

**BOROUGH OF WESTWOOD
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
February 27, 2020**

APPROVED 5/28/2020

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting was called to order at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Open Public Meetings Law Statement:

This meeting, which conforms with the Open Public Meetings Law, Chapter 231, Public Laws of 1975, is a **Regular** Public Meeting of the Planning Board.

Notices have been filed with our local official newspapers and posted on the municipal bulletin board.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Jaymee Hodges, Chairman
Dan Olivier, Vice-Chairman
Mayor Raymond Arroyo
Robert Bicocchi, Councilmember
William Martin
Keith Doell
Anthony Zorovich
Ann Costello
Yash Risbud
Lauren Letizia (Alt. #1)

ALSO PRESENT:

Thomas Randall, Esq., Board Attorney
Ed Snieckus, Burgis Associates, Board Planner

ABSENT: Kristy Dougherty (Alt. #2) (Excused Absence)

NOT REQUIRED: Louis Raimondi, Board Engineer

4. OPEN TO PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

A motion to **open to public was made, seconded and carried.**
There were no questions or comments, and the matter was **closed to the public** on motion made, seconded and carried.

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5. **MINUTES:** The Minutes of the **2/13/2020** meeting were approved on motion made by Ann Costello, seconded by Dan Olivier, and carried unanimously on roll call vote.

6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** See below under Discussion;

7. **RESOLUTIONS:** None

8. **PENDING NEW BUSINESS:** None

9. **VARIANCES, SUBDIVISIONS AND/OR SITE PLANS:** None
SWEARING IN OF BOARD PROFESSIONALS FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS
The Board Professionals were sworn in.

10. **DISCUSSION: MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION REVIEW**

1. **2020 Borough of Westwood Re-examination Report of the Master Plan, Draft 2/24/2020 - Updated** - Mr. Snieckus presented his updated report to the Board, which he indicated would be on the worksession agenda for 3/12/2020 and listed on 3/26/2020 for the public hearing. Mr. Snieckus reviewed the changes, corrections and additions highlighted per the recommendations of the Board at prior hearings. Discussion followed.

Pg 18 - The Chairman thanked Ms. Letizia, Historic Preservation Commission, for her efforts and recommendations, as stated in Section 5, highlighted on Pg 59, noted below.

Pg 49 "no pergolas" was added.

Pg 50 - (e) Roof top use shall be setback minimally 6' - Mr. Martin commented he did not feel 6' was necessary. This could be further reviewed, but was left as is for now. Ms. Letizia asked if heating apparatuses should be included. Chairman Hodges commented there is an ordinance prohibiting propane BBQ grills on patios, and this would be similar and come under that Code and the Fire Department's jurisdiction.

Pg 50 - Mr. Snieckus also added (a) The space used by patrons of commercial roof top use in excess of 20% of the indoor commercial use patron area, shall be included in the total parking requirement of the use.

Pg 57 - Shades of sign colors was clarified.

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Pg 59 - Historic Preservation - Mr. Snieckus report stated the Borough's continued efforts regarding historic preservation has advanced in several areas and noted the following for future consideration: The Borough adopted a historic district for several properties along Jefferson Avenue, titled the "Jefferson Avenue Historic District", located completely in the "O" zone, and requires the review by the Historic Preservation Commission and a Certificate of Appropriateness for future changes to the structures in this district. It is recommended the Zoning Map be revised to identify same. Also, the Commission successfully petitioned to have the Westwood Train Station and surrounding Westwood Veterans Memorial Park placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the US Department of the Interior, which will assist with funding improvements. It was also recommended that the Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan, last adopted in April of 2007 be updated to reflect these attainments. Mr. Olivier asked Ms. Letizia to clarify the last item. Ms. Letizia explained it opens up the train station to grant opportunities. Anything that is done with federal funds goes before a review Board. It does not affect small changes. These sites are seen as historically important in the Country. Mr. Snieckus concluded the discussion.

