



City of Woonsocket, RI

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Tue, April 7, 2020 | 6 p.m.

Location: Teleconference via Zoom

I. Call to Order:

Chairman Finlay called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

II. Attendance Review

Members in Attendance:

1. Ken Finlay, Chairman
2. Roji Eappen, Vice-Chairman
3. Ron Miller, Secretary
4. Wendall Gardner
5. Jon Pratt

Others in Attendance:

1. Kevin Proft, Administrative Officer/City Planner
2. Theresa Dunigan, Recording Secretary

III. Correction/Approval of Minutes:

Motion to APPROVE the March 3, 2020 meeting minutes: Secretary Miller

Second: Vice-Chairman Eappen

Discussion: None

Vote:

Chairman Finlay	Yes
Vice-Chairman Eappen	Yes
Secretary Miller	Yes
Member Gardner	Yes
Member Pratt	Yes

Motion Passed	5-0-0
---------------	-------

IV. Old Business: None

V. New Business:

- a. **Zoom Tutorial:** The Planning Board will practice with features required to conduct online meetings via Zoom.

Mr. Proft asked if any Members were experiencing difficulties using the Zoom software. Chairman Finlay was unable to access the video component. Mr. Proft and he agreed to meet prior to the May meeting to ensure he will be able to participate fully at that meeting.

Mr. Proft then asked if all Members were able to access the documents prior to the meeting. He included a link for the public to download the meeting packet and documents at the Planning Board's page on the

City of Woonsocket website (<https://www.woonsocketri.org/planning-board>). The website was also listed on the posted agenda to ensure all interested parties could access the meeting documents. All the Members were able to download the packet. Mr. Proft also shared his screen with everyone in attendance.

Chairman Finlay and Mr. Proft discussed how best to open the floor for public comment. Chairman will announce opening the floor for public comments. If the meeting attendance is small, the public will be unmuted together and asked if they have comment. If the group is larger, the public will be unmuted one by one and asked if they have a comment. The Board can also experiment with the raise hand function in Zoom to ensure anyone who would like to speak can do so without interruption.

Mr. Proft asked how the Board will handle a Member being disconnected from the software. Chairman stated the meeting can continue without the Member just as it would during an in-person meeting. A quorum is required to open the meeting. If all Members are disconnected due to a software issue and unable to reconnect, the meeting will be postponed after 10 minutes. Mr. Proft voiced concerns regarding the upcoming proposed zone change possibly requiring additional expensive advertizing if the meeting is interrupted. After a short discussion, Mr. Proft proposed an announcement at the beginning of each teleconference meeting to state that, following a disconnection that lasts more than 10 minutes, all remaining business will be tabled and then continued at the following meeting. This would also be added in writing to the agenda and any meeting documents posted on the Planning Board webpage. All the Members agreed this would be the best way to notify the general public. Member Pratt suggested scheduling an emergency meeting to finish all planned business if needed. Mr. Proft said he would check with the solicitor to determine whether it is allowed to have a preemptive statement about continuing unfinished meeting items to another meeting if there are technical difficulties.

The Board agreed that Mr. Proft should create a “remote meeting procedures” document for the chairman to read at the beginning of remote meeting so applicants and attendees understand expectations.

At this point, Chairman Finlay wanted to open the floor to the public for comments.

Motion to open the floor for public comment: Member Gardner

Second: Vice-Chairman Eappen

Discussion: None

Vote:

Chairman Finlay	Yes
Vice-Chairman Eappen	Yes
Secretary Miller	Yes
Member Gardner	Yes
Member Pratt	Yes

Motion Passed	5-0-0
---------------	-------

The members of the public said using Zoom for the meeting was working very well. There was a question regarding logistics if an individual wanted to present any visual aide to the Members. After experimenting with the software settings, Mr. Proft demonstrated how an individual may remotely control the administrator’ screen and annotate the displayed documents.

VI. Administrative Officer’s Report

Mr. Proft quickly reviewed the following points:

- a. The next meeting will include a solar project and a proposed zone change (MU/I to R).
- b. Mr. Proft is drafting RFPs to hire contractors to help complete the upcoming Comprehensive Plan.

c. Lead Grant – He has received several applications for the lead inspector position.

He did not have further information to report as he has recently been working on specific projects for the Mayor related to the current covid-19 crisis.

VII. Next Meeting Dates:

Regular Meeting: Tuesday, May 5, 2020 (Teleconference via Zoom)

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (6:54 p.m.): Member Gardner

Second: Secretary Miller

Discussion: None

Vote:

Chairman Finlay	Yes
-----------------	-----

Vice-Chairman Eappen	Yes
----------------------	-----

Secretary Miller	Yes
------------------	-----

Member Gardner	Yes
----------------	-----

Member Pratt	Yes
--------------	-----

Motion Passed	5-0-0
---------------	-------