



# **TOWN OF ACUSHNET**

## **MASSACHUSETTS**

### **OFFICE OF THE PLANNING BOARD**

**Mailing Address: 122 MAIN ST.**

**Office Address: 130 Main Street, Parting Ways, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**

**ACUSHNET, MA 02743**

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## **Acushnet Planning Commission Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes for November 2, 2023**

Open: 6:02pm  
Adjourn: 7:57pm

Present: Mark Francois, Chairman  
Rick Ellis, Vice Chairman  
Bryan Deschamps, Member  
Dave Davignon, Member (via Zoom)  
Steve Boucher, Member

Issue: The Chairman welcomes those in attendance and makes the media notification

Issue: A motion is made to open the Planning Board meeting.  
So moved: R. Ellis  
Second: S. Boucher  
Vote was 5-0 roll call

Issue: The Chairman asks the Board Members to introduce themselves

Issue: A motion is made to open the Public Hearing portion of the meeting  
So moved: B. Deschamps  
Second: R. Ellis  
Vote was 5-0 roll call

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

#### **a) Special Residential Development - Over-55 Zoning Bylaw Amendment (continued)**

To see if the Town will vote to amend Article VIII (Zoning Bylaw) of the General Bylaws by adding a new Section 3.3.7, Special Residential Development – Over 55 Housing, or take any other action in relation thereto. The Planning Board will vote to close the Public Hearing, then will begin deliberation, votes may be taken. The plans and accompanying documentation are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office, Parting Ways Building, 130 Main St. 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, during regular business hours.

The Chairman states this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> public hearing for this warrant article and notes that the Board will have discussion and then the public will have questions or comments. The Chairman notes that there have been no changes or amendments to this Article since the last meeting.

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Several residents expressed their concerns about this bylaw amendment and some believe it could eventually cause a population explosion in the Town. Chairman Francois and Member Boucher gave several facts surrounding the details within the proposal. Selectman Hinkley was present and confirmed certain details of an MBTA adjacent community once the rail project is finished. He also noted that this proposed amendment will be scrutinized by several Boards in Town with special permits and orders of conditions. A resident on Zoom had questions and concerns regarding 40b affordable housing. The Chairman noted that the proposed article has nothing to do with 40b affordable housing. Member Dave Davignon expressed some thoughts via Zoom and he is concerned with the disinformation being spread by one individual on social media and believes that is being driven by ill intentions against individuals in Town and certain members of the Town of Acushnet. Dave D. notes the reality that soon enough the State will start to mandate multi-family housing especially in MBTA adjacent communities. Dave D. notes that the Town has been stagnant with growth over the past several decades and while it is great to have open spaces and farmland in Town the burden on taxpayers has been greater without any growth. Dave D. notes the ever-rising costs of schools, pensions and benefits etc. Rick E. notes this is a complicated issue and the hard part is the financial implication. Rick E. states there should be a financial study done to determine if this article will provide tax relief or become a tax burden.

Issue: A motion is made to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

So moved: S. Boucher

Second: R. Ellis

Vote was 5-0 roll call

Issue: A motion is made to endorse the original Article with amendments by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.

So moved: S. Boucher

Second: B. Deschamps

Vote was 4-0 (one abstention, Rick Ellis)

Roll call was 4-0

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- b) **Site Plan Review and Solar Special Permit Modification (Continued);** Plan entitled Lambert Street Access Road, Issued June 6, 2023. To process a modification for a site plan review and a special permit for a 7.5 MW solar array proposed by Syncarpha Park Drive LLC. The engineer is Weston & Sampson. The plans and accompanying documentation are available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office, Parting Ways Building, 130 Main Street 1<sup>st</sup> floor, during regular business hours.

Issue: A motion is made to open this Public Hearing continuation for the Syncarpha Park Drive special permit modification.

So moved: S. Boucher

Second: R. Ellis

Vote was 5-0 roll call

Resident, Mark Morad, came forward with questions. He states that because this public hearing is about Lambert Street access road there should not be any votes about Brooks Ave access. Chairman Francois notified Mr. Morad that the motion suggested by Syncarpha at the last meeting has nothing to do with how the Board votes.

Resident, Kathy Murray, came forward and asked what is the MEPA process. The Chairman noted that is governed by the Conservation Commission. Dave D. explained the process to the audience.

Kathy asked about the number of trucks per day allowed when accessing the site. She asks about the condition of the road and the Chairman notes if the proponent damages the road, they are responsible to repair it but normal road use would be looked at by the DPW.

Jesse O'Donnell of Weston & Sampson gave further clarification of the MEPA process. Kathy Murray asks how big is the solar array and Jesse notes it will be about 22 acres. Residents continued with questions surrounding permitting, wetland replications, and other activities of the proponent. The Board members explained each situation to the best of their abilities.

Issue: A motion is made to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

So moved: R. Ellis

Second: B. Deschamps

Vote was 5-0 roll call

Issue: A motion is made to amend the conditions of approval to change the entrance from Brooks Ave to Lambert Street from a previously approved plan. If the proponent fails to get Lambert Street approval by various other agencies, they would have to come back to the Planning Board to amend the conditions of approval of the special permit back to Brooks Ave with a public hearing.

So moved: S. Boucher

Second: B. Deschamps

Vote was 5-0 roll call

Issue: A motion is made to adjourn the meeting.

So moved: S. Boucher


Second: R. Ellis

Vote was 5-0 roll call

Respectively submitted,


Paul Sullivan  
Administrative Assistant

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Paul Sullivan

12-11-23

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Date

  
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Mark Francois, Chairman

12/7/23  
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Date