

1. Amesbury Planning Board Meeting Minutes
2. In Person Meeting – June 9, 2025, at 7:03 PM
3. Chairman Pascal Rettig called the June 9, 2025, Planning Board meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
4. *To submit a public comment ahead of time email Becky Frey at freyr@amesburyma.gov. To speak live at the meeting fill out a public comment form and turn it into Becky Frey. There will be a public comment portion of each public hearing discussed tonight.*
5. *The Chairman notes that tonight's Planning Board meeting is being recorded by Amesbury Public Access Television; this legal step has been taken but does not act as the official record. The written meeting minutes by the Recording Secretary is the official record.*
6. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call –
7. Keith Ratner – YES
8. Joel Nice – YES
9. Michael Jewell – YES
10. Tracey Chalifour – YES
11. Tom Salemi - YES
12. David Frick – YES
13. Pascal Rettig – YES
14. Also: Nipun Jain (Planning Director) and Becky Frey (Community Development Coordinator)
15. **Minutes – 3-24-25**
16. Tracey Chalifour motioned to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2025, Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
17. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
18. Keith Ratner – Abstain
19. Joel Nice – YES
20. Michael Jewell – YES
21. Tracey Chalifour – YES
22. Tom Salemi - YES
23. David Frick – YES
24. Pascal Rettig – YES
25. Motion passed 6-0-1
26. **Minutes – 4-14-25**
27. Tracey Chalifour commented that line 102 should clarify that Joel Nice is providing an update on the Community Preservation Committee.
28. Tom Salemi motioned to approve the minutes from the April 14, 2025, Planning Board Meeting, as amended. Seconded by David Frick.

- 29. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
- 30. Keith Ratner – YES
- 31. Joel Nice – YES
- 32. Michael Jewell – YES
- 33. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 34. Tom Salemi - YES
- 35. David Frick – YES
- 36. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 37. Motion passed 7-0

38. Minutes – 4-28-25

- 39. Tracey Chalifour commented that Horace Mann School was spelled incorrectly.
- 40. Tracey Chalifour motioned to approve the minutes from the April 28, 2025, Planning Board Meeting, as amended. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
- 41. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
- 42. Keith Ratner – YES
- 43. Joel Nice – YES
- 44. Michael Jewell – YES
- 45. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 46. Tom Salemi - YES
- 47. David Frick – YES
- 48. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 49. Motion passed 7-0

50. Signs –68 Haverhill Rd. (Grind and Go Café)

- 51. Stephano Battock from Newburyport Signs represented the applicant. The Design Review Committee asked them to work with the customer to reduce the amount of dead space on the sign itself. They submitted a revised design that eliminated the dead space and changed the color to black. The sign will be reduced in size to 58” by 54”.
- 52. Pascal Rettig confirmed the Board received a memo that the DRC recommended approval of the revised signs.
- 53. David Frick motioned to approve the sign package for Grind and Go Café at 68 Haverhill Road as revised. Seconded by Michael Jewell.
- 54. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
- 55. Keith Ratner – YES
- 56. Joel Nice – YES
- 57. Michael Jewell – YES
- 58. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 59. Tom Salemi - YES
- 60. David Frick – YES
- 61. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 62. Motion passed 7-0

63. City Council Referral – Bill 2025-053

64. Pascal Rettig commented that this was a drainage easement request for 12 Elizabeth St. Planning Staff is not clear on what this is for and why the Planning Board has been engaged.
65. Keith Ratner motioned to continue this item to June 23, 2025, and asked staff to reach out to DPW to provide background context for this Bill. Seconded by Tracey Chalifour.
66. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
67. Keith Ratner – YES
68. Joel Nice – YES
69. Michael Jewell – YES
70. Tracey Chalifour – YES
71. Tom Salemi - YES
72. David Frick – YES
73. Pascal Rettig – YES
74. Motion passed 7-0

75. Preapplication – 45 Main St.

76. Paul Gagliardi, Attorney with Dalton and Finegold, represented the applicant Fuller Building LLC. They will be applying for a Historic Preservation Special Permit. This is an iconic building in downtown Amesbury at the intersection of Main St. and Friend St. Michael Dumaresq and Aileen Graf are present to speak to the project as well. The building has not changed much over time. They are proposing to replace the windows with period-appropriate designs. They are in discussions with the Historical Commission and MA Historical about adding windows on Friend St. to further activate that side of the building. They will be raising the roof line on the back of the building and creating a new space. The goal is to create 4 apartments on the second and third floors of the building. The building completely covers the parcel so there is no onsite parking. They are in discussion with other property owners in the area to see if they can reach a rental agreement. It may come to a point where they will need to request a waiver. There has been discussions with OCED about whether or not they will need an affordable unit. They may be asking for a waiver for that as well.
77. Aileen Graf, from Graf Architects, commented that she would show the changes they are proposing. The first-floor commercial space takes up the entire footprint. They are proposing some access changes and a change on the corner of the Friend St. side. They will wrap the storefront around the corner. It's currently very blank because the wall is all brick. There is also a large topographical change. Today there is low interaction, and they are trying to activate that side by creating a mezzanine level and having a commercial space entering from the rear of the building. The second floor will split the floor plan into 2 units and the third floor will have a similar elevation with 2 units. The Main St. side will have a largely unchanged façade. They will spend time restoring it. All of the first-floor storefront walls will be scraped and repainted. They will clean the golden brick and brownstone. The Friend St. elevation will have added storefront windows, and they will change the roofline by 4 feet to create the mezzanine retail space. It will have a traditional historic approach. There is an existing fire escape on the third floor that will need to be modified or removed. There will be small changes on the rear with a balcony. The rear of the building has a small alley with a small iron gate closing it off.

