



Holton/Swanton/Cross Streets Community Meeting Tuesday, April 04, 2023, at 7:00 pm – Remote Participation

Members Present:	Diab Jerius, Chair I-Ching Scott Keri Layton	Sally Dale, Vice Chair/Clerk Nicholas Rossettos
Also Present:	Joshua Fiala, MAPC WinCam	Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary
Others Attending:	Roger Wilson John Suhrbier Deborah Nowell Laura Conti Susan Busher Feng Liu Deborah Boyle Maura Sullivan Pamela Cort Franken Willy Riley Pasley Mike Galvin Julie Wile Fish Michael Creane Abby Dorothy	Ellen Spencer Eric Shediak Brendan Connors Richard Rohan Donald Zidik Bill McPadden Steve Schleinger Michelle Blumsack Christopher Kiff Peter Pirani Mark Vaughan Eliza Hanly John Martignetti Susan Nardone Jessica Christine Carney Shukong Ou George Nowell William Band Stephen Ingemi Marianne DiBlasi Vincent Dixon Timothy Matthews Stephen Boksanski Tayla Multin Deb Melkonian Michael Coolidge John Dobbins Michelle McCarthy Grace

A quorum being in attendance, Chair Jerius calls the Winchester Planning Board (PB) meeting to order at 7:03 pm, noting that the meeting is being recorded via WinCam and Zoom. Roll call of PB members: Dale, Layton, Rossettos, Scott, Jerius in attendance.

1. **Holton/Swanton/Cross Streets Community Meeting:**

Chair Jerius: Introduced Josh Fiala with the Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC) and his presentation on the Holton/Swanton/Cross Streets area.

Mr. Fiala: Presented the study for the Holton/Swanton/Cross Streets area using slides. An abbreviated summary follows:

The Agenda: Reintroduce the Study, Provide Summary of Community Feedback, Review Initial Recommendations including Feedback Questions, and Propose Next Steps.

Reintroduce Study: purpose to increase the value of the nonresidential tax base and update the zoning; outlined the area of focus which is currently zoned IL (limited light industrial) bordered with residential (multifamily, single family, condos); total of about 60 parcels; reviewed current uses of these parcels; goal is to balance development and residential, as identified in the Master Plan.

Review Initial Recommendations: Goal to achieve a balance between light industrial and residential uses, allow businesses to do their work while mitigating impacts, and to improve the public realm. There are 3 possible directions from which we could choose:

1. Reverse the current trend of increasing residential/other uses (like sport facilities), reduce encroachment of non-light industrial on light industrial areas, and preserve light industrial uses.

2. Over time, continue to evolve toward lighter impact uses, preserving a place of commercial and light industrial functions.
3. Reduce the light industrial uses over time and allow encroaching uses (residential/other).

He favored the second option. Using this selection, 8 recommendations were outlined:

- Vision Statement
- Zoning Boundary – Reduce industrial boundary to reflect the current evolution of land use and keep a core area for light industrial uses.
- Zoning Uses – When the boundary shifts, the uses shift; keep the light industrial uses and expand them to include small commercial uses such as education, art, etc.
- Dimensional Regulations – Should support businesses and make it easier to build/expand; they include limits on building height, density, square footage, etc.
- District Design Guidelines - Define design guidelines that encourage predictable outcomes such as screening/buffering for neighboring properties.
- Town Rules & Regulations – Explore reducing additional regulations that negatively impact the operations of businesses.
- Street Traffic Improvements – Implement measures to improve the safety of vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists.
- Coordination/Collaboration with Woburn – Share and coordinate improvements with Woburn.

Next Steps: The recording of this presentation with the survey will be made available on the Town’s website. Need to refine initial recommendations. A report will be made to the PB.

Chair Jerius: Noted the PB members had to leave the meeting to attend their regular meeting. PB Members left at 8:15 pm.

Mr. Fiala continued the Community Meeting taking questions and comments from attendees.

Michelle McCarthy: She is a resident and Town Meeting Member (TMM). Asked why this meeting wasn’t sent to all TMMs. Many TMM would have wanted to attend.

Roger Wilson: Has lived in the area for a long time. He recommends looking at sources of complaints. There is a lot of operational noise, like that from the railroad facility and idling trucks/trains and air handling units. Light pollution is another problem with businesses. They leave the lights left on at night. Look at the types of facilities that generate heavy trucking traffic, as well as large volumes of traffic. Cross Street has over 10,000 cars per day.

Dorothy Simboli: She is also a TMM. She voted to rezone Main Street 2 years ago; some buildings went from industrial to business. What did we already do (what is the before and after) and what is being proposed? This seems piecemeal. Whose vision is this? Really concerned about current business owners. Explain what does it mean to rezone a property from industrial to commercial business. Are we creating preexisting nonconforming businesses in this area. Are we hurting some significant existing businesses? Could Light Industrial and Commercial uses be combined?

Mr. Fiala: Noted that existing businesses could remain and that changing from Light Limited Industrial to General Business focuses more on use. It isn’t a reduction but a change to different commercial uses. As for nonconforming, they could continue operating, even if the zoning changes. The intent is to balance the stakeholders’ businesses. Looking for feedback that would guide the zoning changes.

Stephen Ingemi: Small business owner on East Street who moved in 2010 to Winchester. He had looked in neighboring towns and Winchester was most business friendly, inviting and supportive town. He understands the residential concerns. He would be concerned about shifting to residential and impacting the current businesses.

George Nowell: How many parcels are slated to switch or rezone? Concerned that his property on Cross Street (used for a warehouse) would drop in value.

Mr. Fiala: Estimated about a dozen parcels are candidates for rezoning. The value of the land is often tied to what the future of the property could support. Could see a reduction if the zoning uses are limited or something the market would invest in.

Susan Busher: Winchester's zoning bylaws lack anything to protect residents and businesses. There is no definition of Light Industrial; there is only a statement of uses. This doesn't give enough to protect residents from hazards and nuisances of Industrial properties (noise, radiation, light, fumes, pollution). Concerned with reduction of side yards. They have trucks and dumpsters, making it awful for abutting residences. There is also an abandoned railroad track. Concerned that it might be reopened and that would be additional noise and safety concerns. Railroad should not be included in the Limited Light Industrial.

John Carney: Owner of the Kidstock building. He was not notified about any of this. Kidstock is his tenant. He is the owner of the property. He bought the building because it was zoned for light industrial use and does not want it to be changed. The building would be worth less if the zoning changes.

Mr. Fiala: Closed the meeting. The recording of this meeting will be available. The survey will be posted to be available for anyone who hasn't participated. This process is in the study phase and will need further development prior to taking it to the Town Meeting members. He thanked everyone for attending and their comments/participation.

Sally Dale, Clerk

Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary