



**BOXBOROUGH PLANNING BOARD**  
29 Middle Road, Boxborough, Massachusetts 01719  
Phone: (978) 264-1723 · Fax: (978) 264-3127  
www.boxborough-ma.gov

Owen Neville, Chair

Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk

Nancy Fillmore

John Markiewicz

**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 3, 2014**  
**7:30 PM**

**Boxborough Community Center, 30 Middle Road**

Members present:

Owen Neville, Chair

Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk

Nancy Fillmore, Member

John Markiewicz, Member (arrived at 7:32 PM)

Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

**Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2014**

Ms. Fillmore MADE a MOTION to approve the minutes of September 22, 2014. Mr. Pontoriero SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor. Mr. Markiewicz was absent from the vote.

At this time Mr. Markiewicz arrived at the meeting

**Pre-Application Conference for Site Plan Approval for a proposed project at 530-540 Massachusetts Avenue (Veterinary Dental Office)**

Bonnie Shope representing Veterinary Dental Services, LLC and William Hall from Stamski and McNary, Inc. were in attendance to present the project to the Planning Board. Mr. Hall explained that the proposed project would entail an approximately 5,000 square foot veterinary dental office building with 18 parking spaces. An infiltration trench located at the rear of the project and underground chambers would be used to handle stormwater runoff. Ms. Shope stated that her practice would entail veterinary dentistry and oral surgery. She noted that she has an existing practice in Acton which has been operating since 1999 and she has been the owner of the business for the last three years. Ms. Shope indicated she has been looking for a piece of property to relocate her business and this location seemed to be a good fit. She stated that she did not want to travel too far from her existing location in order to stay in close proximity to her current client base. Ms. Shope noted that she has clients from all over New England but they are primarily from Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire.

Mr. Markiewicz asked how many people the business employed and Ms. Shope indicated there were ten employees. Mr. Markiewicz also asked what types of animals she treated and Ms. Shope stated she typically treats dogs and cats, but she is hoping to expand to other small animals in the future. Ms. Shope also indicated she has no plans to treat large animals. Mr. Markiewicz asked how much influence the Planning Board could have on the design of the building as he wanted the structure to fit into the existing context of the community. Mr. Duchesneau pointed out that this was a Site Plan Approval application and therefore the Planning

Board really only held jurisdiction over the external programming at the site. Mr. Markiewicz asked if the Applicant could look into using more colonial-style windows. Ms. Shope stated she wanted to design a building that made people feel comfortable about bringing their animals in for treatment. Mr. Neville stated he thought the proposed design of the building would fit nicely into the area as it somewhat relates to the Alpha Cars showroom that had recently been constructed.

Mr. Neville asked if the paved area at the rear of the project sloped downward but Mr. Hall indicated it actually sloped upward. Mr. Markiewicz asked if the walkway leading up to the front door would line up with the crosswalk across Route 111. Mr. Hall indicated that it did. Mr. Markiewicz then asked what the proposed external lighting hours would be for the project. Ms. Shope indicated the external lights would only be illuminated during the hours of operation or shortly thereafter. She pointed out that her business does not keep any animals overnight at their practice. Mr. Markiewicz asked if any hazardous materials would be produced or stored at the site and Ms. Shope indicated there were none.

Ms. Shope stated the look of the building is very individual, but that her goal is to construct a building that is very attractive. Mr. Markiewicz indicated people are going to prefer a clean, nice looking facility. Ms. Shope also indicated she is working with a landscape architect on the project. Mr. Neville noted that Ms. Shope should think about the long term vision of the landscaping and how the plantings will look once they are fully mature. Mr. Markiewicz added that trees and shrubs start off rather small, but over time they can grow together and look very crowded. Mr. Neville asked what the height of the external light fixtures is and Mr. Hall indicated they were between 15 and 20 feet in height.

Mr. Markiewicz asked if Ms. Shope would be moving her entire practice from Acton to Boxborough and Ms. Shope stated that was correct. Ms. Fillmore asked if there would be any lighting for the external signage and Ms. Shope stated there would be, but only for a few hours into the evening. Mr. Pontoriero stated he was somewhat concerned about the solar glare that would be created off of the entry vestibule. Ms. Shope indicated they would look into this to ensure it would not be an issue. Ms. Fillmore asked if the Applicant had spoken to any of the abutters regarding possible noise levels. Ms. Shope stated she had not but also pointed out the animals are not outside for very long. In fact, the animals are only outside long enough for them to relieve themselves as the enclosure on the west side is not designed to be a play area.

Mr. Neville asked what the anticipated hours of operation would be and Ms. Shope stated they would be open from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Mr. Pontoriero asked when she would like to start construction and Ms. Shope indicated they are hoping to begin as soon as possible. Ms. Shope stated she would like to have this site open for business by June of 2015. Ms. Fillmore asked if the structure would be handicap accessible and Ms. Shope indicated that it would. Mr. Duchesneau indicated that if the Applicant could revise their plans based on the comments they received from the Planning Board, the project could move forward with a public hearing at the Planning Board's next meeting on November 17, 2014.

### **Signage Bylaw Discussion**

Norman Hanover of 71 Boxmill Road was in attendance to discuss the existing Signage Bylaw in the Zoning Bylaw with the Planning Board. Mr. Hanover indicated that over the last six to seven weeks he had noticed a signage issue at the intersection of Liberty Square Road and Massachusetts Avenue. Mr. Hanover stated he felt the temporary signage in this location has

become an issue in terms of visibility for drivers, which has made this intersection dangerous. He continued on to note that in his opinion, the temporary signs in this location are in violation of the Signage Bylaw. Mr. Hanover indicated he would like to see the Planning Board and the Town Planner be more aggressive in directing the Building Inspector to enforce this bylaw.

