

# Background Materials October 7, 2024– Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 10/4/24

**Cable Access Channel 15** –The Cable Studio has indicated that this meeting will be live streamed on Channel 15.

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<https://www.southhadley.org/1274/Agenda-Background-Materials>

### AGENDA ITEM #1 Open Comment Period

This 10-minute period is set aside for the public to offer comments on items not on the posted agenda, in accordance with the adopted policy, as amended 9/11/23, posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage here:

<https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/11705/Policy-on-Open-Comment-Period---As-Adopted-2023-09-11>

**Action Needed:** Allow members of the public to offer comments to the Board.

### AGENDA ITEM #2 Minutes

Planning and Conservation Coordinator Colleen Canning will forward minutes separately.

**Action Needed:** Vote to approve the minutes.

### AGENDA ITEM #3 Correspondence

Correspondence are attached.

**Action Needed:** No action needed.

### AGENDA ITEM #4 Illuminated Sign Permit – Ebenezer’s Bar and Grill, 60 Bridge Street

Project plans online here: <https://www.southhadley.org/1444/Bridge-Street-60---Ebenezers>

The applicant is proposing to replace an existing double pole mounted sign with overhanging lighting with a single pole mounted internally illuminated sign, double facing. Standards for signs are in the Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-85: [Town of South Hadley, MA General Provisions \(ecode360.com\)](#) For the Board to issue an illuminated sign permit, the Board must make a finding that the sign will not be adverse to the character of the surrounding neighborhood or the community.

255-85(G)(2) Standards for Adverse to Surrounding Neighborhood or Community:

- Illumination impact on surrounding properties – must be considered and minimized.  
*The new sign will replace the existing exterior overhead lighting.*
- Internally Illuminated signs for lettering or logo or message being promoted only.  
*The daytime sign shows two white stripes on the sign, but the stripes are not shown as illuminated in the nighttime illustration. Seek clarification about the illumination of that graphic detail.*
- Illumination does not illuminate adjoining or nearby residential properties or pose a danger to motorists on adjoining or nearby roadways from glare.  
*The new sign will replace the existing exterior overhead lighting.*
- Background or field of sign cannot be illuminated.  
*The sign background is described as opaque with only the lettering illuminated.*

**Action Needed:** The Board must make a finding the sign will not be adverse to the character of the surrounding neighborhood or the community. Identify hours of operation and set condition for hours of sign illumination.

#### AGENDA ITEM #5 Illuminated Sign Permit – Saigon Chef, 481 Newton Street

Project plans online here: <https://www.southhadley.org/1447/15731/Newton-Street-481---Saigon-Chef?activeLiveTab=widgets>

The applicant is locating in a vacant storefront at the Woodlawn Plaza shopping center and proposing to add an illuminated sign on the face of the plaza above the storefront.

Standards for signs are in the Zoning Bylaw Chapter 255-85: [Town of South Hadley, MA General Provisions \(ecode360.com\)](#)

For the Board to issue an illuminated sign permit, the Board must make a finding that

the sign will not be adverse to the character of the surrounding neighborhood or the community. 255-85(G)(2) Standards for Adverse to Surrounding Neighborhood or Community:

- Illumination impact on surrounding properties – must be considered and minimized.  
*The new sign will replace a former store sign (Mandarin Gourmet), and is consistent with placement and size of other existing plaza storefront signs.*
- Internally Illuminated signs for lettering or logo or message being promoted only.  
*The daytime and nighttime illustrations show the lettering and logo illuminated, black opaque vinyl background.*



- Illumination does not illuminate adjoining or nearby residential properties or pose a danger to motorists on adjoining or nearby roadways from glare.

*The new sign will replace the former storefront’s sign.*

- Background or field of sign cannot be illuminated.

*The sign background is described as opaque with the lettering and logo illuminated.*

**Action Needed:** The Board must make a finding the sign will not be adverse to the character of the surrounding neighborhood or the community. Identify hours of operation and set condition for hours of sign illumination.

