

# Background Materials – August 11, 2025 – Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 8/8/25

**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 is attached.

**Action Needed:** No action needed.

## AGENDA ITEM #4 Discussion Route 202/33 Corridor Re-Zoning – Draft Zoning and Zoning Map

Revised Draft Zoning Bylaw: <https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14275/Zoning-Recommendations---Draft---Rev-8825>

Revised Draft Re-Zoning Map: [Corridor-Zoning-Map---Draft---8825-revised](https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14275/Corridor-Zoning-Map---Draft---8825-revised)

Project website: <https://southhadley.org/1400/Route-202-33-Corridor-Re-Zoning>

Based on discussion at the public listening session held on 7/28/25, I have made proposed revisions to the draft zoning bylaw and zoning map (see links above). We will review the proposed changes, and finalize each so that they may be posted for the Public Hearing scheduled for 9/8/25.

**Action Needed:** The Board needs to review the proposed revisions, make any final edits, issue a final draft of the proposed zoning bylaw and map for the public hearing.

**Recommended Motion:** *I move to accept the final revisions, as edited here tonight, for the Route 202/33 Corridor Draft Proposed Zoning dated “Revisions-August 5, 2025” and the revised zoning map dated 8/8/25, and schedule a public hearing for 9/8/25 at 6:30pm with the intent to submit such proposals to the November Town Meeting for adoption.*

## AGENDA ITEM #5 Discussion Curb Cut Policy/Bylaw

It was previously believed that the DPW had a policy to only allow one curb cut per development/parcel. However, it seems that “policy” was not formally adopted and recent conceptual proposals for new development have included multiple driveways for detached multifamily projects. This is not a preferred site design for multiple reasons. I am recommending that the Town adopt either a zoning bylaw or other policy to limit the number of curb cuts in all zoning districts for all uses (residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural).

Attached are some examples of curb cut regulations from other communities for discussion.

Proposed bylaw/policy language is the following:

*Curb cuts shall be limited to one driveway accessing the development from the public way. A Special Permit from the Planning Board shall be required for more than one curb cut. The Planning Board may only issue a second curb cut if the applicant can show that there is something unique about the property that would otherwise render flow to and from the property unsafe and unmanageable. If the Board finds that more than one curb cut is necessary for traffic safety purposes, then additional off-site traffic mitigation may be required by the Planning Board to address pedestrian safety within the abutting street network.*

**Action Needed:** Discuss need for limiting curb cuts, proposed language, and whether or not to pursue a zoning bylaw or request a local policy be adopted by DPW or Selectboard.

## AGENDA ITEM #6 Open Space and Recreation Plan 10-Year Action Plan

Draft Action Plan: <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/14277/OSRP-Action-Plan-2019---10-year-Action-Plan---DRAFT>

The State is now allowing Towns with current Open Space and Recreation Plans to extend their 7-year Action Plans by three more years, creating a 10-year plan before the plan expires. This is of great benefit to the Town as it allows us to save money by not investing in another plan update for another three years. Many actions within the Action Plan remain uncompleted and still relevant while others will be ongoing for many years and therefore appropriate to continue addressing through an extension of the current plan.

The State has no required process for extending the Action Plan. The draft 10-year extension has been reviewed and approved by the Conservation Commission. I am asking the Planning Board to also review it and offer any comments before it is submitted to the State for approval.

Tasks identified for the 7-10 year extension are tasks that either have not been completed, are underway and need more time for completion, or are intended to be on-going.

**Action Needed:** Discuss and proposed edits to the revised Action Plan and vote to endorse the proposed 10-year extended Action Plan.

