nguyen, Susan Coram, Karen Herrick

Remote Participants: Chris Alphen, Bradford Fortin, David Conti, Tim J., Giovanni Fodera, Town Manager Matt Kraunelis

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Olivia Knightly

Topics of Discussion: ANR Plan Endorsement, 1310 Main Street; Definitive Subdivision Application, 0 Harold Ave (a.k.a. 0 Van Norden Road); Grandview Road Extension; 246 Walnut Street Subdivision Plan Endorsement; MBTA Communities 3A Discussion.

MEETING HELD IN THE SELECT BOARD ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Mr. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Mr. MacNichol gave an overview of the hybrid meeting procedures.

Mr. D’Arezzo requested to take an item out of order – inviting the Assistant Town Manager Jayne Wellman to speak. Ms. Wellman introduced herself to those present and provided an overview of her role and ability to provide support to the CPDC.

Mr. MacNichol requested to take another agenda item out of order, this request was granted by Mr. D’Arezzo.

Approval Not Required Plan Endorsement, 1310 Main Street

Mr. MacNichol introduced the Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan at 1310 Main Street. He described an ANR plan as the division of attractive land fronting an existing public way, with all lots proposed on the plan meeting the minimum frontage and zoning area requirements for the district it is located in. He stated that the subdivision application does not require a public hearing process because the right of way for frontage access exists.

Mr. MacNichol said the ANR application proposes the division of property located at 1310 Main Street into 3 single lots that front Main Street, and lot 3 will have additional frontage on Franklin Street. Mr. MacNichol advised that wetlands and vernal pools are present on the



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site, but for the purposes of the ANR review process the primary concern involves the proposed subdivision.

Mr. Sullivan, the project engineer, spoke in person and provided a description of the subdivision and the work completed to date. The project attorney, Mr. Brad Fortin, was in attendance online. Mr. Sullivan stated that all 3 lots exceed the minimum zoning requirements for the S20 zoning district. He said that 1310 Main Street contains the existing home on the property. Mr. Sullivan said that extensive wetland delineation has been completed including work with the conservation commission, but currently the review is for development is for ANR.

Mr. D'Arezzo requested clarification on the location of Lot 3 and access to the existing house that is located on Lot 2 fronting Main Street. Mr. Sullivan confirmed that the existing house is located on Lot 2 while Lot 3 is a large undeveloped parcel that is buildable. He added that the applicant will be looking to propose a subdivision or development plan for Lot 3 in the future. Mr. Sullivan said that he left in access and utility easements so residents can access the existing house through Lot 3. He added that there is an existing driveway there now with utilities, which he formalized into an easement.

Mr. D'Arezzo made a motion to approve the ANR for 1310 Main Street. Ms. Mateev seconded the motion, and it was approved 3-1-0. Mr. Weston abstained. (D'Arezzo, Mateev, Clish – Weston)

Continued Public Hearing, Definitive Subdivision Application, 0 Harold Ave (a.k.a. 0 Van Norden Road), Zero Harold Avenue, LLC

Mr. Jack Sullivan presented on behalf of the project applicant, providing an overview of the site. Mr. Sullivan addressed concerns regarding the requirement for a cul-de-sac to meet the needs of fire and safety and the alternatives that have been considered to create access to the proposed single-family lot.

The proposed alternative to the cul-de-sac is a 14' wide paved driveway which would require a waiver from the CPDC. Mr. Sullivan stated that to meet the required proof the plan would need to demonstrate a 60' right of way with a 60' radius cul-de-sac, however, the site lacks the adequate frontage to create the required geometry to meet proof.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the design preserves natural features and requested feedback from the CPDC about how the design can meet proof or receive a waiver. Mr. Weston provided his thoughts on the purpose of meeting proof requirements. Mr. Weston stated that the property owner does not have the right to build on the site because of the geometric challenges identified and the applicant's inability to meet the required proof.

Mr. MacNichol reiterated the purpose and intent of proof plan requirements. He stated that the CPDC could waive with the intent and finding that the plan design is not inconsistent with the intention and purpose of the regulations.

Mr. Sullivan asked the CPDC if it would be justified to request a waiver for the 30' curve roundings. Mr. D'Arezzo inquired about why the applicant has not applied for a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Board members feel that the proof plan is not working. Mr. Sullivan stated that he anticipates it will be difficult to receive a variance without the required frontage and that the CPDC would be the best avenue to get the plan approved. Mr. D'Arezzo reinstated that the applicant must be able to show proof. Ms. Clish reiterated that an exception to the proof requirements does not seem justified at this time. Ms. Mateev and Mr. Weston agree that the site plan would have to go in front of the ZBA to



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request a variance before the CPDC review the plan again. Mr. Sullivan agreed to review the plan and see if other alternatives could be considered.

