

Background Materials – November 22, 2021 – Planning Board Meeting

Prepared by Anne Capra, Director of Planning and Conservation, 11/18/21

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

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 posted on the Town of South Hadley Planning and Conservation Department webpage here: [Policy-on-Open-Comment-Period---As-Adopted-2021-03-08 \(southhadley.org\)](#)

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

AGENDA ITEM #2 Correspondence

A list of correspondence received is attached.

Action Needed: No action needed.

AGENDA ITEM #3 248-250 Old Lyman Road Approval Not Required (ANR)

Application and project plans are online here: [From AutoCAD Drawing "C:\1temp\8267-CIOLEK\8267ce01.dwg" \(southhadley.org\)](#)

This project applicant Ciolek Family LLC seeks to combine three parcels, all of which are in common ownership by Ciolek Family LLC. An existing building currently spans parcels I and III.

Parcel	Assessor's Parcel ID	Address
I	8-115	248 Old Lyman Road
II	8-105	Old Lyman Road
III	8-101	250 Old Lyman Road

1. **Type of Way:** Old Lyman Road is a Town owned and maintained roadway, therefore meeting the definition of a public way.
2. **Minimum frontage requirements for zoning district:** The parcels are within the Industrial A zoning district which has a 200' minimum frontage requirement. The total frontage on Old Lyman Road from the proposed ANR is 470.9' therefore meeting the minimum frontage requirement. The total acreage of the proposed combined lots is 66,344 sq.ft. which exceeds the minimum lot size of 40,000.
3. **Vital access:** As a Town owned and maintained roadway, the standard for vital access is met.

Action Needed: The Board must either endorse the plan or file a notice of denial with the

Town Clerk. If the Board votes to endorse the ANR Plan, the Board should also authorize the Director of Planning & Conservation to sign the plan on the Board's behalf.

AGENDA ITEM #4 Planning & Conservation Department Report on Planning Projects and Development Updates

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Projects

DLTA Water Supply Protection Overlay District

The Town has received a District Local Technical Assistance Grant (DLTA) from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to review the existing Water Supply Protection Overlay District (WSPD) zoning bylaw to evaluate if any amendments are warranted to provide greater protections to both the Dry Brook Well aquifer and the Holyoke Range. PVPC Senior Planner Patty Gambarini has begun the assessment, which has included meetings with Water District 2 Superintendent Mark Aiken as well as Smith College hydrogeologist Bob Newton and State Geologist Steve Mabee. The assessment will include an analysis of developed and undeveloped land within the WSPD to better understand the potential impact of new development in terms of alteration of natural land cover (forested/vegetated landscape).

Additionally, we are working with Steve and Bob to develop a proposal (scope of work and budget) for isotopic analysis of groundwater within the WSPD. Such a study would essentially "fingerprint" the sources of recharge to the well and provide a more complete picture of the extent of the recharge area, which is believed to extend well beyond the Zone II due to the nature of the surficial geology in the area (clay lense of varying depth and possible holes within the layer, fractured bedrock and deep vaults, and multiple stream beds providing hydrogeologic conduits).

Rapid Recovery Plan

Sec. Mike Kennealy and Undersecretary Ashley Stolba of the Massachusetts Exec. Office of Housing and Economic Development conducted a roundtable discussion on our Local Rapid Recovery Plan at the new Senior Center, and a brief tour our recent MassWorks infrastructure improvement project on Dayton and Lyman Streets on 11/10/21. A summary of the plan is attached. Next steps involve identifying priority projects to seek funding for. Attached is a brief summary of the RRP. The full plan can be viewed here:

<https://southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8845/Rapid-Recovery-Plan-October-8-2021>

Route 33/202 Corridor Study

The last community meeting was held on 11/10/21. Video recording of the meeting is here:

<https://vimeo.com/645312703>

We are compiling the comments submitted during the meeting. These comments will be appended to the plan, and the final plan submitted to the Planning Board for your consideration for endorsement. Our consultant Emily Innes anticipates getting that to us within the next few weeks.

Master Plan

I have completed the edits to the Master Plan and submitted the draft to Emily Innes for her to complete. She anticipates having the final draft available in January. Thereafter we can schedule a public hearing.

