

1. Amesbury Planning Board Meeting Minutes
2. In Person Meeting – December 22, 2025, at 7:02 PM
3. Chairman Pascal Rettig called the December 22, 2025, Planning Board meeting to order at 7:02 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. **Preapplication– 14 Maple Street**
16. Scott Brown spoke as the application architect. Mark Wojcicki, owner, was present as well. Scott Brown stated the plan is to subdivide the lot. There is an existing Queen Anne Victorian that is in need of updates and repair. The plan is to rehab the existing structure, subdivide the lot, and build a new single-family structure on the other lot. They are proposing two single-car garages of identical design in the back left corners of the lots. The new proposed house has a smaller footprint. The existing house is 2,300 sf. The proposed house is also three bedrooms and 2,600 sf. The discrepancy in square footage is the attic space. The existing structure will not have any new attic-level square footage. Care has been taken with material and detail selections. They are working entirely within the existing footprint. There is a twin structure on Maple St. The tower on this structure was removed from this at some point, likely due to failure. They plan to restore it. They will remove the existing ramp and work with most of the existing openings and elevations.
17. David Frick questioned how high the existing and proposed structures would be. Scott Brown responded the new structure from mean grade to peak would be 31 feet 8 inches,

roughly the same as the existing. David Frick questioned what ceiling heights would be.

Scott Brown responded the first floor would be 8'6" and the second floor would be 8 feet.

18. Scott Brown stated much of the original historic detail has been covered and it will be restored or replaced in kind. The new proposed house will have attic-level square footage. It also includes a single-story mudroom. The single-car garage is 12 by 22 feet. The public hearing is scheduled for January 6th and they will be before the Historic Commission in January as well.
19. Keith Ratner asked if the existing garage would be knocked down and rebuilt. Scott Brown responded the existing house currently has a two-car garage and the plan is to raze it and replace it with a single-car garage.
20. David Frick clarified that the lot frontage was 59 feet on one lot and about 60 feet on the other. Scott Brown confirmed that was correct. David Frick questioned how that worked with the zoning requirements. Scott Brown responded there was a zoning matrix showing the required lot size is 8,000 sf, and the proposal is close to those requirements.
21. Pascal Rettig stated the project looks great and it will improve the streetscape. David Frick noted it is a good use of the Historic Preservation Special Permit.

22. Continued Public Hearings– Rocky Hill Development

23. Keith Ratner motioned to continue to the public hearing to the January 26, 2026, Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by David Frick.
24. Tracey Chalifour noted they have had two meetings in a row where the applicant presented without submitting new materials. Tracey Chalifour questioned how they can ensure deadlines are met. Pascal Rettig suggested requiring submissions in advance and holding deadlines.
25. Nipun Jain stated this is not common for a project of this scale and suggested sending a formal email requiring a submission at least two weeks in advance. That would mean they would need to submit by January 12th for the January 26th meeting.
26. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
27. Keith Ratner – YES
28. Joel Nice – YES
29. Michael Jewell – YES
30. Tracey Chalifour – YES
31. Tom Salemi - YES
32. David Frick – YES
33. Pascal Rettig – YES
34. Motion passed 7-0
35. David Frick motioned to take 47 Macy St. out of order. Seconded by Joel Nice.
36. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
37. Keith Ratner – YES
38. Joel Nice – YES
39. Michael Jewell – YES
40. Tracey Chalifour – YES
41. Tom Salemi - YES

- 42. David Frick – YES
- 43. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 44. Motion passed 7-0

