



# Town of Danvers Planning Board

1 Sylvan Street, Danvers, Massachusetts 01923 | p: 978-777-0001

[www.danversma.gov](http://www.danversma.gov)

## Planning Board Members:

James Sears, Chair  
Louis George, Clerk  
Torey Adler  
Jean Hartnett  
Tim Spittle

## **Location: Danvers Senior Center and Remote Participation**

**February 28, 2023**

**7:00 p.m.  
MINUTES**

James Sears called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

Board members present: James Sears, Louis George, Tim Spittle, Torey Adler, Jean Hartnett (remote)

Staff present: Joshua Morris

***PUBLIC HEARING: Maple Square*** – Request for Modification to Special Permit Decision submitted by AAM 15 Management, LLC for properties at 114 Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 510), 128 Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 512), 140 Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 530), 146 Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 531), 146A Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 532), 148 Maple Street (Map 43, Lot 533), 1 Hobart Street (Map 43, Lot 509), 3 Hobart Street (Map 43, Lot 508), 6 Hobart Street (Map 43, Lot 405), 7 Hobart Street (Map 43, Lot 507), 9 Hobart Street (Map 43, Lot 506), 53 North Putnam Street (Map 43, Lot 518), 61 North Putnam Street (Map 43, Lot 516), 66 North Putnam Street (Map 43, Lot 529), 2 Putnam Court (Map 43, Lot 515), and 6 Putnam Court (Map 43, Lot 514). Said properties are in the Maple Street Traditional Neighborhood Development (MSTND) Smart Growth Overlay District. The applicant is proposing to modify the language of Conditions of Approval #2 in the Special Permit decision for the “Maple Square” project. The applicant is requesting to provide twenty (29) affordable units instead of thirty (30) affordable units, based on keeping the required percentage of affordable units at 20%, with the total number of units changing from 147 to 145.

Attorney Nancy McCann (presented on behalf of applicant)-also present Nick Faye (AAM 15 Management, LLC) and Tony Librot (AAM 15 Management, LLC). Requesting modification to conditions of approved of Special Permit. Outlined rationale behind reduction in number of units proposed (147 units to 145 units); 20% affordable units from 30 units to 29 units. Modification to reflect this reduction.

Board-under Zoning Bylaw-round up?

Attorney McCann-yes-if decimal, per Zoning Bylaw, round up.

Gardner Trask (Chair-Danvers Affordable Housing Trust)-speaking on behalf of the Trust-neutral stance. Conforms to Zoning laws.

Motion to approve decision (read aloud) by Louis George, seconded by Torey Adler and unanimously approved.

***PUBLIC MEETING: 154 Water Street (aka 170 Water St) – Pursuant to Section 30.2.F and Table 1 of the Zoning Bylaw submitted by New England Home for the Deaf, Inc. and WinnDevelopment Company, LP for property in the Residential II (R-2) zoning district. The applicant proposes to construct a building with 140 units of senior housing (55+) and associated site modifications (Assessor’s Map 67, Lots 001 and 001A). The public hearing for the application will be heard at the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting on March 13, 2023, and the Planning Board will make recommendations concerning the application.***

Attorney Nancy McCann (presented on behalf of New England Homes for the Deaf [NEHD] and WinnDevelopment)-outlined plan being proposed that will come before ZBA – affordable housing for age 55+ with preference for deaf, deaf/blind or near deaf. Reviewed history of NEHD property. Property 16+ acres. Existing conditions independent senior housing for deaf and deaf/blind; nursing home, skilled living facility. Proposing 140 independent units. Affordable housing component at 50%. Applicant must be the Danvers Housing Authority (DHA) or be developer selected by DHA which DHA did. Danvers Affordable Housing Trust sending letter in favor to Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Secondary preference for Danvers residents. Site has wetlands and riverfront area and easement in it. Seeking variances from ZBA (height-seeking 4 stories; variance from number of units allowed per building; variance for location of some parking spaces). No variance needed for density-size of lot supports unit proposed. Per Zoning Bylaw, ZBA acts as Special Permit, Variance, granting authority; applicant files package with Planning Board so that Planning Board can make recommendations.

Board-When was this section added to the Zoning Bylaw?

Attorney McCann-looking into it-prior to early 1990s. Also present Chuck Crush (NEHD Executive Director & CEO); Rami Schneider (WinnDevelopment); Jesse Johnson (Civil Engineer-Wesson & Sampson); Steve Prestejohn (Architect-Cube 3); Michael Blier (Landscape Architect-Landworks).