78. Michael Jewell questioned what would happen to the awning. Paul Gagliardi responded that would stay. Michael Jewell questioned what would happen to the elevated office space in the back portion of the commercial space. Michael Dumaresq responded that would be incorporated into the new mezzanine level. Michael Jewell questioned what would happen to the name on the building. Mike Dumaresq responded that it would stay the Fuller Building.
79. Tom Salemi noted that he did not have any questions and thought it was a good project.
80. David Frick commented that this was a tricky building to figure out how to redesign and reuse. It is good they have come up with a creative solution. This is a great project. The concerns around the parking are understandable. Mr. Frick had an office downtown and he never struggled to find parking. The effort to figure out how to handle the parking is appreciated. Paul Gagliardi commented that they have been in discussions with two different downtown property owners.
81. Joel Nice commented that he was excited for this project. There is a lot of potential here. Joel Nice noted he would be willing to grant parking waivers because there is plenty of parking downtown. It will be good to add 2 commercial spaces, and the Board can get creative with the affordable unit because this is a small project.
82. Keith Ratner agreed they should be able to figure out the parking downtown.
83. Keith Ratner questioned if the affordable unit was triggered at 4 or 5 units. Pascal Rettig responded that the bylaw says more than 4, but there may be a provision in the Historical Special Permit. Paul Gagliardi commented that if they are creating 4 or more units, then the affordability comes in. They have to provide one affordable unit or 15%. The Board can waive up to 10%. OCED is interpreting that would round down, which would mean they do not need to do it. Keith Ratner noted they could also discuss a payment in lieu.
84. Tracey Chalifour commented that she did not have any additional comments, and was excited to see the property evolve.
85. Pascal Rettig supported adding the windows and changing the roof, and noted he hoped the Historical Commission supported that as well. Anything to help liven up the street would be amazing. It will be great to restore the building, and it would be good if they came up with some parking solution.
86. David Frick questioned whether these units would be rented or owned. Mike Dumaresq responded that they would be rental units. Paul Gagliardi noted they were going to the Historical Commission in July.
87. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
88. Sarah Lloyd owner at 57 Main St. commented that she was in favor of the project and was excited about what they were doing. There is a lot of potential to activate Friend St. The applicant mentioned the fire escape gate access through the alleyway, and that access is shared with 57 Main St. That's our only entrance and exit. The fire escape needs work and there has been trespassing. Sarah Lloyd questioned if that area would be cleaned up and maintained. Also, how far would the height of the new roofline be from the windows in the building next door.
89. Mike Dumaresq responded that the roof would be roughly in the middle of the window or a little lower.
90. Sarah Lloyd questioned if there were any renderings from the back.

91. Aileen Graf responded that the gate is remaining as it is today. They had that conversation with the TRC and agreed it was a piece of history, and they want it to remain.
92. Pascal Rettig commented that this discussion could continue between the applicant and abutter offline.
93. Sarah Lloyd commented that the gate should be updated.
94. Tracey Chalifour commented that she may want to stay involved with all the other meetings to follow the project and continue public comment.
95. Paul Rettig commented that this application would be back when they formally file.