## AGENDA ITEM #6 Planning & Conservation Department Report

### 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.*

<b>8/25</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 73 Alvord Street – Two-Family Conversion Special Permit – Public Hearing</li><li>• 300 Newton Street ANR</li><li>• Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments – Board discussion draft report</li><li>• Sign Bylaw Amendments – Board discussion draft report</li></ul>
<b>9/8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Route 202/33 Zoning Public Hearing - (Special November Town Meeting Warrant)</li></ul>
<b>9/22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Route 202/33 Zoning – Final Edits &amp; Draft Report to Town Meeting</li><li>• Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments – Public Hearing</li><li>• Sign Bylaw Amendments – Public Hearing</li></ul>
<b>10/6</b> <i>Columbus Day</i> <i>10/13</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Route 22/33 Zoning – Approve Report to Town Meeting</li><li>• Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments – Final Edits &amp; Draft Report to Town Meeting</li><li>• Sign Bylaw Amendments – Final Edits &amp; Draft Report to Town Meeting</li></ul>
<b>10/20</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments – Approve Report to Town Meeting</li><li>• Sign Bylaw Amendments – Approve Report to Town Meeting</li><li>• Subdivision Regulations Public Hearing</li></ul>
<b>November 5th</b>	<b>Special Fall Town Meeting</b>

**B. Draft Report on Agricultural Uses Zoning Bylaw Amendments**

Draft report and amendments online: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

**Agricultural Uses**

- [Agricultural Uses Review and Analysis Report - January 2025](#)
- [Proposed Amendments to 255-10 - Terms Defined 5.20.25](#)
- [Proposed Amendments to 255-24 Accessory Uses and Buildings and 255-41 Outdoor Recreation Facilities 5.20.25](#)
- [Proposed Amendments to 255-25 Agricultural, Horticultural and Floricultural Uses 5.20.25](#)
- [Proposed Amendments to 255-26 Stables and Riding Academies 5.20.25](#)
- [Use Schedule Proposed Amendments - Agricultural Uses - 6.3.25](#)

**C. Draft Report on Sign Bylaw Amendments**

Draft report and amendments online: <https://www.southhadley.org/1318/ProposedDraft-Bylaws>

**Sign Bylaw**

- [Report on Sign Bylaw Review and Analysis - January 2025](#)
- [Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments - Signs - 5.20.25](#)
- [Sign Bylaw Amendment - Proposed Dimensional Standards](#)

**AGENDA ITEM #7 Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)**

No additional business has been submitted to me as of the date of this notice.

**Example Curb Cut Bylaws and Policies**  
**August 2025**

**Northampton - Zoning Bylaw 350-8.8**

**G. There shall be a maximum of one driveway curb cut per lot.** In GB and HB Districts, and for all new two-family lots, a special permit from the Planning Board is required for more than one curb cut. See also requirements in § 350-21 and 350-22 for Character District standards as applicable. The Planning Board may only issue a second curb cut if the applicant can show that there is something unique about the property that would otherwise render flow to and from the property unsafe and unmanageable. If the Board finds that more than one curb cut is necessary for traffic safety purposes, then additional off-site traffic mitigation may be required by the Planning Board to address pedestrian safety within the abutting street network. In all other districts, the Planning Board may, as part of site plan approval, allow additional driveways/curb cuts if, and only if, such permit will promote and improve safe and efficient traffic circulation. Residential driveways shall generally be over the front lot line directly from the street. Residential driveways may be constructed across side and rear lot lines directly from the street, however, when the Department of Public Works finds, or the Planning Board issues a site plan approval, that the driveway will not degrade safety. Driveways shall not cross lot lines of adjoining properties without Planning Board site plan approval.

H. A driveway's entrance or exit shall not exceed, at its intersection with the front lot line, a width of 15 feet for single-, two- and three-family uses and 24 feet for all other uses, except that the Planning Board may, as part of site plan approval, allow a thirty-foot width if, and only if, such approval will promote safe and efficient traffic circulation. See also requirements in §§ 350-21 and 350-22 for Character Districts as applicable.