Attached is MPIC's report to the Planning Board, Selectboard and Town Administrator regarding their biannual update on 2010 Master Plan Implementation. I will outreach to Town Administrator Wong about setting up a joint meeting with MPIC on the report findings.

MVP FY22 Action Grant – Queensville Dam Removal Study

The engineering assessment has begun and includes an assessment of the stream channel (Buttery Brook) downstream of the dam. As part of this project, long term water quality monitoring equipment will be installed in Titus Pond to track before and after conditions within the pond. The Environmental Science teacher at South Hadley High School will be utilizing the data logger and integrating the project into classroom curriculum beginning this spring. The project also involves a public art installation on Main Street in the Falls. A RFP was issued to select an artist to install a temporary painted mural on Main Street where Buttery Brook is culverted. We are currently seeking appropriate final approvals from MassDOT, DPW and the Selectboard for the street art installation.

Small Business COVID Relief Microenterprise Grants

This is CDBG funding through the 2020 federal CARES Act program, administered through the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and the Valley Community Development Corporation. In Massachusetts, for the competitive program, it was used specifically for microenterprise business assistance (5 employees or less, including all FTE and/or PT) and public social services. South Hadley is part of the Easthampton Regional application (Easthampton was the lead community; other towns were Hadley, Hatfield, South Hadley, South Hampton, Westhampton and Granby). The total available funds for microenterprise grants were \$783,000 for these communities. It is meant to cover losses due to COVID, up to \$25,000. Total funding approved to South Hadley businesses so far is \$85,000:

- Thirsty Minds Coffee and Wine Bar
- South Hadley Tower Theater
- Moxy Boutique
- Superstar Innovations

Final deadline is December 31, 2021.

Center, Warner, Graves Streets Neighborhood Infrastructure Design

This is FY21 CDBG funds for the design of road, sidewalk and stormwater infrastructure improvements. BETA engineering was hired through an RFP process for the design work and a contract has been issued. PVPC is the contract administrator with DPW and the Director of Planning and Conservation involved as well.



Development Updates

Canal Street Condominiums Special Permit

The developer requested a release of their stormwater performance bond. The performance guarantee is not to be released until Certificates of Occupancy have been issued for 75% of the dwellings and 100% of the building foundations and the roadway have been installed. DPW and the Building Commissioner have confirmed that these conditions have been met.

Next steps – the developer must submit to the Planning Board a Certificate of Performance attesting to the satisfactory performance of all works and installations as set forth in their Performance Bond Agreement. Upon receipt of that in my office, I will schedule with DPW to perform an inspection of the stormwater management system. If DPW is unable to do so, a third-party engineer will be contracted with for this service. Based on that inspection, I will make a recommendation to the Board regarding releasing the Stormwater Performance Guarantee. It is at the Board’s discretion to release some or all of the guarantee.

Bardwell Street Condominiums Special Permit

The developer has requested gas meter hookups and is in the process of seeking gas line testing.

MassWorks Lyman/Dayton Streets Infrastructure Improvements

Construction commenced on 10/29/21 on the 8” sewer main replacement on Dayton Street, and stormwater work to begin 11/22/21. The contractor has notified the Town that the water main will also be installed this Fall. Currently, construction is scheduled to be completed by Fall 2022.

AGENDA ITEM #5 Other New Business (topics which the Chair could not reasonably expect to be discussed/considered as of the date of this notice)

No new business had been submitted to me as of today.



To: Selectboard, Jeff Cyr, Chair
Planning Board, Brad Hutchison, Chair
Town Administrator Lisa Wong

From: Master Plan Implementation Committee, Judy Gooch Dobosh, Chair
Subject: Update on Master Plan tasks
Date: November 16, 2021

The purpose of this memo is to bring you all up to date as best as possible on progress towards the goals of the Master Plan. A summary of the current status of all the entities we monitor is followed by a brief section on situations that concern us at present, and a summary of the various questions and suggestions shared with us by the various entities with which we had contact.

It is our hope that a joint meeting of the Selectboard, Planning Board, MPIC and the Town Administrator can be scheduled to discuss issues in connection with implementing the Master Plan. While the Planning Board "owns" the Master Plan, it is not in a position to manage all aspects of its implementation. The Town Administrator manages the administration and works closely with paid staff. But neither the Planning Board, the Selectboard nor the Administration has jurisdiction over the activities (or lack of) of various elected or appointed boards, committees or commissions, except insofar as the Selectboard controls the appointments process and works with the Town Administrator to develop the budget. Effective actions depend heavily on the initiative, dedication and goodwill of the elected or appointed volunteers.

