



# City of Westfield

**William Carellas, Chair**  
Cheryl Crowe, Vice Chair  
John Bowen  
Robert Goyette, Jr.  
Jane Magarian  
Philip McEwan  
Raymond St. Hilaire  
Bernard Puza, Associate  
Richard Salois, Associate

June 20, 2023  
City Council Chambers

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**PB MEMBER PARTICIPANTS**  
 **MEMBERS ABSENT**

**STAFF**

William Carellas, Chair  
 Cheryl Crowe, Vice-Chair  
 Robert Goyette, Jr.  
 Jane Magarian  
 Philip McEwan  
 Raymond St. Hilaire  
 John Bowen (@7:02)  
 Bernard Puza (Associate)  
 Richard Salois (Associate)

Jay Vinskey, City Planner  
 Christine Fedora, Secretary

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Chair Carellas opened the meeting at 7:00

- A. Public Participation (on any matter not subject to a public hearing)  
Chair Carellas asked if anyone would like to address the Board.

Ann Sanborn - Westwood Drive- Informed the Board she was told there would be immigrants housed at Dickinson Hall at Westfield State University and if the Planning Board was aware of this? Chair Carellas replied he was not aware of this, and it is not within the Planning Board's purview, he further suggested she contact someone at City Hall such as the Mayor or City Council.

- B. Review and approval of previous meeting minutes (5/02/23 & 5/16/23)  
Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to approve the 5/2/23 & 5/16/23 minutes. All in favor.
- C. Review of plans not requiring approval under Subdivision Control Law
- 185 Gun Club Rd/Pezzini et al

Planner Vinskey informed the Board this is an amendment to a previous approved plan. The houses on the lot existed prior to subdivision control law, as such does not have to meet the frontage requirement. Basically, the shapes of the lots have changed a little. (Member Bowen entered the meeting)

Member Salois asked if there is something that allows the back houses to access the road. Planner Vinskey believed the Zoning Board required the cross-easements as part of their variance. Chair Carellas further noted that is not within the Planning Board's ANR purview.

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to approve the plan. All in favor.

D. Public Hearings (and possible deliberations and decision)

- Site Plan Approval – retail/storage building - 302 E. Main St. & 23 Verona St.

John Tomaszewski of R. Levesque Associates presented. The project is located between East Main and Verona Street and contains 2 parcels for a total of 17,200 s.f., zoned Business B. The parcels consist of Wagner Rug and Flooring on East Main Street and house at the rear Verona Street property. The proposed project construction will consist of 3570 s.f. combination of retail and storage building. The project will utilize the existing 9 parking spaces. There will be no additional paved areas, no additional stormwater and no additional impervious coverage is proposed. There are new additional utility connections being proposed off Verona Street. Project is currently in front of the Conservation Commission (floodplain).

Member Crowe asked about the proposed storage area within the existing business, 2 different lots? A portion of the new building will be retail. Planner Vinskey stated there are 2 buildings being added together to figure the storage maximum. Mr. Tomaszewski stated if this moves forward, they will be doing an ANR plan.

Chair Carellas asked what would happen if they didn't need the second building? Mr. Tomaszewski replied they would come back for a change of use. Planner Vinskey noted the total site would be 40% storage. Member Salois asked about 2 different businesses. Planner Vinskey noted that would be up to the building inspector to decide, but currently they are proposing a single use. Member Salois asked if it would be a covered walkway between the buildings? No, there would be 10-foot separation. Member Goyette stated he would like to see the floor plan and elevations. Chair Carellas also noted he would like to have Planner's concerns addressed.

Chair Carellas invited public comments.

Councilor John Beltrandi – Speaking as individual, in favor of this project this is a growing business, currently they are renting space on Mainline Drive, he asked the Board to consider approving.

Chair Carellas reviewed items the Board would like addressed: How will trucks be prevented from turning into the driveway? Will the existing driveway have access to the overhead door in the back? The comments made by the Planner regarding lighting, landscaping, dumpster, as well as the 2 different addresses/lots.

Planner Vinskey noted the building straddles between the property lines, and it would be treated as one lot. If commonly owned, separate parcels okay by zoning.

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Goyette to continue until July 18, 2023. All in favor.

- Special Permit/Site Plan/Stormwater Permit – Self-storage facility – 109 & 121 (portion) Medeiros Way/Parcels 63R-14 & 15 (portion)

Mr. Todd Cellura of Sovereign Buildings, Inc. would like to build a self-storage facility on the southerly side of Medeiros Way. The property is located at 109 Medeiros Way & a portion of 121 Medeiros Way. The land consists of over 21 acres, the land is zoned Business B and Industrial A to the rear.