96. Preapplication – 1—9 Oakland St.

97. Jeff Roelofs, Stefano Brasso, and Steve Sawyer were present with owners Ken and Kurt Sweet to speak to the application. They are happy to extend the pre-application discussion to the next meeting if there is a need.
98. Stefano Brasso commented that the building sits in the center of the industrial zone with steep topography. There is a 2-story grade change that provides a lot of interesting opportunities. It is surrounded by other industrial mill buildings. The building is on a 0-foot lot line and has surface parking. The scale of this building is interesting. The height of the building at the bottom of the hill has the same roof line at the top of the hill. The existing conditions is a horseshoe shape building facing Oakland St. It has an almost flat roof and repetitive punch openings in the mill building. There is a large continuous curb cut and it is all paved in the middle. The existing tower does not have a roof. The buildings are in rough shape, but there are a lot of historic elements that are intact and can be repaired. There is a steep grade change down to Chestnut St. The building goes from a 3 story to a 4 story as the basement starts to emerge. There are 5 stories on the back side and the tower has six stories. The building was built in 1888 after a great fire destroyed much of the neighborhood. They are hoping to bring back the mansard roofs. The signage is still there on the tower. After looking at the master plan and overlay district, they tried to embrace and incorporate design elements into the project. The natural assets of the walkability to the downtown could create a nice bridge between the two neighborhoods. The building is in close proximity to the riverwalk as well. The downtown and the upper Millyard are already a destination and the lower Millyard will also become a destination. A rendering from the master plan imagines future realm improvements in this area. There is a lot to work with and there's a high concentration of buildings that have potential. Today it is a tough environment to walk but it is not hard to imagine the connection to downtown. This proposal would be a major renovation of the building while keeping elements that make the building special. They are trying to infill where it is feasible. It will be a historic renovation with pedestrian improvements. They are proposing 124 apartments and 7 artist live/work units. Those will be units with exterior doors fronting on the sidewalk and courtyard. The rest of the units are generally smaller apartments. The building has 3 separate commercial spaces that could be divided further if needed. The zoning height takes into account the grade change. The maximum height will be 56 feet and 6 stories total. It will match the height of the existing height of the tower. The basement will be commercial space and parking. There will be 155 parking spaces and the majority of those will be in garages. There will be 25 parking spaces in the parking lot on Oakland St. They will maintain the

window openings. The courtyard area will have a narrow strip of plantings between the sidewalk and parking. A fence will shield the parking. The top floor will recede into the background some. They will infill with a new addition to match the top floor and put a lot of windows at the bottom for the residential lobby with a mailroom. The sidewalk will go back into the main entry. There will be a small patio area that could go with the other commercial space. The front right side will be like the left. They will work closely with city engineering on the grade changes. There are some artists' studios in areas that are not big enough for commercial space along the bottom floor. A new addition along the Chestnut St. side will also be in brick. They will differentiate the building with complimentary but different architectural details. The first 3 stories of the new addition are an interior parking garage. The upper three floors are residential units. The top floor is set back 5 feet to reduce the visual impact. There's a small one-story bump out on Chestnut St. That will give the commercial space some additional frontage and some plaza patio seating in the back. The lowest level plan has a cleaned-up curb cut to access the lowest level garage and it's a dead end with 36 spaces. The first floor has a commercial space and 2 elevators that serve all floors. There is some green space, and they will need to work with the city to carry a strong sidewalk line down the street. The second floor has a 34-parking space garage with access on the Oakland St. The artist live/work studios will be on Chestnut St. The third floor will have one focused curb cut to the courtyard with 25 parking spaces and garage spaces. There will be an internal trash room and dumpsters would be rolled out for pick up. It will also have the main lobby, 2 commercial spaces, artist studios and some units. The upper floors are a double-loaded corridor scheme with a mix of different sized units. The top floor has a 5-foot setback. They are proposing a small roof deck for residents' use. There would also be a lot of mechanicals on the roof. The dashed area would be for a future solar array. It's a sustainable design, with urban infill in a dense neighborhood. There is walkability and it is near public transit. They are reducing and containing storm water runoff and installing drought tolerant native plantings. There will be EV charging stations and bike storage as well as recycling and compost options.

99. Steve Sawyer commented that they completed a site survey and there are 2 existing buildings with a small offset on Oakland St. and the side yard. There is a steep slope down to the rear. The two parcels are part of the project, and the garage will be added to the downhill side of the existing structure. They will be formalizing the entryway and creating an entry to the lowest level with an 8% grade. They will be improving the sidewalk. The proposal is to provide a 5-foot granite sidewalk with curbing. They plan to work with DPW on street scape improvements. They will be working through the design on the corner at Oakland St. and Chestnut St. Oakland St. has a central curb cut. The garage will be a 12% grade down to mid-level. There will be surface parking on the open courtyard area. They will be providing all the utility upgrades. There will be enhanced infiltration chambers in the upper courtyard and they will hold and infiltrate storm water under the garage.
100. Jeff Roelofs commented that they have been working with GPI's traffic engineer and found peak demand time for parking at the building given the high residential and commercial use would be midnight to 4 am. They predict a need for 153 spaces on a weekday and 129 spaces on a Saturday. There is sufficient parking based on the unit count alone. It does not take into account the proximity to other amenities or transit. This is also

a short walk to the surface lot and garage. They are using that to meet the commercial parking demand.

