



**Amesbury Technical Review Committee
February 19, 2026**

**City Hall Auditorium
62 Friend St.
9:30 am**

In Attendance:, Lauren Blatchford, Nick Cracknell, Joe Buckley, Howard Snyder, Nipun Jain, Amanda Armington, Jim Wilson, Joe Neipp, Lauren Blatchford, Chief Serino, and Becky Frey

Absent: Chief Bailey

Nick Cracknell called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

Pre-Application Presentations:

1. 10 Chestnut Street –

Postponed to 3/3/26 TRC Meeting.

2. [230 Main Street](#)

Attorney Lisa Mead and civil engineer, John Tobin, were present to speak to the application. Lisa Mead commented that this property is at the corner of 230 and 234 Main Street and Rosedale St. The proposal will rehab 230 Main St. and take down the structure at 234 Main Street. They are proposing 68 units and 5 buildings.

John Tobin commented that there are two existing residential properties, an old used car dealership, and an old childcare school on the site today. There is access to the site on Main St., Macy St., and Rosedale St. There are overhead utility lines with lines running through the property. The proposed plan is to work with National Grid to move those poles. They are waiting for approval from the city before finalizing that utility plan. The proposed layout will have buildings A-E from right to left. Building A has 18 units proposed, Building B has 20 units, Building C has 21 units, Building D will have 5 units, and Building E will have 4 units. They will close the access points on Macy St. The site will be accessed off the existing curb cuts on Rosedale St. and Main St. The buildings will be along the street and the parking will be located in the rear. There will be a total of 70 parking spaces on the site. The parking plan shows some future EV parking spaces as well as handicap spaces. There will be motorcycle and E-Bike parking spaces near the dumpster. The landscape plan will introduce 350 trees and bushes to the site. There will be courtyards between Buildings A and B, Buildings B and C, and Buildings D and E. There will also be a small one out front of Building C. They have not developed the utility plans yet, but are planning to put a subsurface utility service out there. They can tie into Main St. if need be. They will need permitting from MASS DOT to change the access on Macy St. There is sewer off Main St. and Rosedale St. They will submit a turning plan to show how the emergency vehicles can maneuver through the site.



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Lauren Blatchford commented that the plan said 78 spaces would be provided, but in the presentation they said 70 spaces. This proposal is short 34 spaces from what is required in the ordinance, and that's an issue for the Police Department. There should be 102 spaces according to the zoning code. Cars cannot park on the street. John Tobin responded that they have a parking engineer who will address that concern. They are working with the planning department on that.

Howard Snyder commented that Building D and E have 9 units total. That area is under parked. It would be challenging for residents to have to walk from parking at Building C over to D and E. Howard Snyder was concerned about the sidewalks in front of the buildings along Macy St. It should be widened. The courtyard between C and D looks more like a pass-through area rather than active use. They should evaluate to see if they can create more distance between the buildings for breathing room. There should be more detail on the area north of the parking area to the right of the three dumpsters. Howard Snyder questioned if the E-bike/motorcycle and tandem parking area was in the right of way. John Tobin responded it was in the right of way, but they have rights to it. The tandem parking would be assigned parking for someone in Building A.

Jim Wilson commented that he did not have any questions. They addressed the EV and handicapped parking locations.

Chief Serino commented that they will need to do a swing turn radius plan for a ladder truck on the corner. They may need to reduce the parking or remove trees to make that work. Chief Serino echoed the police department's concerns about the parking layout. Cars will be stacked there, and they will have limited access getting in and out of there. Chief Serino was not opposed to the project, but it does need work. They need to come up with a plan for fire department access. John Tobin commented that they already identified one tree that has to be removed. They can meet with the fire department offline. Chief Serino commented that a general community concern is that Main St. is backed up already, especially at school time. This proposal would be adding in 60 plus units. They need to address that.

Nipun Jain commented that the Planning Board comments included concerns and comments on the overall density and lack of overall parking. That is an issue that needs to be addressed. The historic home is the driving force behind the application, but the overall layout needs to work. There are only 4 parking spaces in the area with the historic home. They need to look at how they can make that parking area better.



