



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

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By Town Clerk GP at 12:25 pm, Dec 11, 2024

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Community Planning and Development Commission

Date: 2024-11-04

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: Approved

Attendees: **Members In person:** John Weston, Chair; Tom Armstrong, Associate; Heather Clish, Secretary; Hillary Mateev.

Members Present on Zoom: Guy Manganiello

Members Not Present: John Arena

Others Present in person: Andrew MacNichol, Community Development Director; Olivia Knightly, Senior Planner; James M. Joly; Brian D. McGrail; Chris York; Peter Sandorse; Genady Pilyavsky, Reading Climate Advisory Committee.

Present on Zoom: N/A

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Olivia Knightly

Topics of Discussion:

MEETING HELD IN THE SELECT BOARD ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Mr. Weston called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

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

Tree Preservation Bylaw Presentation, Reading Climate Advisory Committee

Genady Pilyavsky, 3 Paramount Avenue, member of the Reading Climate Advisory Committee, presented on the benefits of tree canopy preservation in residential neighborhoods. Mr. Pilyavsky cited tree preservation bylaws in Arlington and Lexington as exemplary tree programs to duplicate. He stated that developers would be expected to offset any trees removed by measuring the diameter of the trees and replacing them.

Mr. Pilyavsky said he plans to present to the conservation commission, has spoken to the tree warden, and plans to speak with other relevant governmental bodies and Reading residents. He stated the proposed tree preservation bylaw would look to mirror the Arlington bylaw.

Mr. Weston asked what type of development this bylaw would apply to and stated that tree size and diameter and the quality and quantity of the replacement trees would not equate. Mr. Pilyavsky stated that there would be dimensional requirements to determine which projects this bylaw would apply to. He stated that tree height and size requirements would be implemented and there would be a focus on planting native trees.



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Mr. Weston said that the bylaw would need to identify whether it applies to single family lots or subdivisions. Mr. Manganiello asked if developers are defined as anyone who is developing land and Mr. Pilyavsky said that there is not a definition at this time.

Ms. Clish said that the model bylaw may not be defined by who is developing but by the type of project. Mr. Manganiello recommended the Town of Lynnfield, which has a similar bylaw and said that people may not be receptive to being told what they can and cannot do with their land, but it is something within the bounds of conservation.

Mr. Weston said that the bylaw may not be applicable to single family properties and smaller projects and that this would generate different discussions about how the bylaw applies to projects under site plan review.

Mr. MacNichol said the bylaw could apply to non-conservation buffer trees and that site plan review currently does not have a replacement count for trees but there are standards for trees to be replanted. He added that subdivisions require tree replacement for every 2,000 feet of open area per lot and that there is existing tree replacement language to be considered.

Mr. Manganiello stated that barriers may include the rising cost of construction and how the diameter of trees removed would be calculated. He stated that someone would have to be responsible for monitoring and maintaining the trees and checking their health. He added that it may be an overreach to impose this on individual homeowners but that developments should have landscape plans.

Mr. Armstrong said that trees smaller in diameter don't provide the same value as larger trees and requiring native trees may not always be necessary. Mr. Pilyavsky said that residents would be able to plant any kind of tree they want and remove any tree, but the replacement program would encourage native trees.

Ms. Mateev echoed Mr. Manganiello's comment about tree monitoring and questioned how this would happen. Mr. MacNichol said that town trees would have to be addressed with the tree warden.

Ms. Clish said that a tree replacement bylaw would become a public program and that the care for public and private trees would need to be clarified.

Mr. Weston stated that it may not be feasible to find suitable locations within one-half mile of the site to plant replacement trees. Mr. Manganiello said that there is a lot of natural forestry in Reading and Ms. Clish said that there is opportunity for a tree replacement program like this. Ms. Mateev added that replacement trees should be planted in locations where there is room on site for them to grow. Mr. Weston said that the bylaw should consider whether the goal is to replace all trees off the site that has been developed or if it is about minimizing the number of trees that are cleared when a development happens.

Mr. Pilyavsky said he will address all feedback received.

Public Hearing, Special Permit and Site Plan Review for Mixed-Use, 346-348 Main Street, Park Realty Trust

Attorney Brian McGrail spoke on behalf of the applicant. He stated that the site plan has been updated to address prior comments from staff and the CPDC.



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Mr. McGrail said that the dumpster layout was updated to an 8-yard dumpster set and a plastic recycle bin. He said the plans were updated to show an area next to the dumpster for an EV scooter charging station outside of the building. The updates added a third parking space on Park Ave for loading and EV parking and shifted the parking spaces on site to widen the turning lane into the parking lot, which is reflected in the turning movements diagram. The plans widen the garage door from 18 feet to 22 feet providing easier two-way entry and exit movements and a six-foot privacy fence was added to the western site boundary and snow storage areas.