101. Jeff Roelofs commented that a lot of work went into this design and there are a lot challenges but a lot of benefits as well. This aligns with the overlay district and the Master Plan. It is a renovation and reuse of a historic building. They are creating more housing, improving the streetscape, and artistic space and increasing commercial space. They have been to the Technical Review Committee. They are working with the historic special permit provisions. They are happy to extend the preapplication process if needed. They have not met with the Historical Commission yet.
102. Pascal Rettig opened it up to questions from the Board.
103. Tracey Chalifour questioned how many affordable units there would be. Jeff Roelofs responded that they are hoping for 10% affordable units. Tracey Chalifour questioned where the bike storage would be. Stefano Brasso responded that they earmarked space in the garage levels and could fit 10-12 per level. Tracey commented that e-bikes take up more space than regular bikes, which is something to consider. Stefano Brasso commented that there are some storage spaces that are not currently earmarked for anything. They can make them more available. Tracey Chalifour commented that they should consider the placement of the trash on each floor and ensure it is not a noise nuisance for adjacent units. It would be good to understand the parking usage especially when talking about using the municipal parking lot.
104. Keith Ratner questioned what the parking requirements were. Pascal Rettig responded that the default was 1.5 spaces per unit. The municipal lot would cover the commercial requirement. Stefano Brasso confirmed that they have reduced the parking count to what they deem appropriate based on the traffic study. It would be 1.25 per unit and they would designate some courtyard spaces for visitor or commercial use. That would satisfy the parking demand for the zoning requirement, and they will use the municipal lot as well. Keith Ratner questioned if a 12% grade was too steep in the winter. Steve Sawyer clarified that it was interior and acceptable. Keith Ratner questioned if these would be rental units. Stefano Brasso confirmed that was correct. Keith Ratner commented that he will want to discuss the affordable housing more and will want to see traffic and vehicular circulations on the site as well as the surrounding area.
105. Joel Nice commented that he supported providing less parking and would like to see more commercial space or more ground floor activation. It would make more sense to add more vibrance or activity to the south facade and even the front with some color or material. Part of the fun with the mill buildings is adding a modern touch. It would make sense to provide more manipulation of the facade or outdoor spaces. Overall, it is a great project and he was open to waivers.
106. Stefano Brasso responded that they were open to hearing about different look options and depending on parking demand open to talking about that as well.
107. Michael Jewell commented that it would be nice to see that building renovated. Right now, the municipal lot is in bad shape and periodically closed. This area is not walkable in the winter. The sidewalks are not kept clear, and pedestrians need to make numerous crossings in the street. That should be discussed with DPW.

108. Tom Salemi commented that he was also excited about the project. Joel Nice made some great points about the architecture. The Chestnut St. view is underwhelming. They should put something more visible there. It would be nice to have more gathering spaces. This will be a positive addition to the neighborhood and whole downtown area.
109. David Frick agreed it was a good project and would activate this part of the city. It is good forethought to install the sidewalk. If any commercial space is any kind of restaurant, then they would need to consider venting or other items needed for that.
110. Pascal Rettig commented that it would be amazing to see this project come together. It would be good to activate the space more. If the team is holding back from adding more commercial space because of the parking requirements, then he would be open to waivers. This will not extend the downtown if people are pulling in and going straight up to their units. This is a huge project, and it would be great to see more street level activation if possible.
111. Stefano Brasso questioned if they were requesting to make the commercial spaces larger or reduce the garage size. Pascal Rettig responded all of the above. A couple of those artist live/workspaces could work as commercial spaces with seating out front.
112. David Frick commented that he presumed they put together ideas on how they were going to maintain the historic nature and questioned if there were any issues on the back side of the building. Some of the units in the existing building will be looking right onto other apartments. Stefano Brasso responded that they will put as many windows on the Chestnut St. side as possible.
113. Nipun Jain commented that clearly staff is excited about the project as well and they appreciate the effort that team has put together at this time. It is a good place to start and a good opportunity for the community to activate this part of downtown. This has been discussed with TRC and generally speaking TRC has been supportive. The building is getting older by the day and needs a lot of work. They are anxious to undertake repairs and trying to come up with best way to move forward. They have looked at the possibility without the addition or a smaller one but a majority of what proposing needs the addition. Staff has been encouraging them to look at activating the first floor. There is a lot of opportunity to engage the public and residents. It is a balancing act between what parking is needed on the site or in the future.
114. Nipun Jain commented that he understood Joel Nice's comments on the building design. They have worked with the design team to emphasize the history of the building. There will be more discussion with the Design Review Committee. It is important to understand and visualize other vantage points. Public safety officials are excited for pedestrian facility improvements.
115. Tom Salemi questioned if there was opportunity to make a pedestrian thoroughway through the building. Stefano Brasso responded it was a steep grade change and some of it was the neighbor's property.
116. Pascal Rettig thanked the team for coming in and noted they were welcome to come back if needed.
117. David Frick noted it would be good to have updates from the DRC and Historical commission.

