NEEDHAM PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

October 3, 2023

The Needham Planning Board meeting, held in the Charles River Room of the Public Services Administration Building and virtually using Zoom, was called to order by Adam Block, Chairman, on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. with Messrs. Crocker and Alpert and Ms. McKnight, Planner, Ms. Newman and Assistant Planner, Ms. Clee.

Mr. Block noted this is an open meeting that is being held in a hybrid manner in public and remotely per state guidelines. He reviewed the rules of conduct for all meetings. This meeting includes one public hearing and public comment will be allowed. If any votes are taken at the meeting the vote will be conducted by roll call. All supporting materials, including the agenda, are posted on the town's website.

7:05 p.m. – Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2023-03: Neehigh LLC, 93 Union Street, Suite 315, Newton Center, Petitioner (Property located at 629-661 Highland Avenue, Needham, Massachusetts). Regarding request to demolish the five existing buildings on the property and build a single two-story 50,000 square feet Medical Office Building (25,000 square feet footprint) with two levels of parking (one at-grade and one below grade) totaling two hundred and fifty (250) spaces. *Please note: This hearing has been continued from the September 5, 2023 Planning Board meeting and will be further continued to the October 17, 2023 Planning Board meeting.*

Mr. Block noted this meeting will be continued. The Board asked the Petitioner to agree to engage a third-party peer reviewer for a traffic assessment at the last meeting. GPI has prepared a summary of comments. The summary has been sent to the Petitioner who is reviewing the report with their traffic engineer. The Petitioner has requested a continuance of the hearing to the 10/17/23 meeting.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Crocker, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:
VOTED: to continue the hearing on Major Project Site Plan Special Permit No. 2023-03 to 10/17/23 at 7:30 p.m.

Appointment:

7:05 p.m. – Needham Housing Authority – discussion about Linden/Chambers Redevelopment Project.

Reginald C. Foster, Chairman of the Needham Housing Authority, noted that in 2019 the Needham Housing Authority completed a Facilities Master Plan (FMP). There are 336 affordable units in various states of being worn out. The FMP identified are 5 major modernization and redevelopment projects. In mid-2021 the Preservation and Restoration Initiative (PRI) was launched, and the Cambridge Housing Authority was hired as a consultant. The first two projects are 1) the redevelopment of the 152-unit Linden/Chambers and is a top priority; and 2) the complete renovation/modernization of the Seabeds and Cook units. A third project, which won't start before 2028 at the earlies, is the redevelopment of the High Rock Estates remaining 60 bungalows. (In 2005-2009, the first twenty bungalows were redone to duplex units.) In January 2023, Bargmann Hendrie+Archetype Inc. (BHA) was hired to lead the Linden/Chambers project. The Conceptual Design was completed in June 2023 and the applicant and was presented the Planning Board at the June 20, 2023 meeting for input and guidance. The project has now complete the schematic design phase. The Schematic Design will be presented tonight along with the required zoning relief, and a community engagement plan will be discussed.

Dan Chen, lead architect, noted there have been many changes since the conceptual design. Originally in the Phase 1A/1B Conceptual Design there were 144 1-bedroom units to be built in 2 identical U shaped buildings. This conceptual design required were 4 elevators and 4 stairwells. In the Schematic Design, Phase 1A and 1B will have 136 units, including 8 two bedroom units, and only needs 2 elevators and 3 stairwells. Making cost reductions was also the major driver of other schematic design changes: there is a much tighter and straight design; the 2 buildings have been combined to have a shared a common core; and the two amenity and utility room spaces have been combined into one space. By having 4 stories, besides having a cheaper, more compact footprint while still retaining approximately the same number of units, there's the added advantage of increasing open space by 50% over the Conceptual Design. Even though a 4th story has been added, it's only 2 feet higher than the 3 story 51' height proposed in the Conceptual Design. This has been achieved by redesigning the roof and lowering unit ceilings from 9 feet to 8 feet in each apartment. Other advantages of the propose Schematic Design: the distance setback from Linden Street has been increased from 25 feet to >80 feet; tenant parking is closer to the front door a 0.5 parking ratio; and a 17,000 sq. ft. building footprint reduction (FAR 0.42).

