



# Town of Bellingham

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN

10 Mechanic Street

Bellingham, Massachusetts 02019

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January 6, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Daniel Spencer with all members in attendance.

Mr. Spencer introduced Jennifer Altomonte, the chairman of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committee and presented her with a plaque for all her hard work. She thanked the Board for having her and wanted to give a special thank you to Denis Fraine for being right there along her side throughout the entire year.

### VFW Change in Manager

Attorney Daniel Doyle represented the VFW and stated that due to recent events they would be submitting an application for a change of manager naming Steven Shea, the junior vice commander, as the new manager as well as submitting an application for a change in officers and directors. Mr. Shea stated he lives in Bellingham and has been a fire fighter for the city of Framingham for the last 18 years. His attorney stated he is well known in both communities.

Mr. Connor agreed that it was time to make the situation over there right again.

On a Connor/Martinis motion, the Board unanimously voted to approve the change in manager and officers and director's application as submitted by the VFW.

Mr. Fraine pointed out that Attorney Doyle has been volunteering one hour a week of his own time for the past 15 years providing free legal advice to our seniors at the Senior Center. The Board thanked him for this service.

### Joint Appointment – Selectmen/Planning Board

Mr. Spencer welcomed the Planning Board and stated the reason for the joint meeting was to interview the candidates and appoint the Associate Member position on the Planning Board. All members of the Planning Board were present.

- Elizabeth "Liz" Berthelette

Liz stated she has lived in Bellingham since 2013. She grew up outside of Worcester. She has worked on the research side of a commercial real estate firm for the past 14 years. Mr. Martinis asked how she found out about the position. Liz stated she has been serving on the Master Plan Implementation Committee and was asked to apply.

Mrs. McNulty asked her if she has had any experiences with Town Meetings. She said unfortunately she has not been to many but agrees the residents need to be more involved.

Mr. Connor asked her if she has reviewed any of the current Planning Board projects and she stated she was closely following the residential to industrial rezoning article that was recently on the Fall Town Meeting warrant. Mr. O'Connell asked her how she thought her background would be a good fit with the Planning Board. She said her firm does a lot of consulting work with municipalities and felt she could add some insightful input. He further asked her if she thought Bellingham was considered a hot market and she said for industrial growth it was.

Mr. Devine asked her what she thought were the driving factors for developers to move outside of the 495 corridor. She said the need for more modernized warehouses alongside cheaper rent.

Mr. Spencer asked her if she had attended any Planning Board meetings and if she thought her position at the real estate firm would conflict with being a member of the Planning Board. She has not attended any Planning Board meetings and her position is not commission based and if she thought a topic would conflict, she would excuse herself or be upfront and honest.

- Bryan Bradley

Bryan stated he has lived in Bellingham 26 of his 28 years of life and he currently owns a house in the Wethersfield area. He works in IT and is currently serving as the Chairman of BVT's Advisory IT Committee. He also served 9 years in the US Army.

Mr. Martinis asked what interested him in the open position on the Planning Board. He stated he would like to get involved in town government. He also asked him what his thoughts were on Bellingham's plan to grow its community. Bryan stated he was in favor of the industrial growth as it helps grow the tax base.

Mrs. McNulty asked him if he had any experience in attending Town Meetings. He said he has not.

Mr. Biagi thanked him for his service and asked him if he had anything in his background that could help him contribute to the Planning Board. He said he went from a member to vice to chair on the BVT Advisory IT Committee and said his experience in the military has helped him learn how to adapt quickly and he is a fast learner.

Mr. Connor asked him what the hot topics on the Planning Board were right now. He stated he had also been closely following the residential to industrial rezoning article that was recently on the Fall Town Meeting warrant. He didn't see the need to add another gas station on the right side of Hartford Ave.

Mr. O'Connell asked Bryan how his background would mesh with the Planning Board. He said his experience is with IT and this would be brand new to him but that he is a fast learner.

Mr. Lafond asked what he thought about the traffic issues in Bellingham. He said that he agrees that there is a lot off traffic in town and bringing in new businesses would create more traffic.

Mr. Devine asked Bryan about growth in the industrial areas and how he would determine if something was a good project. He stated location is key to new growth.

Mr. Spencer thanked both candidates for coming before the Board and advised Bryan not to sell himself short given his willingness to learn and encouraged him to stay involved.

Mr. Salisbury thanked both candidates for coming in and stated there is no one more uniquely qualified for this position than Liz and that's why she was asked to apply.

On a Martinis/Biagi motion the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board unanimously voted in favor 10-0 to appoint Elizabeth "Liz" Berthelette to the Planning Board as an Associate Member. The Planning Board motioned to close their meeting.

