

Background Materials for August 24, 2015

Agenda Items #1 through #13

Agenda Item #1 – Informational Meeting – Conversion of One-Family to a Two-Family in a Residence A-1 district

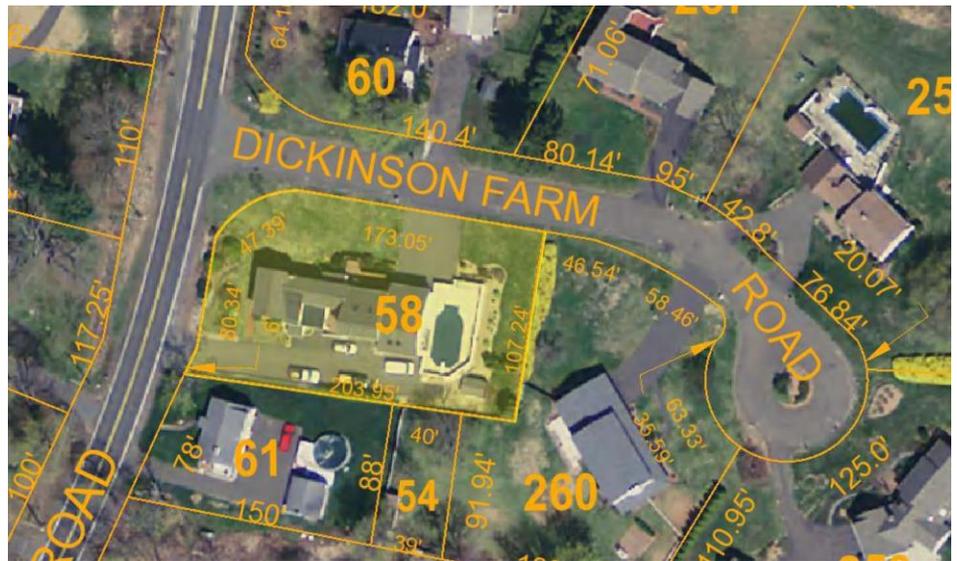
Attorney Paul Boudreau represents the owner of a single-family residence at 103 College Street. The subject property is in the Residence A-1 zoning district. It appears that the structure on the property needs extensive work and could be converted into a two-family residence which might make the renovations financially feasible. However, the Zoning Bylaw currently does not allow for conversion of a single-family into a two-family in the zoning district – only allows for new two-family developments and then by Special Permit.

I have briefly discussed with Attorney Boudreau the Board's prior efforts to have the provisions changed to allow for conversion of single-family dwellings in Residence A-1 by Special Permit. But, I also noted that, due to opposition from several sources, the Board has not renewed its efforts to change the Zoning Bylaw in this regard. Attorney Boudreau has requested an opportunity to discuss this matter further with the Board.

ACTION NEEDED: Since this is an Informational Meeting, no action is necessary.

Agenda Item #2 – Minor Site Plan Review

South Hadley ESL, Inc. has submitted an application for Minor Site Plan Review for 67 Amherst Road. The applicant is to use the facility for an educational program for up to 12 students. The subject property is a 0.52 acre tract situated at the southeast corner of Amherst Road and Dickinson Farm Road (see map and aerial photo below).



At present, the property has an 8,918 square foot residential (Two-Family – according to the Assessor's Property Card) structure constructed in 1920 situated thereon. The applicant does not intend to expand the building except to the extent that Building, Fire, Safety, or

Health Codes require any such expansion. Rather, the applicant intends to utilize the existing facility for a nonprofit educational institution – primarily residential for students attending the Hartsbrook School in Hadley (a private, nonprofit school) but also for additional courses for the residents to be provided on-site but only for those persons residing at 67 Amherst Road. The facility at 67 Amherst Road is leased to a private nonprofit educational institution which will operate the facility. The application submittal has been posted on the Town’s website at the following link: <http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1690>

The Building Commissioner issued a letter July 29, 2015 stating that she had “*been advised by Town Counsel Ed Ryan that the project . . . appears to qualify under the non-profit educational exemption to the Zoning Bylaw. Therefore, in terms of zoning only, [her] office considers this use permitted subject to Site Plan Review and limited regulation of topics specified under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A, Section 3 for such non-profit educational uses.*”

Since this project is a private, non-profit educational use and it does not involve any additions to the building which would expand its capacity, under the Planning Board’s Rules and Regulations, it qualifies for Minor Site Plan Review. While no public hearing is allowed under such a review, I have notified the certified abutters of the Board’s planned review.

In accordance with the procedures set forth for Minor Site Plan Review, the application submittal has been distributed to the various departments for review and comment. While the departments have 14 days in which to respond, given the limited nature of the physical modifications being proposed and the extensive involvement the Building Commissioner, Director of Public Health, and Fire Department have had regarding this building, I have requested that the departments provide their comments on or before the August 24th meeting at which the application is to be submitted. To date, the following departments have indicated approval of the submittal without any comments:

- Police
- South Hadley Electric Light Department
- Public Works
- Fire District #2 Water Department
- Conservation Commission

Public Health Director Sharon Hart noted that the “Health Department will need to wait for the Building Commissioner to classify use (e.g. dormitory, educational facility) since that would determine inspectional requirements. If the students are being fed at the facility, she indicated that may require a food service permit.

