



# Town of Westminster

MASSACHUSETTS 01473  
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE  
**PLANNING BOARD**

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Jon Wyman, chairman

Marie N. Auger, vice chairman

Jill Normandin

Andrew Rice

Linda Wiest

November 7, 2017

## MINUTES

### Planning Board

### Meeting Room 222

Members present: Jon Wyman, Marie Auger, Jill Normandin, Linda Wiest, Andrew Rice and Town Planner Stephen Wallace.

Additional Attendees: Tom Murry, Fred Confalone and Peter Richer (Waste Management), Pete Normandin, Joe Serio, David & Jane Ferrazza, Ross Barber, several other citizens that did not sign in.

J. Wyman, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

First order of business: Marie Auger made a motion to accept the minutes for October 24, 2017 Linda Wiest seconded, All in favor, motion carried (4 - 0). Andrew Rice abstained as he was not present at this meeting.

The second agenda item was acting on a request from the Department of Public Works (DPW). Per State law, the DPW referred the proposed layout of a new town road to the Planning Board for their recommendation. The new road in question is Sipila Drive, which currently serves as the driveway for the senior center at 68 West Main Street. The driveway is being accepted as a town road so that it can provide frontage for an eventual senior housing development in back of the senior center. The Planning Board voted unanimously (5 - 0) to recommend acceptance of Sipila Drive as a town road.

Chairman Wyman then re-opened the public hearing on the zoning amendments that the Planning Board will propose at the November Special Town Meeting.

The Town Planner explained that the first three zoning amendments deal with the planned expansion of the Waste Management landfill on Route 31. The first zoning amendment adds a new Solid Waste Management District (SWMD) to the list of districts in the Zoning Bylaw, the second zoning amendment outlines the provisions that govern the new SWMD, and the third zoning amendment adds a definition for the term "solid waste management" within the bylaw's definition section. The Board voted unanimously (5 - 0) to forward these three zoning amendments to town meeting.

The fourth zoning amendment is a temporary moratorium on the retail sale of marijuana. The Town Planner explained that the moratorium will last through the end of the 2018 calendar year and will buy the town time on two fronts: first, waiting to see how the State Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) decides

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to regulate this new land use, and secondly, allowing the town some time to decide whether or not it wants to allow the retail sale of marijuana as a permitted use within town boundaries. The Town Planner explained that Town Counsel recently briefed the Board of Selectmen on their options, and the town will likely bring the matter (whether to allow the use or not) to a referendum vote sometime in April of next year. The Board voted unanimously (5 – 0) to forward this zoning amendment to town meeting.

The fifth zoning amendment is a housekeeping amendment recommended by the Building Commissioner, who pointed out that the provisions relating to floodplain development found within Section 205-46 are the same as those found in Section 205-9 (Floodplain District). Further, Section 205-46 refers the reader to the Table of Uses, but the reader will not find any floodplain development provisions in the Table of Uses. The Building Commissioner recommends deleting the duplicative text in Section 205-46, as the provisions governing development in a floodplain are already enumerated in Section 205-9. The Planning Board voted unanimously (5 – 0) to forward this amendment to town meeting.

The sixth zoning amendment deals with revising the residential section of the Zoning Bylaw's Table of Uses. While most of the changes in the table were already approved at the May 2017 Town Meeting, there were two proposed changes to the table that are significant: 1) allowing townhouse apartments By Right in the Residential-I district (as opposed to by Special Permit) and; 2) allowing townhouse apartments by Special Permit in the Residential-II district (as opposed to not being allowed at present). Board members Normandin and Wiest expressed concern that these two changes would change the character of the community and were too much too soon for a small town like Westminster. Board member Normandin also expressed a concern that townhouse apartments could potentially hurt the value of abutting properties, but did not submit any evidence to support this claim. Several audience members also expressed concern about the impact these two changes could have on the community character and the Westminster landscape. The Board voted unanimously (5 – 0) to forward this zoning amendment to town meeting, but strike the two changes relating to townhouse apartments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

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