

**TOWN OF DEDHAM**  
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

**John R. Bethoney, Chair**  
**Michael A. Podolski, Esq., Vice Chair**  
**James E. O'Brien IV, Member**  
**Jessica L. Porter, Member**  
**James McGrail, Esq., Member**  
**Ralph I. Steeves, Associate Member**



**Dedham Town Hall**  
**450 Washington Street**  
**Dedham, MA 02026-4458**  
**Phone 781-751-9242**

**Jeremy Rosenberger**  
**Town Planner**  
[jrosenberger@dedham-ma.gov](mailto:jrosenberger@dedham-ma.gov)

**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**July 22, 2020, 7 p.m., Zoom Video Conference**

**Present:** John R. Bethoney, Chair  
Jessica L. Porter  
James McGrail, Esq.  
Michael A. Podolski, Vice Chair  
James E. O'Brien IV

**Not Present:** Ralph I. Steeves, Associate Member

**Staff:** Jeremy Rosenberger, Planning Director  
Michelle Tinger, Community Planning and Engagement Specialist  
Jennifer Doherty, Administrative Assistant

The Chairman of the Planning Board, Mr. John Bethoney, read a statement to open the Planning Board meeting:

“It being 7:00 pm, Wednesday, July 22, 2020, welcome everyone to the virtual public meeting of the Town of Dedham’s Planning Board.

Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Dedham’s Planning Board is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort has and will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

Members of the public may access this virtual webinar by going to zoom.com, select Join A Meeting in the right-hand corner, and enter Webinar ID: 936 9581 5911

In addition, Members of the public may phone into the webinar by dialing:

1-646-558-8656 and then enter Webinar ID: 936 9581 5911.

The virtual forum is also live streaming on the Town of Dedham’s Planning & Zoning Facebook page. Furthermore, the meeting is broadcast live Dedham TV. Visit dedhamtv.com to watch online or find your local TV channels.”

The Chairman took a roll call attendance:

James McGrail – here

Jessica Porter – here

James O’Brien – here

Michael Podolski – here

John Bethoney - here

Having five members in attendance, a quorum was met.

### **Scoping Session**

**Applicant:** Newbury Corporation/The Norfolk & Dedham Group

**Project Address:** 222 Ames Street

**Zoning District:** General Business (GB)

*Scoping Session for proposal to demolish existing 36,060 sq. ft. office building and construct 46,000 sq. ft. new office building and 214 off-street parking spaces. Representative: John P. Connelly, Esq.*

The Chairman explained that this was only a scoping session and was not a formal filing yet.

In attendance for the Norfolk and Dedham Group were John Connelly, Esquire, Joel Murray president and CEO, Jeff Tompkins and Matt Formacola, architects. Attorney Connelly

explained the project to the Board. He started by providing the background history of the company, which started in Dedham in 1825. They have come to the conclusion that in order to adapt to modern capabilities of business they would benefit most from constructing a brand new building, and as such are anticipating filing an application with the Planning Board for approval.

Matt Formacola from SGA Architects then described the project. He explained the building currently has 160 parking spaces and they would like to increase this to 190 spaces. The new building they are proposing would be about 53,000 square feet. They are not proposing to make any changes to the kind of traffic pattern, or the way the building works and they would like to maintain the driveway. They would like to add some visitor parking at the front of the building, as requested by the owner. They would also like to add some covered parking spaces. They are attempting to keep all the existing trees. The team continued by giving an extensive overview of egress, ingress, building height, landscaping, etc.

Mr. Joel Murray, CEO and President of Norfolk and Dedham stated that they had explored all different avenues with respect to renovating their existing building. However, the building consisted of many additions and reiterations throughout the years and they determined it would be best to start over with a brand-new building. He further stated he valued the relationship his company had with the town, and they look forward to continuing that positive relationship for many years to come.

Board member James O'Brien thanked the company for remaining in Dedham. He went on to explain that he understood the difficulties with renovating a building, and why they preferred to reconstruct.

Ms. Porter asked what the total capacity of employees would be at the end of this project. Joel Murray answered that the interior space was very flexible, but they did not have any intention to increase staff significantly. They currently had approximately 150 employees and the building could hold a maximum of 190. Most of the space they would be gaining with the new building was for amenities, such as a rather large cafeteria, a fitness center, a

training facility, conference rooms and the like. The current pandemic had also been taken into consideration with appropriate space planning.

Ms. Porter then asked about sustainability. She mentioned that the Town of Dedham had just released a Climate Action Plan, so she was interested in hearing if their team had discussed a green building, green house gas emissions, or any sustainability measures. Jeff Tompkins of SGA answered that yes that had been a large part of their discussions and he further explained some of the green measures they would be putting into place. Ms. Porter also encouraged them to look at covered bike storage and electric vehicle charging. Mr. Tompkins felt that could easily accommodate those items. She also mentioned that there was currently a MassDot project happening along Ames and Bride streets that was disruptive to the neighbors. She encouraged the Norfolk and Dedham Team to try to work with MassDot and coordinate construction as to minimize the impact to neighbors if possible.