The Building Commissioner provided me a copy of the Architect’s Change of Use Report which indicates that the use will be changed to a “Dormitory”. I have inquired of the applicant’s attorney as to how they plan to provide meals for the residents as that could require a commercial kitchen. A similar facility in Springfield avoided the kitchen requirement by implementing a plan to have meals delivered and equipped their kitchen with only equipment to warm up meals and not provide onsite cooked meals.

Site Plan Review criteria are attached to this packet. However, this application is subject to review only for reasonable regulation related to bulk and height of structures and determining yard sizes, lot area, setbacks, open space, parking and building coverage requirements under the provisions of Chapter 40A, Section 3, MGL. Since the applicant is not proposing to undertake any building additions, it would seem that the only relevant consideration is related to the parking required.

ACTION NEEDED: The Board should review the application and determine if it conforms to reasonable requirements related to bulk and height of structures and determining yard sizes, lot area, setbacks, open space, parking and building coverage requirements. The Board may condition its approval only to the extent that those conditions relate to the limited areas of review.

Agenda Item #3 - Date(s) for August through December meetings.

The Board had previously set August 31st as a potential meeting date. The next scheduled meeting date is September 21st. The following are the scheduled dates for October through December:

- October 12th and 26th
- November 9th and 23rd
- December 14th and 28th

October 12th conflicts with the Columbus Day holiday
November 23rd is the Monday immediately prior to Thanksgiving
December 28th is in the Christmas-New Year's week

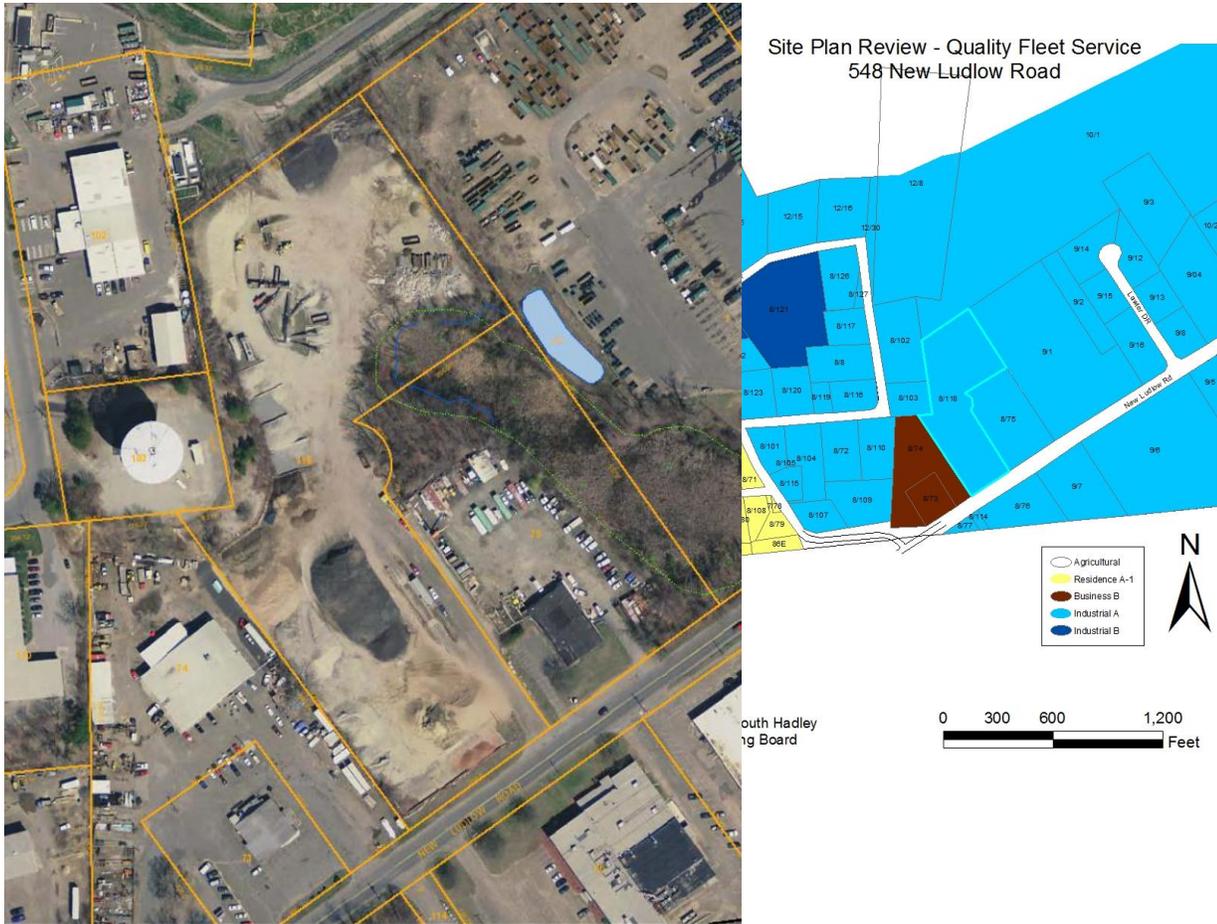
October 5th would be a reasonably spaced date for replacing October 12th. The other dates do not "conflict" with holidays but we may wish to cancel the December 28th date as the Board does not normally meet the last week of December due to the various holidays.