Pg 47 - Mr. Zorovich asked if a tattoo studio was always permitted, commenting in view of wanting to fill empty storefronts, he felt this would not be best for the character of the town. As a recommendation to the Governing Body, he would take this out. He did not feel comfortable with this, and there are other tattoo parlors in nearby towns that people could go to.

Pg 27 - Mr. Zorovich also noted that the Westwood numbers had declined on owner-occupied homes. Mr. Zorovich reviewed housing units and occupancy status, using the Census Bureau and questioned the numbers used in the report. He would want to see something written to encourage owner-occupied homes. In the section alluding to AirBnB, he was not in favor of this. It would hurt the small town feel. Mr. Snieckus stated it was documented as reviewed and mentioned in the report under short-term rentals. Chairman Hodges commented he thought we were not going to include it at all. Further information was needed. It would not be listed and would not be a permitted use. Mr. Snieckus asked if he should strike it completely. The Mayor felt the language was helpful. Mr. Olivier agreed. There were

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significant discussions over several meetings, and this should be indicated. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. Martin commented it is the balance in town we need to protect. He originally chose to live in this town because it had a high percentage of rentals and choices of income levels.

Mr. Doell agreed with Mr. Zorovich and commented he was also against tattoo studios, and it should be stricken. Ms. Costello agreed as well. Ms. Letizia asked if it was permitted now, and the Chairman said it is a new use in the CBD/SPE. This is why we have a draft review to bring up these items, and we can reconsider them. Ms. Letizia stated she would like to reconsider this. Mr. Martin felt it should be left in. It is a legitimate art form. It is a good use and can be integrated into an artsy environment which attracts people to Westwood. The Governing Body would decide if it wants it in or not. Mr. Doell said it is not needed on Westwood Avenue.

Chairman Hodges commented this is sent to the Governing Body for consideration based on the Board's recommendations. Mr. Martin felt the Governing Body was in favor of it and can decide on its own. Mayor Arroyo commented one person, the Mayor seats the whole Board, and that is why the Board cannot make land use ordinances, only recommendations. He agreed with Mr. Martin. The Governing Body is perfectly capable of taking this document and deciding on its own. It can take pieces of it, can adopt it, change some of the recommendations slightly, and send it back to the Board for consistency review. Mr. Martin commented if you want to take it out, then take it out. Chairman Hodges commented the discussion is to not remove it completely, only in the SPE zone on Westwood Avenue. Mayor Arroyo had thought the Board felt it more appropriate for the CBD, not the SPE. Ms. Letizia asked why the same details and restrictions given to other uses were not included for tattoo studios to weed out types of studios. Board Attorney Randall advised and Board Members agreed the restrictions are not the same, i.e., minimum square footage, and that would not affect the type of studio. They also cannot say they want an upscale tattoo studio only.

Mr. Martin stated this document has to serve us for the next six to ten years. So it has to have forward-thinking uses and the vision to combat the internet, and there needs to include a list of these forward-thinking uses the Governing Body can choose from over the next ten years. He believes we were on

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the right track before, and the last minute tinkering is something he is not in agreement with and is not beneficial. Ms. Costello commented our job is to protect the community, and this is not good for the SPE.

Ms. Costello made a **motion to recommend to not include tattoo studios in the SPE part of the CBD, but in the CBD only.** The motion was seconded by Mr. Zorovich. A brief discussion ensued. On roll call vote, Anthony Zorovich, Ann Costello, Keith Doell, Lauren Letizia, and Jaymee Hodges voted yes. Dan Oliver, William Martin, and Yash Risbud voted no. Councilmember Bicocchi abstained. Mayor Arroyo recused himself on the vote. The motion carried.

A motion to **open to public was made, seconded and carried.** There were no questions or comments, and the matter was **closed to the public** on motion made, seconded and carried.

11. ADJOURNMENT - On motion, made seconded and carried, the meeting was adjourned at approx. 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**MARY R. VERDUCCI, Paralegal
Planning Board Secretary**