45. Continued Public Hearings– 45 Main Street

- 46. David Frick recused himself from the application.
- 47. Mike Dumaesq commented that they went to TRC on December 10th and to DRC last week. DRC recommended approval.
- 48. Pascal Rettig commented that not much was still outstanding. The main questions left were about parking. The applicant has noted the building is within 300 feet of the municipal lot and could count that toward parking. The Board asked if other options were explored.
- 49. Mike Dumaesq responded that they could not find anyone who was willing to enter into a long-term lease that would work for both parties. City Council passed a Bill in October for a resident parking sticker program that would use the public lots. We believe that would work with this property.
- 50. Tracey Chalifour questioned if there were any notes from the TRC meeting that would help inform the Board. Nipun Jain commented that this application was for a Historic Preservation Special Permit. They proposed to renovate the building with commercial space and 4 residential units. The site is in a prominent location with constraints associated with the property. They do not have the ability to provide onsite parking. The primary items to satisfy is the historic preservation, the affordable unit, and the parking. The building has been deemed historic. They have met the standards and beyond because they are seeking historic tax credits. The DRC reviewed the design changes and only had one comment about one window missing a sash. They are in full support and recommended the building as proposed to move forward and be approved. Under the current zoning code, the first layer is to provide parking onsite. They cannot because of the site constraints. Then they ask the applicant to provide off street parking in a reasonable distance from the property. If that long-term lease is not possible and a municipal lot is within 300 feet the Board may consider that.
- 51. Pascal Rettig commented this was a change of use. There are a number of properties that don't have parking today. This is a change of use, but not a significant intensification.
- 52. Nipun Jain confirmed that was correct. This is the first of many that could cause an issue for the city. The city needs to think hard on how to address it and how that relates to the municipal lots. It is encouraging the city has introduced a sticker program. That is a good first step. This is a small project and not a large impact, but they should confirm that with the police department. If they recommend it is reasonable that this project can use municipal facilities closest to the site, then the Board could move forward with this. Staff can ask the police department on behalf of the Board. They can have that letter back before the next meeting.
- 53. Keith Ratner requested clarification on the affordable unit issue. Nipun Jain responded that the Board has requested to waive the requirement for an affordable unit. Given the scale and scope of the project and effort to restore building, staff is supportive of that request. Pascal Rettig noted they were proposing small units. Mike Dumaesq confirmed they were around 600 sf. Nipun Jain added they would rent for the higher ceiling of what DHCD has.

They would more or less will be renting out within the range of the affordability amounts without the restriction.

54. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
55. David Frick 14 Maudslay View Lane commented that he owned a couple buildings downtown that caused him to recuse from the application. They should use the parking issue as an example to get the city to do something. This is not a big deal, it's 4 units. If it was going to be a larger impact, then they would need to figure out what they were going to do. They need to do something that helps the city manage the program. The Board should send that message to the police department. Mr. Frick thought this was a great project and supported it. There is an issue with a condo owner in the back where their view will be impacted. The applicant and the affected abutter should engage in discussion.
56. Amanda from 57 Main St. submitted written public comment that is attached to the end of these minutes.
57. Pascal Rettig questioned if he knew which windows they were talking about. Mike Dumaresq confirmed they were near the one story portion of the building that was being raised. The current roofline is approximately 4 feet lower than proposed. They need to raise the roof to maintain proper interior height for the retail space. Raising this roofline would impact the windows. There is some separation between their building and this one. The impacted windows are side by side. Nipun Jain added this situation is common in downtown historic buildings. There are certain building code requirements that prevent existing windows from being blocked but there are also existing air rights. If the proposed building meets zoning requirements, then there are limited scenarios in which they can restrict this applicant from making this extension. It is not an excessive use of their property rights.
58. Tom Salemi questioned if they had to raise the whole roof. Mike Dumaresq responded that they did to achieve the correct head height. They are raising the new floor level up 20 inches. They brought the door up the slope as far as possible to reduce entrance steps.
59. Joel Nice questioned what would be in the basement space. Mike Dumaresq responded that it would be finished space and retail space.
60. Tom Salemi commented that conceptually he was fine with using municipal lots for parking. However, he did not want to set a precedent that suddenly allows for this to happen. The Board should get a letter from the Police Chief supporting this parking waiver and commented on a parking management plan. Tom Salemi questioned if they would be marketing these as apartments with no parking. Mike Dumaresq responded that they have worked out all the details, but they would advertise the residential parking permit sticker program.
61. Pascal Rettig agreed they should get a letter from the Police Chief. It should not be a free for all parking precedent. They would still evaluate on a case-by-case basis.
62. Nipun Jain confirmed staff would reach out to the Police Chief.
63. Tracey Chalifour noted this already went before the DRC. Nipun Jain confirmed it had, however, if the Board was looking to modify any design, then they would benefit from engaging the DRC again. They could provide comment for the next meeting. Tracey Chalifour commented that she would be in favor of hearing what the DRC had to say about

the window concern. It is understood it's an urban setting, but there may be alternative solutions.