ACTION NEEDED: Set the meeting schedule for August through December 2015. We should allow for meetings on the Housing Production Plan and the Multifamily Study.

Agenda Item #4 – Public Hearing – Quality Fleet Service, Inc.

6:45 p.m.

Quality Fleet Service, Inc. has submitted applications for Site Plan Review and a Stormwater Management Permit to construct a 14,580 square foot commercial facility to be used for vehicle maintenance. Other elements of the project include provision of 61 parking spaces, stormwater management, utilities, landscaping, and related improvements. The site has previously been used by St. Jacques for sand and gravel storage and related operations. The subject property consists of a 6.72 acre parcel located off the north side of New Ludlow Road at 548 New Ludlow Road and is presently zoned Industrial A (see map and aerial photo below) .



Below is an excerpt from the company's website to provide some background:

Since 2005, Quality Fleet Service Inc. has grown from a small one mechanic shop to a 5,000 square foot full-service garage with a fleet of four service trucks equipped to perform any of your on-site repair or maintenance needs.

At Quality Fleet Service, Inc. we specialize in forestry and utility equipment, with our services ranging from both light duty trucks to heavy equipment. As a Perkins, Kolher Diesel and Kubota factory authorized parts and repair facility, our services also include anything from performing preventative maintenance to complete hydraulic or engine rebuilding of gas and diesel machines.

In a subsequent narrative submittal, the applicant explained that 4,800 square feet of the proposed building is to be used for a secondary tenant – cellulose insulation installer. Over a longer term, the applicant may occupy all of the proposed building. Parking calculations were made based on the joint occupancy of the property by the applicant and his rental tenant.

Fuss & O'Neill – engineers were retained to conduct a Peer Review of the Stormwater and wetlands submittals. Their review was completed and submitted on August 5, 2015 and has been posted on the Town's website at the following link:

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1689>

The report was forwarded to the applicant's consultant who reviewed the report and made revisions to the application materials as necessary. We will likely want Fuss & O'Neill to review the revised materials as well.

A copy of the application submittals have been posted on the Town's website at the following link: <http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/316/Project-Plans-M-Z> look for "Quality Fleet Service" – four separate files containing the submittals:

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1656>

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1657>

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1658>

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1659>

The revised materials – in response to the Stormwater Management peer review are also posted on the Town's website at the following links:

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1692>

<http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1691>

While the public hearing on this application was duly advertised and posted for July 30, 2015 at 6:45 p.m., only three members of the Board indicated that they would be able to attend that date and time. Therefore, the abutters and applicant were notified that the public hearing would be deferred until August 24, 2015 at 6:45 p.m. when all Board members have indicated they can attend. At the last meeting, Mr. Cavanaugh duly deferred the public hearing until the date and time noted.

Comments have been solicited from the various departments pursuant to the Planning Board's Rules and Regulations. The deadline for comments was July 28, 2015. To date, comments/responses have been received (either via email and/or the ViewPermit program) as noted below:

- Police Chief David Labrie stated that there do not appear to be any public safety concerns with the site plan submitted for 548 New Ludlow Road.
- Conservation Commission Administrator noted that the project is undergoing third-party review for stormwater management. The Conservation Commission continued their hearing until September 2, 2015.
- Fire District #1 Fire Department offered the following comments:
 - 1). Would like to verify that there is full access around the building for Fire Apparatus.

- 2). Move proposed fire hydrant closer to or past front corner of building as long as it is within 50 feet of FDC. The current location would put our apparatus inside the 30ft alleyway, which is too close to the building.
 - 3). Fire Sprinkler and Fire Alarm requirements will be determined by use group of building (Possible mixed use) as required by Building Code.
- Director of Public Health Sharon Hart initially offered the following comments in July:
- 1). The stormwater detention must be empty within 72 hours of any storm event - that is also in the Stormwater Management Bylaw
 - 2). She did not witness any test pits or perc tests for the detention site. It is our practice to have the Department witness such tests. In the past, we had several cases in which the engineers relied upon nearby results or the general soils information and the detention basins did not work as intended which resulted in standing water or worse.
- However,** in August, Ms. Hart updated her comments as follows:
- 1). Perc and soils tests were witnessed by BOH representative. The Perc test was successful at the detention basin location.
 - 2). Stormwater by law and BOH regulations, no standing water after 72 hours.
- Fire District #1 – Water Department Water Superintendent Jeff Cyr noted his approval of the project in August but added the following comments:
- 1). Considering the Proposed Water Main will be serving both Fire and domestic service, the size will need to be increased to 8” D.I. That is the minimum size the District accepts.
 - 2). Due to the fact that the domestic service will be coming directly off of the Water main, a 30- foot wide easement will need to be conveyed to the District (15 feet on each side of the water main). All costs associated with producing and recording that easement will be the responsibility of the developer. Said easement must be reviewed by the Districts’ legal counsel prior to recording.
 - 3). The District can perform the 8” Tap for the Tapping sleeve and valve for a fee.
 - 4). Only District Personnel are allowed to operate gate valves within the distribution system.
 - 5). All materials and all practices relative to the installation of the proposed water main must be in compliance with the Districts’ Rules and Regulations for development. Those can be found on our Website.