Mr. Pontoriero clarified that Mr. Hanover was referring to the temporary signage at the Liberty Square/Massachusetts Avenue intersection (which Mr. Hanover was), as opposed to the directional signage on the dividing island which Mr. Pontoriero felt also restricted driver visibility. Mr. Markiewicz stated the intent of the bylaw is to prevent the signage from creating a traffic hazard. However, he added he was fairly certain that often times people did not realize they are creating a traffic hazard when they are erecting their temporary signage.

Mr. Hanover then began listing his specific concerns about this temporary signage and the Signage Bylaw. He asked how long a "temporary" sign could be erected and suggested that perhaps the Town should be approving each location of these temporary signs. Mr. Hanover also raised questions about the area between the edge of the roadway pavement and where private property begins. He wondered if someone could legally erect temporary signage in these areas while the private property owner could do nothing. Mr. Hanover stated he felt the Town should discourage this practice.

Mr. Markiewicz stated that while the area between the edge of the roadway pavement and the private property line is technically part of the unpaved right-of-way, it would seem to be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain this area. Mr. Neville pointed out if the Town changes the elevation of a roadway, the Town would be responsible for ensuring private property owners' driveways are still usable. Mr. Pontoriero noted the signage that poses a traffic hazard are the biggest concern to him. Mr. Duchesneau proposed a two pronged approach to address this issue. He indicated he could continue to work with the Building Inspector to enforce the Signage Bylaw and that the Planning Board could also examine the language of the existing Signage Bylaw to improve it.

Mr. Hanover asked who the Building Inspector takes his direction from and Mr. Neville noted it would be from interpreting the State Building Code. Mr. Hanover then asked what would happen if the Building Inspector does not feel a certain portion of the Zoning Bylaw should be enforced. Mr. Duchesneau stated that if that situation arose, the Board of Selectmen should be made aware. Mr. Markiewicz indicated that as a general courtesy, prior to any signage simply being removed, the entity that is responsible for the signage should first be contacted in an attempt to remedy the deficiency of the signage. Mr. Hanover stated he has moved temporary signs to more appropriate locations but they often times are moved back to their original locations. Mr. Neville indicated the Planning Board understood Mr. Hanover's concerns on this topic and this particular signage item is now on the Board's radar.

#### **Master Plan Update Problem Statement**

Mr. Markiewicz indicated the Master Plan Update Committee (MPUC) had its first meeting the previous Wednesday on October 29, 2014. He stated how the MPUC discussed what the various components of the Master Plan would entail and how rapidly each of the different components are changing. Mr. Markiewicz noted one of the topics discussed was how low electricity costs are in Boxborough compared to the other surrounding communities. He also indicated that the population projections and aging status of Boxborough's residents were discussed. Mr.

Markiewicz stated how the MPUC and the Planning Board need to be thinking about the types of housing and services the community needs to be providing. Additionally, he pointed out how the Town should not lose site of the fact that it is now part of an entirely regionalized school system. The Town needs to look at the total impact of Acton and Boxborough on the regional school system moving forward.

Mr. Markiewicz stated that a number of MPUC members were interested in discussing economic development and this is a component that will greatly impact the tax base. He also noted there was interest in having a conversation about a town center and what that might entail. Mr. Markiewicz also indicated he wanted to reach out individually to the voting members of the MPUC to get a better understanding of what each of those members would like to accomplish through the Master Plan Update.

### **Future Meeting Dates for 2015**

Mr. Neville stated that the current Planning Board should not plan any meeting dates after the Town Election in May of 2015 as there will be new membership on the Board after the election and those members should determine their own meeting dates. Mr. Neville then proposed the following meeting dates for January to May of 2015: Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>; Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>; Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup>; Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>; Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>; Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>; Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>; Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>; Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>; and Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Pontoriero MADE a MOTION to approve Mr. Neville's proposed meeting dates from January to May of 2015. Mr. Markiewicz SECONDED the MOTION. All members voted in favor.

### **Status Update on MassWorks Grant Application**

Mr. Duchesneau stated that the Town's MassWorks Grant Application had been denied by the State. Mr. Neville indicated he had a good conversation with State Representative Benson and others from her office regarding the status of the culverts on Route 111 near the Fire Station, Blanchard School, and the Sargent Memorial Library. He also noted that Mr. Duchesneau has been in touch with one of Representative Benson's aides who is working to schedule a meeting with MassDOT regarding this topic. Mr. Pontoriero asked if the worst case scenario would simply be that the Town would reapply for a MassWorks Grant in August of 2015. Mr. Duchesneau indicated that was correct, but added he was working to begin a dialogue with MassDOT to get some of the culverts fixed prior to then.

### **Correspondence**

The Planning Board briefly discussed the memorandum they had received from the Town Assessor regarding her proposal to begin taxing private ways. Mr. Neville stated he was in favor of the proposal but thought there was a land court decision or legal opinion indicating this action could not be done. He indicated he would look into his files and attempt to find the paperwork which referenced this position.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Markiewicz, SECONDED by Ms. Fillmore, with all members voting in favor.

On Behalf of the ~~Boxborough~~ Planning Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Pontoriero', written over a horizontal line.

Eduardo Pontoriero, Clerk