

**CITY OF EAST PROVIDENCE
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES**

Date: March 8, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Zoom virtual meeting

As a result of Covid-19 and the closure of City Hall, this meeting was conducted virtually through an application called "Zoom".

Present: Alan D'Aiello, Christopher Grant, Burton Batty (Vice-Chair), Michael Robinson (Chair), Michelle Rockwell, Eric Crook, William Fazioli (Planning Director), Patrick Hanner (Staff), Johanna Walczak (Staff), Jim Moran (Staff)

This is an open meeting of the East Providence Planning Board and is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Raimondo's executive order 20-25 issued on April 15, 2020 and extended by executive order 20-46 on June 12, 2020 due to the current state of emergency in R.I. due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus. In order to mitigate the transmission of the Covid-19 virus, we have been advised and directed by the state to suspend public gatherings and as such the Governor's order suspends the requirements of the open meeting law to have all meetings in a publicly physical location. Further all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely. The order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as adequate means of public access are afforded so the public can follow along.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was cited.

3. APPROVAL OF PLANING BOARD MINUTES

None

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Minor subdivision # 2020-09-Minor. Preliminary plan submission.

Applicant/Owner: Candido Esteves. Street address: 50 Bourne Avenue, Location: Map 303, Block 11, Parcel 93, Zoning Residential 3. (Enclosures)

Johanna Walczak presented the staff report. All the required findings have been outlined in the planning staff memorandum dated March 3, 2021. The plan is consistent with current zoning in

the neighborhood. Based upon the planning departments findings, planning staff find the proposed subdivision is consistent with the city's comprehensive plan and positive findings are met for the standards of the subdivision regulations. Staff recommends the planning board grant conditional approval of the subdivision as proposed. A number of conditions have been outlined in the recommendations of the staff memo. Staff recommends the planning board approve the applicants request for waiver of curbing and sidewalks. Staff recommends the planning board delegate final plan approval to the administrative officer.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to adopt the staff recommendations and supporting documents into the record.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Ms. Rockwell, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to adopt the applicants request of waiver for curbing and sidewalks.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Ms. Rockwell, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to grant conditional approval of the subdivision as proposed subject to the conditions set forth in staff's memo.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to delegate final plan approval to the administrative officer.

B. Adoption of proposed amendments to the Land Development and Subdivision Review Regulations to allow for an architectural peer-review for large-scale developments. (Public hearing) (Enclosure)

The proposal has been advertised for three consecutive weeks. Mr. Hanner clarified a statement on the last page of the staff memo, 3rd line states 75 or more units, should state 75 or more residential units.

On a motion by Dr. D'Aiello, seconded by Mr. Grant, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to adopt the proposed amendments to Section 4-6 Professional Review Fees of Land Development and Subdivision review regulations with the minor textual modification that it would reference 75 or more residential units.

C. Advisory recommendation to the City Council for a proposed amendment to Chapter 19, Zoning, for a Marijuana Compassion Center Ordinance (Enclosure)

Mr. Fazioli gave a brief overview of the Marijuana Compassion Center Ordinance. This is strictly for medical purposes. Mr. Moran explained in detail Compassion Center regulations, including zoning requirements for the ordinance.

Mr. Grant asked if the city discussed with the East Providence Police department zoning and where the centers can be located. No direct outreach has been made to the EP Police Department. After a brief discussion among the board members, outreach will be made to the EP Police Department.

The draft ordinance was based upon what was provided under state law. Mr. Robinson suggested a postponement on any recommendation to the City Council until feedback is received from the Police Department. The solicitor's office has already looked at the proposal. The ordinance itself was prepared by the legal department in cooperation with the Planning Department.

Dr. D'Aiello is questioning the distances to where a special use permit can be granted, are the locations coming from the state ordinance/law, or is this an East Providence solution only. Mr. Moran stated a number of communities were looked at. This is for East Providence only and is a standard used by many communities.

Mr. Grant is asking if it's still a lottery for the Compassion Centers, a total of 6 new centers. Mr. Moran advised a lottery is still in place to pick the 6 new Compassion Centers across the state.

On a motion by Mr. Grant, seconded by Dr. D'Aiello, on a roll call vote, the board voted 5-0 to postpone any action on this matter pending receipt of input from the EP Police Department.

D. Advisory recommendation to the City Council for a proposed amendment to Chapter 19, Zoning-Mixed Use Hub Overlay Districts-Main Street and Neighborhood Center Overlay Districts (Enclosure)

Mr. Fazioli gave an overview of the overlay district ordinance, referring to recent development on Taunton Avenue. Mr. Moran provided further details. The overlay district will give more flexibility to corridors in the city that are struggling with restrictions based on current zoning. The overlay district will enhance the vitality within the struggling corridors. The ordinance is consistent with the comprehensive plan, section 19-2 of zoning. One of the main components is to repurpose existing buildings that are limited under current zoning.

Mr. Crook joined the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Dr. D'Aiello is asking why Riverside Square is not included in this draft overlay. Mr. Fazioli stated the Vamco Property and Buckets property both received zoning relief. Mapping can be done to include Riverside Square or any area that can benefit from the overlay. Dr. D'Aiello would like to add Riverside Square, all board members are in favor.

On a motion by Dr. D'Aiello, seconded by Mr. Grant, on a roll call vote, the board voted 6-0 to provide a positive recommendation to City Council for the proposed overlay district, including Riverside Square.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

None

6. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Fazioli presented the staff report. He introduced Claire Morehouse who has been with the Planning Department since January. The Planning Board are now members of the R.I. Chapter of

The American Planning Association. Johanna has been successful in getting the city accepted into the Municipal Resiliency Program with the R.I Infrastructure Bank. This will focus on climate control, storm water management, etc. The city has also been accepted into the Green Coalition. April is tree month, various events are planned throughout the city. Mr. Fazioli also provided an update on upcoming projects.

7. COMMUNICATION

None

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for April 12, 2021

9. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Rockwell, seconded by Mr. Batty, the board voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 PM.

CC: Mayor Roberto DaSilva
City Council
Director of Public Works
City Engineer
City Solicitor
Fire Chief
Zoning Officer