

## Planning Board 2021 Annual Report

In calendar year 2021 several developments in the town under the authority of the Planning Board were newly approved or completed while others are still in process. The Board also continues to attend to other aspects of its role soliciting citizen input for perspective land use and development.

The end of year status of ongoing projects previously approved by the Board and subject to continued construction oversight are as follows:

Abbey Road (22-32 Bear Hill Road) – Work remains halted at this Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) of the 13 single family homes with ten homes completed. The town is negotiating a new Tripartite Agreement for \$307,512 plus \$40,000 for exterior road work with the new developer.

Regency Residential Village (106 W. Main) – Both residential buildings are completed and occupied in this dual development of a total of 96 apartments for residents over-55. The acceptance of the street, Jana Way, with some stipulations was voted at the Fall Town Meeting.

Merrimac Crossing (118 E. Main St.) – Construction never went forward on the original approved Special Permit for mixed use with a commercial building in front with two buildings consisting of a total of nine two-bedroom condo units in back for this lot. The Board has approved a new Special Permit for an over-55 development of 16 units in eight duplex townhouses. Site work has begun.

Regency Office Park (108 W. Main St./One Jana Way) - The first of three buildings approved for Site Plan Review in this commercial development is completed and occupied. The developer was unable to find tenants for the remaining two approved commercial buildings. The Board has approved a new Special Permit for mixed use to include the existing building and another commercial building near Hwy 110 and seven over- 55 townhouse units in two buildings in the back of this property.

Proposed project for 118 W. Main St. withdrawn – An application for a Special Permit to build a single-family home with a Home Occupation in the Rural Highway District was submitted to the Board. As what was being proposed did not meet the definition of Home Occupation but the ZBA has the authority to modify the requirements, the applicant was asked to go to the ZBA for this purpose. Instead, the ZBA granted a “Use Variance” for the party to build a single-family home even though the Zoning Bylaws do not allow Use Variances, nor single-family dwellings in the Rural Highway District. As the ZBA variance is being honored by the Building Commissioner, the Planning Board accepted the applicant’s request to withdraw their Special Permit application without prejudice.

In other planning activities, in calendar year 2021 the Board granted three Approval Not Required (ANR) requested for properties at West Main (near the library), 62-64 Church Street and 14 Nichols Street. The Board collected \$1300.00 in filing fees for its review activities in Fiscal Year 2021.

In other business, on October 12, 2021 the Planning Board held a public hearing to amend the Zoning Bylaw language for detached accessory dwellings, single-family dwellings in the Rural Highway District, and inclusion of self-storage facilities as an allowed uses by Special Permit in the Village Center and Office-Light Industrial Districts. The hearing also included allowance for detached accessory dwellings for agricultural workers in the Agriculture Residential District. Although the Board recommended approval of these zoning changes, it was necessary to table the articles at the Fall Special Town Meeting due to a technicality. The zoning changes will be re-introduced for the Spring Town Meeting.

Sandra Venner continues in her role to serve as chairperson and Karol Flannery as Vice-Chair. John Thomas continues as Alternative for Special Permits and Robert Bender was appointed as MVPC Commissioner. Sandra Venner serves as the representative to the Affordable Housing Board of Trustees.

Longtime Administrative Assistant, Pat True, retired in August 2021. We acknowledge her many years of service to the Town and are grateful for her work on behalf of the Planning Board. The Board hired current Administrative Assistant to the Board of Health to take on the Planning Board Administrative duties. Linda Ralph has assumed this dual role.

Respectfully submitted by

Sandra Venner, Chair

Sandra Venner	Term expires 2024
Karol Flannery	Term expires 2025
Dennis Brodie	Term expires 2026
Keith Pollman	Term expires 2023
Thomas Abisalih	Term expires 2022 (previously appointed until next town election)
John Thomas	Alternate for Special Permits