Mr. Alpert asked if Schematic Design Phase 2 would be the same as the Conceptual Design. Mr. Chen stated it would be. Pulling the building back to 80 feet makes a significant buffer. The concept design was for 3 stories with 9-foot finished ceilings and a 15-foot ceiling in the attic totaling 51 feet. The schematic design is 4 floors with 8-foot ceilings and a 10-foot attic ceiling totaling 53 feet. A 4th floor has been inserted into the attic space. Architecturally it appears flatter than the 3-story. The project was 15,777 square feet into the wetland buffer zone. With the schematic design, the infringement into the buffer zone has been reduced. There is nothing in the design within the 25-foot no-disturb zone. Mr. Alpert asked if there is any more room to push the building back toward Maple Street. Maybe 15 or 20 feet without disturbing the wetlands. Mr. Chen stated it is very tight. The building is outside the 25-foot buffer which is the reason the building is twisted and angled the way it is. Many versions of this have been studied. The applicant wanted to make this as compact as possible to save cost. The project is looking at 107,000 square feet but it started at 122,000 square feet. Mr. Foster stated the Conservation Commission is pleased with the significant improvements. A full Development Review Team meeting was done with all town departments. The Fire Chief wants to be able to drive a fire truck around back.

Mr. Chen noted the Phase 1A/1B building setback is 88 feet and the a 5-foot buffer to the sidewalk. There will be a strip of green space in the back of Phase 1B. The Fire Department needs to get to the back of both sides with no need to circle around. Mr. Foster that a review meeting with the FD had been scheduled. He noted that the buildings will be fully sprinklered. The project will go a little bit with the 50' wetland buffer zone in Phase 1B. Mr. Alpert noted a little green space in back of the building. Mr. Crocker asked if the residents have access by a back door. Mr. Chen stated there is no rear access but a common access out of the stairwell. A tree survey was done so the applicants are aware of the condition of the trees. The concept design had 252 units with 3 and 4 stories with the 4th story at 62 feet with a pitched roof above. He showed the existing 152 studio units.

Mr. Block asked how many one bedroom units are there currently. Mr. Chen stated there are currently 152 units, all studios. In the Concept Plan Phase 1A and 1B were to be separate buildings. The schematic design in Phases 1A, 1B and 2 has 247 units with 4 stories. The total square footage went from 215,600 square feet to 201,800 square feet with a 13,800 square foot redirection. There will be 130 parking spaces. Mr. Alpert asked for clarification as to whether Phase 2 is the same as it was in June. Mr. Chen noted it is, with a lower ridge height. There are no immediate abutters. Mr. Block stated there is no rendering of the view from Maple Street with the trees. Mr. Chen noted that can be done. The trees help to shield the building from Maple Street. There are 2 green spaces on site. On the left is a larger green space. That green space will be developed into an amenity space for residents with gardens, a seating area and recreation. Mr. Crocker asked if there will be basements. Mr. Chen noted there will be no basements and all storm water will be retained on site.

Robert Smart, attorney for the applicant, stated a retention basin is not something that is part of this project or being proposed for this project. The applicant just has land available should the Town want to use it. Ms. McKnight stated she lives in a 105-unit housing development, and she is interested in how people will move around. She asked where the 2 elevators in Phase 1A and 1B are located. Mr. Chen stated the elevators are located in the center. Ms. McKnight commented that all the residents would walk from the elevator to their units. Mr. Chen stated it is 190 feet from the elevator to the end unit. They tried to minimize that distance. If the building was 3 stories, there would probably be another 100 feet to the end unit. Ms. McKnight asked where the community room would be located. Mr. Chen stated the community room is in the middle when people walk in on the 1st floor. There are still some inefficiencies in the plan, and it may still be tweaked. All central services are in the middle.

Ms. McKnight stated having the common room right there in the center makes a difference to the community. She noted the units are to be affordable at 50% of area median income, but it was said the 2-bedroom rent would be higher. Margaret Moran, of the Cambridge Housing Authority, stated the rent is by number of bedrooms. A 2-bedroom rent would be around $400-$500 more per unit per month, but the rent paid by the occupant is based on income. The unit would still be affordable, but the amount of the subsidy would need to be greater. There is a demand for 2-bedroom units for people who need care or assistance. Ms. McKnight asked if the attic space was usable and was informed it was not. She asked how many existing units are there. Ms. Moran stated there are 152 studio units averaging 400 square feet. Ms. McKnight asked where a resident would go for green areas for sociability. Mr. Chen noted there is a small lounge area by the lobby and a large green space outside. This is still being worked on. Ms. Moran stated there would be the ability to sit in the back also.

