

**SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING  
MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 23, 2023**

**Present:** Brad Hutchison, Chair; Diane Mulvaney, Vice-Chair; Joanna Brown, Clerk; Nate Therien, Member; Michael Davis, Member; Michael Adelman, Associate Member; Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation; Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

Chair Hutchison called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and reviewed the virtual meeting protocols.

**Agenda Item #1 --- Open Comment Period**

No members of the public spoke during the open comment period.

**Agenda Item #2 --- Minutes**

Draft minutes of the following meetings were sent to the Board for review :1) December 5 regular meeting; 2) December 5 Conti Drive Site Plan Review public hearing; and 3) December 5 New Ludlow Road Special Permit amendment public hearing.

Clerk Brown recommended that language in the December 5 meeting minutes relating to ANR endorsement be revised to indicate the notation on the plan.

**Motion:** Member Davis moved to approve the December 5 regular meeting minutes as revised and the two December 5 public hearing minutes. Vice-Chair Mulvaney seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

**Agenda Item #3 – Correspondence**

The list of correspondence was sent to the Board prior to the meeting.

**Agenda Item #4 ---- 6:30 PM - Continuation of Illuminated Sign Request filed by Delaney's Market for replacement of an illuminated freestanding sign at 459 Granby Road, Map 31 Parcel 15**

The applicant's consultant, Jim Carlin of Ace Signs, was present at the meeting. Consideration for the illuminated sign request had been continued over the course of a number of meetings. An existing illuminated freestanding sign servicing the business at 459 Granby Road was actually located on the abutting property owned by South Hadley Fire District #1. Therefore, approval from the Fire District for sign replacement was needed before the Board could consider approval. Since the previous meeting, approval had been granted. Therefore the Board could consider approval at this time. A wall mounted sign at the property had already been approved and the same special conditions could be applied to the freestanding sign.

**Motion:** Clerk Brown moved to approve replacement of an illuminated freestanding sign at 459 Granby Road with the same special conditions applied to the previously approved wall mounted

sign which included the following: sign illumination is permitted until 10:00 PM Monday - Saturday and until 7:00 PM on Sunday. Vice-Chair Mulvaney seconded the motion. Five (5) out of five (5) members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

**Agenda Item #5 --- 6:30 PM - Public Hearing to consider applications for an amended Special Permit and Stormwater Management Permit filed by Skinner Woods, LLC to modify the configuration of dwellings associated with the approved Skinnerwoods Flexible Residential Development located along the north side of Amherst Road, Map 51, Parcel 21**

Chair Hutchison called the public hearing to order at 6:42 PM (see public hearing minutes)

The regular meeting reconvened at 8:23 PM.

**Agenda Item #6 --- Discussion with Building Commissioner on draft Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw**

South Hadley Building Commissioner, Damien Cote, was present at the meeting.

Commissioner Cote received and agreed with Chair Hutchison's comments regarding the requirement for fire separation for attached ADU dwellings. Therefore, an addition to an existing home for the purpose of an ADU was more difficult for homeowners to comply with than that of detached ADUs. Due to South Hadley's existing setback requirements, fire code would automatically be met when siting an AD on a residential property. Commissioner Cote recommended against citing sanitary code as it was out-of-date and in conflict with building code. He also mentioned that there were state-level discussions on permitting the use of ADUs by-right so it was in the Board's interest to regulate the use now.

Clerk Brown asked Commissioner Cote how pre-existing ADUs would be handled. If ADUs (such as in-law apartments) were in existence prior to zoning adoption, should they be allowed even if they didn't satisfy current zoning and building requirements?

Member Therien asked if existing structures, such as a garage, could be converted into an ADU. A living unit would require proper foundation. If an existing structure had an adequate foundation, it could be converted into an ADU.

Member Davis asked if sight lines would be part of the review process. Sight lines were considered when it presented a safety concern, such as the ability to see the road when exiting a site in a vehicle.

Associate Member Adelman asked if separate utilities could be required. Any requirements under zoning could not conflict with building code. Meters were not under building code and were entirely the responsibility of the utility company.

Members thanked Commissioner Cote for his time. If members had additional questions, they could be sent to Director Capra and she would compile and forwarded them to Commissioner Cote.

**Agenda Item #7 --- Planning & Conservation Department Report**

Director Capra detailed the following items:

- *Upcoming meeting dates*- Due to the Board’s workload, Director Capra recommended that the Board plan to meet every Monday during the month of March.
- *Housing Production Plan*- A report from the Town’s consultant was anticipated to be received within the upcoming weeks.
- *Remote Meetings*- The Governor's Orders allowing for virtual public meetings was set to expire at the end of March.

**Agenda Item #8 --- Other New Business**

Clerk Brown asked for a large-scale zoning map with streets clearly labeled and identified to be made available.

**Agenda Item #9 ---Adjournment**

**Motion:** Vice-Chair Mulaveny moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Therien seconded the motion. Five **(5)** out of five **(5)** members voted in favor of the motion through roll call.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Colleen Canning, Planning/Conservation Coordinator

**Appendix**

<b>Document</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Delaney Market Illuminated Sign Request	Planning Files
Draft ADU Bylaw	Planning Files