

# Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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## The Northampton Planning Board

Minutes of Meeting  
April 23, 2020  
Via Zoom Teleconference

Members Present:		Time
R	George Kohout, Chair	
R	Alan Verson, Vice Chair	
R	Marissa Elkins	
R	Sam Taylor	
	Euripedes DeOliveira	
R	Christa Grenat	
R	Melissa Fowler	
R	Janna White, Associate Member	
R	David Whitehill, Associate Member	

### Staff:

	Planning Director, Wayne Feiden	
R	Assistant Director, Carolyn Misch	

**7:00 PM** Bill Dwight opened the meeting of the City Council Committee on Legislative Matters jointly with the Planning Board. Bill Dwight, Gina Louise Sciarra, Racheal Maiore and John Thorpe sitting for Legislative Matters.

There were no public comments.

Bill Dwight and George Kohout opened the public hearing on the proposed zoning amendments for their respective boards. Specifically the amendment to restore and clarify dimensional provisions for uses categorized as “essential services” & “municipal facilities” to be consistent in each district. Specifically add:

- 1) Footnote to Chapter 350 Attachments 4-8, 18, 24 -no minimum lot size, depth, or frontage required for essential services or municipal facilities; minimum setbacks for principal municipal facilities buildings same as other principal uses.
- 2) In 350 Attach 19 - municipal & essential facilities are allowed by right.

Staff explained the need to amend the text of the ordinance.



Rachel Maiore asked for clarification about what constitutes essential services and municipal facilities.

Staff provided examples.

There was no public comment.

Upon motion by Gina Louise Sciarra and second by Rachel Maiore the Board's voted to close their hearings.

Upon motion by Alan Verson and second by Marissa Elkins, the Planning Board by roll call vote voted unanimously to recommend that the ordinance amendment be adopted by City Council.

Legislative Matters Committee voted unanimously by roll call vote to recommend that City Council Adopt the measure.

Upon departure of Legislative Matters Committee Members, the Planning Board took up the following items:

Minutes of March 12, 2020: Upon motion by Christa Grenat and second by Marissa Elkins the Board voted 7-0 by roll call vote to approve the minutes.

Staff presented the ANR for Bright St.

Upon motion by Janna White and second by Christa Grenat, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to have the ANR endorsed.

**7:35 PM** George Kohout opened the public hearing for the Site Plan Major Project by Karen LaVerdiere to construct 5 new units in detached structures with site development at 175 Jackson St, Northampton, Map Id 24A-43.

Terry Reynolds, project engineer described the project by screen share. He described the plan for a 4' stockade fence between the proposed parking area at the front of the lot and the southerly property boundary. He also noted that the utility location connecting to Jackson Street would likely need to be altered to protect the large Sugar Maple tree at the front of the property.

Reynolds further clarified the request for a waiver for a full traffic study, waiver for providing a cement concrete sidewalk of 5' in width in order to provide a walk that is 3' wide made of bituminous.

George Kohout asked how the walk would be differentiated from the driveway?

Reynolds noted there would be a curb separation.

George Kohout asked about the width of the apron.

Karen LaVerdiere asked for clarification on the standard for sidewalk construction within the road right of way.

George Kohout asked about the need for a full traffic study and the merits of the waiver.

Staff noted that the full study would be warranted for a larger commercial project to analyze origin and destination of trips, but this scale of project would not likely benefit from a full traffic analysis.

Sam Taylor asked about plantings proposed at the front and sight distance concerns.

LaVerdiere confirmed that she was concerned about that and asked if those shrubs could be relocated to the edge of the parking area.

The Board confirmed that this would be a good solution.

Yvonne Bouche, 159 Jackson Street asked about the parked cars along the side of the lot, noting that they were unsightly. She also asked about tenancy status.

George Kohout confirmed that the applicant had indicated that these would be rental units and that a fence was proposed to screen the parking from her property.

Bouche also asked whether the project had already begun.

LaVerdiere stated that a previously planned demolition of a storage structure on site was coming down.

George Kohout asked about project timing.

LaVerdiere noted that her original intention was to begin in June, but that COVID19 had upended that schedule and she was unsure when she would begin.

Bouche reiterated her objection to the project because of smog, noise, visual blight it would create.

Alan Verson stated that he thought the project made sense in the location as it relates to the city's goals for encouraging infill housing and he was in favor of granting the requested waivers.

Janna White asked about the shift in city standards to require 5' wide sidewalks.

Staff explained that there was just a codification of the standard and the dimension would accommodate accessibility more than 3' wide walks.

George Kohout asked about refuse removal.

LaVerdiere explained the location for pick up.

David Whitehill stated his concern about barrels potentially blocking the public sidewalk.

LaVerdiere noted that she would designate an area where the shrubs are currently shown on the plans – since they would be relocated.

George Kohout asked about notice to abutting renters and about lighting.

Terry Reynolds confirmed that no site lighting is proposed, only exit/entry door lighting under canopies is proposed.

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

Staff described possible conditions.

Upon motion by Alan Verson and second by Christa Grenat, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve the permit, with waivers and conditions including additional tree protection for a Willow Tree

**8:50 PM.** Upon motion by Janna White and second by Sam Taylor, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn.

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