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Joe Buckley questioned where the snow storage was. John Tobin responded they will have to take it off site. Joe Buckley questioned if it would be private trash management, storm water management, and snow removal. John Tobin confirmed that was correct. Joe Buckley commented that they will need to come into meet with DPW to talk about water and sewer connection.

Nick Cracknell commented that they could discuss his design comments offline. Nick Cracknell commented that overall he thought it was a good project that was fairly well designed. The proposal was for a historic special permit at the property at 230 Main St. It went through a pretty exhaustive demolition review with the Historical Commission. It was inventoried and studied. They had structural engineers evaluate it and they came to the conclusion it was worth preserving. The Historical Commission invoked the 18-month delay to encourage the owner to explore renovating it. They have worked with OCED to collaborate and come up with a redevelopment plan. It's taken time to get here. They are proposing to remove 234 Main St. That demolition application went to the Historical Commission 2 weeks ago. It was approved under that auspice that 230 Main St. will be permanently preserved. The goal is the historic preservation of 230 Main St. but not at all costs. The whole neighborhood was dramatically improved with the CVS and Cumberland Farms. The challenge for the city was to work with the applicant and inform them on what's important and why. They need to ensure the size of the units are comparable to the parking plan. The units are 500-600 sf. They will not generate the same traffic as 2-bedroom units. The application will need to provide a traffic study. The parking requirements in the zoning ordinance are from the '70s and tends to result in overparked sites. It is important to see how big the units are. If this project proceeds, then it is likely to result in \$300,000 tax revenue. In respect to open space, this is a more urban neighborhood. There is a lot less open space than some people might think is necessary, so the open space that is there needs to be well designed. There is an opportunity to scale the buildings back slightly to make sure that it's not overwhelming the site. In respect to parking, it's important to get it right because they are asking for a parking waiver. They need to look at the parking gap. They need to look at the motorcycle parking creatively. Nick Cracknell did not think 78 parking spaces was wildly wrong, but they need to look at the size of the units and how it correlates. They should also assess the parking layout. It doesn't work well on how it's laid out compared to the buildings. Joe Buckley raised a good issue about the snow storage. That will be a serious management issue. It is not typical to have no storage. They will work on the Fire Department issues and he would love to participate in that discussion. Nick Cracknell has no issues in the paper street being used. It looks like it's being utilized now. Use all of what you can because you need it.



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Nipun Jain commented that given how much impervious surface is planned here, it is critical to understand how the runoff works. The site slopes down to Macy St. It will be important to think about how they are handling sheet flow and how that relates to snow and ice management. They will need to show the location and amount of the HVAC units. If they are on the ground, then it should show how they impact landscaping and how they will be accessed. They need to look at ADA routes for pedestrian activity. They talked about the paper street, but it would be good to know more about how they are making those improvements. They will need to understand who has the rights to that and if there are any other restrictions for that. The dumpster is too close to the property line. They need to make sure there is enough room to do maintenance.

Nick Cracknell commented they could look at narrowing the driveway to 22 feet to beef up the landscape island and plant trees down the middle. It would be good to see if that's possible with fire access. It would make a big difference to the quality of living there.

Lisa Mead commented that they hoped to hear comments today that would allow them to take the plans to the next step. They had a good meeting with the Planning Board and will take these comments into consideration.

Nick Cracknell questioned if the public wanted to speak.

Armand Bisson of 14 Kimball Road commented that he was concerned about adding traffic to this intersection. There will already be added traffic from all the development going in down near the Starbucks. Route 110 needs a two-lane setup. Traffic in Amesbury will be intense. This is an urban look with urban numbers, and it is unclear how they are going to handle that.

Carlos Telles of 225 Main St commented that he lived directly across the street for 25 years. Mr. Telles understood Amesbury's need to expand the tax base and develop housing, but he hoped they could do so without over-treading neighbors. The current regulations value this. Traffic is already a problem in that area. School traffic results in the overuse of Wells Ave, which in turn creates safety issues for students and pedestrians. The construction plans proposed for 230 Main St. ask for waivers on the setback, parking, and affordable housing. Mr. Telles was concerned about the snow removal plan. The Committee should drive by 225 Main St. and see how the snow is still built up in that area. The 78 proposed parking spaces are well below what is currently required. The lower end of Wells Ave. currently has cars parked on it all day long. They heard this morning it was suggested that one-unit dwellings may or may not require more parking.