MPIC can and does identify issues of concern (as well as successes), bringing them to the attention of the Planning Board, Selectboard and the Town Administrator. But it is not always clear who decides what to do, or who can intervene, when challenges arise. It would be useful

to us, and, we expect, to other entities, to have a better sense of where the accountability lies. In addition, collaboration and communication will be key to achieving the goals of the plan. Are there better ways to structure the implementation process to support and encourage collaboration? To ensure that appropriate communication takes place? We would welcome your thoughts on this.

For the past two months MPIC members have been meeting with the entities assigned tasks in the 2010 Master Plan (still in effect) and entities that have tasks assigned in the draft Master Plan Update. In each case we have raised three topics:

- The status of the draft Update, and the fact that the Town is still functioning under the 2010 plan;
- Progress in regard to tasks assigned in the 2010 plan, if relevant, and current priorities, achievements and challenges; and
- Ways in which MPIC can be most helpful to entities as they move towards the goals of the Plan.

A brief summary of each meeting or other interaction follows. Please note that this information is current as of mid-November and may well have changed by the time we gather to discuss it.

Appropriations: no meeting currently scheduled. Completed all tasks from 2010 plan. Will meet after budget is developed.

Bike/Walk: has reorganized. Continuing to plan treks around town. Priorities: bike lanes, public seating, making new projects bike and pedestrian friendly, publicizing opportunities.

Board of Assessors: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. Current priorities: continuing to update the GIS system; succession planning. Want more information sharing from other entities that collect mappable data.

Board of Health/Health Department: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. The BOH has begun discussing goals outlined in the draft Update: monitoring and eliminating lead in drinking water in municipal buildings; identifying indicators of public health that should be monitored annually, possibly in comparison with regional data; reviewing the Town's readiness to deal with future pandemics; building a more welcoming and supportive community by identifying disparities in public health and addressing unmet needs. Members believe the Board's work in these areas will require more information sharing among Town entities and more coordination. They welcomed discussion of means to encourage these as part of the implementation process.

Bylaw Review Committee: currently lacks a chair and has not been meeting.

Capital Planning: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. Meets seasonally, in connection with budget development. Hasn't met since last spring. Chair is hoping to rebuild relationship with School Committee and Superintendent.

Conservation Commission: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. Currently working on purchasing development rights to Lozier farm; outreach to residents (kiosks, website, recorded meetings, outreach to high school, social media).

Council on Aging: No tasks in 2010 plan. Has just submitted AARP Age and Dementia Friendly application, is working towards its goals. Working on evening programs; trying to meet demand for 1 x 1 transportation. Board is looking at cultural diversity.

Cultural Council: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. Currently working on 2021-22 grant cycle. Has 3 new members. Concerned that they'll be asked to take on tasks that aren't part of their charge.

Department of Public Works: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. No meeting, pending discussion with Town Administrator.

Disabilities Commission: No tasks in 2010 plan. Recruiting new members and finding a new chair. Wants to work closely with COA on age and dementia friendly programs.

FD#1, Water District: no tasks in 2010 plan. Distributed information with water bills.

FD#2, Water District: no tasks in 2010 plan

Ledges Golf Course:

Historical Commission: 2010 tasks not complete. Has not been meeting.

Master Plan Implementation Committee: completing fall round of meetings with entities; reviewing MPIC bylaws; planning video.

Planning Board: no change from 2019 re 2010 tasks. Current priority is the Master Plan Update.

Police Department: No tasks in 2010 plan. Achieved certification; working with COA on fraud prevention, working with Health Department and Schools. Speeding continues to be a problem. Reaching out to as many organizations and entities as possible.

Recreation Commission: 2010 tasks completed or not relevant. OSRP submitted and approved. Very interested in what metrics will be attached to their tasks.

Redevelopment Authority: 2010 task complete. Has not met since spring.

Schools: Tasks in 2010 plan completed or ongoing. Current priorities: infrastructure capital, human capital. Dealing with lots of complex issues around health and safety, readjusting to in-person learning.