#### AGENDA ITEM #4 Discussion - Flexible Development Bylaw Amendment and associated bylaws

Proposed amendments and new bylaws include the following:

- 255-31 Flexible Development Bylaw Amendment
- 255-47 Multifamily and multiple dwellings Amendment
- 255-95 Common Drive NEW Bylaw
- 255-96 Common Open Space NEW Bylaw

Draft bylaws and other background materials are online: <https://southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

#### 255-31 Flexible Development

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13346/255-31-Flexible-Development-Bylaw-Amendments---Revised-Final-Amendment---10324>

The final draft bylaws were reviewed by Town Counsel Attorney Lisa Mead and she had the following suggested edits for 255-31 Flexible Development (in red and underlined):

#### J. Density Bonuses

(2) Affordable housing units. Add at the end of the paragraph: “such that said units will qualify under the SHI requirements of EOHLIC.”

*I recommend adopting this edit. SHI is the Subsidized Housing Inventory tracked by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLIC). The State sets a minimum of 10% of the housing stock within the town should be Affordable Housing. South Hadley’s SHI is current 5.98%.*

#### N. Not subject to variance.

No provision of this section, nor any project for which Site Plan Approval was granted under this section, shall be subject of a dimensional variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. If deviations from the approved dimensional standards become necessary, the Planning Board may waive those dimensional standards and amend the Site Plan Approval to accommodate such conditions.

*I recommend adopting this edit.*

Other edits to the draft bylaw:

- I reformatted the Tier table under J(3) to cleanup the misalignment in the table layout.

### **255-47 Multifamily and multiple dwellings Draft Amendments**

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13245/255-47-Multifamily-and-Multiple-Dwellings---Final-Draft-Amendment---82824>

I'd like to revisit this bylaw again. (D) Required open space is proposed to be amended, adding reference to the proposed new 255-96 Common Open Space Bylaw. However, in the existing bylaw, the required open space standards applied to multifamily projects on parcels of 2 acres or greater. In the amendment, that standard was dropped. I'm proposing we keep that standard, and possible change it to 3 acres or greater to be consistent with the proposed acreage amendment in Flexible Development. It would be a major constraint for a multifamily development (4 or more dwelling units) on less than 3 acres to have a minimum 30% open space set aside requirement. Further, (E)(4) states:

*"In the Residence A-1, Residence A-2, and Agricultural Districts, no parcel of any size may contain more than four dwelling units on it except pursuant to the flexible development provisions of 255-31."*

Therefore, for consistency throughout the Zoning Bylaw, I recommend the following edit:

D. Required open space. On parcels of three acres or greater, multifamily developments and developments with more than one building for dwelling purposes on a single parcel of land shall include Common Open Space which conforms to the provisions of 255-96 of the Zoning Bylaw."

No new edits are proposed to the following:

NEW Bylaws – 255-95 Common Drive & 255-96 Common Open Space

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13312/255-95-Common-Drive-and-255-96-Common-Open-Space---Revised---91924>

Use Regulations Schedule Amendments

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13247/Use-Regulations-Schedule---Final-Draft-Amendments---82824>

Last, Attorney Mead has requested that the final bylaws for the warrant not have any color edits on them since everything will be sent to the Attorney General in black and white. Therefore, I will need to reformat all the bylaws with the language to be removed ~~crossed out~~ (which it is currently) and new language **underline and bold**.

**Action Needed:** Consider recommended edits above. Motion to accept edits as final proposed amendments for Town Meeting adoption.

## AGENDA ITEM # 6 DRAFT Planning Board Report to Town Meeting

The draft report has been posted online here:

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/13347/Planning-Board-Report-to-Town-Meeting--10424---Draft>

I welcome comments and edits from the Board. At submittal of this draft, the Board has not approved the public hearing minutes for 9/23 so I have not attached the hearing minutes. Similarly, I welcome any edits pertaining to the summary of public comments. Because the minutes will contain all of the comments submitted in their original form, the report only summarizes comments.

**Action Needed:** Review draft report and make any edits needed. Motion to vote to approve the Planning Board Report to Town Meeting.

