

# Minutes

**Planning Matters Subcommittee  
June 23, 2020 at 3 PM  
Zoom Meeting  
East Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01028**

**Members Present:** Chair Donald Anderson, Marilyn Richards, Connor O’Shea, Ralph Page

**Members Absent:** Sid Starks

**Others Present:** John Taikina, East Longmeadow Redeveloper; Joe Conley, Developer

The meeting was opened at 3:00 PM.

The minutes from the March 10, 2020 meeting were reviewed. Ms. Richards noted that the title of Planning Board should be added after Tyde Richards’s name to be consistent with the other names. On page 2, the first sentence in the second paragraph should be changed to read, “Ms. Richards asked about facilitating preferences for senior citizens and veterans so long as it met the Fair Housing Act guidelines.” On page 3 in the second paragraph, the sentence, “Ms. Richards and Mr. Anderson responded that East Longmeadow residents should always be given preference,” should be added after the first sentence.

**Motion:** Ms. Richards moved to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2020 minutes as corrected. Mr. O’Shea seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. Richards - aye; Mr. O’Shea - aye; Mr. Page - aye; Mr. Anderson - aye.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion about capping the maximum number of affordable units to 20%.

Mr. Anderson gave background information on how the topic arose through discussions with Atty. Pill. Mr. Anderson said the impetus of the bylaw is the site of the former package machinery and a developer wants to turn it into a mixed-used village. The concern was not wanting to put the town in a situation where the town doesn’t have enough affordable housing and have potential MGL chapter 40B projects. As a result, the subcommittee voted to put in a 10% minimum on affordable housing. However, the subcommittee’s efforts weren’t to promote large affordable housing projects. Mr. Anderson posed the question if the subcommittee should put a maximum of 20% affordable units?

Mr. Page thought our language limits it to 10% as it reads today. Mr. Anderson responded that Atty. Pill didn’t think our current language capped the number of affordable units.

Ms. Richards suggested adding “a required maximum of 10%” to the language.

Mr. O’Shea asked if Atty. Pill gave indication that we can put a maximum on the number of affordable units. Mr. Anderson said yes, the town could.

Mr. Anderson noted that he will ask Atty. Pill for language on how to say 10% is required and there is a maximum of 10%.

Mr. Page asked if adding the word “exactly” would eliminate any confusion on the minimum and maximum. Mr. Page also asked why the sentence says “additional housing” instead of “shall provide housing.” Ms. Richards replied that it was related to the mixed-use village district projects at the beginning of the sentence, as the project as a whole provides additional types of housing. Mr. O’Shea also thought that additional housing was in reference to the project and the affordable housing is in relation to any of the housing. Mr. Page suggested removing the word additional.

**Motion:** Mr. O’Shea made a motion to change 5.3-B-13-a to read “Mixed-Use Village District projects, anticipating that 100 Residential units or greater are to be developed, shall include affordable housing at a ratio of 10% affordable units, according to the following schedule.” Ms. Richards seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. Richards - aye; Mr. O’Shea - aye; Mr. Page - aye; Mr. Anderson - aye.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion on limiting residential bedroom sizes to a mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms.

Mr. Anderson began by stating this was another topic that came from Atty. Pill’s review.

Ms. Richards recalled from previous discussions that it might make sense to limit to 1-2 bedrooms for apartments but not for townhomes or condos. She added that people might want an additional room for storage space or as an office and that condos in her neighborhood have 3 bedrooms and some have a loft. Mr. Anderson thought that without a proper maximum, there could be dire impacts to the school system and 1-2 bedrooms would be good for most cases. Mr. O’Shea thought there was no need to limit the number of bedrooms as it’s a matter of economics and the developer would still be limited by the number of units in the parcel. He echoed Ms. Richard’s sentiment that people might want an office and storage space.

Mr. Taikina joined the meeting and said that townhomes would have 3 bedrooms and the rental units would be substantially 1 bedroom. He also noted that the parking requirements are based on the number of bedrooms and is already the town’s limiting factor and safety net.

Mr. Anderson asked if condos and apartments would be next to each other. Mr. Taikina said the condos would be in one building, while apartments would be in another building, though the buildings could be right next to each other.

Mr. Anderson volunteered to draft language for review at the next meeting for limiting the number of bedrooms in 5.3-B-12-g to 1-2 bedrooms for rental units and 3 bedrooms for condos and townhomes.

Mr. Page disconnected and rejoined the meeting.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion about contract zoning where it's required to have a host community agreement agreed upon prior to the actual zone change being made.

Mr. Anderson explained that the case law indicated contract zoning would be permissible and such a change would require the execution of a host community agreement prior to the actual zone change being approved.

Mr. Conley joined the meeting and commented on the affordable housing cap. He noted that his experience has shown it best to pick a firm number and stick with it for clarity, such as it being a requirement of the applicant to build at 10% affordable units to the schedule not to exceed.

Ms. Richards wanted to make sure this change wouldn't be asking too much of the developer to provide all of this information in a host community agreement before the zone change is made. Mr. Anderson said it would be a conditional zone change subject to the approval of a host community agreement first. Ms. Richards replied that there are other protections for the town since the whole project is under special permit.

Mr. Page said the current flow is to get a zone change and then submit a site plan to the planning board for approval of a special permit and then execute a host community agreement. He noted that this would put the host community agreement first before we even know the impacts of a project.

Mr. O'Shea said the town would already be protected today since no project could be built under a permit if they don't meet the provision of having a host community agreement as specified in the bylaw.

Mr. Taikina agreed with Ms. Richards and Mr. Page, stating that it would be a disadvantage to both parties to try to negotiate an agreement with bad information or no information, since the details wouldn't be uncovered until later in the process.

Mr. Anderson stated that he will follow up with Atty. Pill to make sure the intent of contract zoning wasn't lost in translation.

Mr. Page stated that he will update the document with today's motion.

The next meeting was set for July 7, 2020 at 3 PM.

**Motion:** Mr. O'Shea made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Richards seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Ms. Richards - aye; Mr. O'Shea - aye; Mr. Page - aye; Mr. Anderson - aye.

Respectfully submitted,  
Connor O'Shea