Selectboard: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. No meeting with MPIC currently scheduled.

SHCTV: No tasks in 2010 plan. Redoing/upgrading their website; talking with Comcast about upgrading the signal; and considering how to continue to fund the station as more residents convert to Fibersonic. All current funding is from Comcast. Would like to make short videos about town functions and entities. Would like to coordinate town bulletin boards.

SHELD: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing (Fibersonic.) Has just appointed two new members. Looking into battery storage. (MPIC is invited to December meeting.)

South Hadley Public Library (and Gaylord Library): 2010 task completed. Currently preparing a strategic plan.

Sustainability and Energy: Some 2010 tasks completed. Has not been meeting consistently. No meeting currently scheduled.

Town Administrator: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. MPIC will meet with Lisa Wong on Nov. 18.

Tree Committee: 2010 tasks completed or ongoing. Have not had a formal meeting since last spring, though they have been planting trees.

Zoning Board of Appeals: no tasks in 2010 plan. Meets as needed. Current priority: making sure members are educated about duties and responsibilities.

Of special concern: Redevelopment, Sustainability and Energy, Disabilities, and the Historical Commission. The RDA has a significant number of action items in the draft Master Plan Update; it sometimes appears to be a dumping ground for anything to do with economic development. Sustainability and Energy has an enormously broad mandate and has had challenges in identifying individuals who are interested in taking on parts of it. While Disabilities doesn't have primary responsibility for any action items in the draft Update, it clearly needs to be a presence in planning for a wide variety of activities and facilities. The Historical Commission has a mandate that could greatly enhance residents' (and others') knowledge of the town, potentially helping to build local and regional tourism.

A variety of issues surfaced during the discussions of current priorities and how MPIC could be helpful. As noted above, a few entities are not currently meeting, though we have made contact with them. In some cases this is due to lost or out-of-action members (Sustainability, Disabilities). Some meet only seasonally or as needed (Appropriations, Capital Planning, ZBA).

Several entities asked what has happened to the comments they made on the Draft Update and submitted to the Planning Board.

Information sharing came up in multiple contexts. MPIC was praised for its efforts to encourage board-to-board (and other) communication, but some systemic improvements would be useful. For example, the Board of Assessors maintains the GIS system and prepares map overlays reflecting a wide range of natural and man-made features. Other entities also collect information that could be reflected in overlays but don't automatically share it with the Assessors' Office, and there are apparently several different GIS systems.

Many committee chairs would welcome a formal packet and information session on the tasks of chairs, including issues such as how to use the new OWL system for hybrid meetings, and how to post minutes and agendas. Generally, groups were receptive to the idea of an annual workshop for all entities and departments to discuss Master Plan actions. One entity (ZBA) noted the need for committee members to learn about technical and/or legal issues that come up in connection with their committee's work, and raised the question of whether the Town would/could pay for members to attend trainings or workshops.

Some entities expressed concern about the "ownership" of tasks involving multiple entities (how is it determined? Pursued?) The School Committee and Superintendent strongly urged MPIC to push for an ecosystem that supports efforts towards diversity, equity and inclusion. Several entities appreciate that MPIC keeps the Master Plan in front of them.

Background Summary November 10, 2021

South Hadley Rapid Recovery Plan

South Hadley's Rapid Recovery Plan focused on the Village Commons Commercial District, located at the intersection of Routes 47 and 116 at the Town Commons in the northern part of town. The study area includes The Village Commons, a mixed-use development containing 19 residential units, a neighborhood movie theater, numerous social services and health professional offices, and retail and dining spaces, and extends to adjacent businesses including a restaurant and professional office space. The Village Commons is owned by Mount Holyoke College and is operated by the Center Redevelopment Corporation. Mount Holyoke College is located to the east and south of The Village Commons commercial district.

The study found that 92% of businesses within the commercial district noted being affected by COVID-19. Of those, 58% generated less business than they did in 2019, despite having seen an increase in revenue for the three prior years. For some this decrease was by more than 25%. Most businesses within the area are small mom-and-pop shops with less than five employees.