118. Continued Public Hearings – 201 Elm St.

119. Pascal Rettig commented that they would take a 10-minute break and come back at 9:10 pm.
120. Pascal Rettig commented that they asked staff to prepare a draft decision.
121. Nipun Jain commented that he would summarize where they left the review and discussion. The application has been reviewed by all committees, and they have made favorable recommendations for the project. The Board was waiting for the peer review memo and that has now been issued. They have had a discussion with the design team and the applicant has made revisions based on that and the peer review memo. One comment was made on the ms4 and is effective on properties of an acre or more. This site is less than an acre, so it does not apply in this place. The applicant has complied with site plan design and standards. Intent has been to meet the performance standards in the DEP handbook and stormwater standards that are applicable. The applicant provided additional documentation and calculations that in my opinion satisfy the intent of the comment and can be verified for completeness before a building permit. Supplemental documents can be finalized prior to construction. There was a request made by the Board to get a letter from TRC in regards to potential safety for the driveway at the existing house. It is an existing house and existing driveway. They have not raised any red flags that they do not want the driveway to be used. That can be addressed with departments during construction, and they can work out if any additional signage or safety precautions are needed for that driveway in addition. This could be added as a condition into the decision.
122. Meera Cousens commented that they did add one more sign at the intersection of Elm St. and Monroe St. that says hidden driveway ahead. They will work with DPW and Public Safety.
123. Pascal Rettig commented that condition made sense. Tom Salemi agreed.
124. Keith Ratner commented that there was a comment in the Stantec memo that gutters may be needed. Meera Cousens responded that they do not have gutters but will do a drip line around the perimeter of the historic house. They will be conveyed to a sub-surface system. Nipun Jain added that this issue was discussed with Stantec, and the applicant team is going to identify where they are accounted for in the revisions.
125. Nipun Jain reviewed the draft decision. The first few sections are fact findings of the site and application. Page 5 has the waivers listed. The waivers are dimensional for setbacks for the front side or rear. One of the things that we have at least mentioned is that there are now 3 new lots. Those new lots can come into being after a definitive subdivision plan has been filed with the Board and those setback waivers will kick in once approved. They are supportive of those waivers and see them as proposed to be granted provided the houses built as designed and approved landscaping is installed as proposed and definitive plan is approved. Page 6 has general conditions that may apply at any point of the project in perpetuity. The allowed uses are outlined. Page 7 lists the important conditions which are the definitive subdivision plan that needs to be filed, and the new residential structures may be built on new lots once the plan has been approved. They can move forward with the existing structure once the site plan and special permit are approved. Page 8 includes notations and is a good way of documenting for the building inspector and future residents what each lot and structure stand for. Number 10 is a

notation relating to storm water management and maintenance on each lot. There is a historic preservation restriction condition. Any changes to the historic structure can only be to the extent that was approved by the Historical Commission as well as plans approved by Planning Board. Most of the conditions after that are required for any project.

126. Pascal Rettig commented that number 14 talked about the landscape plan and indicated trees in the back, but did not enumerate them. Nipun Jain commented that the final landscape plan will be approved. They need the quantity of each of the plant species. Meera Cousens confirmed they would get that information.

127. Nipun Jain commented that page 11 speaks to stormwater management and infrastructure. They have indicated that once the storm water infrastructure components are installed and the as built is complete, then the O and M plan will be provided to homeowners to maintain it. Page 13 has conditions about the submission of architectural drawings to ensure that the building is carried out as proposed. There may be construction drawings with more detail and staff will review them to ensure consistency. Engineering documents will be provided and will be reviewed by Stantec and make sure they are adequately addressed. Page 14 addressed sedimentation and erosion control. Another issue raised in the public hearing was concern about runoff onto Monroe St. That information has been added on the plans and the applicants will establish an erosion control bond until the site is stabilized.

128. Joel Nice motioned to continue the Planning Board Meeting to 10:30 pm. Seconded by David Frick.

129. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

130. Keith Ratner – YES

131. Joel Nice – YES

132. Michael Jewell – YES

133. Tracey Chalifour – YES

134. Tom Salemi - YES

135. David Frick – YES

136. Pascal Rettig – YES

137. Motion passed 7-0

138. Nipun Jain commented that page 16 includes a condition to make sure the site and area around it remains clear and clean. Any repair and cleanup should be coordinated and they should provide a monthly report on erosion control and maintenance. Those are the more critical conditions in the decision based on where the project stands at this time.

139. David Frick motioned to approve draft decision for the spite plan and special permit application for 201 Elm St. as provided by staff with the added condition that the applicant will work with public safety and DPW on any additional street signage. Seconded by Keith Ratner.

140. Tom Salemi commented that his concerns about the driveway were addressed with the public safety condition.

141. David Frick commented that he was concerned about storm water, but the peer review identified what could be addressed. It is good to go.