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Mr. Telles could not imagine a scenario where each unit would not need parking for at least one car. The intersection at Main St. and Macy St. is a concern. Traffic does currently back up regularly enough, and it is unclear what the traffic monitoring will show to address those concerns. Mr. Telles agreed Amesbury needs to expand the tax base and housing, but it needs to be done in such a way that does not exacerbate existing conditions.

Nick Cracknell commented there would be a traffic impact study provided in the formal application. There is a fundamental difference between a studio apartment and a four-bedroom house. The Planning Board typically hires a third-party reviewer to confirm they agree with the study or identify areas that the applicant needs to respond to. This is about making the neighborhood better, not worse.

Nipun Jain commented that the existing uses will not be there anymore, like the daycare and pizza place. The traffic study looks at traffic flow and how it is impacted, then it comes up with proper mitigation needed. They will also need a MassDOT permit, so the state will review it and provide further comments that may require additional off-site improvements.

Nick Crakcnell commented that the area was zoned for commercial today and originally, they proposed a car wash. This development is an improvement over that, and Mr. Cracknell commented they could work to get to the finish line.

3. 29 Water Street

Mike Sanchez showed a rendering of the proposal and commented when the applicant purchased the building he gave a lot of the surrounding land to the city for a park. The goal of this proposal is to put in 6 units in the existing building on the upper floors. The first floor will be non-habitable space with egresses. The building is currently vacant. They are at the point where they need to restore the building or tear it down to build something else. The property line around the building ranges from 1.5 feet and 10 feet. The site is out front and has a wedge in the back. There is a preliminary landscape plan. The goal is to make a center access and plant attractively for the entry. All utilities will come off Water Street looking. They will need a temporary construction easement with approximately 20 feet on north, west, and south sides to create a construction access. They will be cutting and pointing new windows for the project.

Lauren Blatchford commented that there was no parking on the site and questioned if they would be looking to use the municipal lot. Mike Sanchez responded that they would



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be looking for a parking waiver for 9 spaces. The municipal lot is approximately 30 feet from the structure across the street. If the city is looking for redevelopment in an urban setting, then it is difficult to achieve the parking standards. Lauren Blatchford questioned how big the units were. Mike Sancez responded that the top floor would be two, two-bedroom units and the second floor will have one, two-bedroom unit and three, one-bedroom units. The second-floor units are 950 – 750 sf and the top floor units are 1,500 sf.

Amanda Armington commented that this site was in the flood plain and questioned if they planned any grading. Mike Sanchez responded that they did not plan to do any grading. They will play with the grades inside the building. They are not increasing the storm water load to the site at all. The plan is to restore and improve the grass around the building. For the construction phase they will install a driven post construction fence with a scrim. There will be erosion control within the site and they will restore the impacted area with loam.

Howard Snyder did not have any comments.

Jim Wilson questioned if they thought about putting parking on the first floor of the building. Mike Sanchez responded that the grades don't work. When 21 Water Street LLC donated the land back to the town there was a statement for parking allowance in future projects. They included some provisions.

Chief Serino questioned what the construction timeframe would be. Mike Sanchez responded that the goal would be to start in June, and it would be 10-14 months of construction. It would be one summer season. Chief Serino commented that he was in favor of the project, but noted from a public safety perspective they will need to be conscious of safety during the construction phase especially in the summertime. They can have an offline conversation about it. They will need to make sure they complete a CMMP and NFAP 21. Mike Sanchez agreed. They will use a rolling gate instead of swing gate. They can shut down the site or limit timing based on city events. They can nail that down with the CMMP and will finalize where to put the fencing and how to contain the site.

Nipun Jain commented that they will need to focus on what happens on the street edge. The brick sidewalk stops at the crosswalk and does not continue. They should consider extending that brick out to the front of the building and have the patio merge into it. They could potentially damage the sidewalk during construction, so they should consider that improvement. Mike Sanchez confirmed they would consider that. There is a 20' by



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20' area for the landscape area. They figured that plan would evolve during the DRC process. Nipun Jain commented that they should indicate where they anticipated parking even in the municipal lot. Dan Healey has control over his own parking in the lot. Nipun Jain questioned if that was an option. Mike Sanchez responded that he was willing to use that, but wanted to make sure the city was on board with the plan.

Nick Cracknell commented that to him parking is a non-issue here. He has spoken with Mike Sanchez about this prior agreement, and it is his understanding that it happened when the garage was built in the '80s. The city purchased the property for the Water St. parking garage and part of that agreement was that a certain amount of parking was promised in exchange for help to build it. That is separate from 21 Water street LLC. Mike Sanchez commented that basically a certain amount of parking is associated with the 21 Water Street Realty Trust. This property is associated with that. If the parking waiver is not granted outright, then they have other avenues that can be explored.

Joe Buckley questioned if they could provide the dimensions on the sides of the buildings for the temporary easement. Mike Sanchez responded that the south side would be 16.5 feet, and on the sides they would be looking for 10 feet and 25 feet. They basically just need enough room for scaffolding. Joe Buckley questioned if they were taking any spaces on the street for construction. Mike Sanchez responded that there are 2-3 spaces on the north that they might want to integrate into the construction plan for public safety.

Nick Cracknell commented that the primary goal of the project was historic preservation. They are preserving the last remnant of the urban neighborhood that used to be here. This is a huge challenge because they are not able to use the ground floor. There is commercial viability on the ground floor because of the FEMA regulations. The challenge will be to find something they can do on the first floor to make it interesting. Mike Sanchez commented the applicant was working to support the city and interested in contemplating a temporary use. Nick Cracknell commented they were still supportive of making that area an active park.

Nick Cracknell commented that buildings downtown cannot be reused if we don't adapt them to what is feasible. Housing makes sense in this building. Parking is still a problem no matter the use. A residential sticker parking program was implemented last year. They to support projects and make sure they are charging a reasonable rate for the parking program. It should be a fair and equitable management program.



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Nick Cracknell commented that the affordable housing unit is triggered in the regulations for any project with more than 4 units. An applicant can ask for a waiver in the historic preservation permit to get the requirement from 15% to 10%. This project would require an affordable unit with 6 units at 10%. If they lowered the proposal to 4 units, then it would not require one. They have a problem with the code because proposals from 5 to 14 units would all require one affordable unit, but that is an inequity. They have a draft payment in lieu bill going through City Council soon. There should be a sidewalk easement, and they should meet offline to discuss parking with the police.

Administrative Review:

1. [14 Maple Street](#)

Becky Frey commented that the applicant has officially filed, so this was put on the agenda. There are minimal site changes, so the intent was to make sure everyone has looked at it and submitted any final comments. it. Nick Cracknell commented that the only site change was a new curb cut. That will come to public works.

Administrative Items:

1. 28 Haverhill Road – Letter of Support

Nick Cracknell commented that the Committee can review the draft letter to Mass DOT that supports putting in a curb cut on Route 150 for the 28 Haverhill Road project. The project will have a traffic study.

Joe Buckley commented that none of those roads were in control of the city of Amesbury. They are part of Mass DOT.

Nick Cracknell commented that the rationale for the letter was to let DOT know what the City's interests were. Many of us feel that the curb cut is critical. DOT will make the final decision, but the City's voice is meaningful. The Committee should review the draft and they can take action on it when they are ready.

2. 27 Kimball Road – Filing Update

Becky Frey commented that the Comprehensive Permit application for 27 Kimball Road has been filed locally, and it will come back to TRC for another review at some point.

3. Outdoor Dining – 2026 Timeline



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Becky Frey commented that the outdoor dining applications are open for 2026, and the submittal deadline is 3/5/26. They will be reviewed at the 3/19/26 meeting.

Administrative:

1. Minutes – 11-19-25; 12-8-25

Chief Serino motioned to accept the TRC minutes from the 11-19-25 and 12-8-25 meetings. Seconded by Jim Wilson. The motion passed unanimously.

General Communications:

Chief Serino motioned to adjourn at 11:31 am. Seconded by Nipun Jain. The motion passed unanimously.