Chuck Crush-presented history of property and current status or property. Noted 3-5 year waiting list for one of the buildings on the property. 54 rest home beds – assisted living and skilled nursing. 30 bed skilled nursing facility. Increase in people seeking independent living. Partnered with WinnDevelopment to meet the needs of community. Reviewed tiers of affordability for the housing to be offered. Will schedule tour with Planning Board if any are interested.

Adam Stein (WinnDevelopment)-reviewed history of WinnDevelopment and partnership with NEHD.

Jesse Johnson-reviewed existing conditions, including entrances and exits to the property and building locations on said property. Noted limitations of property and things to be sensitive to, including abutters. Easement and riverfront restrictions and wetlands taken into consideration. Presented plan showing where new structure and parking will be located. Presented new curb



cuts. Existing parking deficiency will be addressed. Sidewalk connections proposed. Fire Department access available around building; trash and delivery full access. Pick up and drop off area.

Board-impact of traffic around back of building on houses on Jacobs Landing?

Jesse Johnson-narrowed down to fire access width and signage of fire only. Maintain and supplement buffer with landscaping.

Board-community meetings-plan development? Current conditions of area where building will be? Area possibly a Native People's settlement area-archaeological survey to be done?

Jesse Johnson-met with public, staff and fire department, NEHD, NGrid. Original design is different shape and orientation; different parking. Made changes based on feedback received. Grading and drainage design noted on plan. Peak will be matching scale and height to existing buildings on property. No blasting anticipated. Looking into Native People's settlement area-no updates.

Rami Schneider-part of application will go through environmental review process and includes submission to Mass Historical that will cover archaeological data and will note any Native People's settlements in the area.

Board-concern is proximity to neighborhood and rationale behind four stories. Neighbors notified for community meeting?

Attorney McCann-reviewed site features and legal rationale behind hardship of property. Cited needs of population being served and site layout to accommodate said needs. Yes-notified abutters.

Jesse Johnson-reviewed traffic study, scope and information gleaned from the study. Cited sources of information.

Board-traffic report done in June? High School affecting traffic count? Recommendation for left turn lane? Coordinated with Town Engineer?

Jesse Johnson-couple days in June which is typical. Would not do for entire month. Exact dates of traffic count are in report. Proposed to remove median and put in left turn lane into property. Yes-coordinated with Town Engineer and walked site together. Will respond to further comments from Engineer as they come in.

Board-driving patterns for populations being serviced?



Jesse Johnson-relied on traffic patterns analyzed in June to understand current traffic behavior of those living at site now. Understand baseline. Full traffic plan set shows all details of traffic design and changes to accommodate proposal.

Board-charter school timeline?

Jesse Johnson-Charter school reports says it will start operating in 2029. Photometric design of front and back presented; strict limits within National Grid easement. Worked to keep fixtures out of easement. Compliance with today's standards and fixture heads pointed away from abutters.

Board-cutouts? Residents and staff numbers on site? Numbers of shifts? Manager on site?

Jesse Johnson-presented fixtures proposed.

Attorney McCann-proposed development is independent living-no shifts.

Rami Schneider-during leasing, will have managers on site and will reduce once leasing full to one to two during typical business hours.

Jesse Johnson-sensitive to wetlands and riverfront areas. Design meets local and state stormwater standards. On site extensions for water system; sewerage easement on site. Providing 25 new parking spaces for existing and 141 spaces for building; 5 for visitors; 10 overflow spaces.

Board-comparable to other sites with regards to parking?

Jesse Johnson-comparable sites not at 100% parking full even with 100% capacity.

Board-transportation offered for NEHD residents?

Chuck Crush-main transportation currently is bus stop out front and other community transportation services. Own bus for skilled nursing facility.

Board-breakdown of residents? Do all need to be 55+? Could 4 people live in a unit with one at 55+? How is affordable mixed with regular rate? Recreation area on site?

Jesse Johnson-deaf/near deaf first preference. Traffic generation looked at if not at 100% occupancy deaf/near deaf.

Rami Schneider-limited to number of bedrooms per unit. Parking limited-register car with us. Property management to monitor who gets parking spaces. Our design is one space per unit.



Cited similar 55+ community and parking space usage percentage. Comfortable that one space/unit is good threshold based on existing data and demand. 60% are one-bedroom units. Attorney McCann-proportionate placement. Affordable placed proportionately in property with full rate. All attributes identical regardless of affordability. Two spaces/unit is not criteria for this project per bylaw. Adequate parking is required and is being provided. Recreation will be reviewed during landscaping presentation.