64. Joel Nice commented that the applicant is entitled to building even higher and blocking more. This is the compromise to get 2 floors of usable space. Keith Ratner noted they were just blocking some of the window not all of it.

65. Keith Ratner motioned to ask staff to draft a decision for the January 12, 2026 Planning Board Meeting and address the parking concern with the police department and the roof height concern with the DRC. Seconded by Joel Nice.

66. Pascal Rettig initiated 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 – RECUSED

73. Pascal Rettig – YES

74. Motion passed 6-0

75. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the public hearing to the January 12, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi.

76. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –

77. Keith Ratner – YES

78. Joel Nice – YES

79. Michael Jewell – YES

80. Tracey Chalifour – YES

81. Tom Salemi - YES

82. David Frick – RECUSED

83. Pascal Rettig – YES

84. Motion passed 6-0

85. Continued Public Hearings– 29 Lake Attitash Road

86. David Frick motioned to continue the public hearing to the January 26, 2025 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Joel Nice.

87. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –

88. Keith Ratner – YES

89. Joel Nice – YES

90. Michael Jewell – YES

91. Tracey Chalifour – YES

92. Tom Salemi - YES

93. David Frick – YES

94. Pascal Rettig – YES

95. Motion passed 7-0

96. Continued Public Hearings– 47 Macy St.

97. Pascal Rettig noted that the Board got an updated site plan.
98. Nipun Jain commented that they worked with the applicant on a parking layout that is safe and meets zoning requirements. Using existing GIS/map data and the best available information, they were able to outline the appropriate location of the parking from the existing curb cut on 110. It will be further extended toward the rear of the property, almost past the building to accommodate 5 parking spaces with a hammerhead turnaround. This is reasonable and does not overwhelm abutters. It meets landscape buffers and primary entrance ADA access. Staff recommends that if the Board so chooses they can make a motion to approve this application, since this is a minor modification to existing conditions. The Board discussed parking and that the extension of the driveway could be gravel. Gravel is sufficient unless the use and parking expanded. It is reasonable to approve this without further review. Staff recommends including the condition that there is a field survey to verify property boundaries and existing structure to confirm it can go in the general location.
99. Pascal Rettig questioned if the applicant was amenable to this sketch and the condition. Eli Einsen confirmed he was.
100. Nipun Jain proposed a motion if the Board was satisfied with the information. Staff recommends approval of the site plan application with the condition that the applicant provide, prior to construction or conversion of the existing building, a site survey that establishes property boundaries and confirms that this driveway is realistic.
101. Tom Salemi questioned if there was any signage on the building or front yard. Eli Einsen responded that they would probably do signage on the building for now and will come back for a sign application. Nipun Jain noted that the landscape is conceptual as well. There is existing vegetation on the property, and once the landscaping is finalized it will be clear where the sign should go.
102. Tracey Chalifour commented at the last meeting the applicant said there were five employees there at the time. Eli Einsen confirmed that was correct, but not all of them drive. Tracey Chalifour questioned if one of the 7 spaces was ADA compliant. Eli Einsen confirmed the front one was. Tracey Chalifour questioned what this was zoned in. Nipun Jain responded that the zoning does not prescribe the number of parking spaces. It is based on square footage of use, which results in 5 parking spaces as the minimum needed. They discussed with the applicant that depending on the use and how the business grows, they could add parking at that time. Given the nature of the business, it will not become an access issue for this site.
103. Pascal opened public comment. There was no public comment.
104. David Frick motioned to approve the site plan application for 47 Macy Street with the condition that the applicant provide, prior to construction or conversion of the existing building, a site survey that establishes property boundaries and confirms that this driveway is realistic. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
105. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
106. Keith Ratner – YES
107. Joel Nice – YES
108. Michael Jewell – YES
109. Tracey Chalifour – YES

- 110. Tom Salemi - YES
- 111. David Frick – YES
- 112. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 113. Motion passed 7-0