Mr. Weston opened it up for public discussion.

Mr. Aram Boornazian, 9 Harold Ave, spoke in person and referenced the Reading Subdivision Regulations paragraph 3.3.2 stating that the proposed dwelling does not appear to be 6 feet above wetlands present on the site, and that the site should be deemed unsuitable to build. Mr. Boornazian raised a 2016 determination by the CPDC that deemed the lot as non-buildable lot and presented an Order of Conditions for 116 Van Norden Road citing a tree removal condition.

Mr. Sullivan advised the CPDC that the Order of Conditions presented by Mr. Boornazian is for a different lot than the Harold Ave property under review. Mr. Sullivan further clarified that the Order of Conditions states that the rear portion of the lot was deemed non-buildable due to the lack of frontage, however this does not mean that the property could not be buildable in the future. Mr. Weston agreed that there are several constraints on the property. He stated that other issues identified with the site would be discussed in the future should the applicant return with a proof plan.

Mr. D'Arezzo made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Definitive Subdivision Application for 0 Harold Ave to Plan to July 15, 2024. Ms. Clish seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0-0 (Weston, Clish, Mateev, D'Arezzo).

Public Hearing, Major Modification to a Definitive Subdivision Grandview Road Extension, Michael Salamone

Mr. D'Arezzo read the Legal Notice into record.

Mr. Giovanni Fodera attended the meeting virtually to present on behalf of the applicant. He provided an overview of the proposed subdivision and the history of site work.

Mr. Fodera stated that the plan was approved in 2021 and site work began in 2023. The approved underground stormwater collection system was installed according to plan. The ownership team determined that the 2021 approved drainage plan was the preferred, The plan proposed keeping the roadway from the 2023 plan and reincorporating the stormwater system from the previously approved 2021 plan. Lot 2 will remain for future development. Mr. Fodera said that the drainage system installed works properly. Mr. Weston asked Mr. MacNichol if there was feedback from Town Engineering Staff, who stated that no major comments or concerns were provided at this time.

Mr. D'Arezzo asked Mr. Fodera for clarification about the increase in impervious surface and removal of fewer trees. Mr. Fodera confirmed that this was only represented on the plans and not done on the site. Mr. D'Arezzo asked about the necessary permissions and easements required to complete grading onto Town Property. Mr. Fodera confirmed that a 30' wide grading easement was granted. Mr. D'Arezzo asked about the shed located on Lot 2 and whether this has been removed yet. Mr. Fodera said that it will be moved onto Lot 1. Mr. D'Arezzo asked for confirmation about whether a future developer on Lot 2 will be responsible for their own stormwater management.

Mr. D'Arezzo asked about the reach R1 100-year storm increase. Mr. Fodera said that there are two discharge points located on the site and when viewed together on the overall site there is an observed decreased peak rate runoff. Mr. D'Arezzo asked whether Reach 1 and



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Reach 2 are connected to one another. Mr. Fodera confirmed that they are not connected. Mr. D'Arezzo expressed concern for neighbors and any potential increase in runoff that could impact abutters. Mr. Fodera said he can discuss drainage further with engineering. Additional clarifying questions were asked about the engineering software used by Mr. Fodera.

Ms. Clish asked Mr. Fodera what prompted the change in the stormwater system to go back to the initial design. Mr. Fodera stated that the ownership team felt that it was the right thing to do. Ms. Clish asked if there is anything about the roadway that is different from the first approved version and how it may interact with the prior drainage design. Mr. Fodera said the roadway design has mostly remained the same except the cul-de-sac has been lowered by about two feet. Previously in 2021 there were catch basins scattered around the cul-de-sac at low points but the 2023 design has the stormwater flowing naturally toward the stormwater collection system.

Ms. Clish stated that she would appreciate a review of the plans by the Town Engineer. Mr. Fodera agreed that it would be helpful to have the Town Engineer review the plans and stormwater design.

Mr. Weston opened it up for public comment.

Susan Coram, 31 Ridge Road, asked for clarification about the proposed stormwater recharge system that extends into Lot 2 and the assumption that lot 2 would need to manage their own stormwater runoff. She inquired where drainage for Lot 2 is proposed to be located and whether more tree removal would occur in the future to accommodate future drainage on Lot 2. Mr. Fodera pointed out the proposed location for Lot 2 drainage which would not extend off the drainage easement or the shared recharge system.