Peter Sandorse of Pheonix Architects reviewed the changes to the architectural plans which include utility rooms in the basement, elevator and stairwell as well as an electric room to the main level. Mr. Sandorse said the buildings remain largely the same except for the basement utilities and they are in the process of adding balconies.

Mr. McGrail reviewed the Main Street design standards and how the proposed development conforms to these standards. He stated that parking is behind the building and the driveway on Main Street will be closed, minimizing driveway cuts and the visual impact of parking. He said that native shrubbery will be included along the front of the building. Mr. McGrail said that light fixtures are being worked on with a lighting consultant, but he does not see a need for heavy lighting.

Mr. Weston said that the site configuration and civil plans would be reviewed simultaneously and may need to be modified. He stated that this will be a special permit under mixed use and that there are requirements under section 4.4 that the applicant needs to demonstrate they have met. Mr. Weston said that the zoning requires 25% commercial use, and the plans calculate gross livable area and not gross floor area. He added that the three parking spaces on Park Ave technically need to be on site and the board needs proof of rights to Park Ave. Mr. Weston stated that office storage may not contribute to the commercial percentage, and this should be accurately reflected in the parking requirements. He stated that roadway configurations and turning movements should be reviewed by the police department.

Mr. McGrail said that the applicant will work through the comments and is aware that they may waive the 25% commercial requirement, pending board approval. He added that they will be prepared to present their waiver requests.

Mr. Armstrong stated a preference for downlighting options on site and expressed concern for lack of snow storage on site.

Ms. Mateev stated that the elevator lobby looks restrictive on the first floor and asked what the intention of the balconies is. Mr. Sandorse said they are an amenity, and they are exploring whether they can overhang the building. Ms. Clish said that they may not be able to overhang Main Street or other properties and stated that they may conflict with the dormers.

The board continued to discuss the architectural details of the proposed building. Ms. Clish stated that if the design includes balconies that they should have usable space to prevent them from becoming storage areas.

Mr. Weston said that the fire department should be consulted again to review turning radiuses onto the site.

Mr. Manganiello asked if snow guards would be placed on the roof and the applicant said they would consider it. He added that some variation in siding could help with the overall



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design. He also noted that the drainage design appears undersized to him and that the sizing of the units looks appropriate.

Ms. Clish agreed with Mr. Armstrongs notes on the downlighting and noted that business lighting will be important to review in the overall lighting plan.

Mr. Weston opened for public comment and there were none.

Mr. MacNichol stated that the long-term use of Park Ave should be considered, and pedestrian safety and access should be improved to Main Street and the train depot area.

Mr. Manganiello asked about the gas as a utility and Mr. Sandorse stated it is intended for cooking, with the remainder of the building as electric. Mr. Joly said that the light department recommended gas but that they should also design for potential heat pumps in the future. Mr. Manganiello encouraged them to consider electric for rentals.

Ms. Clish made a motion to continue the public hearing for a Special Permit and Site Plan Review for Mixed-Use, 346-348 Main Street, Park Realty Trust to Monday December 9, 2024. Ms. Mateev seconded the motion, and it was approved 5-0-0. (Manganiello, Armstrong, Clish, Weston, Mateev)

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

Application Continued to Monday December 9, 2024 at the request of the applicant

Ms. Clish made a motion to continue the public hearing for the definitive subdivision application at 0 Harold Ave to Monday December 9. Mr. Weston seconded the motion, and it was approved 5-0-0 (Manganiello, Armstrong, Clish, Weston, Mateev)

Other Business

Town Meeting

Mr. MacNichol stated that an MBTA Communities town meeting informational session was held on October 23, and another is being held on November 6 in an effort to inform Town Meeting Members about the MBTA Communities bylaws. The board had a brief discussion about the Town Meeting.

Review of Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the minutes for September 16 and September 19, 2024 as amended. Ms. Clish made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Weston seconded the motion, and it was approved 5-0-0 (Manganiello, Armstrong, Clish, Weston, Mateev)

Adjournment

Mr. Armstrong made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 PM, and it was seconded by Ms. Mateev. It was approved 5-0-0 (Manganiello, Armstrong, Clish, Weston, Mateev)



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Documents Reviewed at the Meeting:

- Climate Action Committee
 - Tree Preservation Bylaw Presentation
- 346-348 Main Street
 - Engineering Memo, dated 11/4/24
 - Plan Civil Set, dated 10/28/24
 - Architectural Submittal, dated 10/28/24
- Draft Minutes
Dated 9/16/24 and 9/19/24