114. Keith Ratner motioned to close the public hearing for 47 Macy St. Seconded by Joel Nice.

- 115. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
- 116. Keith Ratner – YES
- 117. Joel Nice – YES
- 118. Michael Jewell – YES
- 119. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 120. Tom Salemi - YES
- 121. David Frick – YES
- 122. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 123. Motion passed 7-0

124. **Continued Public Hearings– 27.5-29 Clarks Road**

125. Tracey Chalifour recused herself.

126. Alex Loth commented that they have had our pre-application meetings and subcommittee meetings, met with the Planning Board twice, and had a DRC meeting last week. They are working on a revised rendering focusing on the front buildings to show the scale. They will bring down the height a little bit, but there will not be major changes. They are moving around windows in the design. Those revisions will be done by January 6th. They have filed an NOI and will be opening that hearing on January 5th. We did receive peer review and submitted comprehensive responses. They are waiting for a response from the peer reviewer. They have taken all Planning Board comments and public hearing comments and responded to them. These have been uploaded to the portal and submitted. The architect took a street view from Clarks Road heading south to show what it would look like. They are preserving the streetscape with the historic homes in the front. It is the same idea looking back from Birchwood Point. You can see the beginning of the public walking path. The revised landscaping plan was uploaded. The most important thing was to talk about that with the fire department. The chief asked them to reduce the height of two trees to allow ladder access, and that change was made. The size of an island was reduced to allow a fire truck into the ramp of the garage. There was a lot of talk about a median, and at the end of the day it would create more problems than it solved. It would move buildings further apart and create problems for emergency access. Sidewalks were pulled off the entryway and more screening was provided at the entrance. They are making it more historically accurate. There is a cobblestone entryway and crosswalks proposed. The open space plan shows 7.1 acres will be given to the city and there will be an easement for access to the proposed trails.

127. Tom questioned if the Board would see the final concept of the building and final elements. Alex Loth responded that the elevations and heights are in the packets. The revised renderings and notes will be prepared by the 29th to discuss on the 6th. Tom Salemi

questioned what they envisioned for the process for conditions of the proposal. Nipun Jain responded that typically they don't deal at the Planning Board level with large projects routinely. The amount of detail the Board requires depends on that as well. For example, when Munters was reviewed by the Board some details needed to be provided so the overall design could work, but they did not require substantial changes. It depends on the peer review. Depending on how VHB reviews the submitted information and what the Board sees, it is reasonable to make items a condition of approval or request more information. In this instance, before construction, all of that would be vetted by a peer review consultant or staff. If changes are needed, they would need to come back before the board to be reviewed. There is no way to move forward without coming back to the Board, even if it is a condition of approval.

128. Pascal Rettig clarified that there was nothing coming out of the technical review that would require substantial changes, so it is reasonable to do it later. Nipun Jain responded that the application has made presumptions in engineering design; based on those, peer review is saying they need confirmation before construction. The applicant is saying they will do that before starting construction. It would be reasonable to consider conditions of approval prior to the endorsement of the plans. It is a fairly flat site up to the ramp to the basement, then there is a steep drop. The building has another level that is exposed. There is not a lot of earth movement, so they are reasonable site conditions. The elevations provided were evaluated by DRC. Typically, the Board sees line drawings more like construction drawings. These are more conceptual, so they don't look like what is typically seen. The DRC asked for more details on the buildings along Clarks Road to show more architectural detail since they are closer to the street.

129. Keith Ratner commented regarding the driveway, Mr. Loth said they had talked about a median because the fire department was looking at two means of access. Rocky Hill is providing that access. Keith Ratner questioned how the fire department felt about this access. Nipun Jain responded that the fire department needs to make sure it functions. When they put it in the fire truck turning templates, given the layout of the driveway, the short section where a median could be placed became too small and a nuisance. They started looking at other goals like pedestrian connection and safe movement from the south side to the north side. They added landscape buffers along the sidewalks which makes it safer for pedestrians and visually narrows the roadway to slow traffic. It also makes it easier for emergency vehicles to enter and exit. This is the next best alternative since a median would not be practically viable. If this driveway were extended 700 linear feet like Rocky Hill, it would be a different discussion. Given the balance of the project, this appears to be a reasonable solution. They are waiting for VHB to confirm that.