No comments were received from the Building Commissioner, SHELD Manager, or DPW Superintendent. However, given that Fuss & O’Neill serve as the Town’s consulting engineer, I believe the DPW Superintendent was deferring to the firm for their comments.

ACTION NEEDED: The public hearing should be held as scheduled. However, given the status of the Stormwater Management Plans and the continuation of the Conservation Commission consideration of the matter, following the hearing the Board may wish to continue the public

hearing until September 21, 2015 at 6:45 p.m. for the sole purpose of addressing issues raised in this hearing and completion of the Stormwater Management Permit review.

To better prepare the Board and the applicant for a decision to be made on September 21st, the Board may wish to review the project in light of the Site Plan Review criteria and note any outstanding issues in regards to those criteria. The applicant could address those issues at the September 21st public hearing.

Agenda Item #5 – Decisions – Quality Fleet Services

Given the recommendation to continue the public hearing until September 21, 2015, I don't believe any action on this item will be appropriate. However, I believe the Board should plan to make a decision on both applications at that meeting.

ACTION NEEDED: No action required. But, if the Board closes the public hearing, the Board could review the various criteria and render decisions on both applications.

Agenda Item #6 – Minutes

I have attached draft copies of the following minutes to the email transmittal for your consideration (these were previously transmitted to the members)

- 1). July 30, 2015 Planning Board Meeting

ACTION NEEDED: Review, edit and approve the minutes.

Agenda Item #7 – Bills and Correspondence

A list of the bills and correspondence are attached – at this time there are no bills to be paid.

Agenda Item #8 – Zoning Reform Legislation

I received a notice that a Legislative Committee is once again to consider a bill to modernize the State's Zoning and Land Use statutes. A six page summary of the key points of this bill is attached for your review. Essentially, the legislation provides 13 areas of reforms to the Zoning Enabling Act and/or the Subdivision Control Law (the two are so intertwined into the issue of development and permitting) which would be available to all communities in the Commonwealth:

- Allowable zoning techniques
- Special permits – required vote, duration, and process for extension
- Site plan review – not currently addressed in State law
- Variances – More flexibility options
- Vested rights
- Development impact fees
- Inclusionary zoning
- Master planning
- Notices to board of health
- Other procedural reforms – dispute avoidance, appeals, and amendments
- Consolidated permitting – for larger developments

- Minor subdivisions – potential to do away with ANRs
- Subdivisions – roadway standards and requiring neighborhood parks

Other reforms are included which would be available to communities who “opt-in” by taking specific actions under a proposed “Planning Ahead for Growth Act”

Last year, various Planning Boards and other organizations endorsed the legislation. I was asked to see if the South Hadley Planning Board would like to do so this year.

While it would be obvious that everyone would not support all of the proposed changes – some are changes I would not support. But, the overall package makes significant positive reforms to the archaic Zoning Enabling and Subdivision Control Laws and the positive changes, in my opinion, far outweigh any of the proposed changes which I do not favor.

ACTION NEEDED: Determine whether or not to endorse the proposed legislation.

Agenda Item #9 – Master Plan Matrixes

This is a continuation from several previous meetings at which time Mark, Jeff, Melissa, and Helen provided a synopsis of their reviews of the portions of the matrixes they had been assigned. The primary remaining matrix relates to the Planning Board responsibilities which Ms. Rosner indicated she would review and be prepared to discuss on July 30, 2015. However, given the circumstances of the July 30th meeting, we were unable to review the remaining Matrix.

The review is to answer the following:

- What has been done?
- Has the Recommended Action been completed?
- Is the Recommended Action relevant today?
- What should be the priorities for the next five years?
- Is another party a better match for being responsible for implementation?

Given the scope of the agenda, there may not be time to review any of the Matrixes. However, we are behind the schedule we set for ourselves in reviewing the matrices.

ACTION NEEDED: No definitive action is required at this time; however, the Board agreed at a March meeting to review each of the Recommended Actions on these matrixes.

Agenda Item #10 – Possible Bylaw Amendments

I included this item in the event we have time to discuss possible bylaw amendments (General and Zoning) for this coming Fall Special Town Meeting. At this point, I am working on the following matters which may or may not be ready for the Fall Special Town Meeting:

- a. South Hadley Falls 40R District
- b. 43D Priority Development Districts – Expedited Permitting
- c. Flexible Development
- d. Sign regulations

We are still waiting for the Preliminary Approval on the South Hadley Falls 40R District. The State identified issues with the draft Zoning provisions – primarily that the definitions section was not a “stand alone” section from the rest of the Zoning Bylaw.