Ms. McKnight asked if the project will comply with the Town's storm water management regulations and was informed it would. Mr. Block stated there is the opportunity in Phase 1A to have a path to walk to the parking lot rather than go through the lobby. Mr. Chen stated the exit is through the lobby. The Board discussed where the funds would be coming from. The project, as redesigned, saved $10 million and went from $65 million to $55 million. It was noted the big money comes from the federal low-income housing tax credit program. Some comes from debt with some from the Section 8 vouchers and another source is state DHCD which would be moved from state to federal. Mr. Chen noted 72 units will be replaced. The units are $80,000 to $85,000 per unit. This is effectively a grant. The Debt Service is repayable. Mr. Block asked how much of the total cost the debt is and was informed roughly 20%. Mr. Block asked how much is the town cost? Ms. Moran noted CPA funds are budgeted to be about 10% of the total cost. Mr. Block asked if $70 million includes all development and was informed the final details are still being worked out.

Mr. Alpert asked if the applicant was looking to get to Town Meeting in May and the timing for construction. Mr. Foster stated they would like to get to Town Meeting in May. Ms. Moran stated zoning needs to be in place, then competitive funding. They will be breaking ground in the summer of 2025 if all goes well. Mr. Chen stated it would be 16 months for Phase 1A and 16 months for Phase 1B. Mr. Alpert asked if it was $70 million just for Phase 1A and 1B and was informed yes. Mr. Block asked the number of units in Phase 1A and 1B. Ms. Moran stated 136 units. Mr. Foster noted 111 units in Phase 2. There are still people living in Linden/Chambers. They want to minimize disruptions to existing tenants. Mr. Block asked what happens in Phase 2 if funding cannot be secured. Mr. Foster noted the 80 Chambers units can still operate. The core is Phase 1.

Mr. Crocker questioned the adequacy of the common space as proposed. Mr. Foster stated the current community room is 1,400 square feet. The Phase 1A and 1B space is a little larger than that but there are fewer people. Phase 2 will have another community room space. That is more than adequate. Mr. Crocker commented that it is important people have a space they can call their own or feel as if it is their own. Mr. Foster stated they are looking at the area next to 1A with the landscape plan for a large green space. Mr. Foster noted there is a net increase in green space to work in. This is much more usable and available for activities than the current green space. He feels there is tremendous potential for all kinds of different usage. Mr. Crocker noted if the applicants are thinking of gardens, they should work with the Needham Community Gardens. Mr. Foster stated there are existing garden beds and they are working with the Needham Community Gardens already. It is a very high priority to continue that.

Mr. Smart noted there had been talk about the zoning article creating a new district. That would put all the requirements such as use, dimensions and parking, in one place. The town has done this before with the Medical Overlay, Mixed Use 128 Overlay, Elder Services Overlay and the Highway Commercial 1 Overlay. It will be a lot easier to read if there is a new affordable housing district. Affordable is defined in Section 1.3 of the By-Law. Ms. Moran noted deeply affordable means subsidy, affordable means no subsidy and based on income with fixed rent. Section 8 vouchers are based on 30% of income. Ms. McKnight asked what percentage of units would be deeply affordable. Ms. Moran stated 116 of 136 units would have a subsidy attached or be deeply affordable. The others will have a tax credit rent. Section 8 eligible is approximately 20 tax credit units and affordable at 50% of income.

Mr. Block asked if the Board should modify the definition of affordable so as not to impose other restrictions. Mr. Smart stated it could be done. He would be interested in what the Board says. Mr. Block noted it is worth flagging. There needs to be clarity in the definition and significance of the definition to prevent unintended consequences. Mr. Smart feels the Board's preference is to have a definition to make all units deeply affordable. Ms. McKnight stated what is missing is the idea that 100% of the units will be affordable. She wants to be careful to include that. Ms. Newman stated senior housing, disabled or family housing is not included as a zoning requirement. Mr. Foster noted a senior age restriction and disabled was required for the existing Linden/Chambers development by a vote of Town Meeting authorizing the conveyance of a parcel of land for the development. Mr. Smart stated an affordable housing district is being created. He wants the use to be of right subject to site plan review. Applicants should go through the site plan review process and have a posted hearing. It is a pretty expansive set of standards. Ms. Newman stated single-family and two-family residential uses are being allowed in the underlying districts. Mr. Smart stated they are not tied to that. It could be taken out.

