



## TOWN OF CONCORD

### Planning Board

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To: Select Board  
Stephen Crane, Town Manager

From: Planning Board  
Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner

Cc: Zoning Board of Appeals  
Ray Matte, Building Commissioner

Re: **Planning Board Goals/Projects: 2020-2021**

Date: July 7, 2020

The following memo provides an update on the Planning Board's goals and projects for 2019-2020 and identifies the goals and project that the Planning Board will consider for the next year. The Board has provided an opinion on the level of study/work required for each item by the Town Planner and the Board.

#### **2019-2020 Goals & Project Update**

With the postponement of the 2020 Annual Town Meeting, the Planning Board was requested to identify the "essential" Planning Board Warrant Articles that the Board would like to present at this year's abbreviated Town Meeting. Below is an update on each Warrant Article:

- **Additional Dwelling Unit - Article 32 Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** This Amendment was specifically identified by the community in the Envision Concord Plan and the Board has received strong community support for the proposed Warrant Article. The Board would like to move forward with the Article.
- **Two-Family Dwelling Unit - Article 33 Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** Although this amendment was noted in the Envision Concord Plan, it is currently proposed for only the Residence C Zoning District and has less of a town-wide benefit. The Board does not have any issues if this Article needs to be deferred.
- **Planned Residential Development - Article 34 Zoning Bylaw Amendment:** The Board believes this Article should move forward with an amendment to remove the one provision that generated any significant debate at the public hearing (the change in PRD permitting authority from the ZBA to the Planning Board). The Board's rationale is that open space, sustainability and unit size diversity provisions of the PRD Bylaw are significantly out of step with the Envision Concord Plan, making it difficult for the Board to ensure that PRD applications will further the Town's land use goals.

- **Hammerhead Lot - Article 35 Zoning Bylaw Amendment:  
Relief From Parking Requirements - Article 36 Zoning Bylaw Amendment  
Fairs, Bazaars, Antique Shows, Suppers & Dances - Article 38 Zoning Bylaw Amendment  
Prohibited Uses - Article 39 Zoning Bylaw Amendment**

The Board believes these Articles can be deferred, unless the Town Moderator was considering them for the consent calendar. If anyone subsequently moves to take any one of them off of the consent calendar, the Board would seek to defer it.

- **Thoreau Depot Business Zoning District Boundary - Article 37 Zoning Map Amendment:** The Board believes this Article should move forward to facilitate potential safety modifications to layout of the driveways and parking at the Site, which are supported by the Police and Fire Chief.
- **Thoreau Depot Smart Growth Analysis:** The Board and Town Planner started working with MAPC on the potential redevelopment analysis of the Thoreau Depot Business District at the beginning of the year and held the first public forum on February 11<sup>th</sup>. The forum was very well attended and a lot of great feedback was provided. The project was put on hold until just recently with MAPC providing at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Planning Board meeting a presentation of a synthesis of community feedback from the February 11<sup>th</sup> public forum, a draft vision and draft recommendations for zoning and other elements. MAPC will be taking feedback from the Board and the public until July 10<sup>th</sup> so that the vision and recommendations can be refined and a first draft of a Zoning Bylaw developed.
- **Active Role in Exploring Alternative Transportation Options for the Town:** The DPLM Director and the Town Planner worked with the CrossTown Connect TMA on the submission and successful award of a Workforce Transportation Grant for the implementation of a commuter shuttle on a fixed loop through Town with stops at major employment centers and the two commuter rail stations. The shuttle was intended to be launched in April, which obviously did not happen. The Town is now finalizing the contract with the State and will seek to launch the shuttle in the fall.
- **Update Subdivision Rules & Regulations:** Town staff met in February to begin discussing options for updating the Subdivision Rules & Regulations and researching outdated elements in the current Regulations that pertained to specific elements or expertise in their respective departments/division. This project was then put on hold until July.

## **Potential 2020-2021 Goals and Projects**

### **1. 2020 Annual Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw Amendments**

The Planning Board will be prepared to present Articles 32, 34 and 37 at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. The Board has minor revisions to make to the presentations from the Board's public hearing and the Town Planner will prepare a hand-out on the Articles that are moved forward.