In regards to creation of 43D Districts, the primary Zoning Bylaw consideration relates to changes in the Zoning Bylaw which are necessary to implement expedited permitting. I don't believe the Zoning Bylaw has any procedural impediments but this is a matter which I am still exploring.

I am attempting to complete a revision to the Flexible Development amendments for Monday night. I hope we can discuss it prior to advertising for an October public hearing.

While I am working on the sign regulations, I do not expect to have any amendments ready for the sign regulations. In light of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding the Arizona community's sign ordinance, we should consider making significant changes as to how we regulate signs in the Zoning Bylaw. I am drafting an outline for sign regulations which generally focuses on the following:

- On-Premise vs Off-Premise
- Uniformly restricting the number of signs
- Regulating by district not by message on the sign
- Prohibiting “Roof” signs
- Setbacks from the pavement of sidewalk/street
- Consistent size limits (height, area, etc.) by zoning district
- Provision for requiring property owner approval
- Continue the illumination limits and restrictions
- Temporary signs not by message but by duration of permit and number permitted per year (for sale, for rent, tag sales, etc.)
- Clear statement of purpose which respects the First Amendment Right to Free Speech while taking care to ensure that signs do not cause visual pollution, impede the flow of pedestrians or vehicles, nor create safety hazards

The challenge in the sign regulations will be to ensure that the standards further the purposes and do not pose internal contradictions.

ACTION NEEDED: No action is required at this point.

Agenda Item #11 – Annual Report

The Annual Report submittal is due to the Selectboard Office by Friday, August 28th. I have attached a draft to the email for your review. While in the past this report has been submitted without the Board's review, I think it should be reviewed by you if possible.

ACTION NEEDED: No action is required; the Board's substantive input would be helpful.

Agenda Item #12 - Development Update and Planner's Report

I will provide a report on the following items:

- a. Development Report
 - **Annafield Estates Subdivision:**
 - **34 Bridge Street:**
 - **One Canal Street and 27 Bardwell Street:**
 - **Mountainbrook Street Acceptances:**
 - **Rivercrest Condominiums:**
 - **Ethan Circle**
- b. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
- c. Other Projects
 - **South Hadley 43D Expedited Permitting District.**
 - **MassWorks Application.**
 - **Permitting Guide.**
 - **General Code.**
- d. *Professional Development Day – Scheduled for September 11, 2015; however, I will be on vacation*
- e. *Workshops/Training Opportunities*
- f. *OnLine Permitting Program*
- g. *New Town Website: working on better managing the Board's materials on the website.*

Agenda Item #13 – Other New Business

I have included this agenda item for Board members to bring up new items (for discussion and future consideration) that are not on the agenda and which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date which the agenda was posted.

TOWN OF SOUTH HADLEY

JEFF SQUIRE
Chairman

MARK CAVANAUGH
Vice-Chairman

HELEN FANTINI
Clerk

JOAN ROSNER
Member

MELISSA O'BRIEN
Member

DAN DODGE
Associate Member



RICHARD L. HARRIS, AICP
Town Planner

OFFICE OF THE PLANNING BOARD

116 Main Street, Room 204
South Hadley, MA. 01075-2896
Telephone: (413) 538-5017 ext. 206 * Fax: (413) 538-7565
www.southhadleyma.gov
Email: rharris@southhadleyma.gov

August 17, 2015

TO: Abutters to 67 Amherst Road

SUBJECT: Minor Site Plan Review of Nonprofit Educational Facility – 67 Amherst Road

Dear Abutters:

In accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40A, Section 3 and the South Hadley Zoning Bylaw, and the Planning Board's Rules and Regulations for Minor Site Plan Review, the Planning Board will undertake a review of the plan for use of 67 Amherst Road as a nonprofit Educational Facility at its meeting as noted below:

DATE: Monday, August 24, 2015

MEETING TIME: 6:00 p.m. (However, no specific time set for the review of this plan, it is the third item on the agenda and precedes a public hearing advertised for 6:45 p.m.)

PLACE: South Hadley Town Hall – Selectboard Meeting Room

Please note that the review of the plan for 67 Amherst Road is not a public hearing but is a public meeting. The Building Commissioner has determined, based on materials submitted and the Town Counsel's advice, the use of the facility qualifies as a nonprofit educational use exempt from the Zoning Bylaw; however, under State Law it is subject to "reasonable" regulation which includes Site Plan Review. "Reasonable" regulations has been limited to bulk and height of structures and determining yard sizes, lot area, setbacks, open space, parking and building coverage requirements. The application materials are on the Town's website at the following link: <http://ma-southhadley.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1690>. The narrative which describes their plans is only two pages and begins on page 50 of the submittal.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact me at 413-538-5017, Ext 128.

Sincerely,

Richard Harris, AICP
Town Planner

Section 12**SITE PLAN REVIEW**

(As Amended through June 19, 2013 STM.)

(E) Site Plan Review Criteria

(As Amended June 19, 2013 STM.)