142. Pascal Rettig commented that the concerns on the storm water, subdivision, public safety, and retaining wall were all covered in the decision.
143. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
144. There was none.
145. Jole Nice questioned how the erosion control bond was determined. Nipun Jain responded that it was based on .25 per sf of disturbed area.
146. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
147. Keith Ratner – YES
148. Joel Nice – YES
149. Michael Jewell – YES
150. Tracey Chalifour – YES
151. Tom Salemi - YES
152. David Frick – YES
153. Pascal Rettig – YES
154. Motion passed 7-0
155. Keith Ratner motioned to close the public hearing for 201 Elm St. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
156. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
157. Keith Ratner – YES
158. Joel Nice – YES
159. Michael Jewell – YES
160. Tracey Chalifour – YES
161. Tom Salemi - YES
162. David Frick – YES
163. Pascal Rettig – YES
164. Motion passed 7-0
165. **New Public Hearings – 26 Friend St.**
166. Nipun Jain read the legal notice into the record.
167. David Frick is an abutter and recused himself from the application.
168. Lisa Mead and Aileen Graf were present to speak to the application. Lisa Mead commented they were there for a special permit for multifamily residential use and site plan review. The proposal is to renovate the existing one-story building and add 3 stories on top of it. They will be adding three 2-bedroom units. There is a one-story addition on the back that will be removed. This space will be used to add 3 parking spaces. The property is located in the Central Business District. It will have commercial use on the first floor and the residential units above. The park on the left side will be extended and improved. The lot is preexisting non-conforming on all sides. There currently are no onsite parking spaces. The proposed building height will be 36.5 feet. The Board is permitted to allow extension to non-conforming buildings in the Central Business District. They will be asking for some modifications. There will be an enclosed trash and recycling area, and this project will include improvements to the adjacent park. The engineer has designed roof leaders off the gutters and the downspouts will infiltrate in the back under the parking lot.

169. Aileen Graf commented that the first floor is just shy of 1,500 sf will remain mostly commercial. They will build a corridor for residents to access the residential units. The project would be adding 3 floors with a 1,000 sf 2-bedroom unit on each floor. The residential units will have access from the rear as well. They will add store front windows along the front and wrap the windows to the park side. The intent is to improve visibility on that side and activate the park. Adding three levels of residential units fills the void on the street. The first floor will have a recessed doorway that will lead to the commercial and residential spaces. The building will have a mansard roof with some dormers. They will be providing some screening to the parking. There will be a balcony for each unit in the back. The roof will have faux slate for the steep pitch and then architecture shingles for the less visible parts of the roof. The alleyway will have the HVAC units and the leaders that bring the roof runoff to the infiltration system. Trash and recycling will be behind the fence. The landscape plan shows how this building will interact with the park. They will work with the city in making the park improvements.
170. Lisa Mead reviewed the special permit criteria. This is an allowed use and desirable because it will increase the housing inventory. It will not create undue traffic congestion. They will be providing parking and there is a public parking lot across the street. They will not overload any public water drain or sewage system. They will not take up a larger footprint and there is no physical limitation to creating the height. The building and lot are currently non-conforming, and the Planning Board can approve modifications. There is no negative impact to the existing or possible structures. The proposed building fits the neighborhood, and the current structure looks out of place. It will not impair the integrity or character of the district architecture. The proposed mixed use is appropriate for the downtown. There will be an improvement to the character of the neighborhood. The proposal is complimentary for the area and consistent with the Downtown. The site plan review criteria complies with the performance standards as it minimizes traffic impacts and adds parking. There is ample room for pedestrians. The stormwater will be addressed. The building is served by adequate water supply.
171. Michael Jewell did not have any questions.
172. Tom Salemi commented this was a good project. They are creating parking spaces in the back of the building and access the public parking lot. Tom Salemi questioned if the city would have any obligation to make sure it's clear. Nipun Jain responded there are other private parking areas in that lot. These three additional spaces will also be able to get similar access.
173. Joel Nice commented that he did not have any questions. It looks great and they addressed a lot in the preapplication. The storm water infiltration component is a good addition.
174. Keith Ratner questioned if they were coordinating with the city on the park already. Lisa Mead confirmed they were.
175. Tracey Chalifour questioned why they changed the placement of the bedrooms on the top level. Aileen Graf responded it was because of the dormers.
176. Pascal Rettig commented that one note in TRC comments was to not extend the grassy area. Nipun Jain commented that all of the improvements to the public space are conceptual. They will be coordinating with the relevant departments to finalize details.

When that question was raised it was clarified that this was not the final plan and it's a concept that has been developed in collaboration. The primary intent is to work along the edges of the property to provide screening. They will work with city staff to finalize details and easements for the park.