130. Alex Loth clarified the driveway was the same width.

131. Keith Ratner noted that the peer review mentioned working with utilities that may need improvements. Water and sewer had capacity, but it needs to be determined if anything else is required. Nipun Jain responded that from past projects of this scale, it is a fair question for DPW, but also for the applicant to determine what DPW wants and coordinate with them. There are many things in motion on Clarks Road, and DPW is looking at water and sewer improvements. It is a matter of scope and timing.

132. Keith Ratner requested more details about the retaining walls. Alex Loth responded that they were on the ramp down to the parking area; it will be visible as it comes down the ramp to the driveway. There is also a low retaining wall near the play area. Keith Ratner noted there was a request to waive the design requirement and noted they have had issues with walls in the past. Joel Nice commented those were larger ones that would require a structural engineering review. Nipun Jain commented that if the retaining walls are decorative, materials need to be identified; if they are structural, they must be designed accordingly and meet structural requirements. A condition of approval may be recommended to assess the structural requirements and determine the materials of the proposed walls.
133. Alex Loth commented that if structural engineering was needed, it would be appropriately designed.
134. Joel Nice noted there were 18-foot exterior light poles and no interior lighting. Joel Nice questioned if there were lower fixtures or if they were adding interior lighting. Alex Loth responded that the photometric plan shows the light distribution was in compliance with city guidelines. Lowering the lights may reduce coverage, and they are trying to maintain dark sky compliance. They can look to see if any changes are possible. Joel Nice commented that they liked the trail design and connection to the neighboring area. It is good they concentrated the amenities while preserving open space.
135. Nipun Jain suggested the Board focus the discussion on traffic, which has been a major concern, engineering details, and architecture. The peer review comments have been responded to, and they are hoping for a response from the peer reviewer soon. They also hope to have conclusive information on the traffic and engineering review, and revised architectural for DRC feedback by next Monday.
136. Michael Jewell had no comments.
137. David Frick said that he was looking at the elevations, and it is hard to determine the building size. The labeling is unclear on the site plan.
138. Alex Loth clarified Building C is one building broken into C1 and C2. Buildings A and B are in the front. Nipun Jain commented that the total building length was a DRC question as well. Without floor plans, the scale is hard to understand. They were asked to submit that. David Frick questioned how many units are in A and B. Alex Loth responded there were three units each. There will be two on the first floor and one on the second. They will confirm the square footage. Joel Nice questioned what the driveway width was. Alex Loth responded it was 24 feet. Joel Nice questioned what the height of the buildings were. They look about 48 feet wide. Alex Loth responded the height is about 34 feet. They are working with DRC and may adjust ceiling height and roofline to reduce height. David Frick agreed this helps match the neighborhood.
139. David Frick commented that there were many outstanding engineering peer review responses. There were too many to condition with an approval at this point. The traffic study was good and the responses to peer review were appreciated.
140. Pascal said this is coming at the end of a long process as a site plan, not a discretionary special permit. Waivers are discretionary but mostly justified. The biggest are distance to the road, number of units per building, and parking. If the front buildings fit the neighborhood, the waivers are reasonable and help achieve an appropriate streetscape.

Consolidating the buildings reduces the neighborhood impact. Increasing units per building makes sense, it is contingent on proper fit.

