

## IPSWICH PLANNING BOARD

### MEETING MINUTES

Planning Office Conference Room, Town Hall plus remote via ZOOM

Thursday, April 14, 2022 at 7:00 PM

Pursuant to a meeting notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a remote meeting of the Ipswich Planning Board was held on Thursday, April 14, 2022, at Town Hall in the Planning Department conference room and remotely using ZOOM. Board members Carolyn Britt (via ZOOM), Mitch Lowe, Toni Mooradd, Helen Weatherall and Associate Member, Laurie Paskavitz, were present. Jeffrey Anderson was absent. Staff, Ethan Parsons, and recording secretary, Odile Breton, were also present.

Mooradd convened the meeting at 7:01 PM with a quorum present. Mooradd is chairing the meeting this evening at the request of Britt.

Mooradd requested an acknowledgement of attendance for all members present. Mooradd reviewed the purpose of the meeting and noted a draft memo was sent to members. Mooradd introduced Jenn Campbell who is attending the meeting and has an interest in joining the Planning Board.

**Citizen Queries:** None noted.

### **Discuss Potential Zoning Amendments for Fall 2022 Town Meeting**

Mooradd reviewed a memo of potential zoning amendments. She noted goals documented in the Community Development Plan (CDP) and Housing Production Plan (HPP) that are related to zoning initiated some of the proposed changes. Parsons said the list can be amended. The purpose of the meeting is to prioritize the proposed amendments.

1. Open Space Protection Zoning (OSPZ) and Water Supply Protection District: Purpose of amendment would be to reduce the number of dwelling units and scale of development by limiting the yield plan or density bonus within Water Supply Protection Districts. It's important to protect the water supply and to treat the district like wetlands. Parsons noted the Town wants open space development instead of subdivisions so he doesn't want to outright deter OSPZ projects. There are incentives to open space development such as density bonus and setback requirements are waived.

Britt expressed concern with items overlooked and being put in the open space. She gave an example of nitrogen loading restriction on open space at the Linebrook Road OSPZ project. Britt suggested adding wording to the proposed amendment: None of the encumbrances of development should be placed on open space. Lowe said there are many items to consider and asked what lots are in the Water Supply Protection District that would be impacted. Lowe requested the Planning Department complete further analysis on this amendment.

2. Single-Family dwelling buildings in multi-family dwelling projects: Proposed amendment would increase the percentage of allowed single family detached units to

50% from 25%. The change addresses flexibility with design, concerns with impervious space, building massing and a need to find balance between development and open space. Britt noted the percentage cannot be 100% as that would allow an applicant to circumvent subdivision regulations. The development should not be predominantly single-family dwellings. Co-housing was discussed but not pursued as an amendment. Lowe noted the proposed amendment needs to be updated for CDP and HPP. Parsons to review for specific items in CDP and HPP related to zoning.

3. Lot Area: Issues with the current definition in the zoning bylaw. Proposal would amend the table of dimensional and density requirements to increase the upland area. The buildable area should determine the density. The purpose of this amendment is to have size of building to be in line with the size of the buildable portion of the lot. Lowe noted some lots may not be contiguous.
4. Building Height: Building height contributes to overall building massing. The 45 ft. maximum height is proposed to be replaced with 37 ft. in the General Business and Highway Districts. Britt said 45 ft. is too high for the Intown Residence District (IR).
5. Drive-thru businesses: Mooradd noted it is currently allowed by right in certain zoning districts. It is prohibited in the Central Business District except for fast food establishments. The amendment would prohibit drive-thru in the Central and General Business Districts. It would allow them in the commercial-oriented Planned Commercial District and Highway Business District.
6. Floor Area Ratio: This is to allow an appropriate size building. It was noted that floor area ratio is used in the RRB District for development. Incongruous massing seems to be an issue for the IR District as well. Parsons said the Planning Department would like to evaluate the effectiveness of using floor area ratio on the Neck. He said it is difficult to get the right ratio. It is complicated and needs more analysis. Mooradd suggested a working group for this topic.
7. Administrative items: Change title from Board of Selectmen to Select Board in the Zoning Bylaw. It was noted that there are no specific lighting installation regulations. For lighting, the proposed change should achieve lighting that does not cross property boundaries. It was noted the regulation will not change behavior. Britt suggested reviewing bylaws of other communities such as Rockport. Britt also suggested prohibiting gas lighting.
8. Mixed-use Development on Rt. 1: To allow for mixed-use commercial and residential development on Rt.1. Parsons noted a special permit is needed for commercial businesses. He suggested changing the Table of Use to allow for retail and personal consumer use establishments by right. He noted a change in tenant requires a special permit, which can be onerous for businesses trying to open in a planned commercial district.
9. Gross Floor Area definition: It was noted that floor area is in the Zoning Bylaw but not Gross Floor Area. There needs to be consistency with definitions throughout the Zoning Bylaw.
10. Tandem Parking: It is not specifically prohibited in the Zoning Bylaw. Britt noted there are rare situations where tandem parking would be approved and would be limited to

residential use. Parsons said public safety needs to be considered for granting a waiver related to tandem parking.

11. Table of Use for Retail Establishments in the IR: The concern is for a large retail establishment in the IR district. The ones that exist do not present a concern.
12. Tree Planting: Lowe suggested speaking with the Climate Resiliency Group. Britt suggested speaking with the Shade Tree and Beautification Committee.
13. Floodplain Zoning: Britt said this section needs to be updated for boundaries and references to new maps.

Mooradd said the short list for the Board includes the following: 1. OSPZ, 2. Single-Family unit ratio, 3. Lot Area, 4. Building Height, 5. Drive-thru businesses, 6. Floor Area Ratio, 7. Administrative Items, 8. Mixed-Use and 9. Gross Floor Area definition. Parsons said the next step is to assign topics to Planning Board members, to occur at a future meeting.

### **Adopt minutes of March 10, 2022**

Under 5-11 Washington Street, Lowe asked for “study” to be added after solar feasibility.

*Lowe made a motion to adopt the minutes of March 10, 2022, as drafted and amended and Weatherall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

### **Adjournment**

*Paskavitz made a motion to adjourn, and Lowe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Meeting notes taken by: Odile Breton

Accepted on: April 28, 2022