Ms. Coram pointed out that the proposed drainage area on Lot 2 is currently higher than the proposed building area and asked whether the proposed building would need to be raised. Mr. Fodera responded that the roof runoff will have downspouts that will lead to the recharge system which will have gravity conveyance to a dry well.

Ms. Coram asked if any complaints have been received from abutters about flooding. Mr. Fodera stated that no complaints have been received to his knowledge. Ms. Coram asked why the land needed for recharge system be taken from the wooded area instead of decreasing the footprints of the buildings. Mr. Fodera responded that the lawns were extended on Lots 3 and 4 upgradient of the recharge system and further from the wetlands to provide a larger lawn to future homeowners.

Ms. Coram stated that the newly created roadway has caused water to collect and expressed concern for children in the neighborhood. She asked about the requirement for guardrail or fencing along the new roadway due to the increase in standing water present. She also inquired about the proposed sugar maples that are to be planted in the same area and whether these trees will be affected by the standing water, citing that she believes there has been a negative impact on the Town Land. Ms. Coram provided observations about the amount of fill removed from the site in comparison to the amount of fill that was brought into the site. She requested that earthwork and elevations are double checked in respect to the drainage solutions.

Mr. Weston confirmed with Mr. MacNichol that the Conservation Commission approved the plans. Mr. MacNichol said that the Maple trees to the west are out of the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. D'Arezzo advised that the trees should be reviewed the by Tree Warden.



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Kyung Yu, representing the Church of the Nazarene, 900 Main Street, stated that the Church sent an official letter to the CPDC last year because the church experienced flooding. He asked about the impact of the plan change to the church and their neighbors. Mr. Fodera responded that the proper fill was not used to install the basin and that this material will be removed and replaced with a new fill which will allow for better infiltration. Mr. Fodera continued to say that once the new drainage system is complete it will be a lawn and not an open basin and that all stormwater will be going into the underground system with a better infiltration rate.

Mr. MacNichol recommended a continuance of review on the July 15, 2024 CPDC agenda.

Ms. Clish made a motion to continue the public hearing for the Major Modification of a Definitive Subdivision Application for the Grandview Road Extension to July 15, 2024. Mr. D'Arezzo seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0-0 (D'Arezzo, Clish, Mateev, Weston).

3-lot Definitive Subdivision, 246 Walnut Street, Plan Endorsement

Mr. MacNichol proposed the endorsement of the 246 Walnut Street Plan that included the addition of granite curbing and retaining wall detail as previously conditioned.

Mr. D'Arezzo made a motion to endorse the plan for Walnut Street as amended with granite curbing. Ms. Clish seconded the motion and it was approved 4-0-0 (D'Arezzo, Clish, Mateev, Weston).

MBTA (3A) Communities Discussion

Mr. MacNichol announced the upcoming forum on Wednesday June 12, 2024. He discussed the work that has been completed since the closure of the public hearing in January to produce a set of compliant zoning models that will be reviewed at the upcoming public forum. Mr. MacNichol said that Town staff have confidence recommending several models ranging from Mixed-Residential, a non-Commercial Corridor, Downtown Zoning, and a combination of areas including industrial zone. The Town will be looking to receive feedback from the community on four to five potential models to help to improve the draft concepts and determine the best alternative for the Town moving forward.

Mr. Weston stated that the alternatives produced are clear in their location and intent. He continued to say that past CPDC discussions included looking for a strategy to fit all new multi-family residential within existing commercial districts, another conversation looked to include the creation of affordable housing. Mr. Weston said that if the town were to add affordable housing as a consideration of 3A zoning then density would need to increase to accommodate this. Mr. MacNichol responded that the exercise was intended to review form and location and the consultant can provide an analysis on affordability when the models are narrowed down more. Mr. Weston added that affordability was an important consideration that resulted from the public engagement process and was not directly identified in the consultant's report. Mr. Weston stated that the final area considered should include either the downtown business district or the area surrounding the downtown business district to meet the requirements.

Mr. D'Arezzo asked about the inclusion of 40R in the zone and whether including this area would allow the Town to decrease the total 40R area outside of the zone that would have to be included. Mr. MacNichol confirmed this is true. Ms. Clish further asked if this would be true for including any of the options outside of the Transitional Residential Town Center. Mr. MacNichol resolved that when a different area outside of the Town Center concept is



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included in the zoning, then this reduces the overall amount of single-family zoning in the Town Center Area that is needed.

The CPDC discussed the format and logistics of the public forum scheduled for Wednesday June 12 and how planning staff are going to collect public feedback. Mr. MacNichol said that Planning staff are looking to have a conversation-based forum and gather feedback that would help push the process to the next level. Ms. Clish emphasized that the questions asked during the forum will be important. Mr. MacNichol provided examples of feedback that would be helpful to receive from the public, including determining what is supported and not supported by the community. Ms. Clish said that consensus is not likely, but determining pros and cons could be helpful to generate feedback that we can do something with. Ms. Clish advised that staff should reduce the amount of information presented in the slides by summarizing.