The Planning Board shall review the site plan and supporting data taking into consideration whether the proposed site plan reasonably fulfills the following objectives (as used in this subsection E, the word “shall” is mandatory and the words “should” and “may” are recommended but optional):

1. Compliance with all requirements of this bylaw, all other applicable regulations and bylaws, and consistency with the South Hadley Master Plan.
2. Integration of the site into the existing terrain, surrounding landscape and built environment so as to minimize disruptions to natural processes, existing land forms, architectural character, and significant vistas.
3. Site design that, to the extent feasible:
 - a. avoids wetlands, wetland buffers, rivers, river resource areas, vernal pools, sensitive habitats, steep slopes, floodplains, and hilltops;
 - b. minimizes obstruction of scenic views from publicly accessible locations;
 - c. preserves unique natural, scenic, cultural, or historical features;
 - d. minimizes tree, vegetation and soil removal and grade changes;
 - e. provides open space with a scale and character that is appropriate to the surrounding area; and
 - f. screens objectionable features from neighboring properties and roadways.
4. If the proposal requires a special permit, it must also conform to the special permit requirements in Section 9 of this By-Law.
5. Structures shall be compatible with the character and scale of structures in the neighborhood and zoning district.
 - a. Proposed structures shall be compatible in character and scale through the use of appropriate massing, roof and wall lines, façade proportions and detailing, fenestration, ornamentation, and other architectural techniques
 - b. Proposed building or buildings shall relate harmoniously to neighboring buildings and each other with adequate light, and air circulation and separation between buildings.
 - c. Where appropriate, buildings shall be arranged so as to define outdoor spaces, including streets and plazas.
 - d. The Planning Board may consider whether the location, size, and style of entrances are compatible with the neighborhood’s character.
 - e. Buildings shall be designed to avoid large expanses of undifferentiated facades, and long plain wall sections.

- f. The Planning Board shall consider whether fenestration is consistent with the neighborhood's and/or Town's character. The Planning Board may consider window type (double hung, casement, etc.), alignment, proportions, percent of glazing, and proportion to façade, but may not regulate building materials.
 - g. Electrical and mechanical equipment (whether rooftop, ground level, or wall-mounted) shall be screened from public view using materials harmonious with the building or shall be located where they are not visible from any public way.
 - h. Applicants are encouraged to locate and design buildings such that they maximize solar access during cooler months and control solar gain during warmer months.
6. Landscaping shall be an integral part of the proposed site design, and shall enhance the design and arrangement of structures, define usable public and private outdoor spaces, integrate the site into the surrounding landscape, as appropriate, and provide buffering from objectionable or noxious elements both within the site between the site and the surrounding area.
- a. Landscape plantings and other landscape elements shall be encouraged to create pedestrian scale spaces and to maintain landscape continuity within the community.
 - b. The need for irrigation, fertilization, and/or use of pesticides should be minimized through the selection of vegetation that thrives under the site's proposed conditions, including temperature, light, moisture, air circulation, soil type and quality, and stress from salt.
 - c. The preservation of mature plant species, hedgerows, and woodlots shall be encouraged and included as a design element in the development of the site and to serve as natural buffer.
 - d. Landscape buffers shall be provided between parking lots and public streets and between uses that may be incompatible, such as large-scale commercial uses and residences. Such buffers may include planted trees and shrubs, hedgerows, berms, existing forestland, or forest created through natural succession. The width of such buffer areas will depend upon the topography, scale of the uses, and their location on the property and nature of buffer composition, unless this bylaw indicates that specific widths are required for a particular situation. Where excessive noise contributes to the incompatibility, sound barrier fencing may be required.
 - e. Screening shall be required for loading docks, storage areas, dumpsters, utility buildings and similar features. Screening may include planted trees and shrubs, hedgerows, berms, existing vegetation, and fences.
 - f. The Planning Board may require that shade trees at least six feet tall and two-inch caliper be planted and maintained at 20- to 40-foot intervals along roads, at a setback distance acceptable to the Highway Superintendent.
 - g. The Planning Board may require that at least 30% of a new parking area be shaded by tree and vegetation canopies upon their full growth.

13. In order to create more walkable and pedestrian-friendly developments, minimum frontage occupancy requirements apply in certain locations to create a sense of enclosure in the streetscape. As used herein, “frontage occupancy” means the percentage of the lot width at the front of the building that must be occupied by the façade of a building.
- a. Minimum frontage occupancy requirements apply to the following use categories as shown on the Use Table in Section 5E:
 - i. Business
 - ii. Public and Institutional
 - iii. Multi-family dwellings
 - b. A minimum frontage occupancy of 80% is required in the South Hadley Falls area along Main Street from Carew Street to Pleasant Street and along Bridge Street from one parcel Main Street to Lamb Street.
 - c. A minimum frontage occupancy of 50% is required along Route 116, from Boynton Street to Camden Street and along Route 33 from Route 202 to the Chicopee Town Line
 - d. A minimum frontage occupancy of 50% is required along Route 116 from Camden Street to Route 202 and along Route 202 (Granby Road) from Easy Street to East St.

Before approval of a site plan, the Planning Board may require that the applicant make modifications in the proposed design of the project to ensure that the above objectives are fulfilled.