Mr. Tomaszewski reviewed the existing site consisting of undeveloped wooded land, Arm Brook is located to the North-South direction, bordering vegetated wetlands, buffer zone and river front, portion of the site has wetlands. Self-storage facility which will consist of 7 new buildings, there will also be an owner occupied contractors building, office space for self-storage, 5 parking spaces near building and 5 in back. They are also before the Conservation Commission, the stormwater will run through the catch basins to infiltration basins, the utilities are off Medeiros Way.

Member Crowe noted that 109 Medeiros Way consists of a big area of undeveloped land. Member Crowe voiced concerns regarding the water resource protection district. Planner Vinskey stated if they don't touch the water resource protection area, the regulations don't apply. The project parcel contains over 21 acres in size, 6.8 acres of that will be developed.

Member Puza inquired about the contractor shop? Mr. Cellura explained the contractor shop will be used to store tools and equipment, office. Chair Carellas asked if the job site has a dumpster for any of the extra materials that might come from the contractor's shop? Mr. Cellura stated there would be nothing left outside. Will there be a sign? There will be a sign, but the location of the sign has not yet been determined, no trailers will be stored on site. There will be a gate, but the location is yet to be determined. Hours of operation? Are yet to be determined. Planner Vinskey noted the plan shows 2 contractor shops.

Public comments?

Planner Vinskey noted we have not heard anything regarding the stormwater, other outstanding items were a gate/fence. Mr. Cellura replied the hope was to avoid fencing the whole site.

Mr. Tomaszewski noted we still have not heard back from the Conservation Commission they just received the DEP comments today. Tomaszewski stated they are here to work with the Board, they do not want to push the limits of the work.

Member Goyette also stated he would like the details of the fence, and the guard rail. Chair Carellas also inquired about the parking area and the storage facility, would there be enough room for fire trucks? Planner Vinskey stated he has reached out to them but has not received any comment.

Snow storage areas? Will note where will be. How prevent tenants from storing hazardous waste? Mr. Cellura noted it would be in the lease agreement. Chair Carellas asked if they would have the right to open the storage facilities?

Chair Carellas asked if both commercial and residential uses would be stored in the storage units. Mr. Cellura voiced his concerns that commercial uses might not be allowed to use the facility, he felt any concerns regarding commercial uses could be addressed in the lease. Also discussed was the use of utilities within each unit. Member Goyette also noted on the Cycle Street application utilities were not allowed in the storage units.

Planner Vinskey noted the issue with Cycle Street was the residential neighborhood, contractors coming in back and forth. He felt there are less concerns here. Member Crowe voiced concerns regarding storing pool chemicals, aquifer.

Member Bowen asked if they would be willing to put a fence up? Planner Vinskey felt a full fence may not be necessary he suggested a gate in the front part.

Member Puza asked about lighting? There would be LED wall packs on the outside of the buildings.

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to continue to July 18, 2023. All in favor.

- Zoning Ordinance Amendment to allow by-right keeping of domestic animals/chickens (petition of the City Council)

Councilor Ralph Figy addressed the room. Currently the city allows dogs and cats. The application before the Board is to be able to raise chickens/eggs, currently they are only allowed in the Rural Residential District if you have 5 acres. The proposal before the Board was to allow the chickens to be a by right use in a residential district if they meet certain parameters. Single or Two-family lots with 5,000 square feet min. This use would be non-commercial, for personal consumption only. He read from the proposed ordinance/requirements.

Member Salois felt that section 2b, should be changed to 1 acre rather than 2 acres if the lot is in (rural residential zoning district) and that cattle or horses should be allowed on one acre of land there; 5 acres is not necessary. Planner Vinskey mentioned anything that doesn't fit into this proposal could be addressed by adding a Special Permit provision.

Member McEwan felt that 5,000 square feet is too small, he felt the Board should consider it to be 10,000 or 20,000 square feet minimum.

Public comments?

Monica Melchionne, 14 Gold Street - previously had chickens and received a notice that she could not have them because her property is industrial-zoned. Would she be able to have them under this? Planner Vinskey informed her, yes 6 chickens by-right on a residential lot, regardless of zoning.

Liz Blood - 43 Jefferson Street - Stated in Boston the lots are smaller, and they could have up to 6 chickens. On 0.3 acres, plenty of room.

