

Town of Lenox

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

April 27th, 2021

Documents Available: Agenda, wireless bylaw language (micro, macro and design manual), revised ANR plan for 100 & 94 Church Street

Members Present: Pam Kueber, Chair; Kate McNulty-Vaughan, Lauryn Franzoni

Others Present: Gwen Miller, Land Use Director/Town Planner, Anthony Lepore, CityScape Wireless Consultant

Meeting with wireless consultant to review recommended updates to wireless infrastructure bylaw and draft design standards.

Consultant Anthony Lepore explained why there are two sets of wireless amendments. The small-scale wireless bylaw is for infrastructure typically sited in the public right-of-way, and is not a zoning bylaw. The macro wireless bylaw is a zoning bylaw and is for large-scale infrastructure, like the tower behind Lenox Fit, or the concealed antenna in the steeple of the Church on the Hill.

Both micro and macro wireless infrastructure are heavily regulated federally and each bylaw as proposed is consistent with federal requirements, giving the locality flexibility and discretion where possible.

The macro wireless zoning bylaw creates a locational preference hierarchy through the table of uses, indicating where:

- Additions or enhancements to existing wireless infrastructure can be added and by what permission
- New concealed wireless infrastructure can be added and by what permission
- New non-concealed wireless infrastructure can be added and by what permission

The board discussed how to handle new concealed antenna on existing tower or building; PK suggested it could be allowed in the R-15 or R-30 zone so as not to limit coverage in these neighborhoods. The board decided to let new concealed antenna on existing tower or building be allowable by Special Permit in the R-15 or R-30 zone.

A board member asked the likelihood and timeline of small-scale, 5G technology coming into Lenox. Lepore anticipates a longer term deployment to communities like Lenox, but could see small scale wireless happening in a neighborhood like Lenox Dale where coverage is spotty already.

PK worried about ability of tall towers in other districts to reach neighborhoods where they are not allowed given the topography of the community. Lepore suggested that increasing the tower height could help expand coverage in certain cases. The zoning bylaw language allows the ZBA to grant a variance for relief from the height limit.

There was discussion regarding terrain and how it blocks RF—Lenox has significant elevation changes which contribute to the challenge of universal wireless coverage.

Looking at the table of uses, it was noted the ZBA would be issuing a basic use permit, and to clarify that they are empowered to grant it through a simple majority decision.

The group discussed visual preferences for large-scale infrastructure, going through images provided by Lepore. Options include a “slick stick,” which is a monopole tower with everything contained within. He also described lattice towers, and then the slimmer profile tower which has antennae and repeaters visible on top.

In terms of designs for small scale wireless infrastructure, he explained there are specific companies such as ConcealFab or Stealth that will craft designs to meet your local specifications. That is, if the Town wanted to require small-scale wireless to look like the replica Westinghouse lights in the village center, they could have these companies create them accordingly and the wireless company would pay for them.

[Review / Endorse Approval Not Required application for property at Assessor’s Map 43 Parcels 86 and 87 \(94/100 Church Street.\) – continued from April 14](#)

Pat McColgan of Taconic Land Surveyors presented a new Approval Not Required Plan (ANR) for the division of land at 94 and 100 Church Street. This revised plan showed sufficient frontage for all three proposed lots, sufficient area and access. PK moved and LF 2nd, and the Board voted to endorse the plan as presented: (Ayes: PK , LF, KMV).

[Update on Approval Not Required application for Lenox Landings – Assessor’s Map 8 Parcel 1 and 6- 1 \(241 Walker St.\).](#)

GM provided updated guidance from Attorney Joel Bard of KPLaw, who opined that what was being presented as an ANR actually met the definition of a subdivision. She had talked w/ the attorneys and they would submit a subdivision plan with specific findings for the Board to approve later.

[Update on joint public hearing with Board of Selectman regarding Master Plan \(date for hearing being rescheduled\).](#)

PK indicated this was being rescheduled so as not to conflict with town elections, and that the Planning Board was happy to meet on a Wednesday if more convenient to the Board of Selectmen.

[Note upcoming ZBA petitions.](#)

PK suggested the activity of reviewing and discussing each ZBA petition in a timely manner was not convenient and that Board members should call attention to issues they see as they arise going forward.

Based on Board discussion of the “fit” of a veterinary clinic among the Gateway Overlay District uses, PK will draft a letter to submit to the ZBA when an application for this proposal is filed. A copy will be sent to Attorney Jeff Lynch as a courtesy.

Board members are reminded to do their “Conflict of Interest” review and file it with the Town Clerk by April 29.

Updates on board and committee assignments and affiliations; Discuss whether to appoint an official delegate to reorganizing Affordable Housing Trust & Committee and if so, vote on appointment.

The Board discussed whether to appoint an official delegate to the Lenox Affordable Housing Trust. The Trust is appointed by the Select Bd., and the Trust has discussed altering their charter, and the PB wondered if it made sense to require a Planning Board member be on the Trust at all times. KMV supported this concept; GM suggested it might become onerous over time. PK and LF suggested flexibility be retained and that the Planning Board representative be a more informal arrangement as it has been over time.

On the next meeting agenda: more discussion of the Wireless bylaws, and reorganization of the Planning Bd., and possible future meetings in person, with or without zoom.

Meeting Adjourned.