The Northampton Planning Board
Minutes of Meeting
February 11, 2019
City Council Chambers 212 Main St., Northampton, MA

Members Present:

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tess Poe, Chair,</td>
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<td>Mark Sullivan, Vice Chair</td>
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<td>R Sam Taylor</td>
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<td>Euripedes DeOliveira</td>
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<td>Terry Culhane</td>
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<td>George Kohout</td>
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<td>Christa Grenat</td>
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<td>Janna White, Associate Member</td>
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<td>Alan Verson, Associate Member</td>
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Staff:

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<td>Planning Director, Wayne Feiden</td>
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<td>Senior Planner, Carolyn Misch</td>
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City Council Committee on Legislative Matters with The Planning Board, Council Chambers 212 Main St. Alisa Klein, David Murphy, Maureen Carney sitting for Council Committee.

5:00 PM Alisa Klein, Vice Chair Legislative Matters Committee opened the joint public hearing for the Planning Board and the Legislative Matters Committee on the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment to standards governing large-scale solar arrays. The ordinance also includes elimination of the current prohibition against removal of more than 25,000 board feet of timber, would create site plan special permit standards for large-scale ground mounted solar arrays that result in more than 5 Acres of tree removal.

Klein read the ordinance amendment as introduced to Council and then read the proposed revisions based on the City Solicitor’s recommendations.

Carolyn Misch, Senior Planner, provided history and context of the current regulations and the impetus for recommending the amendments.

Alan Seewald, City Solicitor, further expounded on the reasons for his recommended changes.
Klein opened the hearing for public comment.

Lilly Lombard, Monroe Street and Chair Public Shade Tree Committee noted that the ordinance had changed since the Tree Committee had voted to co-sponsor the ordinance. She suggested the Council take more time to study the science between renewable energy development and impact to tree clearing.

Rebecca Neimark stated that we should not allow tree clearing for the purposes of providing this type of development. Marty Nathan, Massasoit St, remarked on the long standing health benefits of trees which should not be discounted for the short life span of solar panels.

Amy Meltzer, 11 Olive Street, raised concerns over the zoning ordinance changes. Garrett Stover suggested that solar developers do not have the community’s interest in mind.

John Skibiski, spoke in favor of the ordinance to allow more solar development within the city.

Representatives from Climate Action Now spoke against the ordinance suggesting that more data relative to benefits of forested canopy should be included in the analysis and the Board’s decision making process.

The Board members discussed the changes and the need for changes. Klein asked for clarification regarding the loophole that would be closed with the ordinance.

Staff described the issue on the Ryan Road parcel.

The Board and Council debated a continuation.

Upon motion by Janna White and second by Christa Grenat, the Board voted unanimously to continue the hearing to March 28, 7:00 PM.

The Board reconvened in Hearing Room 18.

Planning Board, Hearing Room 18, 210 Main St,

6:50 PM George Kohout opened the Site Plan Amendment by 1924 LLC to modify site lighting and parking at 49 Round Hill Rd, Northampton, MA Map ID 31B-4.

Tom Douglas, project architect, presented the application and introduced Jim Hebert, owner.

Douglas detailed the locations of specific light fixtures that were not on the original plans. He specified that the applicant was looking for 3 amendments:

1- Alteration of the screening materials for the HVAC systems at the back of the building from fence and landscaping to more landscaping without a fence.
2- Modification of the condition for timing on the parking lot lights.
3- Additional lighting around the building including one with reflective lighting slightly higher than the by right standards.
Janet Gross, 38 Round Hill Rd, complained about the lighting and the noise of the temporary HVAC units and the visual impacts of the temporary construction equipment.

Arvid Nelson, 250 Crescent Street, spoke in favor of the additional lighting and the request for the parking lot lights to be adjusted to help users. He noted that the color temperature should not be blue.

Mario Grosso, Pratt House, asked about the 9 PM cutoff for the building lights. He asked the Board to allow the parking lot lights to stay on for his perceived safety.

Nick Gross, 38 Round Hill Rd, noted this neighborhood was not a high crime area and there would be no need to keep lights on all night. He questioned whether the Board should approve the lighting since the Historical Commission had not yet approved the fixtures.

Jim Hebert, owner argued that he wanted the parking lot lights on passed 9 pm for employees that work past that hour. He asked for some, but not all lights to be left on.

Upon motion by Alan Verson and second by Sam Taylor the Board voted unanimously to close the hearing.

The Board discussed the merits of the requests.

Upon motion by Sam Taylor and second by Alan Verson, the Board voted 4-1 (Janna White abstained) to amend the permit to allow 4 parking lot pole lights to be kept on until midnight, all other lights should be turned off at 9 PM except for those over the entries of the residential buildings. The Board also approved the additional building lights with the slightly elevated foot candles on the brick 21 fc vs. allowed 20 fc. and the change in screening for the HVAC units. All other conditions of the permit shall remain.

8:10 PM Adjourn