

**Leicester Planning Board Meeting Minutes  
September 19, 2023**

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**Location:** Leicester Town Hall, Meeting Room 3

**Member Present:** Joshua Campbell, James Reinke, Sharon Nist, Anthony Escobar, Lee Dykas

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Kristen Jacobsen, Town Planner, Lisa Westwell, Administrative Assistant

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
LEICESTER, MASS.

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**Call to Order:** Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**1. Review of plans for the Site Plan at 112 Huntoon Memorial Highway**

Applicant/Owner Jack Daige stated he wants to expand and construct a new 10,000 s.f. storage facility to store crane equipment as it is currently being stored outside. Mr. Daige was asked if he would use the existing entrance and if there would be any additional lighting. Mr. Daige said he would use the existing entrance and there will be no additional outdoor lighting. Mr. Daige explained that there is asphalt around the existing building and then gravel and grass. Mr. Daige said the new building will remain gravel and an engineered plan will address the stormwater. Mr. Daige was asked if he had filed with Conservation and he said he had not and does not think he will have to file with Conservation. The Board stated they want Kevin Quinn, P.E. of Quinn Engineering to conduct a peer review and provide comments.

**Motion:** Ms. Nist moved to continue the hearing to October 3, 2023 at 7:00 pm

**Second:** Mr. Reinke

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously

**2. Flint Way Road Acceptance**

David Genereux, Town Administrator, is requesting that the Planning Board recommend the acceptance of Flint Way as a public way so that they can make sure the Becker 1812 house can be sold as the house goes through the existing Flint Way and the Town wants to split the road from the house. Surveyor termed Flint Way an "ancient way" so in his opinion, the way is there and already owned by the Town so there is no need to accept the road. This situation is currently under review by Town Counsel. Mr. Genereux said that Flint Road is 18 feet wide and needs to be 20' wide to comply with Subdivision Bylaws but it is not wide enough for two way traffic. Ms. Nist asked if Flint Way can be made a one-way road. Mr. Genereux said getting traffic to Route 9 will be a problem if it's one-way as the road is not ready for traffic. Mr. Genereux stated that accepting Flint Way would:

1. Give Barrett House frontage
2. If 1812 is sold, they own the road so there would be no frontage and no way in
3. If it is a public way, the Town can use Chapter 90 monies to wide it.

Ms. Nist asked if it could be one-way until it can be widened. Mr. Reinke said a one-way would not be a safe option. Mr. Reinke also stated that this came up as a ZBA item and the Town may be faced with imminent domain so the Town wanted to have the road accepted.

Mr. Genereux said that 1812 may be sold tomorrow but they would need Town meeting action to have it accepted as a public way and then they could close the sale. Mr. Reinke said that having it accepted as a public way is to protect the Town and have access for the other two Becker houses. Mr. Genereux said that they Planning Board would need to vote tonight for the request to get on the special town meeting warrant.

**Motion: Ms. Nist moved that the Planning Board recommend the acceptance of Flint Way as a public way for special (check actual motion language) town meeting.**

**Second:** Mr. Reinke

**Discussion:** None

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously

**3. Public Hearing Continued – SP2021-03 11 Hankey Street - WorcShop**

Applicant has requested a continuance to November.

**Motion: Ms. Nist moved to continue the public hearing to November 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM.**

**Second:** Mr. Escobar

**Discussion:** Board members mentioned that this is Thanksgiving week and discussed different dates.

**Motion: Ms. Nist rescinded her motion and made a new motion to continue the public hearing to December 5 2023 at 7:00 PM.**

**Second:** Mr. Escobar

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously

**4. ANR 2023-03 – 651 Main Street**

Ms. Nist recused herself and left the meeting room.

Mr. Amit Schilgi was present on behalf of the owner. This this 16 unit project they submitted and these three lots were required to be ANR lots. Mr. Reinke asked if there was a big retaining wall behind the ANR lots. Mr. Schilgi said yes there is a retaining wall. Mr. Reinke said that the plan shows the stone wall but not the engineering for the retaining wall. Mr. Schilgi said they are on the plans for the back of the lot. Mr. Reinke asked how the wall would be constructed. Mr. Schilgi stated the area is currently wooded and that building the retaining wall will be part of the project and that all of the drainage will also be done to make sure the lots will not be flooded. Mr. Reinke stated the ANR meets the criteria and cautioned that they get permits for earth removal. Mr. Schilgi stated they need to finalize everything on their end and determine the amount of material that will be removed and then they will apply for the permit.

**Motion: Mr. Reinke to approve ANR Plan 2023-03 for 651 Main St., Map 21 Parcel 85.1**

**Second: Mr. Escobar**

**Discussion: None**

**Vote: Four – Yes. One – recused. Motion carried.**

**5. Discussion with Diago McClain re: land purchased on Huntoon Memorial Highway**

Ms. Nist re-entered the meeting room.

