

IPSWICH PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES

Town Hall, Planning Office Conference Room, 25 Green Street, Ipswich, MA  
Monday, March 2, 2020  
6:00 PM

Pursuant to a meeting notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Ipswich Planning Board was held on Monday, March 2, 2020 in the Planning Office Conference Room of Town Hall. Board members Keith Anderson, Carolyn Britt, Paul Nordberg, Kevin Westerhoff, and Mitch Lowe were present. Board member Helen Weatherall was absent. Planning Staff, Ethan Parsons and Kristen Grubbs, were also present.

Anderson convened the meeting at 6:10 PM with a quorum present.

**General business, administrative, and operational matters:** Chair Keith Anderson opened the meeting with an introduction, stating from time to time the Board meets to review procedures and policies for Planning Board review of projects. Because several of the current Board members have joined the Board within the past year, the timing was good to convene. Planning Boards have two categories of responsibilities: 1) adjudicatory review of projects and regular permitting decisions, and 2) driving policy related to long-term planning efforts on behalf of the Town.

The Board discussed the process of hearing development applications, suggesting it is good to have a presentation from the applicant, have Board members ask questions, and then turn to the audience for their questions and comments. It was suggested the Chair spend a few minutes at meetings laying out the ground rules and meeting guidelines. The Board discussed large projects that require permits before other Boards (most commonly Conservation Commission, Zoning Board, Design review Board, Architectural Preservation District Commission) seek to collaborate and communicate more clearly during the review process. Perhaps there could be a Board liaison to the other Boards. Or, perhaps on large projects there could be a subcommittee of 1-2 Board members who meet with staff, or staff and applicant, to then share a fuller understanding of the project to the rest of the Board.

It was suggested that the Planning Board webpage could include a link to send comments on projects to Planning Board members (by way of email to Ethan Parsons rather than individual private board member emails).

During site visits, Board members should listen and ask factual questions but not participate in negotiations or discussions with applicants or with each other. Site visits are not public meetings but should still adhere to general open meeting law procedures. Public can attend site visits if approved by the property owner.

The Board with staff support should maintain a list of zoning and other bylaw amendments and revisions to be considered for future Town Meetings. Current and upcoming topics include: payment in lieu procedures related to affordable housing, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness

recommendations, short term rental regulations, water neutral development and regulations, Architectural District appeals process (non-zoning).

It was discussed that it would be useful for the Board to have a Vice-Chair to support the Chair as well as to serve as Chair in the case of the Chair's absence.

**Overview of CDP and HPP:** Staff reviewed the status of the two current long range planning efforts: the Housing Production Plan and the Community Development Plan 2020-2035 Update. March 23<sup>rd</sup> is the Town's Housing Forum. Board members discussed the necessity of speaking out about the rationale and background of why the Town does long range planning, as well as our successes and work needed. The CDP Update will include a public survey during April which will need broad support and outreach. The CDP will have a robust implementation plan and is due to be completed within the next year, to be adopted at Town Meeting in the Spring of 2021.

**Adjournment:** 7:24 PM

Meeting minutes prepared by: Kristen Grubbs, Town Planner

Adopted on: April 2, 2020