## SOMERVILLE

Zoning limits curb cuts to one (1) and includes additional design requirements to limit pervious surface and traffic conflicts. There are similar requirements for all of the zoning districts, but the Neighborhood Residence (NR) district, which is their lowest-density residential district would be the most comparable to residential neighborhoods in South Hadley. And, the Engineering Department also has specific requirements for curb cuts, separate from zoning

Section 3.1.19: <https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/somerville-ma/doc-viewer.aspx#secid-477>

Somerville

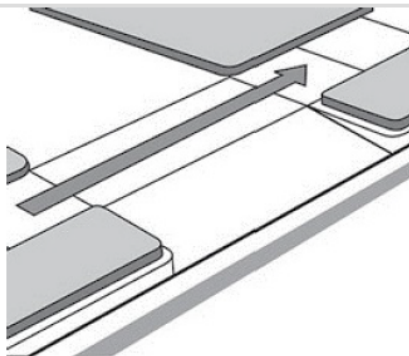
### 3.1.19 Public Realm

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#### a. Sidewalk Curb Cuts

- i. A curb cut requires a permit from the City Engineer and must be compliant with all City Ordinances.
- ii. Unless otherwise specified, the City Engineer may not permit more than one (1) curb cut per front lot line of a lot.
- iii. Curb cuts are prohibited along all thoroughfares designated as a pedestrian street.
- iv. Curb cuts must be located to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists and must have a clear distance from fire hydrants, street trees, utility poles, and other furnishings as deemed necessary by the City Engineer.
  - a). Curb cuts for commercial or high-volume driveways should be at least one-hundred (100) feet from an unsignalized or signalized intersection.
  - b). Curb cuts for residential driveways should be at least twenty (20) feet from an unsignalized intersection and at least forty (40) feet from a signalized intersection.
- v. The interior width of a curb cut (between curb stones) may be no wider than the driveway, vehicular entrance, or loading facility it serves.
- vi. A driveway apron may be installed only within the furnishing zone of a sidewalk and must be constructed in accordance with all standards established by relevant City Departments.
- vii. The grade, cross slope, and clear width of the walkway of a sidewalk must be maintained between the driveway apron and the abutting driveway. The appearance of the walkway (ie. scoring pattern or paving material) must indicate that, although a vehicle may cross, the area traversed by a vehicle remains part of the sidewalk.

Figure 3.1.19 Sidewalk Curb Cuts



## **WESTFIELD**

From City Planner Jay Vinskey:

We had the same situation in Westfield (a loose DPW policy only) but with the ADU changes we just added to our zoning (in single family districts only):

*"Not more than one driveway access/curb cut per lot is permitted for a single-family dwelling (whether or not an accessory dwelling unit also exists), except by Special Permit from the Board of Appeals"*

## **NANTUCKET**

Zoning states "no more than one driveway access shall be allowed on a lot. However, the Planning Board may grant a waiver to allow two or more driveway access."

<https://ecode360.com/11472273>

## **NEW BEDFORD**

Zoning Bylaw - Recently added an administrative site plan review level to their SPR ordinance and any residential driveway that creates a second curb requires administrative SPR. Previously, the ordinance made these go to the Planning Board for a full site plan review. [Administrative Site Plan Review would be by the City's Planning Department staff, not the Planning Board.]

## **WATERTOWN**

Has this requirement for new or changed construction for residential uses, and it is regulated by the Zoning Enforcement Officer:

Section 6.01 (h & i) For a site upon which new construction is proposed; to which an increase in the number of existing bedrooms or units is sought; or to which modifications to existing construction of driveways or parking areas are proposed for either one, two, three, or four family dwellings or row houses, the following design standards shall apply: There shall be allowed a maximum of two curb cuts per site at a maximum of 11 foot width, with a minimum distance of 20 feet between curb cuts. No curb cut, or combination of curb cuts shall exceed a maximum of 40% of the lot frontage, or 22 feet, whichever is less.