Estimated Board time: Low

Estimated Staff time: Low

Implementation Priority: High

## **2. Thoreau Depot Business District Redevelopment**

The Planning Board will continue to work with MAPC, property and business owners and the community on developing a vision for the redevelopment of the Thoreau Depot Business District and subsequent Zoning Bylaw amendments needed to further that vision. The Board will hold a public meeting to review the final report and proposed draft bylaws from MAPC and gather input from key stakeholders and the community. The Board will use this information to determine if further study, public meetings and/or education is needed before advancing a proposed zoning bylaw amendment to the 2021 or 2022 Town Meeting.

Estimated Board time: High

Estimated Staff time: High

Implementation Priority: High

## **3. Concord's CrossTown Connect Shuttle**

The Town was awarded a Workforce Transportation Grant to implement a shuttle from the two commuter rail stations to MCI-Concord Prison, Baker Ave. and Baker Ave. Ext., Emerson Hospital, Concord Center and employment sites on Virginia Rd. The Town Planner will be working with the DPLM Director, CrossTown Connect TMA and the Town's Visitor and Tourism Director on the launch of the shuttle in the fall, including marketing and business support. When reviewing development applications, the Board will discuss with applicants participation in CrossTown Connect TMA as a way to reduce traffic and further the Town's sustainability goals.

Estimated Board time: Low

Estimated Staff time: High

Implementation Priority: High

## **4. Neighborhood Conservation Districts**

The Board will research the potential of neighborhood conservation districts, educate and survey property owners of key neighborhoods and hold a public meeting to gather community input. Based on level of input and interest, the Board will draft a recommendation on the feasibility of implementation of a Neighborhood Conservation Districts, and if so, the next steps for moving forward.

Estimated Board time: Medium

Estimated Staff time: Medium/High

Implementation Priority: High

## **5. 2018 Envision Concord-Bridge to 2030 Comprehensive Plan**

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan Section 5 Implementation Action Chart that has a total of 188 Action Items with the Planning Division referenced in 140 and the Planning Board referenced in 54 Items. The Board will review these Action Items on an annual basis, identified timing, whether the Board should take the lead in moving forward and develop a list of Goals & Projects for the next 2 to 4 years.

Estimated Board time: Low

Estimated Staff time: Low

Implementation Priority: Medium

**6. Research effectiveness of Zoning Bylaw Section 6.2.13 (FAR Bylaw) and Section 7.1.5 (expansion of a nonconforming dwelling by more than 50%).**

In support of the Envision Concord Plan, the Town’s sustainability goals, and in response to resident input, the Board will research special permits for expansions greater than 50% granted by the ZBA since the FAR bylaw was adopted and any special permits granted for going over the maximum FAR. The Board will write a memo on its findings that can inform the metrics being developed by the ZBA for granting expansions, the effectiveness of the FAR Bylaw and whether amendments to either Bylaw should be considered.

Estimated Board time: Medium

Estimated Staff time: Medium

Implementation Priority: Medium

**7. Subdivision Rules & Regulations**

The new MS4 Permit requirements under the EPA’s National Pollution Discharge & Elimination System (NPDES) Program have been issued, litigated and are now in effect. The Public Works Department has submitted the Town’s MS4 Plan for review and approval. One milestone action item in the Plan will be updating the Subdivision Rules & Regulations. The Town Planner has had a preliminary meeting with Town staff from various departments/divisions and will continue to move forward over the next six months of a substantial overhaul of the Regulations. The Board will hold a public hearing, with legal notice, and adopt the revisions to the Rules & Regulations.

Estimated Board time: Low

Estimated Staff time: High

Implementation Priority: Medium

**8. Research Site Plan Rules & Regulations**

Zoning Bylaw Section 11.8.4 states that a Site Plan application shall be submitted in accordance with the rules and regulations. However, the Board has not adopted any. This is not a simple task given all of the elements and variables that go into a well thought out and successful site plan. The Town Planner has begun researching other communities that have adopted similar regulations. The Board will develop a list of elements they believe are characteristics of a good site plan, such as landscaping islands in parking lots, EV charging stations, maximum exterior light levels, or minimum tree caliper.

Estimated Board time: Medium

Estimated Staff time: High

Implementation Priority: Medium - Rolling development as staff time allows

## **9. Tree Preservation Bylaw**

The Board will review the memo from Davy Tree with perspectives on the implementation of the bylaw to date and hold a public meeting to discuss potential changes to the bylaw. Based on the level of changes and degree of public input, the Board will determine if it will prepare a warrant article to amend the bylaw for the 2021 Town Meeting.

Estimated Board time: Medium

Estimated Staff time: Medium

Implementation Priority: Low