177. Lisa Mead confirmed they would coordinate with the city on the easements that are needed.
178. Tracey Chalifour commented that she did not see snow storage on the plan. Nipun Jain commented that this was also brought up in TRC and one area identified was a storage area in the alleyway. Depending on the snow event some could be stored there. If there is too much, then they would need to haul it off site.
179. Tracey Chalifour noted that the DRC made a positive recommendation with minor revision and comments. However, there was nothing there. Nipun Jain commented that they discussed some making the walkway a different material, adding fencing around the trash enclosure, and along the right-hand side. None of the comments were substantial changes to the site plan.
180. Pascal Rettig opened the public comment
181. Linda Perriello of 75 Main St. commented that she was a board member of the buildings and was concerned about the snow removal. 75 Main St. has a garage under the building parking in the back area with the municipal lot. When it snows their cars need to park in the municipal lot and take away the snow in their parking area. Then city pushes the snow where this new parking is proposed because there is no other place to put it.
182. Pascal Rettig noted that right now there's a building where the new parking is proposed, so they are not using that for snow storage. The proposed park is not finalized. This will go through DPW for them to approve. It does sound like snow storage gets complicated back there.
183. Nipun Jain added that snow storage and removal is complicated downtown period. It is not fun in the downtown, but there are solutions.
184. Tracey Chalifour questioned what is supposed to happen with the snow at 75 Main St. Linda Perriello responded that they hire a company to plow them out and he needs to remove it from site.
185. Lisa Mead commented that this is a management issue for the whole parking area. Obviously if the snow cannot be easily plowed and stored, then they will need to remove it. They will ensure that it is outlined in the condo documents and everyone has to manage it. Pascal Rettig agreed. Lisa Mead added that DPW needs to approve the landscaping. Nipun Jain noted that there was a plan to look at the city arrangement of parking in that area. It has never been laid out in that area to look at the best use and circulation. Snow will be a big consideration.
186. David Frick spoke as an abutter. He owns the property at 42 Friend St. and had that condo since 2012 as well as a condo in the upper Millyard. This is a great use of space. It is a good infill project, and he supported it.
187. Pascal Rettig commented that they did not have any engineering or stormwater review. Pascal Rettig questioned if there was anything outstanding they were waiting on. Nipun Jain responded that they were not waiting on anything. Amesbury has not seen a project in the downtown in a while. A lot of time has already been spent on what the will building will

look like and how the parking will work. Pascal Rettig noted that they could ask staff to draft a decision.

188. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the public hearing to the July 14, 2025, Planning Board Meeting and ask staff to draft a decision to review at that meeting. Seconded by Joel Nice.

189. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

190. Keith Ratner – YES

191. Joel Nice – YES

192. Michael Jewell – YES

193. Tracey Chalifour – YES

194. Tom Salemi - YES

195. David Frick – RECUSED

196. Pascal Rettig – YES

197. Motion passed 6-0

198. **NewPublic Hearings – Bill 2025-054**

199. Tom Salemi motioned to extend to the Planning Board Meeting to 10:45 pm. Seconded by Tracey Chalifour.

200. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

201. Keith Ratner – YES

202. Joel Nice – YES

203. Michael Jewell – YES

204. Tracey Chalifour – YES

205. Tom Salemi - YES

206. David Frick – YES

207. Pascal Rettig – YES

208. Motion passed 7-0

209. Keith Ratner left the meeting at 10:29 pm.

210. Nipun Jain read the legal notice into the record.

211. Nipun Jain commented that all of the changes in the proposed amendment are required and requested by FEMA in order to remain eligibility to be protected by the FEMA insurance program. The revised maps and adoption deadline is before July 8, 2025. They have received a report that was provided to everyone that states the proposed zoning amendment would make the city compliant with the FEMA regulations an requirements under federal regulations and formats. DCR asked the city to adopt their model bylaw, however, because there were some specific requirements already, we did not want to make wholesale changes. That is why it's not a complete replacement.

212. Tracey Chalifour commented that this may warrant a more robust discussion than they have time for tonight given the late hour. Pascal Rettig noted these were model requirements that have to be approved to meet FEMA insurance requirements. The requirements were provided to the city. These changes meet the requirements of the FEMA. The only other option was to adopt the provided language wholesale.