While most recommendations of the RRP are placed within the Village Commons District, they are applicable town-wide. The Town of South Hadley will seek to implement the recommendations in support of commercial districts across town. Recommendations include the following:

- Increase the boundaries of The Village Commons to include peripheral Businesses and Amenities when implementing recommendations of the RRP.
- Institutionalize Small Business Support: Create an Administrative Organizational Structure.
- Institutionalize Small Business Support: Provide Low-Cost Business Development Services.
- Leverage Local Community to Recruit New Businesses.
- Identify Ideal Tenant Mix and Create a Framework for the Next Generation of Tenants.
- Support a Long-Term Creative Restaurant Ecosystem.
- Extend The Village Commons' Ample Public Space Beyond Its Boundaries.
- Create a Parking Fee Structure to Fund Small Business Resources.
- Create Intentional Programming for Various Age Groups to Activate the District to Expand its Reach.
- Implement Town-Wide District Branding and Wayfinding, Beginning with The Village Commons.
- Partner with Higher Education Institutions to Increase Arts and Cultural Events.
- Enhance Awareness of the Village Commons District at Trailheads, Parks and Other Points of Interest.

South Hadley's Rapid Recovery Plan is available at the following link: <https://www.southhadley.org/DocumentCenter/View/8845/Rapid-Recovery-Plan-October-8-2021>

MassWorks FY20 Infrastructure Improvements

South Hadley received a \$2,711,000 FY20 MassWorks Grant to support redevelopment of the Newton Street 40R Smart Growth Zoning District. Infrastructure improvements will include:

- Replacement of outdated and undersized water and sewer lines on Lyman and Dayton Streets;
- Roadway reclamation and paving on Lyman and Dayton Streets;
- Sidewalk improvements on Lyman, Newton and Dayton Streets;
- Mixed use bike/ped path on Lyman Street; and,
- Midblock crosswalks with rapid flashing beacons on Newton and Lyman Streets.

These improvements support other recent investments in the Smart Growth District and the Newton Street corridor including water line upgrades completed by District 1 Water Department, a planned reconstruction of Newton Street by MassDOT (scheduled for 2022), the new \$11.4 Million Senior Center (as described below), and several private commercial and housing developments estimated at over \$30 Million (as described below).

South Hadley Senior Center, 45 Dayton Street

Construction of a new \$11.4 Million Senior Center was completed in August 2021. The project involved demolition of a very dilapidated existing Council on Aging facility and reconstruction of a new 16,770 sq.ft. facility at the site.

Also recently completed is the ADA accessible Fitness Trail located on the property and constructed with a Massachusetts Office of Disability Grant, and a new playground adjacent to the Woodlawn Park ballfield.

Newton Street 40R Smart Growth District – New Development

Plaza Apartments, 501 Newton Street

This project will involve the redevelopment of a razed grocery store on a 9.2-acre parcel at 501 Newton Street (known as the Woodlawn Plaza) into a 60-unit apartment building on the east side of Newton Street (SR 116) and north side of Lyman and Street (SR 33). The project will include a four-story, approximately 65,800 sq.ft. building with a mix of 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, and 3 bedroom units with affordable and market rate units available in each bedroom size. The project anticipates 75% of the units will be deed restricted as Affordable Units to tenants earning between 30% and 60% of the Area Median Income. The project is being developed in partnership with WayFinders, a non-profit Community Development Corporation located in Springfield, Massachusetts. Total Development Costs are currently projected at \$23,505,000. DHCD is supporting the project with federal and state low-income housing tax credits and subsidy funds. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022. The developer is South Hadley Plaza LLC.

Rocky's Hardware and Garden Center, 501 Newton Street

This project will also involve the redevelopment of another portion of the Woodlawn Plaza through the construction of a 12,620 sq.ft. retail store including 2,532 sq.ft. of outdoor display space and garden center. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2022. The developer is South Hadley Plaza LLC. The existing Rocky's Hardware Store will be leased to a new commercial operation.

People's Bank, 468 Newton Street

This project involves the redevelopment of a parcel on the corner of Newton and Lyman Streets with the construction of an approximately 2,000 sq.ft. bank and office space, estimated at approximately \$2 Million in total investment. The branch became operational in October 2021. A Valley Bike Share rent-a-bike station will be located at the front of the building on Newton Street, with docking for 12 e-bikes.