



Town of Ayer
Planning Board

Ayer Town Hall – 1 Main Street – Ayer, MA 01432 – 978-772-8220 x 144



Minutes of February 27, 2024 - Ayer Planning Board Meeting

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall, 1 Main Street

Meeting was recorded and then broadcasted on APAC

Members Present: Jonathan Kranz, Chairman; Ken Diskin, Vice Chairman; Geof Tillotson, Clerk; Nathan King and Julie Murray

Also Present: Danny Ruiz, Town Planner

Chairman Kranz called the meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:15 PM.

General Business

Approve the Agenda

At 6:15 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Ken Diskin seconded. Vote to approve the agenda as presented: Mr. Ken Diskin, aye; Ms. Julie Murray, aye; Mr. Nathan King, aye; Mr. Geof Tillotson, aye and Chairman Kranz, aye.

Continued Public Hearing, Definitive Subdivision, Off Wright Road "Stratton Hill"

Mr. Tillotson read aloud into the record a letter submitted to the Board from Attorney Bob Collins dated January 31, 2024, requesting that the public hearing be continued to April 9th and granting an extension till May 31st for the Board to make their decision.

At 6:16 PM Mr. Geoff Tillotson made a motion to continue the public hearing to the April 9th meeting. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No Discussion. Vote to approve: Mr. Ken Diskin, aye; Ms. Julie Murray, aye; Mr. Nathan King, aye; Mr. Geof Tillotson, aye and Chairman Kranz, aye.

Danny gave a project status summary mentioning that the proposed project is in the process of redesigning the subdivision to have all the development south of the powerlines.

Continued Public Hearing, Site Plan Review and Special Permit, 27 & 29 Harvard Road

Mr. Geof Tillotson read aloud a letter from Attorney Thomas Gibbons requesting the public hearing be continued to the Board's meeting on May 28th with an extension for a decision till June 27th.

6:19 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson motion to continue the public hearing for Site Plan Review to the May 28th meeting. Ms. Julie Murray seconded. No discussion. Vote to approve: Mr. Ken Diskin, aye; Ms. Julie Murray, aye; Mr. Nathan King, aye; Mr. Geof Tillotson, aye and Chairman Kranz, aye. all in favor

Danny gave a brief summary of the status of the project mentioning the hearing is postponed with a continuance until after Town Meeting where the Zoning Map can be approved.

Project Status Update

Mr. Ruiz gave the Board a brief update on some of the upcoming projects coming before the Board which include two Site Plan Review and Stormwater Management Permit projects. The first project is located at 33 Third Street for three single family houses on three lots. Due to the amount of land clearing and grading the project triggers both Site Plan and Stormwater Management permits. The second project is located at 91 Groton Harvard Road. Mr. Ruiz mentioned that a meeting took place last week with several other town departments to review the proposed project which includes a new building, parking and layout of the property which is located next to the transfer station.

Mr. Ruiz also mentioned that Ayer Solar II has submitted a request to have the project reviewed for the retaining wall and as-built plans for final approval by the Board. Mr. Ruiz stated that he will be meeting with other town departments to review the request and go over outstanding items on the site and schedule a site visit to review the project which the Board should also attend.

MBTA Zoning

Mr. Geof Tillotson gave a brief update on the MBTA Communities Zoning which will be a Board sponsored Zoning Article which needs to be completed by December 31st to meet the State's requirements.

Mr. Ruiz gave the Board an update on where the Board stands and meeting the requirements and what will need to be done to complete the Zoning requirements.

Discussion – Table of Use regulations

Mr. Ruiz gave the Board an update on the Table of Use modifications process. Mr. Ruiz informed the Board that Ms. Janet Providakes, Mr. Charlie Schultz, and himself went to the Zoning Board of Appeals to present the proposed changes to the Table of Use. Mr. Ruiz mentioned that he will be going to the Select Board meeting on March 6th where the Zoning articles will be approved to be placed on the warrant. The public hearings for the Zoning articles will be on the next Board meeting on March 12th.

Discussion – Minor Site Plan Review

Mr. Ruiz mentioned that he had two handouts for the Board to review for the discussion this evening. The documents show how other towns in the state separate triggers for major and minor Site Plan Review and the other gives some examples the Board can use and some minor changes needed to the existing Site Plan Regulations.

Mr. Ruiz went over the Boards existing criteria for Site Plan Review which is listed in Section 3.5 of the Zoning Bylaw. Mr. Ruiz recommended a few areas where a minor site plan review could be used including: with changes to properties with less than 5 parking spaces, smaller additions to commercial properties, and changes in use.

There was a brief discussion regarding the recommendations.

Chairman Kranz had a few questions regarding the criteria for clearing and grading.

Mr. Ruiz stated that 2,500 square feet is the trigger now but is not worded properly in the Bylaw. The Bylaw states that a Site Plan must be created and presented to the Board but does not mention the need for approval.

Mr. Ruiz wanted to bring the proposed items to the Board as the creation of a minor site plan approval was left over from the previous planner. Mr. Ruiz wanted to get the Boards opinion the creation.

Mr. Nathan King had a comment regarding minor and major site plan stating minor site plans would be reviewed and approved typically in a single meeting and major would require multiple meetings.

Mr. Ruiz agreed and gave the Board a few examples of minor site plans like a change of use.

Mr. Diskin stated that Section 3.5 of the Ayer Zoning Bylaws already stated the requirements for major site plans and suggested that the Board add minor site plan to be anything that does not meet the current requirements and not change what is existing.

The Board held a brief discussion on the current requirements for Site Plan Review as well as the potential need for a minor site plan review process. The Board decided to review the materials provided by Mr. Ruiz regarding minor site plan and will review the matter at a later date.

Approval of Meeting Minutes February 13, 2024

7:26 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the February 23, 2024, meeting as presented. Mr. Ken Diskin seconded. No discussion. Vote to approve as presented: Mr. Ken Diskin, aye; Ms. Julie Murray, aye; Mr. Nathan King, aye; Mr. Geof Tillotson, aye and Chairman Kranz, aye.

Adjourn

At 7:28 PM Mr. Geof Tillotson made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Heather Hampson, Conservation Agent

Planning Board Approval : _____

Planning Board Chairman (Jonathan Kranz): _____