Mr. D'Arezzo said that the analysis should be the main focus of the presentation and emphasized discussing the models that do not comply and then presenting the models that remain as viable options for the Town. Clarifying questions were asked to Mr. MacNichol about the controls used for the models to achieve compliance.

Mr. Weston asked Mr. MacNichol what the desired outcome of the public meeting is. Mr. MacNichol responded that the need is to clearly establish the immediate next steps and determine where the Town can go from here. If necessary, staff can run new models and make changes to the geography, or the controls used.

Mr. Weston echoed public feedback received over the past few months and at town meeting, that the response to the proposed commercial area zoning model is generally positive and that residents want to keep any new zoning area away from any residential district. Mr. Weston said that he is personally not in support of this because the Town has made decisions historically that have created consequences and have not addressed the current issues. Mr. Weston added that if the Town allows more housing downtown then there won't be a downtown anymore and further inquired about how the public forum will address this concern and others that may arise. He asked Mr. MacNichol about potential discussions that may arise about requests for the Town to pursue a concept that has minimal impact on neighbors. Mr. MacNichol stated that there has been consideration about various community perspectives and his perspective of providing a professional recommendation that tries to address the issue at its core. Mr. MacNichol stated that given the deadline for compliance consensus is becoming the priority and there needs to be buy in from the community about the concepts.

Ms. Clish asked if planning staff have the capacity to receive informal written comments or responses to collect feedback. She added that if there are certain types of comments that will be most helpful, then we can ask people to speak to specific questions.

In response to Mr. Weston, Mr. D'Arezzo provided an example from early in the planning process when there was support for a larger district surrounding the downtown with higher density which would ultimately help the downtown to survive. He stated his fear is that Alternative C1 could receive the most support, where the 40R district would ramp up in density and height. He stated it is easier to get people who don't like something to show up than it is to get the people who do like something to show up. Mr. D'Arezzo advised that if we really want the option to have some sort of missing middle housing or potential real growth in town, opposed to big warehouse style housing, then Town Meeting will need two concept options to choose from. Ms. Clish said that she is skeptical that residents will understand the implications of converting the 40R district to a MBTA Communities district, which opens the door for it to be entirely residential and that the town may lose businesses.



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She also posed the same concern for the commercial district, asking whether people would support Stop and Shop turning into a massive residential area. Ms. Clish said that we need to be very clear about what the options look like.

Mr. MacNichol stated that if the overarching community goal is to minimize the impact to single family zoning as much as possible then downtown concept will be the most popular option. Ms. Clish responded that most people would not likely support turning an area with the potential for future business development into residential use.

Mr. Weston asked Mr. MacNichol if in the instance that the downtown concept is approved as a residential district could locations such as 30 Haven claim the by-right use of 100% residential and convert mixed-use into residential use as businesses leave. Mr. MacNichol responded that they probably could, but parking requirements would need to be factored in. Mr. Weston restated that there is a possibility for conversion of existing buildings. Mr. MacNichol said a bylaw proposal in the future for the MBTA District could find avenues to incentivize mixed use, but it is hard to envision what incentives may look like right now.

Ms. Mateev said that parking issues currently exist downtown and inquired about how the 1.5 parking space per unit requirement would be incorporated. Mr. MacNichol agreed and stated that there are a lot of considerations at this rate with such a short period of time left.

Ms. Clish said that she people may envision that the commercial and industrial area could be mixed-use and whether this is a viable option for MBTA communities. She recognized that mixed use is only allowed when trying to preserve a village feel and asked if there a scenario where the 40R district could stay as mixed use and comply with MBTA communities. Mr. MacNichol responded that downtown 40R could meet their standard of downtown village core but that their metrics for mixed use is limited in capacity and has other requirements that would have to be factored in, such as parking requirements.

Mr. MacNichol raised the concern that there is a discrepancy between the State's designated half-mile radius and the radius that the Town has been using. The State has approved the Town's radius, however, the concepts do not yet reflect the Town's preferred radius.