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is pleased to submit its 78th Annual Report to the citizens of South Hadley.

The Planning Board consists of five unpaid, elected members who serve staggered five (5) year terms and one unpaid, appointed Associate Member who serves a three (3) year term. The Board's Mission is to assist the community in efforts to achieve balanced growth, quality development, and preservation of community assets through effective development regulation, assistance in obtaining funding resources for community projects, and long-term planning. Direct staff support in carrying out this mission is provided by Town Planner Richard Harris with additional assistance provided by Senior Clerk Doris LeClair and support and advice provided by DPW Superintendent Jim Reidy, Conservation Commission Administrator Janice Stone, Building Commissioner Charlene Baiardi, other Town Departments, Boards, and Commissions, and the Fire Districts and their Water Departments.

Following the Annual Election, Board members voted to retain the current officers with Jeff Squire being re-elected to serve as Chair and Mark Cavanaugh as Vice-Chair and Helen Fantini as Clerk for the year. Mark Cavanaugh was reappointed as the Town's representative to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.

Maintaining and administering the Town's Zoning By-Laws and Subdivision Regulations is a major responsibility of the Board. The Board makes recommendations to Town Meeting on proposed amendments to the Zoning By-Law and Zoning Map.

Public hearings are conducted by the Board on applications for Special Permits, Site Plan Reviews, subdivision proposals and Zoning By-Law and Subdivision Regulation amendments. In carrying out its responsibilities the Board coordinates and works closely with other Town boards and departments in review of applications for land use and development. This process ensures that a proposed development is consistent with Town regulations and that each developer's performance fulfills the terms agreed upon.

During the past year, the Planning Board reviewed a number of new developments as well as continued its focus on efforts to implement initiatives recommended in the Master Plan. In regard to the Master Plan, the Board continued work on Zoning Bylaw revisions, furthered work on development of Smart Growth District for Multifamily Development, and begun an extensive review of the status of the Master Plan's implementation to date. The Board continued its support and provided resources for efforts to plan for revitalization of the South Hadley Falls area, the broader effort to bring about economic development in the community, and related efforts.

Zoning Bylaw Revisions. The Board presented to Town Meeting some amendments – largely technical amendments – in Fall 2014. However, one of the amendments implemented a key Master Plan Recommendation: a cap on impervious surface in each zoning district to reduce the increase in storm water runoff and promote more green space. While the Board was prepared to bring to Annual Town Meeting a few key revisions to the Zoning Bylaw in May 2015, it delayed submitting those proposals to see how the codification project being undertaken by General Code would impact the Zoning Bylaw. Consequently, the Annual Town Meeting was only presented an amendment to correct an oversight in a prior amendment.

The Board continued to work on several Zoning Bylaw amendments for Town Meeting consideration in FY 2016 including a Smart Growth District, Flexible Development and Conversion of One-Family Dwellings to Two-Family Dwellings. Additionally, work is progressing on a possible revision to the sign regulations and a Design Review Bylaw.

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Assistance. The Board continued working with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to develop a 40R Smart Growth District in the South Hadley Falls area. Through the year, the Town Planner worked with PVPC staff to submit a request for Preliminary Approval from the State. As a result of State comments, the Town Planner and PVPC staff made various revisions

and, when the FY 2015 ended, we waiting for State approval. This district will be helpful in directing more dense development in areas which are able to accommodate it and appropriate.

Through the PVPC assistance, the Town was awarded a PATH grant from the State and an additional District Local Technical Assistance Grant from the PVPC to undertake an update of the 2010 Housing Plan included in the Master Plan and undertake a Multifamily Development Study. These grant resources are to be supplemented by \$21,000 appropriated by Town Meeting at the Special Town Meeting held in May 2015.

Results of this work will also be used in FY 2016 as the Planning Board fine tunes proposals for Town Meeting consideration. With the plan update, the Town can seek State approval of the Housing Production Plan which will aid in managing Comprehensive Permit applications in a more community-appropriate manner.

Master Plan Review. The Planning Board met with members of the Master Plan Implementation Committee in early January. One of the outcomes of this meeting was the realization that the Town should plan to update the Master Plan in 2020. As a step towards defining Master Plan priorities over the intervening 5 years and to begin defining the issues for the 2020 update, the Planning Board agreed to review all of the Recommended Actions in the 2010 Master Plan and determine what should be the top 3-4 Recommended Actions for each topical area for the next 5 years. As the Fiscal Year ended, through a series of 4 meetings where this matter was reviewed, the Board had nearly completed its initial review.

Development Management Activities. While work focused on implementation and management of the Master Plan, the Planning Board continued its development management activities which increased during the past year with several new development proposals and a proposed amendment to the Zoning Map regarding a parcel of land on Mountainview Street initiated by a property owner. While the Planning Board initiated the process for holding the public hearing on the request pursuant to State law, the property owner decided to withdraw the request.

