

**PLANNING BOARD  
TOWN OF WILBRAHAM**  
240 Springfield Street  
Wilbraham, Massachusetts 01095

John McCloskey, Chair  
Gordon Allen  
James Moore  
Tracey Plantier  
James Rooney  
Bruce Williams, Associate



Michelle R. Buck, Planning Director  
Heidi Burnham, Admin. Assistant

Phone: (413) 596-2800, Ext. 203  
Fax: (413) 596-9256

**MINUTES OF THE WILBRAHAM PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2023**

In attendance: John McCloskey, Chair  
Gordon Allen  
James Moore  
Tracey Plantier  
James Rooney  
Bruce Williams, Associate

Staff: Michelle R. Buck, Planning Director  
John J. Walsh Jr, Building Inspector  
Heidi Burnham, Administrative Assistant

**Chair John McCloskey called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and asked those assembled in the room to proudly join the Planning Board in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**1. Citizens Open Forum**

No citizens took advantage of the open forum opportunity.

**2. Building Inspector's Report**

Building Inspector John Walsh shared the following with the Board: Cedar Ridge pump station is in the ground and they have electricity down to the bottom of the hill; the underground plumbing is going in at the Senior Center. Construction is also underway at True Storage and Lia Toyota. Chair John McCloskey asked Mr. Walsh to look into having the Aquarius Pool sign removed on Boston Road since the business nor the building are no longer there.

**3. Cooley Drive Extension Road Acceptance Request**

The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend moving forward with the street acceptance of Cooley Drive Extension subject to confirmation of DPW approval.

**MOTION (ROONEY, ALLEN): I move that the Board recommend adoption of Cooley Drive Extension as a public way to be laid out by the Board of Selectmen, conditioned upon the requirement that the road remain in good condition until acceptance and that any issue identified in inspection(s) between now and acceptance are addressed and subject to confirmation of DPW approval. Approved by roll call vote (5-0).**

4. **Zoning By-law Amendments for Discussion**

The Planning Board discussed draft language for the Zoning By-Law amendments with Planning Director Michelle Buck and agreed on the following:

**A. Location and Size of Accessory Buildings – Section 4.4.8**

Section 1.3 Definitions - Modify the definition of Accessory Buildings not to include storage containers.

Section 3.9.2 Accessory Uses: Residential – Insert a new subsection for construction dumpsters and storage containers (including pods), stating they shall not be permitted for longer sixty days without permission of the Building Inspector.

*Section 4.4.8 - Location and Size of Accessory Buildings:*

Section 4.4.8B – Increase the size of the accessory buildings from 144 square feet to 240 square feet that are allowed within the reduced set back of ten feet from the side yard and five feet from the rear yard; and change “set back at least seventy five (75) feet from the street line” to “located behind the primary structure”.

Section 4.4.8E – Modify the table to reflect an aggregate of all accessory buildings on a lot <= 300 square feet are allowed without a special permit.

**B. Truck Parking Restrictions in Residential Districts – Section 4.5.2**

Section 1.3 Definitions - Add a new definition of Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR).

*Section 4.5.2 - Truck Parking Restrictions in Residential Districts:*

Section 4.5.2B – Update to add light duty box truck and specify that not more than one of the vehicle types in the list per lot is permitted; with the exception of pickup trucks if more than one resident on the premises carries on a trade or profession away from the premises. Consider allowing up to three commercial trucks (other than pickup trucks) by special permit.

Sections 4.5.2.A.1 & 4.5.2.B.1 - Delete the existing words “gross vehicle weight (manufacturer’s rating) of 10,500 pounds or less” and replace with “gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 12,400 pounds or less”.

Section 4.5.2.B.3 - Delete the existing text in its entirety and replace with “Commercial lettering or signage on the vehicle may not be illuminated; and”

**C. Battery Energy Storage Systems (PVPC draft model bylaw)**

The Planning Board discussed the PVPC draft model by-law with Ms. Buck and it was determined that while it contained a lot of good information it would be premature to try to customize it for Wilbraham in time for the public hearing on March 15, 2023. Ms. Buck shared that the PVPC has included her in the meetings to work on the draft and she will keep the Board apprised of any updates/changes that come out of the next meeting. The Board agreed to defer this to a future Town meeting.

5. **Planning Director’s Report & Planning Board Updates**

Ms. Buck shared the following updates with the Board:

285 Three Rivers Road/ASD Solar Update – The solar company is purposing changes to the approved plan, involving the two equipment pads. If added to the March 1<sup>st</sup> agenda will request assistance from town counsel.

DLTA Grant (Subdivision Regulation Update) – Submitted the grant last week; they should reach a decision by early to mid-March.


Cedar Ridge / McDonald Nature Preserve Land Grant – The title certification is almost complete. Waiting to receive the draft conservation restriction (CR) back from the state. This and the title certification are the two items holding up the closing. The Gleason CR draft is complete. Received the new survey plan today, will record in the next couple of days. The next order of business is to order the sign for the McDonald property; this is a requirement of the reimbursement.

Comprehensive Land Use Plan - Also known as a Master Plan was last done in 1963. There have been site, area, and subject-specific plans done since 1963, but not an overall comprehensive plan. Will talk more about this at future meetings.

Meeting Dates – The Board agreed to meet on April 19<sup>th</sup> and May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:55 PM. The Board will reconvene at its next meeting on **Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 5:30 PM.**

Submitted:

  
Heidi Burnham, Admin. Assistant

Date: 3/10/23

Approved As To Form And Content:

  
John McCloskey, Chair

Date: 3/15/23