#### Route 140, 40B Housing Proposal

Mr. Russell Dion from Campanelli along with private developer Matt Clark presented before the Board plans for a friendly 40B multi-family, rental apartment community in hopes to obtain endorsement from the Board before starting and preparing the PEL application. He stated they were not there for the permit process but simply to present the design concept. Similar projects already exist in 4 communities with the 5<sup>th</sup> one just in the beginning stages. The neighborhood friendly complex would consist of 5 apartment buildings with 50 units in each building along with a clubhouse featuring a full kitchen, fitness center, outdoor living space and a pool. Located just a mile from the Franklin forge park line a continuous shuttle would run for those occupants. 25% of the 250 apartment units would be affordable but because this is a rental property 100% of the units would count towards Bellingham's quota pushing the Town over the required 10%. Mr. Dion stated a traffic analysis is just in the beginning stages but communities like these do not typically create added traffic congestion. However, this project along with the Lobisser and the Lincoln properties project should help the Town become eligible for an added traffic light on Mechanic Street.

The Board's reaction to this project was favorable and stated they are excited to see that area of Mechanic Street cleaned up.

Mr. Martinis stated he has seen one of their other projects and stated it is beautiful.

When asked about the need for a neighborhood complex like this Mr. Dion said demographics are all over the board. There is a need amongst our younger population with the explosion of jobs in RI. Folks in Bellingham who no longer want to take care of a home on their own but don't want to leave the community and development of the lower end of 495 will also draw people here.

Mr. Connor asked what the time table for something like this would be and from the beginning process of the applications until the last apartment complex is built 30-32 months.

State Representative Soter who was in the audience told the Board that a favorable vote to endorse this project will warrant the need for a traffic signal and allow DOT to expedite the request.

Mr. Biagi asked about the type of units and the cost of these units. A certain formula will be followed for the 40B affordable housing units but those should range between \$1,550 for a one bedroom to \$1,850 for a three bedroom while the others will start at \$2,100 a month for a one bedroom typically going up \$150 a month for added rooms or amenities.

Mr. Salisbury from the Planning Board cautioned that once the Town is under the thumb of a 40B they lose all control and it is important to get information upfront and have all the plans ahead of time.

Mr. O'Connell asked Mr. Dion to explain the difference between a friendly 40B versus an unfriendly 40B. He stated a friendly 40B is reasonable to all parties involved and there is more collaboration between the developer and the Town. If a project is being received positively by the Town and it is thought to create good for the community, that too would be considered a friendly 40B project. In an unfriendly 40B project the Town is just listed on the PEL application and there is no collaboration.

Mr. Dion explained if they received the support of the Board this evening they would be back again once the PEL application process has begun to obtain approval during the comprehensive permit process.

On a Martinis/McNulty motion the Board unanimously voted in favor of endorsing and supporting the proposed project's intent as it was presented.

On a McNulty/Biagi motion the Board unanimously voted to approve the December 16<sup>th</sup> minutes as submitted.

On a McNulty/Biagi motion the Board unanimously voted to set the ABCC 2020 Seasonal Population Increased Resident estimate at 500.

The Warrant for the Annual Town meeting was opened and a closing date of February 7<sup>th</sup> at noon was set. The Annual Town meeting will take place on Wednesday May 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM in the High School Auditorium.

Mr. Fraine announced that Lt. Governor Karen Polito would be coming to the Town Hall Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup> to make an announcement with regards to a \$2M Mass Works grant that the Town had applied for. Mr. Fraine is hoping she is coming with favorable news. The announcement will be televised on the cable access station.

Mr. Fraine stated that the budget process for FY21 has begun and he and Mrs. MacKinnon will be meeting with various department heads in the upcoming week.

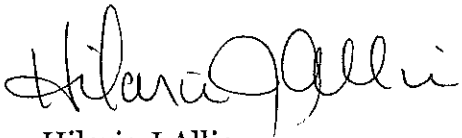
Mrs. McNulty asked about the Sunoco on Hartford Ave and how it was possible that they could store that many vehicles in their parking lot. Mr. Fraine stated he would once again have the Building Inspector look into it. Mr. Connor suggested we also check their tax status. Mr. Martinis asked whether we could charge excise tax for all the cars parked in the lot.

Mr. Martinis stated he would once again like to talk about the status of a dog park in Town. He thinks it would be a nice benefit to the residents so they didn't have to go to surrounding towns and he said in turn those surrounding towns would appreciate it. Mr. Fraine stated he had discussed a dog park with the developers of the new 40B multi family rental unit and they would open to installing a dog park and have it open to all residents. Mr. Martinis didn't want to wait that long nor does he want to wait to have it located at the site of the Lobisser development. Mr. Martinis asked Mr. Fraine about the land swap at the site of the High Street fields but Mr. Fraine stated that it is tied to the Lobisser project. Mr. Spencer suggested he organize a steering committee and pointed out there would be cost associated with maintaining the park.

Mr. Martinis asked if the Town could find out what the actual speed limit is on Maple Street. On one end of Maple Street there is a speed limit sign stating 30 MPH and on the other end of Maple Street there is a speed limit sign stating 35 MPH and there are no signs in between. Mr. Fraine stated he would have our safety officer find out.

On a McNulty/Connor motion, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hilarie J Allie".

Hilarie J Allie

Administrative Assistant