

Planning Board – Special Joint Meeting with Select Board

Longmeadow Public Schools Office, Meeting Room A15 – 535 Bliss Road, Longmeadow MA 01106
Zoom Virtual Platform – www.zoom.us, P: 646-558-8656, Meeting ID: 876 9910 6871, Password: 302119
Monday February 6th, 2023 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Cheryl Thibodeau, Chair; Walter Gunn, Clerk; Bruce Colton, Chris Legiadre, Don Holland.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Select Board members Josh Levine, Dan Zwirko, Mark Gold; TM Lyn Simmons, Director of Planning Corrin Meise-Munns, Mike Barbieri, Patty Gambarini from PVPC.

The *Planning Board Hybrid Joint Meeting with Select Board* was called to order at 7:05pm by Select Board Chair Josh Levine. Planning Board Chair Cheryl Thibodeau took a roll call vote on said board: Ms. Thibodeau: present; Mr. Gunn: present, Mr. Colton: present; Mr. Holland: present; Mr. Legiadre: present. The purpose of the meeting is to view and discuss a presentation by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) on the proposed work to bring Town Bylaws and Regulations into compliance with the federal 2016 Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit.

PVPC's Chief Environment Planner Patty Gambarini provided a brief overview of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit's mission and evolution, which started in 2003 and aims to protect the U.S. waters from erosion and sediment-related pollutants that are accumulated through stormwater management systems, as well as the Town of Longmeadow's history in maintaining compliance with these regulations. The latest program update issued at the federal level was released in 2016 although its formal adoption suffered delays. This, paired with the Town's municipal code outdated language, has resulted in the Town falling out of compliance with the program.

In an effort to restore the Town's compliance status, PVPC has rolled out a series of recommendations that impact the General and Zoning Bylaws as well as the Subdivision Rules and Regulations that were a result of an extensive review of said documents, during which a number of inconsistent, contradictory and/or outdated language was found. This regulatory review is an opportunity to better streamline certain processes and to ensure compatibility across all codes.

The recommendations presented by Ms. Gambarini range from mandatory language to be incorporated in the municipal code to language that will help the Town gather proper information for the annual reports that are to be submitted to MasDEP and EPA, all of which intends to implement the best management practices for stormwater pollutant reduction (with a special attention to nitrogen and phosphorous) in new development and redevelopment construction projects disturbing an acre or more of land, especially as the region experiences a change in weather patterns that is resulting in more rainfall totals per year versus snowfall totals. Examples of proposed changes include modifications to definitions, addition of language that describes prohibited activities i.e., illicit discharges), clarifications in enforcement sections and additional sections that provide various technical specifications.

After the presentation, both boards praised the substantial work that has been performed thus far but raised concerns as to how this amount of technical information can be properly presented in a Town Meeting format in order for town residents to make an informed voting decision. Other topics that were raised were how to navigate the potential economic impact some of these requirements could have on town residents, which challenges could be specific to Longmeadow's landscape that should be reflected in these recommendations and which town official/department is best equipped to properly execute adequate execution—due to the nature of the technical expertise required to review these scenarios, Department of Public Works have historically been assigned such duty, which is the current scenario for Longmeadow and expected to remain as such.

As part of the procedure to adopt these recommendations, Select Board member Mark Gold made a motion, and was seconded by Select Board member Dan Zwirko, to refer the PVPC recommendations pertaining to Zoning Bylaws to the Planning Board.

Walter Gunn made a motion, and was seconded by Bruce Colton, to adjourn the joint meeting with the Select Board. Roll call vote – Ms. Thibodeau: yes; Mr. Gunn: yes, Mr. Colton: yes; Mr. Holland: yes; Mr. Legiadre: yes. All in favor 5-0, motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Damiano