



**Town of West Newbury  
Planning Board  
Tuesday October 17, 2023  
381 Main Street, Town Office Building  
[www.wnewbury.org](http://www.wnewbury.org)  
**Minutes of Meeting****

**Open Session:** 7:00 PM by remote participation (see below)

**Addendum to Meeting Notice regarding Remote Participation:**

As is permissible by State Law the Planning Board conducted its meeting via remote participation. The meeting agenda included instructions for the public about how to participate remotely. No in-person attendance of members of the public was permitted, but every effort was made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that it has been unable to do so, despite best efforts, the Board will post on the Town of West Newbury website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Vice Chair Deb Hamilton called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Members in attendance were Ann Bardeen, Ray Cook, and Tim Cronin. Brian Murphey was not in attendance. Town Planner, Sue Brown, was also in attendance. All participated via Zoom Conference.

**1. Informal Discussion with John Sarkis regarding potential Special Permits for Reduced Frontage Lot and Shared Driveway at 20 Ash Street**

John Sarkis, a hired consultant by the owners of the property Debbie and Dennis Bruce, presented plans to the Planning Board for the 10.18-acre lot of land. A septic plan, prepared by a previous consultant, was also presented to the Planning Board. Sarkis reviewed the existing conditions plan and the concept plan. Debbie and Dennis Bruce asked Sarkis to help them develop the lot into two separate lots under the reduced frontage provisions of the zoning bylaw. The owners would like to sell the lot with the existing dwelling and develop the other lot. Sarkis hoped to create a common driveway out of the existing gravel driveway. Sarkis stated he will need to plan out a projected turnout for emergency vehicles and the definition of access along Ash Street. Hamilton stated that if the driveway needed to be widened, it will likely need Conservation Commission approval due to the proximity to wetlands. Ray Cook stated that in the updated bylaws, it requires that each lot provide the possibility of reasonable practical access without the use of a common driveway. Cook explained that the lot with 126 feet of frontage would need to have the possibility of practical access and with the wetlands, it may be an issue. Cook expressed concern regarding the proposed building site – the 200-foot diameter circle on the concept plan is very steep land. Sarkis and Planning Board members discussed the “possibility of practical access” for the lot. Sarkis stated he could plan for a sub-division instead of a common driveway.

**2. 26 Church Street – Withdrawal of Special Permit Application**

Hamilton stated that Chris Castro has requested to withdraw the special permit application for a kennel at 26 Church Street.

Hamilton made a motion to accept the Castros' withdrawal of the special permit application to build a new building at 26 Church Street without prejudice. Seconded by Cook, with the amendment to the language to state "withdrawing a special permit application to have a kennel in a residential area." Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0. Murphey was not in attendance.

**3. Special Town Meeting Update regarding proposed Zoning Articles**

Hamilton stated that Town Planner, Sue Brown, prepared an FAQ document on ADU's, which is the main topic to be discussed for the Town Meeting report. MBTA Communities will also be discussed briefly. Ann Barden stated that a member would read the motions for the articles presented by the Planning Board. Cook stated that the motions/articles should be presented but the Board should not give a report on other issues. Cook agreed to present the motions/articles if needed.

**4. Update on Housing Opportunities Initiative**

Brown confirmed next steps in the Housing Opportunities Initiative process, noting that Dodson & Flinker will present Concept Plans and Draft Zoning Regulations at the November 7<sup>th</sup> Planning Board Meeting to get Board and resident feedback and will present again at the November 15 Town Project Fair and Forum.

Following the Forum, the process will be on-going and iterative between Dodson & Flinker, the Town and EOHLC to work toward consensus on regulations and to assure what is proposed is in compliance with State regulations.

Dodson & Flinker see Design Guidelines as an important element of the regulations to get Board and community input on next.

**5. General Business:**

- **Minutes** – September 5, 2023; September 19, 2023;.  
**Cook moved to approve the minutes of September 5, 2023, as amended. Seconded by Bardeen. Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0. Murphey not in attendance.**  
**Hamilton moved to approve the minutes of September 19, 2023, as amended. Seconded by Bardeen. Roll call vote was taken and the motion passed 4-0. Murphey not in attendance.**
- **Correspondence** – Correspondence was reviewed from Town of Newbury, City of Haverhill, Town of Merrimac and Town of Groveland.
- **Administrative Details** – None.
- **Items not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in Advance of a Meeting**

**Adjournment:**

**Hamilton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 P.M. Seconded by Cook. Roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Katelyn Bradstreet, *Administrative Assistant to the Planning Board*