Gabriela Michaliszyn, 304 Sackett Road -felt that changes could still be made: ½ or ¼ acre okay, 5,000 sf by special permit. Supports 2 acres reduced to 1 acre, for twice the chickens (12).

Sunny Covileac, 26 Pleasant St- 0.27 acres, had to rehome her chickens. Had appreciated knowing where food comes from. Allow at least 10,000 sf. Had chickens growing up in Agawam, teaches children responsibility.

Alexander Skully, 53 South Maple Street -in favor of this, bounced around quite a bit; values where food comes from. With inflation, gives citizens the ability to have their own food and responsibility. If done legally would be benefit to the community.

Grace Taylor, owns 53 South Maple Street - In favor of this, from Salem where chickens were allowed on small lots. She felt it would be great for the community. Foster mom, foster teenagers. Chickens reduce food waste, waste in the community. Builds community. Not a nuisance.

Jane Okscin - 341 Steiger Drive -In favor, but expressed her concerns regarding the cost to the city in terms of water, sewer, trash, animal control. Will need more officers, inspections with fees, add structure to home, accessory building, must be added to property card. Annual health dept inspections, 6 foot setback, how to handle chicken manure? Diseases and viruses.

Sunny Covileac - Explained the composting process, deep litter method. No odor.

Grace Taylor - Compost bin on her property. Would love to be able to compost chicken manure.

Heather Scott, Agawam - Chicken owner, observing process. Has ½ acre Zoned agriculture, 38 chickens, 3 roosters – don't require much space. Gave examples how chickens have helped her husband and son. Great sense of neighborhood.

Crowe - all types of animals on one lot? Figy- will have to look at it. 5,000 square feet too small. Was raised on a farm, built boxes for manure, and used for gardens. Member Bowen think should be 10,000 square feet. Carellas - add in a special permit to override thresholds? Vinskey stated a special permit probably costs \$400 or \$500 including everything. McEwan suggested special permit for this is cumbersome, expensive and humiliating, prefers Board not deal with.

Chair Carellas felt the city needs this, clearly chickens out there, should be a mechanism to make legal. Think good thing, recommendation should be positive as presented, Council will do whatever they want.

Member Salois agreed should be a positive recommendation. He also felt that 2 horses and 1 cattle should be allowed on a 1-acre lot. Vinskey mentioned he looked at other communities, most do not set lot size minimum for chickens, can even have a horse on ½ acre in Seattle.

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to send a positive recommendation to the Council for the zoning change. Vinskey - does the Board want to spell out its suggested changes? Chair Carellas - no, Councilor Figy will heed the concerns discussed, work out in committee; asked for a positive recommendation on the ordinance change as presented. All in favor.

#### E. Other business

- Breighly Way Subdivision – review of outstanding/incomplete items

Planner Vinskey informed the Board he went to the site and there still are the same outstanding items from last fall. He contacted the developer, and they said will be addressing. Planner Vinskey suggested revisiting this project later. Agreed.

- Petition for Street Acceptance – Pineridge Dr. (Ward 5)

Vinskey stated this was part of an early 80's subdivision, remains a private way. A brief discussion regarding city streets that have not been accepted, should the Board wait for other streets to be submitted? Planner Vinskey informed the Board the process is for the owners along the street to petition the City, not a City initiative.

Member Bowen MOTIONED, to recommend accepting Pineridge Drive as a city street. All in favor.

- Review and adoption of Master Plan

Planner Vinskey informed the Board the Master Plan Committee met this evening and received the updated plan, which was emailed out to members earlier today. The Master Plan needs to be formally accepted and adopted by the Planning Board. Planner Vinskey noted there will be a few minor tweaks to the version he mailed out. He further noted if the Board would like more time to review it, could be put on the Board's next agenda, but it is essentially the same as the draft version which the Board previously discussed last month.

Member Salois (Master Plan Committee Member) felt the plan which covers a comprehensive look at how we would want to see the city, several directives in it. One of the things he supported is the city's need for more open space. He also felt if the Board needed more time to review and digest the plan they could wait. Members Puza (Master Plan Committee Member) agreed and recognized other committee members' work.

Member Salois MOTIONED, seconded by Member Puza to recommend approving the Master Plan from the Master Plan Committee. All in favor.

F. Announcements/Future agenda items. None

Member Crowe MOTIONED, seconded by Member St. Hilaire to adjourn at 8:56. All in favor.