141. Tom Salemi questioned if traffic improvements that were necessary were part of the grant and not reliant on Rocky Hill.
142. Patrick Dunford, VHB transportation engineer, commented that his response memorandum noted the applicant addressed most of the concerns. There were some technicalities remaining but there were no major issues. A single letter will be submitted after coordination. The traffic generation from this project is modest, so the impact is not dramatic. There has been much discussion previously related to the MassWorks project details. The applicant has provided good information. This review focuses on this project's impacts; the city is reviewing MassWorks separately. The project should not be delayed by the Route 110 review.
143. Pascal Rettig questioned what the status of the city review was. Nipun Jain responded that they did not have anything specific. DPW is leading those improvements with MassDOT at Elm Street and Route 110. That work is ongoing. This project alone does not necessitate those improvements, but it benefits from them if Rocky Hill proceeds.
144. Pascal Rettig questioned what improvements would be required without MassWorks. Patrick Dunford responded that they did not evaluate that scenario fully, but noted sidewalk improvements and signal timing adjustments would be likely. Contingencies are included if MassWorks funding changes.
145. Joel Nice questioned what the details were for the sidewalks along Clarks Road. Patrick Dunford responded that they are coordinating to confirm that if broader improvements do not occur, sidewalks will still be installed to the site and Birchwood. Traffic calming measures are not specific yet; the focus is reducing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, with sidewalks being the most beneficial improvement.
146. David Frick commented that the memo mentioned traffic counts from Birchwood. Patrick Dunford responded that the said traffic counts and turning movements were analyzed, and they will coordinate further if the actual counts differ from the assumptions.
147. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
148. Peter Ippedico of 9 Rocky Hill Road commented that he has been canvassing the neighbors and received numerous emails and everyone has the same concern. No one seems to be looking at traffic at a cumulative level. What happens when they are building 696 units at the same time, and everyone is leaving to go to work and coming home at the same time? That will back traffic up down Macy St. all the way to 495. People will look for an escape route like my street. They already have 2,000 cars a day. They have 55 tractor trailer trucks. They don't want to stay on Route 110. It's already a mess. There is nothing on the plans to alleviate the bottleneck that will be created. They are changing the radius of the curbs and medians. They are not creating another off or on ramp. There are no additional changes, just additional traffic. Back in 2020 the traffic committee made recommended changes. In 2022 additional changes were suggested. Now they have 2 speed bumps, a radar speed sign, and sidewalks no one uses. It seems like no one is really paying attention because we already have a problem. This is compounding the problem.

149. Nipun Jain commented that the Mass Works grant was based on the traffic improvements proposed by the Rocky Hill development. They had to do several studies like an environmental impact report. They had to take all of these projects into account.
150. Art O'Dea of 440 Main St. commented that he was speaking as a pedestrian and driver. Mr. O'Dea commutes into Boston everyday and uses Clarks Road to get to 495. The intersection has a dedicated left turn lane, and another shared straight and right hand turn lane. If they make the right lane a right turn only, it will help offload people trying to get on the highway. There is no sidewalk from halfway up the hill on Clarks Road to the cemetery. Walking on the street is terrifying. Cars go 40 mph, and pedestrians go into the woods to avoid them. They need to reduce the impact of traffic and improve safety.
151. Nipun Jain commented they made an excellent point about pedestrian safety. The Planning Office has been looking at the potential to improve the sidewalk northbound on the west side. They have been talking with DPW about this as they do survey work on Clarks Road for water and sewer.
152. Anne Azema of 460 Main St. commented that she has lived there since 1993 and agreed with everything her neighbors have said. They look to the city and the Board to protect quality of life. Otherwise, why would I pay taxes here? When I walk or bike in my neighborhood I take my life into my own hands. There is no place for me to be on my bike in my neighborhood. The lack of comprehensive review in this development is a mistake. There will be piling up traffic, and occupation of the land and habitation in a strange way. There should be a community garden and bike paths.
153. Joe Finn of 412 Main St. commented that he has been coming to these meeting for a long time and any time one of these developments comes through all they hear is traffic impact will be minimal. They are missing a holistic look at the traffic situation. There are a total of 1,097 units in current permitting projects and upcoming projects. Minco is developing across the street at the intersection of Elm St. and Route 110. It is reasonable to say 1,300 or more units are coming down the pike. It is reasonable to assume there will be 2,000 additional vehicles on the road. This is not a neighborhood situation. It is a city problem. What are we going to do about it? The Mass Works grant is good, but we need to press the city for a long range plan on how to cope with all the traffic on the roads. Everybody in the city wants to access 95. How will they get there? It is incumbent on the Board members to press the city for a comprehensive detailed plan on how they would cope with this.
154. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the meeting to 10:15 pm. Seconded by Joel Nice. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
155. Keith Ratner – YES
156. Joel Nice – YES
157. Michael Jewell – YES
158. Tracey Chalifour – Recused
159. Tom Salemi - YES
160. David Frick – YES
161. Pascal Rettig – YES
162. Motion passed 6-0