<https://ecode360.com/37103247>

**SOUTH HADLEY PLANNING BOARD  
LIST OF ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCES  
AUGUST 11, 2025, REGULAR MEETING**

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**Letters and Memos**

- July 29 letter (attached) from Steven Laplante, President of the South Hadley/Granby Chamber of Commerce, regarding the Route 202/33 re-zoning draft zoning and design guidelines.
- July 30 email (attached) from Michael Sobon, CEO of O’Connell Oil Associates, regarding the Route 202/33 re-zoning draft zoning and design guidelines.

**Legal Notices**

*Amherst*

- Notice from the Amherst Planning Board for filing decision to approve Site Plan Review filed by the Amherst Youth Soccer Association for upgrades to Plum Brook Recreation Area on Potwine Lane.

*Chicopee*

- Notice from the Chicopee Planning Board for public hearings on August 7 to consider the following: 1) zone change from Commercial A to Residential C for property at 326 Chicopee Street; 2) site plan review with waivers for the construction of an addition to an existing building at 880 Burnett Road; and 3) preliminary site plan review for renovations to existing building to create mixed use building and associated site improvements at 22 Grove Ave and 185 Grove St.

*Granby*

- Notice from the Granby Planning Board for public hearings on August 11 to consider the following: 1) site plan review for a day spa at 61 Pleasant Street; and 2) special permit and site plan review for a fast-food restaurant establishment without drive-through at 185 West State Street.

*Hadley*

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*Holyoke*

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July 29, 2025

Anne Capra  
Director of Planning and Conservation  
Town of South Hadley  
116 Main Street  
South Hadley, MA 01075

Anne,

Hello! As requested, here is a copy of what I planned to say at the Route 202/33 Corridor Learning Meeting last night. I may not have read it out loud exactly as written.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything else at any time! I plan to attend future meetings including the one scheduled for September 8, 2025.

Written by Steven Laplante on behalf of the South Hadley Granby Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors without the Board's prior review:

"Thank you to Anne Capra, the Advisory Committee, the Planning Board, and everyone here in attendance for taking the time to hear each other's points of views.

My name is Steven Laplante and I'm the current President of the South Hadley Granby Chamber of Commerce. I'm here tonight speaking in that capacity. The South Hadley Granby Chamber of Commerce has a Board of Directors consisting of 10 volunteers. The Chamber has approximately 100 Members employing thousands of people in South Hadley alone.

I'm here tonight to express support from the South Hadley Granby Chamber of Commerce, and our Board of Directors, on the proposed zoning changes to the Route 202/33 corridor.

I want to take a few moments to talk about why these proposed changes are not just lines on a map.

Our local businesses create jobs, support local causes, and provide the good and services we depend on every day. But, as our world changes, so do their needs. The current zoning regulations were written for a different time. And while they have served us well, they now create barriers for growth, innovation, and unfortunately, sometimes even survival for some businesses.

By supporting these zoning changes, we're saying yes to stimulating the local economy by creating opportunities for new businesses, attracting businesses to our town, and encouraging existing businesses to expand. Yes to creating opportunities and accessible spaces for startups, sole proprietors, and mixed-use working/living spaces that fit modern small business needs.

New or expanded businesses would then offer employment opportunities, shorter commutes for both consumers and employees, encourage job retention, increase tax revenue, and help to keep businesses from leaving town.

A healthy business community also creates opportunities for our youth with internships and apprentice programs, as well as providing additional support and funding to our local non-profits, charities, and community service programs!

Communities that thrive are communities that evolve. And that evolution happens through thoughtful, strategic changes like these.

Let's give our business community the tools they need to grow responsibly. Let's make it easier, not harder, for people to invest in this town. And let's be the kind of community that works together to shape our future.

I urge the community to support these zone changes for the businesses that serve us, for the jobs it will help create, and for the future of our local economy.

Thank you!"

I hope this helps! Please keep in touch as needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven Laplante', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steven Laplante  
2025 President  
South Hadley Granby Chamber of Commerce