Jesse Johnson-basin proposed within Mass Stormwater standards. Fenced in. 2' depth. Maintained privately.

Steve Prestejohn (Cube 3 Architects)-presented architectural plan and goal to fit in with already existing buildings and community. Noted details and rationale behind design choices, elevations and street views. Presented architectural renderings.

Board-areas with 3 vs 4 floors and floorplan-please review.

Steve Prestejohn-noted on floorplan where the change in height is happening. May be mismatch between plans and renderings-will resolve-renderings most accurate.

Board-3 or 4 stories facing Jacobs Landing? Appears in close proximity to abutters-noise concerns.

Steve Prestejohn-reflected in plan were stepdown to 3 stories is in renderings. Passive house project-noise levels typical of residential building. Do not expect it to exceed typical building. Will work with mechanical engineer regarding this.

Board-some cases rendering more accurate; sometimes floorplan accurate? Greatly impacts neighborhood. Plan set to come before ZBA should be fully cohesive.

Steve Prestejohn-noted where the back and forth is needed based on view being taken.

Board-heights? How many elevators? Colors as shown? Roof deck? Seating? Building shape? Could building be adjusted to give 100' buffer from residents? Push towards Water Street and farther from abutters? Sacrifice some courtyard? Reduce some height-less need for parking and move away from residences if possible.

Steve Prestejohn-four story portion roughly 48'-49'; Jacobs Landing side roughly 34'. Number does not account for mechanical equipment. Two elevators. Colors as shown. Flat rooves. Small roof deck area facing towards neighborhood-amenity for residents. Occupancy limit 49 people on roof deck. Option to overlook river. Seasonal. Initial plan was rectangular in shape; site constraints resulted in shape proposed. Closest point to any abutter is 136' to house; property line is 50'. Try to keep distance to protect privacy of residents; courtyard standard size.



Jesse Johnson-Explored options to move farther away from abutters. Plan is as close as possible to existing NEHD building and used that as starting point to develop plan.

Michael Blier (Landscape Architect)-presented landscape plan based on adding to and enhancing what already exists. Noted tree and shrub placement including layout and materials; discussed reasoning behind the varieties chosen with respect to abutter property where trees and plantings will fill in over time to create dense foliage for sound, light and habitat.

Board-plan for care of plantings and landscaping? Well water? Drought resistant plants?

Michael Blier-existing vegetation is what plan is based off of. Maintenance-landscaping currently well cared for and hope is this would be cared for as well. Plants native, local, drought tolerant so irrigation may be able to taper off.

Jesse Johnson-looking into irrigation well and will most likely pursue that.

Board-grading in relation to abutters? Electric easement? Retention pond? Fencing? Adverse possession?

Jesse Johnson-grade around perimeter keeps ADA compliant, accessible and sensitive to abutters. Landscaping at and follows grading. Retention pond would impact buffer zone too much. National Grid may have some vegetation grooming underneath their lines. Will not have pathway to it. Easement not used for recreation.

Michael Blier-fencing-some neighbors noted enjoying view, some have own fence, some have vegetated screens so mixed reviews from abutters.

Rami Schneider-several abutters on Jacobs Landing have encroachments onto our property-do not want to make them remove those encroachments-adding fence would run along property line and disrupt them.

Jesse Johnson-this is land court so adverse possession not an issue. They can use it if we don't need it.

Attorney McCann-noted part of property that NEHD is not proposing to use. First thing constructed is new access drive to be sensitive to abutters. No outdoor audio. Note that this is a public meeting, not a public hearing.

Gardner Trask (Danvers Affordable Housing Trust)-Trust wrote letter of support to ZBA. What's being offered serves need for senior population-affordability starts low which is a plus. Meets need for Affordable Housing Trust. Thank you to developers.

Michael Daley (North Shore Avenue)-upset-we were told that this was being discussed in July 2021 and were told did know what was going on. Square footage?



Steve Prestejohn-156,000 sf total including all floors. Size of footprint less than 1 acre.  
Michael Daley-Concern is 70 residents nearby on 35 acres; proposing 140 units on 1 acre.  
Support NEHD but NEHD and Carmelite Monastery in 1980s had meeting with Town and did not want development. Zoning changed R-I to R-II. No more than 2 stories high. Special Town Meeting said 2 stories and/or 30' in height and non-profit. Zoning Board Member said too big.

Board-comment out of order with that comment.

Michael Daley-Too big. For profit? Taxable?