Mr. Smart stated part of this property is in Single Residence A and the other part in General Residence. The current multi-family use is allowed by variances. This 11-acre parcel has been assembled over time. There are numerous restrictions and variances following each of the conveyances of land by the Town. Mr. Alpert feels it is a good point to have its own district and get rid of the underlying Single Residence and General Residence zoning. Ms. McKnight commented the current buildings are protected by variances. There is nothing relevant about underlying or protected uses. Mr. Smart agreed. Ms. McKnight feels this need to say it does not affect variances issued by the Zoning Board. Those variances stay in place protecting the existing buildings as long as the buildings are there, and the new zoning is for the new buildings. Mr. Smart feels someone should speak with Town Counsel to see the best way to go. What is proposed are a series of dimensional and parking requirements. It will be important to hear what the public says.

Mr. Block asked the depth of the building and was informed it was 58 feet. Mr. Block stated if it is determined to be 3 stories and not 4 stories how much more front setback would be needed if at the 88 feet now. Mr. Chen stated it is an issue of getting light. The same density needs to be maintained. The numbers are unforgiving in today's environment. U shaped and L shaped buildings cost more. Mr. Foster stated reducing from 144 to 136 units and lopping off a floor makes it more difficult to afford. The amount of money that could be borrowed goes down fast. Mr. Smart stated a 20-foot side and rear setback is being proposed with a minimum FAR of 0.5 and a maximum of 25 units per acre. This will be about 23 units per acre. Ms. McKnight noted the proposed minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet is way too small. There should be at least 20,000 square feet minimum, which is about half an acre. The frontage requirement in the Apartment A-1 District is 120 feet and for the Apartment A-2 District (North Hill) it is 180 feet. She feels the frontage requirement should be raised.

Mr. Smart stated the maximum lot coverage is 25% and maximum height is 58 feet. He is thinking the height will actually be 53 feet but wants to leave some room. It should be a 4-story maximum. The Board discussed the half story and site plan review. They will have the Planning Director look at this. Ms. McKnight feels they should look at the site plan review section to see if it needs revision. Mr. Alpert stated he was confused because major project is the same as minor project. Mr. Block stated Section 3.16 of the proposed new zoning should be Section 3.17. In Section 3.16.4 (c), it says "projects after site plan review in Section 7.4." He asked if it should be after site plan review is completed and decision rendered. Mr. Smart stated it could say "after completed." This was agreed.

Mr. Block noted in section 3.16.8, it mentions "performed." He asked if it should be something else. Mr. Block stated that Ms. Moran mentioned all dimensional regulations need to be "by right". Ms. Moran stated in order to be eligible to apply for Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) money and tax credit funding the zoning needs to be in place. The project can go through the review process but not a special permit process. She stated the basic part of the zoning needs to be complete. Mr. Block would like to see some verification of that. He feels they need to include in the zoning for 2-bedrooms a restriction in occupancy for live-in assistance. Mr. Alpert asked why not have 2 elderly sisters share a 2-bedroom apartment. Ms. Moran stated there could be someone under 62 who takes care of another family member under critical care. A limitation to occupancy by personal care attendants cannot be dictated. A caregiver may or may not be an occupant. Mr. Block wants to preserve the deed restrictions that are now in place, prior to zoning changes. Mr. Alpert stated deed restrictions limit occupancy solely to elderly and disabled currently. Mr. Block wants a restriction in the zoning that the residents have to be a certain age or disabled. Mr. Alpert asked why that restriction is necessary

Mr. Foster will look at current federal and state programs for deeply affordable housing and look at deed restrictions. He will propose something for the old deed requirement and propose wording for zoning By-Laws for the current reality. The Board discussed who could actually live there. It was noted there was going to be an age restriction, but Mr. Foster stated it would be elderly and disabled, who may not be elderly. Mr. Alpert heard they want affordable and deeply affordable to comply with federal requirements. Mr. Smart stated it should be left to the Housing Authority to make the determination. All units need to be affordable or deeply affordable. Mr. Foster noted elderly housing is contemplated and what is allowable under regulations and Section 8 housing and what conforms to today's standards rather than 1958. Mr. Crocker noted someone could be disabled at any age. Mr. Foster stated their intent is to redevelop this as senior housing. There are 25 acres of NHA affordable family housing just up the hill at the High Rock Estates development. Mr. Alpert noted the sense of this Board is they do not want to limit to elderly and disabled if funding being applied for would allow that.