Possibly reflecting a continuation of the economy's resurgence, time devoted to development management activities increased during the past year. Stormwater Management permitting took on a more significant role during the past year as the Planning Board granted a Stormwater Management permit for the Rivercrest Condominiums project being developed on Ferry Street – after an extensive public review and an engineering peer review of the stormwater management plan. The Board also approved a stormwater management permit for the soccer field reconstruction at Mount Holyoke College – a much less involved review process was needed. Stormwater Management was also a critical consideration in the Board's review and approval of the new 6-lot subdivision "Ethan Circle" to be constructed off Hadley Street. As with Rivercrest Condominiums, the Planning Board engaged a third party engineer to conduct a peer review of the stormwater and wetlands impacts submittals. The same reviews were utilized by the Planning Board and Conservation Commissions as we continue to coordinate our reviews of developments.

Among the other projects reviewed and approved with conditions during FY 2015 were an expansion for the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter School, new Verizon services on the Mount Holyoke College property, and an extension of approval for a 6,000 square foot retail building. The Board also waived Site Plan Review for expansion of the Hutt Studio at 1 Ferry Street and Special Permits for alteration/expansion of several nonconforming residential structures and commercial structures as well as Wireless Communication equipment modifications.

Revisions to the Zoning Bylaw in regards to Home Occupations also impacted the Board's level of review as several "businesses" which previously required a Special Permit were administratively permitted and three that came before the Board did so as Site Plan Review and not Special Permits. The Board approved two Home Occupation applications with conditions to address issues raised in the public hearing process while the third application was withdrawn after the first session of the public hearing process.

Informational meetings were held regarding 5 potential projects which would range from a small ANR lot to a 12 unit multifamily development and the potential Old Lyman Road SHELD facility – all

informational meetings are held as part of the Board’s meetings and listed on the posted agenda. Seven (7) Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans were reviewed and endorsed – these plans divided parcels using existing roadway frontage to create at least three new buildings lots (some plans merely shifted property lines among neighbors). At the end of the year, the Board was reviewing plans for a 14,580 square foot commercial fleet maintenance and warehouse building to be constructed off New Ludlow Road.

During the past year, fees totaling \$9,234.28 were collected by the Planning Department for applications, inspections, reviews, and copies. Overall, this total amounted to a 39% increase over the amount collected during the previous year. However, it should be noted that 42% of the FY 2015 revenues were derived from the Inspection Fees for the Ethan Circle subdivision. Fees charged for notification of abutters of public hearings was the second largest amount accounting for 19%. Application fees associated with site plans, signs, and permit waivers were the third largest accounting for 17% of the total revenue collected. A breakdown of the fees for FY 2015 is provided below:

Fee Category	FY 2015 Amount
Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans	\$ 750.00
Preliminary/Definitive/Form H Subdivisions	925.00
Special Permits/Waivers	200.00
Site/Exempt/Sign Plan Reviews/Waivers	1,365.40
Stormwater Management Permits	535.00
Earth Removal	0
Notification of Abutters	1,572.88
Inspection Fees	3,880.00
Miscellaneous Fees	6.00
TOTAL	\$9,234.28

The Board monitored the effort to complete work on Phase 1 of the Mountainbrook Subdivision off Westbrook Road. Final approved copies of “As-Built” plans and Engineer’s Certification of Completion for Phase I were received by the Town Planner and reviewed by various departments/agencies. Subsequently, the Water Superintendent for District #1, SHELD Manager, and DPW Superintendent certified Phase 1 as being completed and the Board released the Performance Guarantee. As the year ended, the developer was attempting to provide paper work to convey the street for acceptance and the matter was tentatively scheduled for the Fall Special Town Meeting.

The Town Planner worked with the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Special Counsel to process an application (Rivercrest Condominiums) for a Comprehensive Permit under Chapter 40B. The substantive review of the application was never initiated as the applicant eventually received a Special Permit and related permits with conditions for a less intense conventional multifamily development on the site.

The Town Planner continued to play an active role in coordinating development reviews on an informal as well as formal basis. He began work on a Permit Guide which will be useful in conveying to the public and developers the processes for obtaining permits. With the hiring of Town Administrator Michael Sullivan, the Town Planner’s level of involvement in community and economic development activities have been appropriately and necessarily scaled back. But, the Town Planner continued to play an active role in these areas where it was appropriate.

Working with other boards is also a major function of the Planning Board. The Town Planner has continued working with the Assessor and Technology personnel to improve the web-based Mapping Program and to have the maintenance of the Assessor’s Maps and the digital base map carried out by one vendor. As part of this effort, the Town Planner and Assessor’s Office worked to deploy current zoning data on a parcel by parcel basis using the web-based Mapping Program. As with the other permitting departments, the Planning Board through the Town Planner, has continued to be supportive of and assist

the Associate Assessor where possible in the development of the On-Line Permitting system. Additionally, the Town Planner worked continuously with the Town Administrator and other Town departments on a variety of projects.

In closing, the Planning Board would like to express its gratitude to the other Boards and Committees in Town for their cooperation and assistance.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff Squire, Chair
Mark Cavanaugh, Vice-Chair
Helen Fantini, Clerk
Joan Rosner, Member
Melissa O'Brien, Member
Dan Dodge, Associate Member
Richard Harris, Town Planner

DRAFT