Attorney McCann-not relevant to this discussion with regards to site plan. No restriction for profit or non-profit; on NEHD campus. Not a nursing home. Use that is permitted by special permit and no restriction with regards to profit or non-profit.

Michael Daley-will save rest for board of appeals.

Board-appreciate the history. They are allowed to seek variance.

Board-percentage of affordable units? All units age 55+? Priority? Relief to configuration?

Attorney McCann-50% affordable, beginning at 30% AMI. Reviewed how calculations are made per regulations and number of each units based on the 140 total that will be at the varying levels of rental rate. Reviewed terms of affordability. Yes-all units age 55+. First priority preference is deaf, deaf/blind, near deaf. Second priority preference to Danvers residents age 55+. 140 units on 16.1 acres. Permitted density is 16 units/acre per bylaw. Seeking relief for configuration, not density.

Board-concerns with height, neighbors; possibly scale down without losing many units/possible different configurations; concern with noise; reconcile layout and renderings for accuracy. Snow storage areas-please review. Signage? Gate?

Jesse Johnson-snow storage areas noted on plan set. Concern of National Grid is snow storage. Restricted near power line easement. Strips of land around perimeter and could take some overflow parking as needed until snow trucked off site. WinnDevelopment familiar with snow storage and maintenance practices at their site. Signage on site plan. Reviewed wayfinding and signage placement on plans presented. Exploring gating options and will discuss with fire department.

Board-roof deck hours of use? Landscaping-well irrigation system? Ensure archaeological survey done.

Board (Sears)-do we provide positive recommendations based presentation and concerns voiced?





Board (Adler)-in favor of recommending project.

Board (George)-in favor of recommending project with concerns that would like ZBA to address.

Board (Spittle)-in support of project with concerns raised.

Board (Hartnett)-in support with conditions.

Board (Sears)-project well intended. Encourage neighbors to attend March 13 ZBA meeting. We are not permit granting authority for this project. Board has positive recommendation with conditions stated.

Staff-read aloud concerns which will be shared with Planning Board and then to be shared with ZBA.

Board (Adler)-suggest to not recommend reducing scale-will require complete redesign and there is a need for this affordable housing. Other recommendations are more feasible.

Board (George)-recommending that development team look into possibility of reducing size.

Board (Spittle)-keep number of units but clarity about if building needs to be that close to abutters.

Board (Hartnett)-in agreement with Spittle.

Board (Sears)-look into this and may lose units. This is a concern. Moving forward with concerns.

Attorney McCann-discrepancy in appearance of floorplan and renderings. ZBA can require floorplan and elevation renderings be consistent so that ZBA can verify appropriate impact to abutters taken into consideration. Recommendation to reduce scale too broad. Would like to have recommendations before start of ZBA hearing.

Board (Sears)-Planning Board will follow up with ZBA. Concern about scope and size.

Board (George)-look at scale as it relates to neighbors; would like development team to review.

Board (Spittle)-word “scale” is sufficient.

Board (Hartnett)-in agreement.

Board (Adler)-in agreement.





Motion to move plan to ZBA with Planning Board endorsement subject to concerns made by Louis George. Seconded by Torey Adler. All in favor.

### ***Meeting Minutes***

Motion to accept minutes from February 8, 2022 made by Louis George, seconded by Torey Adler, all in favor. Approved. Tim Spittle and Jean Hartnett were not at meeting and did not vote on minutes.

Motion to accept minutes from March 23, 2022 made by Louis George, seconded by Torey Adler, all in favor. Approved. Jim Sears, Tim Spittle, and Jean Hartnett were not at meeting and did not vote on minutes.

Motion to accept minutes from March 8, 2022 made by Torey Adler, seconded by Louis George, all in favor. Approved. Tim Spittle was not at meeting and did not vote on minutes.

Motion to accept minutes from April 12, 2022 made by Torey Adler, seconded by Louis George, all in favor. Approved. Jim Sears and Tim Spittle were not at meeting and did not vote on minutes.

Motion to accept minutes from April 26, 2022 made by Torey Adler, seconded by Louis George. all in favor. Approved. Tim Spittle was not at meeting and did not vote on minutes.

Staff-next meeting scheduled for March 14, 2023; currently nothing on the agenda. Item on agenda for March 28, 2023 meeting for Dog Day Care at Hollywood Hits site.

Board (Sears)-will need to recuse myself from that application.

Staff-when Planning Board meeting is advertised as hybrid meeting, 3 members of the Planning Board need to be physically present.

Motion to adjourn made by Louis George, seconded by Torey Adler, and unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:14PM.