



## Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and City Council Committee on Legislative Matters and the Northampton City Council

### Members

Councilor William H. Dwight, Chair

Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Vice Chair

Councilor Rachel Maiore

Councilor John Thorpe

### MEETING MINUTES

Date: April 23, 2020, Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

1. **Meeting Called to Order and Roll Call:** At 7 p.m., Chair Dwight called the meeting to order. On a roll call, the following councilors were present: Councilor Dwight, Councilor Maiore, Councilor Sciarra and Councilor Thorpe. Planning Board members present: George Kohout, Chair, Marissa Elkins, Melissa Fowler, Christa Grenat, Samuel Taylor, Alan Verson, Janna White and David Whitehill. Euripides deOliveira was absent. Also present were Administrative Assistant Laura Krutzler and Office of Planning & Sustainability Assistant Director Carolyn Misch.

2. **Public Comment**

Councilor Dwight opened the floor to general public comment.

Northampton resident Yvonne Boucher said she owns property next door to 175 Jackson Street. When is this project starting? She asked. They're already parking in the back yard today.

Mr. Kohout explained that the hearing she is interested in will commence in about a half hour after the joint hearing with the Legislative Matters Committee.

There being no further public comment, Councilor Dwight moved to the next item on the agenda.

3. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- A. **Minutes of March 2, 2020 and March 9, 2020**

Councilor Sciarra moved to approve the minutes of March 2, 2020 and March 9, 2020. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

Councilor Maiore noted a correction to the minutes of March 2, 2020. She requested the addition of the words "presence of a" before the word "facilitator" at the end of pg. 6. She moved to amend the minutes as requested. Councilor Sciarra seconded. The motion passed 4:0 by roll call.

The motion to approve the two sets of minutes passed 4:0 by roll call.

4. Public hearing on proposed zoning change

A. 20.073 An Ordinance Relative to Essential Services and Municipal Facilities

Councilor Dwight read the proposed ordinance.

Councilor Sciarra moved to open the public hearing. Councilor Maiore seconded.

Ms. Misch presented. The ordinance is really a sort of 'clean-up' of the zoning, she explained. They have made a lot of changes over the years and missed some things, and this is one of the elements that was inadvertently dropped from some of the districts. The text relates to adding footnotes to the zoning districts, which have separate regulations related to such things as uses, setbacks and open space calculations. That footnote would clarify that there is no minimum lot size or frontage required for such uses as essential services and municipal facilities. Such things as gas lines, sewer lines, parks and municipal buildings all fall into this category, she noted. It is important not to have a minimum lot size for a park or a water or sewer line, she pointed out.

The change also calls for adding a line to Attachment 19 to state that municipal and essential facilities are allowed as of right. An amendment to add the words "and are the only dimensional lot requirements necessary to be met" was made for clarification since the ordinance was first introduced, she added.

Councilor Dwight asked if anyone wished to speak in favor or against.

Councilor Maiore asked what essential services are in this context.

There is a definition in the zoning ordinance for both uses, Ms. Misch said. Essential services refers to services provided by the municipality to the community. They range from gas lines and electric transmission lines to roads, schools, parks and municipal buildings.

In response to a question from Mr. Kohout, Ms. Misch explained the process for ordinance adoption. After the joint public hearing, the ordinance is referred to the full City Council with recommendations from both the Planning Board and Legislative Matters, she clarified.

Councilor Sciarra moved to close the public hearing. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 11:0 with Councilors Dwight, Sciarra, Thorpe and Maiore and Planning Board members Kohout, Verson, Grenat, Taylor, Fowler, White and Whitehill in favor.

Attorney Verson moved to recommend Planning Board approval of the ordinance to the full council as presented. Marissa Elkins seconded. The motion passed unanimously 8:0 with Grenat, Elkins, Fowler, Kohout, Taylor, Verson, White and Whitehill in favor by roll call.

Councilor Dwight offered to accept a motion for a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe so moved. Councilor Sciarra seconded.

Councilor Thorpe moved to amend the ordinance to add the proposed wording. Councilor Sciarra seconded. The motion to amend passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call.

The motion to forward the ordinance with a positive recommendation passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call.

5. Items Referred to Committee

None.

New Business

None.

Adjourn

Councilor Sciarra moved to adjourn. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call. The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

*Prepared By:*

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