

# Town of Carlisle

MASSACHUSETTS 01741

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Office of  
**PLANNING BOARD**

66 Westford Street  
Carlisle, Massachusetts 01741  
Tel. (978) 369-9702  
Fax (978) 369-4521

## **Minutes July 31, 2023**

**Priority Setting for FY24 / Potential Zoning Bylaw Amendments  
Review Town Governance Committee Report (Land Use Section)  
Minutes of June 12, 2023  
Revisions to Accessory Apartment Rules & Regs w/BOH Form**

**Chair Herschelman** opened the remote PB meeting at 7:00 pm, with PB Members **Sara Smith, Adelaide Grady, Pete Yelle, Eric Adams, Joe Gushue** and **Chris Geggis**, Town Planner **Julie Mercier** and Assistant to Planner **Gretchen Caywood** present. The meeting was hosted the meeting on Zoom platform.

Also present were Select Board (SB) member Kate Reid, and Bob Zielinski (Carlisle Mosquito)..

### **Priority Setting for FY24 / Potential Zoning Bylaw Amendments**

TP Mercier had prepared a spreadsheet detailing the Planning Board and the Planning Department projects to facilitate the discussion of FY24 priorities. This included a main list of ongoing projects, pending grant-related projects, a listing of pending/ongoing development applications and projects, office projects, and a list of Board priorities and initiatives, with timeline information for each (see attached).

TP Mercier reviewed these items, noting that development administration/oversight is the most important action of the department. She summarized the applications and development projects before the Board, as well as incoming applications and post-permit construction administration coordination, noting that it is the most important and time-sensitive work for the Department. Mercier noted that Assistant Caywood handles most of this work, as well as general office administrative work, with Mercier focusing on certain development projects with long-term issues. TP Mercier noted that both staff members participate in pre-submission meetings, and that there are land use staff meetings once per month.

Concerning proactive planning work for the Town, TP Mercier explained that she coordinates once per week with the GIS consultants, and that MP implementation coordination is also a large part of her job description – helping to implement the MP across Town departments and committees, and that her role in this will be growing, with MP events being planned for the fall. Mercier noted that the MP Implementation Committee has been set up, and she explained how the departmental reporting will work. TP Mercier also noted that the HPP plan will go to the State soon, and has been adopted by the PB and SB. Some of the HPP strategies are to be spearheaded by the PB.

Concerning the public safety facilities RFP process and the Town Center parking study, TP Mercier reported that the SB authorized that she and TA McLane put out RFQs for these projects. Concerning overall Town facilities planning, Mercier noted that she was involved in the selection of a consultant to assist with a plan, and that she is working with staff to determine accessibility needs. Complete Streets work also continues, with which Mercier has experience, and a prioritization plan has been developed, with a consultant contributing to this work as well.

The Board discussed the overall time commitment of these various items, in particular the development administration piece. Yelle suggested that the PB revisit its fee schedule to help assure that the application fees cover as much as possible of the staff time necessary to administer the application. The Board asked TP Mercier to assign priority number rankings to the ongoing projects list.

At the Board's request, TP Mercier provided more information on the GIS work, noting that she feels she is getting the appropriate level of involvement from the departments interested in providing a GIS data component. Mercier noted that she is working with the consultants to try to get more information on the ongoing costs for GIS, and with MassGIS as well. TP Mercier noted that the consultant is seeking input from different departments to better understand their goals for GIS, and she offered that he could provide a presentation to the Board on the goals of the GIS work, to which the Board agreed.

The Town Center as Community Center project brings together a number of MP recommendations and aims to best utilize the various Town resources in multifaceted ways. TP Mercier noted that there are many underutilized spaces that can contribute toward community activities and needs, and she referred to SB Member Reid's document detailing this concept, which Reid developed. Grady expressed her strong agreement with this approach.

TP Mercier reviewed her list of PB Priorities/Initiatives (see attached spreadsheet), with the revision of the Accessory Apartment Bylaw being seen as a top priority. Geggis volunteered to participate in any working group for this bylaw revision. Mercier had also provided a list of other possible zoning bylaw revisions, and expressed that the Town should determine if we can comply at least minimally with the MBTA Communities zoning requirements, suggesting that a working group be formed for this. Grady volunteered to participate. Concerning MVP work, TP Mercier said we should know in August if the grant will be awarded, and that this work would involve the MVP Core Team as well as other stakeholders, with former PB Member Madeleine Blake being interested in participating as well. The Board asked TP Mercier to involve Blake in this effort. Other MP recommendations were noted as important for FY24, including developing criteria for evaluating land for community purposes, and an additional or alternative type of open space residential development bylaw.

The Board reviewed the timeframe suggestions for the PB Priorities/Initiatives and agreed with the TP's planned schedule.

#### **Review Town Governance Committee Report (Land Use Section)**

At the Board's request, TP Mercier summarized that this report develops a series of recommendations on how to break down the perceived LU silos. Mercier noted that in her experience, the communication between the LU departments is good, with LU meetings being held once per month at which various applications are reviewed. Mercier said she is encouraged that communication is not going to be an issue.

Concerning the cross-training and workload sharing suggestion between departments, TP Mercier said that while it seems like a good idea, in practice it is very hard, adding that she needs 200% of Assistant Caywood's time with what the Planning Department has to accomplish, and that other departments feel similarly. Mercier pointed out that she has put in place several means of knowledge sharing between the departments, but that job sharing itself is not happening, and stressed that she would be integral to any bigger conversation on this idea.

#### **Minutes of June 12, 2023**

The Board reviewed the draft Minutes of the 6/12/23 PB meeting, and a few amendments were proposed. Adams moved that the Board approved the Minutes as amended, Yelle seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously (7-0) by roll call vote.

#### **Revisions to Accessory Apartment Rules & Regs w/BOH Form**

The Board review a draft of revisions to this document, and discussed certain additional revisions. TP Mercier reminded the Board that while certain revisions can be put in place now, for larger revisions to these Regulations, the AA Bylaw must be amended first, with the AA regulations then revised to coordinate with the Bylaw revisions.

The Board briefly discussed potential revisions to the AA Zoning Bylaw. In particular it was noted that the definition of living area needs to be clarified. Grady noted that that are industry standard definitions for this and other terms within the Bylaw that can be utilized.

TP Mercier asked for specific input on the BOH AA Review letter that is part of the AA Regulations and that becomes part of any AA application. Adams suggested a statement be included at the top of the form such as “Fulfilling these BOH requirements does not indicate acceptance by the BOH.”

Due to interruption, the meeting was ended at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gretchen Caywood  
Assistant to Planner, Carlisle Planning Board

List of documents associated with this meeting (available via the Planning office):

- Town Planner Memo to Planning Board dated 7/27/23
- “PB Workplan Priorities” spreadsheet prepared by Town Planner Mercier, dated 7/31/23.
- Town Governance Committee Report 2022