213. Tracey Chalifour commented that the cited maps are from the 70s and 80s and questioned if there were more updated maps that should be referenced. Nipun Jain responded that those are the maps that were reviewed and approved by DCR. That is what is provided.
214. Tracey Chalifour commented that she was not comfortable going through this quickly tonight. It seems like this should be given more due diligence. Nipun Jain commented that these were state mandated requirements, and the state has reviewed this draft and found that it meets those requirements. If the Board has specific questions, then they can review what needs further explanation. The city does not have a lot of leeway to change any of the language because it's taken from what the state is requiring.
215. Pascal Rettig commented there is little leeway to push back and make changes. The Board can go through it, but no one on the Board is a subject matter expert. This is the mandated language, and it has been approved by the state. Tracey Chalifour commented that this was a very layered and complex amendment. It would be good to have a healthy discussion about it.
216. Joel Nice questioned what specific questions Ms. Chalifour had. Tracey Chalifour responded that some of the language conflicts with other parts of the amendment.
217. Tracey Chalifour elected to withdraw all of her comments and let the process unfold.
218. Nipun Jain commented that he was happy to engage in discussion, but the Board would need to schedule a special meeting to discuss it further. The Board should identify what specifically needs to be discussed for the next meeting.
219. David Frick motioned to send Bill 202-054 back to City Council with a positive recommendation. Seconded by Michael Jewell.
220. Michael Jewell questioned if the Conservation Commission looked at this. Nipun Jain confirmed they met tonight and voted to send positive a recommendation to City Council.
221. Tom Salemi commented questioned if there was anything in particular the Board needs to know. Nipun Jain commented that the changes were to ensure performance standards would be met. The Floodplain Administrator is identified as the Zoning Compliance Officer. They are responsible for making sure projects are allowed and following requirements. Some flood hazardous zones are no longer applicable to Amesbury based on the map revisions. The changes make it easier for applicants to understand general requirements and specific requirements.
222. Tracey Chalifour questioned what number 7 on page 7 in the AE zone might have on the community. Nipun Jain responded that this was in relation to recreational vehicles placed in certain places. If any use is grandfathered it would have to be determined by state agencies and the property owner can make application to that effect. If it was a proposed activity, then they would need to seek variances.
223. Tracey Chalifour questioned what would happen if someone had a trailer in Tuxbury Pond. David Frick responded that was not a recreational vehicle.
224. Nipun Jain commented that the regulations are so ironclad, and they cannot change them.
225. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
226. There was no public comment.
227. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

- 228. Keith Ratner – ABSENT
- 229. Joel Nice – YES
- 230. Michael Jewell – YES
- 231. Tracey Chalifour – ABSTAIN
- 232. Tom Salemi - YES
- 233. David Frick – YES
- 234. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 235. Motion passed 5-0-1

236. **Administrative – 31 Newton Road Bond Release**

- 237. Pascal Rettig commented that staff recommended to release the bond in the amount of \$5,975.42.
- 238. Tracey Chalifour motioned to release the \$5,975.42 erosion control bond for 31 Newton Road. Seconded by David Frick.
- 239. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –
- 240. Keith Ratner – ABSENT
- 241. Joel Nice – YES
- 242. Michael Jewell – ABSENT
- 243. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 244. Tom Salemi - YES
- 245. David Frick – YES
- 246. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 247. Motion passed 5-0

248. **Administrative – Planning Board Rules and Regulations**

- 249. Pascal Rettig commented that he and Tracey Chalifour went through the draft of the Planning Board Rules and Regulations. They had made some edits to update the draft to reflect how the Board operates today. They updated small items like changing the word from town to city. They also updated other items, like any additional information that should be provided by the Friday after the previous Planning Board meeting.
- 250. David Frick clarified that the additional information deadline was for applicants not staff.
- 251. David Frick questioned why they were requesting 3 weeks for a preapplication. Nipun Jain responded that it was fine. They have struggled with how to approach that in the past, and this is one way. They can continue to make it better.
- 252. Pascal Rettig commented that the last thing they did was update the order of business.
- 253. Pascal Rettig noted that they did not have any Rules and Regulations officially on the record, so this has to be a public hearing. Nipun Jain confirmed that was correct. Once this is adopted, revisions can be made administratively at a public meeting.
- 254. Nipun Jain commented that they could adopt something formally and then easily change it periodically from there
- 255. Michael Jewell left the meeting at 10:47 pm

256. David Frick motioned to extend the Planning Board Meeting to 11 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi.

257. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

258. Keith Ratner – ABSENT

259. Joel Nice – YES

260. Michael Jewell – ABSENT

261. Tracey Chalifour – YES

262. Tom Salemi - YES

263. David Frick – YES

264. Pascal Rettig – YES

265. Motion passed 5-0

266. **Administrative – Stantec Invoices**

267. Pascal Rettig read the Stantec invoices into the record:

1. A Stantec invoice for 14 S Hunt Rd. in the amount of \$265.50.

2. A Stantec invoice for 31 Newton Rd. in the amount of \$1,440.00

3. A Stantec invoice for Bailey's Pond in the amount of \$385.50.

4. A Stantec invoice for Bailey's Pond in the amount of \$1,969.25.

5. A Stantec invoice for 80 Haverhill Rd. in the amount of \$864.75.

268. Tracey Chalifour motioned to approve payment of the Stantec invoices listed above.
Seconded by David Frick.

269. Pascal Rettig initiated a roll call vote –

270. Keith Ratner – ABSENT

271. Joel Nice – YES

272. Michael Jewell – ABSENT

273. Tracey Chalifour – YES

274. Tom Salemi - YES

275. David Frick – YES

276. Pascal Rettig – YES

277. Motion passed 7-0

278. **Adjournment**

279. David Frick motioned to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi.

280. Keith Ratner initiated roll call vote –

281. Keith Ratner –

282. Joel Nice – YES

283. Michael Jewell – ABSENT

284. Tracey Chalifour – YES

285. Tom Salemi - YES

286. David Frick – YES

287. Pascal Rettig – YES

288. Motion passed 5-0