



**SOUTHBRIDGE  
PLANNING BOARD  
& SPECIAL PERMIT GRANTING  
AUTHORITY**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**March 15, 2023 · 6:30 PM  
MacKinnon Council Chambers, Town Hall  
41 Elm Street, Southbridge, MA**

1. Call to Order – D. Payeur called the meeting to order at 6:43PM. D. Payeur, M. Loin, C. Acly, T. Hensel, C. Bellrose present. P. Paquin absent with notice.
2. Approval of the Minutes of March 1, 2023 – M. Loin motion to approve as written. C. Acly second. Vote suspended to the April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plan Applications – None presented.
4. **6:45 Joint Public Hearing with Town Council** – To consider an amendment to the Southbridge Zoning Bylaw Section 5, Section 9.1, and Section 10. - D. Payeur opened the joint public hearing by reading into the record the legal notice for the zone change. The Town Council and Planning Board reviewed the proposed changes, section by section with the Planning Board discussing why the proposed change was made and answering any questions made by the Councilors. Councilor Steeves questioned the Planning Board’s proposal to remove language regarding wetlands and watercourses from commercial buildings in Section 5.2. M. Loin of the Planning Board discussed the reasons why the Board had proposed the change, citing the Wetlands Protection Bylaws as well as that the language is not necessary for commercial or industrial buildings like it would be in a residence with a lawn, potential septic and well. M. Doyle, 771 Lebanon Hill Road asked about why changes were being proposed to Section 5.2B. Section 5.2.2 will not be broken out into subsections as the Planning Board is proposing to remove subsections B and C. While reviewing Table 2, M. Loin suggested not changing the height of accessory structures in R1 as that may affect barns and other allowed uses in the zone. The Planning Board and Council both agreed to not make that change. Town Planner E. Rumsey explained that Section 9.1 was mandated by FEMA and DOER that these changes be made to the Zoning Bylaw. There were two changes that were discussed: The effective date would be June 21, 2023 rather than January 23, 2023 as written, and there would need to be additional language in Section 9.1.5 which E. Rumsey read into the record. These changes were based upon FEMA and DOER’s review of the section. Section 10 was reviewed. Councilor Steeves questioned the need for the definition of Camp as camping is not allowed within the Town of Southbridge. The Planning Board stated that the definition gives the Zoning Enforcement Officer a basis for enforcement if an individual is found to be running a camp. Councilor Marketti questioned the difference between a Boarding House and renting of rooms. The Planning Board and Town Council came to a consensus to add “non-owner occupied” to the definition of Boarding House to clarify. The Planning Board and Town Council came to a consensus that the proposed amendments are necessary and should move forward with adoption. M. Loin motion to close the hearing at 8:43PM. Councilor Adams second. Vote was unanimous of all present by roll call vote
5. Vote to issue a report to the Town Council with recommendations for amendments to the Southbridge Zoning Bylaw Section 5, Section 9.1, and Section 10 in order to facilitate adoption by the Town Council. – M. Loin motion to issue a report to the Town Council with recommendations based upon the public hearing for adoption by the Town Council. T. Hensel second. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
6. Ongoing Business
  - a) Zoning non-conformance issues – M. Julian updated the Board on outstanding non-conformance issues.

The items listed which may be discussed at the meeting are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

b) Planning Board initiatives and studies – R. Gonzalez discussed a potential private non-profit marijuana social club at 22 Hamilton Street. The Board stated that they would be willing to hear the application, however the legality of such an operation would need to be established first by the Cannabis Control Commission. The Board also suggested that a business plan be put together prior to submission.

7. Staff Update – As discussed

8. Board Forum – As discussed.

9. Next meeting and adjourn – T. Hensel motion to adjourn at 9:03PM. C. Acly second. Motion passed unanimously by show of hands.

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