Ms. Clish asked about a scenario where we don't include 100% within the half mile radius and asked why some of the concepts don't comply. Mr. MacNichol responded that most of what has been modeled are fully compliant concepts and that some sub-areas are intended to be outside of the half mile radius and could be pulled into other areas if needed. Mr. Weston asked about the Salem Street option and whether it was known that the area would be outside of the half-mile radius. Mr. MacNichol said that there are concepts that were intended to be outside of the half-mile radius and could be pulled into concepts within the half-mile radius. Mr. Weston clarified whether the only reason for running the sub-areas was to understand how they may work in conjunction with the concept that already complies within the half-mile. Mr. MacNichol stated that part one of the process looked to identify what concept can fully comply, and if not part two identifies how these areas be partnered with other geographies to help reach compliance.

Mr. Weston asked what parameters for the districts within the half mile radius could be altered in combination with an area outside of the radius to increase the non-buildable percentage and lower the potential density within the Town Center. Mr. MacNichol responded that some of the controls and allowances for the districts inside and outside of the half mile radius can be amended to reduce density in other districts.

Mr. Weston clarified that the analysis was intended to look at each district on its own to determine the characteristics of each. He continued to say that there is another step in the



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process, which is to get feedback from the public and then determine the concept areas outside of the half mile radius, if that is identified as a desire during public feedback. Ms. Clish agreed that the full analysis and context of the district study is important information to convey in the public forum presentation. She advised that the presentation look at which zones could comply on their own and then state that what comes next in the process is using community feedback to conduct subsequent analysis to achieve compliance. Mr. Weston asked for visual examples about potential development examples that the zoning district alternatives could result in.

Ms. Clish asked if the second meeting will cover the bylaw or if it will be about the concept combinations. Mr. MacNichol said that the meeting will be a combination about what the concepts could shape into and some of the controls that would be included in a bylaw while the third meeting would look at the bylaw elements, language, and considerations.

Mr. Weston opened to public comment.

Select Board Member Karen Herrick inquired about the MBTA Communities study completed and draft slides that were discussed, requesting that the information discussed in a meeting be made publicly available before Wednesday's public forum. She asked if a revision of the PowerPoint will be posted before the meeting. Mr. MacNichol said it may be posted beforehand but will certainly be posted after the public forum.

Mr. D'Arezzo raised the public concern about the merging of lots to accommodate future development. Mr. MacNichol responded citing the legal hurdles associated with this and the difficulty to model these types of scenarios.

Mr. Weston raised interest in discussing the impact of zoning changes that would result from the alternatives. Mr. MacNichol reiterated that as the models are narrowed down an analysis about the propensity for lots to be developed, an affordability analysis and additional details will be analyzed to determine impacts of the zoning concept alternatives.

Adjournment

Mr. D'Arezzo made a motion to adjourn at 9:13 PM. Ms. Clish seconded, and it was approved 4-0-0 (D'Arezzo, Clish, Mateev, Weston).

Documents Reviewed at the Meeting:

- 0 Harold Ave Extension
 - Definitive Subdivision Plan, dated 11/4/2024
 - Drainage Analysis, dated 12/3/23
- Grandview Road Extension
 - Major Site Plan Modification Subdivision, dated 5/10/24
 - Application Narrative provided by Fodera Engineering, dated 5/13/24
 - Legal Notice, dated 5/15/24
- 1310 Main Street
 - Approval Not Required Plan, dated 5/29/24
- 246 Walnut Street
 - Mylar plans for endorsement
- MBTA Communities (3A)
 - June 10 Public Meeting Draft Presentation provided by Andrew MacNichol
 - MBTA Communities Initial Compliance Analysis, completed by RKG Associates Inc., dated 6/5/24



Town of Reading
 16 Lowell Street, Reading, MA 01867
 Community Planning & Development Commission
 Mullin Rule

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Certification Pursuant to G. L. C. 39, Section 23d of Participation in a Session of an Adjudicatory Hearing Where the Undersigned Member Missed a Single Hearing Session

[Note: Can only be used for missing one single hearing session; cannot be used for missing more than one hearing session. Inquiries concerning this form and your ability to participate in a matter where you missed a single hearing session should be addressed to Town Counsel.]

I, Thomas Armstrong (name), hereby certify under the pains and penalties of perjury as follows:

1. I am a ^{alternate} member of said board.
2. I missed a hearing session on the matter of 0 Harold Ave and Grandview Rd Ext which were continued or the property located at (see above) which was held on June 10, 2024.
3. I reviewed all the evidence introduced at the hearing session I missed, which included a review of (initial which one(s) applicable):
 - a. _____ audio recording of the missed hearing session; or
 - b. _____ video recording of the missed hearing session; or
 - c. none a transcript of the missed hearing session.

This certification shall become a part of the record of the proceedings in the above matter.

Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this 8th day of August 2024

Name: Thomas M. Armstrong

Received as part of the record of the above matter:

Date: 8/12/24

By: Deena Kupfman

Position: Senior planner