Mr. Block wants to make sure zoning reflects what is intended. Ms. Moran stated they will do homework on their side and come back with a proposal. Mr. Block asked what the next steps and processes are. Mr. Foster stated there will be a resident meeting the week of 10/9 and the first of the community meetings on the 17th. There will be a 2-page community engagement plan. Ms. McKnight asked if residents will be allowed to come to the meeting. Mr. Foster stated the meetings will be open to the public. It will be held in the Linden Chambers meeting room. He noted what residents ask about is different from the neighbor's questions. He will reach out to Town Meeting members. Mr. Block stated there have been complaints about lack of notice of previous community meetings the NHA has had. He stated they need to improve the notice of the meetings. They should have a summary in the notice, email all Town Meeting members and local news would be helpful. He asked if Mr. Foster anticipates additional community meetings. Mr. Foster stated there will be a second community meeting the week of 10/23. Ms. Newman stated the applicant will be back on 11/7 with revisions. The Board discussed how many community meetings would be held and the timing of the zoning to go to the Select Board. Mr. Block would like a summary of comments made at the community meetings. There are some details to be worked out with the zoning.

<u>Zoning Board of Appeals – October 19, 2023.</u>

<u>30 Wilshire Park – Jeremy & Jessica Karlin, owners</u>

Mr. Block stated he has no business interest, but he is personal friends with the property owners. He asked Mr. Crocker to lead the discussion and he stepped outside. Mr. Crocker stated the applicant is tearing down an existing deck and putting an addition on. Ms. Newman stated the property is currently conforming with FAR and would go above the FAR from 0.37 to 0.42. That is not allowed except by variance. A non-conformity cannot be created by special permit. Mr. Crocker stated, if granted, there would need to be a requirement for all stormwater to be retained on the property. Ms. Newman stated the applicant would need to be compliant with the Stormwater By-Law. Mr. Alpert noted the non-conformity of the FAR can only be allowed by variance.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Alpert, and seconded by Ms. McKnight, it was by a vote of the three members present unanimously:

VOTED: to make a comment to the Zoning Board of Appeals on 37 Wilshire Park and point out the change in FAR will be non-compliant and pursuant to our By-Law can only be allowed by variance and the ZBA should make sure the addition would cover storm water management regulations.

Mr. Block returned to the meeting.

<u>24 Webster Street – Med A. Gharsallaoui, owner</u>

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: with respect to 24 Webster Street, to make no comment.

<u>Minutes</u>

Ms. McKnight noted on the minutes of 4/4/23, page 2, the discussion with Mr. Frail, it says Ms. Espada and Ms. McKnight participated. Ms. McKnight did not participate but Mr. Crocker did. Ms. McKnight participated in the CAPC meeting. In the last paragraph the last name of Justin from Engineering needs to be inserted. On page 4, the Report, Ms. Espada stated "that is the next generation anyway and not really the rental." Mr. Block stated to remove the sentence. Mr. Block noted "building construction costs about 1% more." He stated to leave that sentence as is.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:

VOTED: to accept the minutes of 4/4/23 with the redlined changes shown and with the changes discussed.

Ms. McKnight noted on the minutes of 7/11/23, page 2, 2nd paragraph, it says "Mr. Alpert noted that any site plan modifications would be across all districts." It would be noted under the site plan review process. The sentence will be deleted. Mr. Block noted on page 3, under Joe Matthews discussion, it says "even affordable housing would need double if not higher than median income." Ms. McKnight stated it was part of his presentation. Mr. Block stated to leave the sentence in. Ms. McKnight noted the last paragraph, "he is open to height, setbacks and lot coverage but enforcement would be difficult." Mr. Block stated FAR is not as relevant. The real limiting factor is height and setbacks and lot coverage. He did speak to the point of enforcement. He suggested taking out the 2 highlighted sentences. On page 6, Ms. McKnight was not Vice-Chair. That would be Ms. Espada

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Crocker, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:
VOTED: to accept the minutes of 7/11/23 with the redlined changes and additional changes discussed at this meeting.