## AGENDA ITEM #7 Planning & Conservation Department Report on Planning Projects and Development Updates

### A. Next Planning Board Meetings and Other Important Dates

*Planning Board typically meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month.*

10/16/24	Community Forum #2– Route 202/33 Corridor Rezoning 6-8pm @ Virtual/Zoom
10/28/24	
11/4/24	
11/13/24	Special Fall Town Meeting
11/14/24	Community Forum #3 – Route 202/33 Corridor Rezoning 6-8pm @ South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street
11/25/24	
12/2/24	
12/9/24	
January – 1/13 & 1/27/25	February – 2/10 & 2/24/25
March – 3/10 & 3/24/25	April – 4/14 & 4/28/25

### B. Route 202/33 Corridor Rezoning Project

Project website: <https://community.innesassocltd.com/south-hadley>

Next Forum #2 – October 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm via Zoom

Can't make it to the Forums?

Scan for our interactive project site and stay engaged throughout the process!



<https://community.innesassocltd.com/south-hadley>

## Routes 202/33 Corridor

### Zoning Amendments



## COMMUNITY FORUMS

**01 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2024** *Monday*  
 6:00 - 8:00 pm

South Hadley Council on Aging  
 45 Dayton Street

**02 16TH OCTOBER, 2024** *Wednesday*  
 6:00 - 8:00 pm

Virtual via Zoom  
 Join the webinar:



<https://bit.ly/4fPZM9P>

Or Telephone: +1 646 558 8656  
 Webinar ID: 883 0895 6522  
 Passcode: 713870

**03 14TH NOVEMBER, 2024** *Thursday*  
 6:00 - 8:00 pm

South Hadley Public Library  
 2 Canal Street

**04 16TH JANUARY, 2025** *Thursday*  
 6:00 - 8:00 pm

South Hadley Public Library  
 2 Canal Street

**YOUR** voice matters - please join us!

### C. Master Plan Annual Forum

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**

**Master Plan Implementation Annual Forum  
Diversity, Equity Inclusion and Leadership Training**

Friday, October 11, 2024

8:45 am – noon

South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street

**Registration Link:** <https://forms.gle/Zf5w71NiDSACcQx6A>

One member from each Town department, board, committee and commission tasked with Master Plan Implementation should attend. Food will be served.

**Guest Speaker - Bird Guess, President and CEO  
Racial Equity Group  
<https://racialequitygroup.com/>**

Homeless after high school, Bird Guess built a quarter million-dollar business from the trunk of his car. For over a decade, Bird has designed and delivered innovative training strategies on diversity, equity, inclusion and leadership, becoming a world-renowned management trainer. Bird currently serves as Founder and CEO of The Racial Equity Group, a boutique management training firm that provides advisory services to public and private sector organizations, as well as *Fortune 100* Best Companies to Work For, including Texas Instruments, QuikTrip, United States Army, and others. His areas of expertise include conducting Racial Equity audit assessments, advising executives on diversity and inclusion strategies, designing and delivering Racial Equity training curriculum, integrating equity into organizational policies and practices, and ultimately making Racial Equity standard operating procedure. He is also the best-selling author of *Lead Like Water: Many Can Manage, Few Can Lead*.

*Attendees are strongly encouraged to watch the 90-minute background training webinar prior to the Master Plan Forum. The webinar and presentation slides are available at: <https://southhadley.org/1446/DEI>*

**2020 Master Plan**  
<https://www.southhadley.org/1277/2020-Master-Plan>

AGENDA ITEM #6 Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)

**Associate Planning Board Member Vacancy**

An application for this position has been submitted. I have been informed that additional applications may also be forthcoming. Therefore, Administration has set a deadline of 10/24/24 for applications, and thereafter would like to schedule a joint meeting to make an appointment. Please check your calendars for the following Tuesdays on 11/12, 11/26 and 12/3. I will also add discussion and interviews with interested candidates to the Planning Board agenda on 10/28 and/or 11/4 so the Board has time to discuss and make a recommendation prior to the Selectboard meeting.