Mr. McClain stated that he purchased land on Route 56 and is hoping to build a 50,000 s.f. sports facility for youth and adults. Mr. McClain said that he currently leases 20,000 s.f. on Stafford Street next to Worcester Academy Field and is outgrowing it. Mr. McClain said that the parcel does not have a street number but it is next to Laurel Heights. Ms. Nist asked if it was on the right hand side heading towards Pleasant Street and Mr. McCain answered yes. Mr. Dykas inquired about the size of the parcel. Mr. McClain said it is 3 acres but has some wetlands. Ms. Nist asked if he was proposing a gym. Mr. McClain stated it is 5 courts, some offices, a work center, a couple of rooms for birthday parties and that courts are multi-use for mostly for basketball. Planning Board members reviewed the zoning map and said the parcel is in the RI-B zone which would require a special permit. Planning Board members reviewed the zoning bylaws and discussed what classification the business would fall under for permitting.

Ms. Jacobsen, Town Planner, suggested the Applicant submit Site Plan Review and Special Permit in tandem. Ms. Jacobsen explained to the applicant that once the plans are done and the building size is determined, that will determine whether is major site plan review or minor site plan review. Mr. Dykas stated it is on a highway but stormwater and parking will be important. Mr. Dykas and Mr. Reinke expressed their support for the proposed project. Board asked Mr. McClain to work with Ms. Jacobsen on the project.

**6. General Discussion**

Mr. Reinke said the Board of Selectmen were asking for recommendations on how to ease the permitting process. Mr. Reinke said the gym facility should not need a special permit as it is a good business for this zone, but under the current bylaw, it does need a special permit. Mr. Dykas said this zone is for this type of business and he wants to see if the Board can add language to the bylaw that allows the Board to waive the special permit. Ms. Jacobsen said that the deadline is passed to get on the Special Town Meeting warrant. The bylaw would have to be drafted and reviewed, and a public hearing has to be held. Mr. Reinke wants to make sure they get it right. Mr. Dykas wants some items to be at the discretion of the Board and he wants the Town to be business friendly. Mr. Campbell said that he wants to see a checklist to make the process simpler. Mr. Reinke thinks they need to have workshops to review the bylaw language. Ms. Jacobsen suggested updating the use table at the same time. Mr. Dykas said the Greenville area zoning needs to be reviewed because it is meant to be an industrial area. Mr. Campbell said he wants the Board to be intentional about the changes to the bylaw. Mr. Dykas suggested providing comments from Staff before applicant submits to the Planning Board. Ms. Jacobsen said she typically suggests that applicants start with Conservation and then move through the other Boards to reduce the time it takes for the Planning Board to render a decision.

There was general discuss about where the water line starts and stops on Huntoon Memorial Highway. Mr. Reinke proposes carving out 30 minutes after each meeting to review the bylaws.

Ms. Nist recused herself and left the meeting room while the Board members signed the 651 Main Street ANR. Ms. Nist re-entered the meeting room after the representative for 651 Main Street left the room.

## **7. Prospect Hill Estates**

Mr. Campbell asked for the status of the project. No one was present from Prospect Hill Estates. Mr. Reinke said they do not know what is going on out there and suggested they ask Kevin Quinn of Quinn Engineering to conduct a site visit. Ms. Jacobsen believes the plans the applicant sent are older.

## **Town Planner Report/General Discussion**

The Board generally discussed meeting times and procedures for bylaw revisions. Ms. Jacobsen introduced Lisa Westwell and invited any of the Board members to stop in to meet.

Ms. Nist asked if anything came of the applicant that was going to do the cannabis cookies on Stafford Street. Ms. Jacobsen said she has not heard anything. Mr. Campbell said she was going to do a baking business and sell the cookies. Ms. Jacobsen offered to reach out.

Ms. Nist asked about Stafford Street strip mall that asked if the business was supposed to come before the Board to put up a building. Mr. Reinke said it is 4-5 contractor bays.

Ms. Nist asked about Eastern Pearl. Ms. Jacobsen said the Planning Department and Building Department are waiting to hear back. Ms. Jacobsen said a gentleman called about what used to be the old shake shack and said they wanted to do take-out.

Mr. Reinke said next to shake shack there is a duplex and the rain gutters are not attached to the drainage system per the plans. Mr. Reinke also mentioned the property across the street needs a fence up per the special permit. Mr. Reinke also asked if the cultic system across from Hillcrest Church had been done per the plans. Mr. Reinke suggested the building inspector go out.

Mr. Campbell asked if there were any committee updates. There were none.

**Motion: Ms. Nist made a motion to adjourn**

**Second:** Mr. Reinke

**Discussion:** None

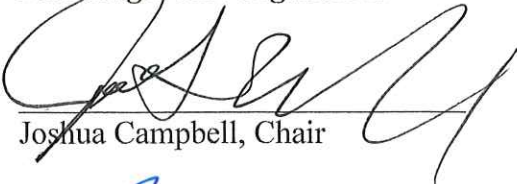
**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:  
Lisa Westwell, Administrative Assistant  
to the Planning Department

Date Approved: 10-3-2023

**Planning Board Signatures**



Joshua Campbell, Chair




James Reinke, Vice Chair



Sharon Nist, Clerk



Anthony Escobar



Lee Dykas