Ms. McKnight noted on the minutes of 8/15/23, "some may say local housing is a commercial use." Mr. Block stated he was referring to multi-family housing. Ms. McKnight noted on the next page "Mr. Crocker wants to see what is happening with detached ADUs." She asked what that meant. Mr. Crocker feels it could be he wanted to see what was happening in other towns with detached ADUs. Ms. McKnight noted a reference to "this." Mr. Block was referring to the Planning Schedule excel spreadsheet. Ms. McKnight noted in the 5th paragraph Mr. Crocker stated it cannot be regulated. Mr. Crocker stated to end the sentence at "inside space" and remove "cannot be regulated." Ms. McKnight noted in the last paragraph there is a reference to a committee. What committee? Mr. Block stated it would be a large house committee. He noted it should be HONE rather than HOME. Ms. McKnight noted "Mr. Block wants to make sure the Housing Committee is included." Mr. Block noted he wanted the Planning Board to participate and be on a more engaged level. He suggested striking the line in yellow.

Upon a motion made by Ms. McKnight, and seconded by Mr. Crocker, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:
VOTED: to accept the minutes of 8/15/23 with changes shown in redline and changes discussed this evening.

<u>Report from Planning Director and Board members.</u>

Ms. Newman noted the next HONE meeting is this Thursday. They will be reviewing the results from the modeling the consultant has done on the recommendations in the housing plan and looking at what the model represents and what would happen if the Town changed the zoning in its commercial districts and allowed housing by right instead of by special permit. She thinks the results would show the plan allows more than an adequate number of housing units. It would be a decision of how far the Town wants to expand. If the existing zoning itself provides an adequate number of housing units to encompass the housing plan recommendations, that is surprising and she feels it would be a different conversation than what some of the Board members thought. Mr. Block would like on the agenda for the next meeting to review the direction of the HONE meeting 2 days from now. He wants the Planning Board to participate and discuss. He would like to make a comment to the HONE Committee that to achieve the goals of zoning they should allow for a much greater number of units per acre. The number needs to be higher than the base zoning would allow. Ms. Newman stated the goal here is to lay out the parameters and how it should be expanded. Mr. Block would like, on the 17th, for Ms. Newman, Ms. Espada and Ms. McKnight to report on the outcome of the HONE meeting.

Ms. Newman stated she is preparing the budget. She will be asking for an additional full-time planner. Mr. Block feels the budget for studies should be increased. He wants to make sure there is sufficient funding. Ms. Newman feels they can talk about that. She noted Karen Sunnarborg is leaving. She just wants to do consulting. She will stay until Ms. Newman finds someone new. There are a lot of towns that use an agency for housing planning. She has reached out to a couple of people she knows to see if they are interested. Mr. Crocker would like the Board to look into what the Planning Board working group did with the Tree By-Law. He understands it is the Select Board that would need to look into this. Mr. Block recommended Mr. Crocker have a conversation with Select Board members and report back. Mr. Crocker will do that and noted the Select Board is planning something later in the year to discuss trees.

Mr. Alpert noted there was a tree committee that did a lot of work, but it got scuttled and nothing happened. Ms. Clee noted the outcome was there was a draft of a General By-Law and the draft ended up relying heavily on how Wellesley did it. The Board began discussing the regulations but the vibe from the Select Board was there was a lot on their plate. Ms. McKnight commented her understanding was it may be too much work for the Tree Warden. Mr. Alpert agreed the Select Board were supporting that it would be too much work for the Tree Warden, so it was put on the back burner. He stated there is a draft By-Law but no draft regulations. That is where it needs to be picked up. The Board needs to formally approach the Select Board. This is a high priority. Mr. Crocker stated Wellesley has had a Tree By-Law for a while. Someone should reach out to Wellesley.

Correspondence

Mr. Block noted an email from Rick Myers, dated 9/18/23, regarding 888 Great Plain Avenue and an email from Joe Abruzese, dated 9/28/23, regarding the release of the Planning Board 9/11/23 Executive Session meeting minutes. Town Counsel Christopher Heep is handling that. Mr. Alpert feels it is a bad precedence to release executive session minutes. Mr. Block noted a letter from Planning Director Lee Newman to Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, dated 9/26/23, regarding donations to the Tree Fund for the property at 920 South Street and a notice of hearing from the Town of Wellesley regarding a zoning By-Law change. Ms. McKnight stated Wellesley wants to increase the percentage of residential units so that no less than 20 percent would be affordable. Wellesley is going more for middle income people. Mr. Block noted additional correspondence of 2 Boston Globe articles from Reg Foster – one regarding affordable housing for seniors and the other about Boston suburbs.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Crocker, and seconded by Mr. Alpert, it was by a vote of the four members present unanimously:
VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Kalinowski, Notetaker

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Natasha Espada, Vice-Chairman and Clerk