Chairman Bethoney noted to follow up on Ms. Porter's questions, would the building be LEED certified? If yes, what level of LEED would the building be? Mr. Tompkins responded that they did not intend to go for LEED status, however based upon the design they would achieve at least a LEED silver certification.

Mr. Michael Podolski asked how long did Norfolk and Dedham anticipate their construction project to last? The answer was a year. He then asked where would the enterprise be housed during the construction phase? Mr. Joel Murray, CEO answered that the interim site had not been fully determined but they were in process of finding a suitable location close by. Attorney Podolski then followed up with stating that a construction management plan would need to be part of the major site plan review.

Mr. John Connolly made a request that they three assessments that are usually part of a major site plan review be waived for this project. Those assessments were: 1) traffic impact assessment 2) environmental impact assessment and 3) community and fiscal impact assessment. Chairman Bethoney stated the Board members would take up the matter at a later meeting and vote on whether to waive the assessments or not.

The Chairman explained that normally they did not entertain comments from the public for a scoping session, however this was a large building and very well-known location in the town so he would do so. He asked if there were any members of the public who wished to speak.

Mrs. Lindsey Looney of 168 Ames Street wished to be heard. She stated they were the closest residential abutter to the project. She wished to know more about the construction project timeline due to the ongoing MassDot project. The applicant answered that they wished to start demolishing the building at the end of 2020, start construction the beginning of 2021 and they hoped it would take one year to complete. This was according to their ideal timeline.

The Chairman asked if any of the Board members had additional recommendations to make to the applicant? Attorney Podolski asked that the applicant put in writing their request to have the assessments waived and why they should consider it. The applicant agreed.

### **Dedham Square Planning Study Committee**

Attorney Podolski and Jessica Porter were the representatives to the Dedham Square Planning Committee from the Planning Board. Ms. Porter explained that the Precinct Three position was now vacant due to Mr. Brian McGrath moving out of town for work. Ms. Porter asked that the position be posted to obtain a replacement. A motion was made by Attorney Podolski to post the vacant position for Precinct Three, and was seconded by Jessica Porter. A roll call vote was then taken.

James McGrail – yes

Jessica Porter – yes

James O'Brien

Michael Podolski – yes

John Bethoney – yes

The motion was approved unanimously, 5-0.

**Planning Board Reorganization**

The Chairman explained that as customary they would hold a discussion and next steps to consider the leadership positions of the Planning Board. The Chairman asked if everyone had had an opportunity to think about that. Attorney Podolski stated that he was presently content with the makeup of the Board and he would like to stay on as Vice Chairman. He also wished for Mr. Bethoney to remain Chairman as there were a lot of Zoning Articles and applications coming down the line.

Mr. McGrail said this was the first time he had been part of a reorganization, and he also had just looked over the list of committee members. It was explained that committee positions or appointments would be made at a future date to give everyone a chance to review and consider them. A motion was made to by Jessica Porter to table the reorganization of the board officers until the next meeting and was seconded by Attorney Podolski. A roll call vote was taken.

James McGrail – yes

Jessica Porter – yes

James O’Brien

Michael Podolski – yes

John Bethoney – yes

The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

**Review of Minutes from June 10, 2020**

Ms. Porter had previously emailed her edits to the Chairman and to the office. Mr. Podolski had one small change in his statement of the minutes which would change “month to weeks”. He also questioned the use of the word NGO, he thought it might be something different. Changes would be made. Attorney Podolski made a motion to approve the minutes of June 10, 2020 as amended, and the motion was seconded by Attorney McGrail. A roll call vote was taken.

James McGrail – yes

Jessica Porter – yes

James O'Brien

Michael Podolski – yes

John Bethoney – yes

The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

### **Old Business/New Business**

Attorney Podolski gave an update of the Building Planning Construction Committee on which he served. He stated that the first bid had been received for the Public Safety Building and it was in excess of what had been approved in 2017. He was unsure as to how the Town was proposing to move forward.

Chairman Bethoney wished to share that he continued to receive correspondence from residents as to the negative impact Amazon was continuing to have on the town. He was asking the Board to join him in writing a letter to the Select Board regarding Amazon's negative behavior and asking them to act on it. Attorney McGrail asked if the Planning Board had any means of enforcing the agreement of the Certificate of Action. Chairman Bethoney responded that the Town's attorney had indicated that the Planning Board was regulatory, and the Building Department would be responsible for any punitive action.

An update was given as to the time and procedures for Town Meeting.

A motion was made by Attorney Podolski to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. The motion was seconded by Attorney McGrail and a roll call vote was taken.

Jessica Porter – yes

James O'Brien – yes

Jim McGrail - yes

Michael Podolski – yes

John Bethoney – yes

The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

