

1 **Approved May 8, 2023**

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3 **PLANNING BOARD JOINT MEETING WITH SELECT BOARD, SHOPC AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
4 **MEETING MINUTES**

5 **Monday, April 10, 2023 6:30PM**
6 **McAuliffe Hearing Room – Southborough Town House**
7 **17 Common Street – Southborough, Massachusetts**
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9 Members present: Meme Luttrell, Marnie Hoolahan and Debbie DeMuria. Also present: Karina Quinn,
10 Town Planner, Colleen Stansfield, Business Administrator. Present via ZOOM: Jesse Stein

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12 **CALL TO ORDER:**

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14 Ms. Luttrell called the Planning Board Meeting to order at 6:32PM. Ms. Doriann Jasinsky, Chair of
15 SHOPC, called the SHOPC meeting to order at 6:32PM. Members present: Ms. Jasinsky, Mr.
16 Dennington, Mr. Stein, Mr. Doug Manz. Advisory Committee Chair Andrew Pfaff did not call the
17 Advisory Committee meeting to order, as a quorum was not present, and stated he would do so when a
18 quorum was present.

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20 **DISCUSSION: MBTA Communities**

21 Ms. Cook provided a review of the project thus far. Ms. Luttrell stated the Planning Board is exploring
22 the recommendation that Southborough’s compliance model might propose the entire 47 acre DELL site
23 and petition the State to forego the 10 acre requirement near the Southborough commuter rail station.
24 Ms. Luttrell stated the Planning Board is also considering recommending that an overly district be
25 proposed as the zoning change. The group discussed creating an overlay district for the 10 acres
26 requirement within proximity to the Southborough commuter rail station. Ms. Luttrell stated that the
27 possibility exists that development could occur in the newly created overlay district but that it is less
28 likely, as the neighborhood is already developed. The group discussed the potential number of new
29 multi-family housing units and the impact of that increase on local schools. They also discussed the
30 potential number of affordable units created by the legislation. Ms. Malinowski asked if the Town could
31 require that 10% of the units built qualify as affordable. Ms. Luttrell stated that the Town could require
32 that. Mr. Pfaff raised the issue that this new legislation may qualify as an unfunded mandate and
33 suggested the Town could petition the State Auditor to rule on the matter. Mr. Stivers asked about the
34 “opt out” option with regard to the legislation. Ms. Cook stated she spoke with Town Counsel Talerma
35 regarding both the unfunded mandate and “opt out” option and he stated these options are something
36 to consider but recommended moving forward with the current path of compliance. Mr. Thomas
37 Bhisitkul, SHOPC member, joined the meeting at 6:53PM. The group discussed the timeline for the
38 project. When asked about timing for Town Meeting approval, Ms. Luttrell stated that the zoning
39 change would be ready for Town Meeting 2024, with an additional opportunity for passage at Fall Town
40 Meeting 2024 if it initially fails. Ms. Luttrell stated that it is unclear what happens if the Town complies
41 with the requirements of the legislation and the zoning change fails at Town Meeting. Ms. Jasinski
42 suggested that, since Park Central is going to be developed, it might be included in the MBTA overlay
43 district. Mr. Bhisitkul stated the MBTA Communities legislation is not designed as affordable housing
44 legislation and noted that Southborough needs multi-family housing as an affordable entry point into
45 the community. Mr. Dennington stated that the report on 21 Highland Street highlights that it is not
46 possible to develop this site into affordable housing units without changing the existing zoning bylaws
47 and it makes sense to establish some part of the MBTA Communities by right zone in this location. Mr.
48 Pfaff asked the group to consider what is the Town’s goal and how to increase the Town’s housing stock
49 over what time period. He asked the group to consider balancing compliance with the State legislation
50 with managing the impact to the Town. Mr. Manz stated he thinks it is important to meet the intent of

51 the MBTA Communities legislation and he also thinks that, if the Town wishes to develop 21 Highland
52 Street into affordable housing, it should be included in the overly district. He also stated that the impact
53 of this legislation should be absorbed over time rather than in the short term. The group discussed how
54 to best manage short-term development and longer-term development relative to compliance with the
55 MBTA Communities legislation and the impact to the Town. The group agreed to not pursue the “opt-
56 out” option at this time. The group also agreed that, while there does not appear to be a downside to
57 pursuing the question of an unfunded mandate from the State Auditor, they would take no action at this
58 time. Mr. Pfaff stated that DHCD would provide a preliminary review of the Town’s compliance model,
59 responding within 90 days, and suggested the Town take advantage of this early opportunity for
60 feedback. The group agreed to have the Planning Board explore all options discussed this evening. Ms.
61 Jasinski moved to adjourn the SHOPC meeting at 7:42PM. Mr. Bhisitkul seconded the motion. The
62 motion was unanimously approved (5-0-0) by roll call vote: Mr. Stein, aye; Mr. Bhisitkul, aye; Mr. Manz,
63 aye; Ms. Jasinski, aye; Mr. Dennington, aye.

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65 **ADJOURN:**

66 **MOTION** by Ms. Luttrell to adjourn the Planning Board meeting at 7:42PM. **SECONDED** by Ms.
67 Hoolahan. **ROLL CALL: Luttrell-Yes, Stein-Yes, Hoolahan-Yes, DeMuria-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes-4,**
68 **No-0.**

69 **Documents Used at This Meeting:**

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72 Respectfully Submitted.

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74 Bridgid Rubin, Recording Secretary

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