163. Tracey Chalifour of 25 Clarks Road unit 201 read her written public comment into the record. They are attached to the end of the minutes.
164. Nancy Leavy submitted written public comment that is attached to the end of these minutes.
165. Sally McKay submitted written public comment that is attached to the end of these minutes.
166. Joe Miller of 5 Rocky Hill Road submitted written public comment that is attached to the end of these minutes.
167. John Stevenson of 439 Main St. commented that this needed a lot more depth and analysis. Mr. Stevenson shared the same emotion and same quality of life concerns as the other speakers. Things get discussed but not respected. In July of 2019 the speed on Rocky Hill Road was posted 25 mph. It is not honored, respected, or enforced. Mr. Stevenson was concerned that these improvements will not be honored, respected, and enforced. Mr. Stevenson had slight concern on the study area scope. They are hearing a lot about 1.5% growth rate but the impact of the 4 developments going in will be larger. That's a lot of traffic. The report and the plan for Starbucks will not be extended before 2031. This is a much bigger entity than they are taking into consideration.
168. Pascal Rettig clarified the traffic report was not taking all traffic into consideration. The Mass Works grant is taking everything into consideration. This area has a traffic problem. The Board is not the traffic committee. A lot of good points were made and comments about the Mass Works grant should be sent to the Mayor and DPW.
169. Nipun Jain commented that they could all benefit from a discussion on the offsite improvements for all intersections separate from this. The agency that is spearheading those efforts for improvements is not the Planning Board, but it would be good to be aware of these concerns and comments. It would make sense to do something with the Rocky Hill Discussion.
170. Nipun Jain reviewed the next steps for this project. The Board can choose to continue the application to the January meeting or look at what would need to be conditioned for approval. If the Board continues, then staff could work to draft conditions while the peer review looks at final responses.
171. David Frick motioned to continue the public hearing to the January 12, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Keith Ratner.
172. Pascal Rettig opened public comment. There was no public comment.
173. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
174. Keith Ratner – YES
175. Joel Nice – YES
176. Michael Jewell – YES
177. Tracey Chalifour – YES
178. Tom Salemi - YES
179. David Frick – YES
180. Pascal Rettig – YES
181. Motion passed 7-0
182. **New Public Hearings – 5 and 13 School St.**

183. Pascal Rettig noted the Planning Board would take a break at 10:01 pm. The meeting resumed at 10:08 pm.

184. David Frick motioned to extend the meeting to 10:30 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi.

185. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –

186. Keith Ratner – YES

187. Joel Nice – YES

188. Michael Jewell – YES

189. Tracey Chalifour – YES

190. Tom Salemi - YES

191. David Frick – YES

192. Pascal Rettig – YES

193. Motion passed 7-0

194. **New Public Hearings – 5 and 13 School Street**

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

196. Scott Brown, Architect, commented: that Mark Wojcicki and Brad Kucher are the principal developers for 5 and 9 School St. As long as I've been coming to Amesbury, these properties have been in dire need of revitalization. Scott Brown was happy to be part of the team that will finally be getting this done. 9 School St. was built in 1963 and was known as the Ordway School until the 1960s. Then it was repurposed for municipal office use. In the 1980s, it was altered with an addition in the corner for a new stairwell. It continued to be used for city purposes. In recent years, it has stopped being used and fallen into disrepair. It is now vacant. The property to the right of it is 5 School St. It was built in 1850 and is registered with the state as a historic property. It is the Orlando Bagley House. It was acquired in 2001 by the city and at some point, deemed uninhabitable. Part of the foundation on the left side is failing. They are seeking a historic preservation special permit to restore and rehab 9 School St. into 6 units, all approximately 1,000 square feet. It will include one affordable unit on the lower level. 5 School St. will be reconstructed in kind, not renovated, due to severe structural issues. For 9 School St., the floor plan layout includes 2 units per floor. They will all be two-bedroom units. There will be an enclosed outdoor patio area for residents. The proposed front elevation includes removing the 1980s addition and adding a new historically appropriate entrance. For the most part, they are trying to reuse existing window openings but will add 3 new openings in the brick veneer to bring in light for the lower-level units. The left side elevation has an entrance at the front right and another entrance at the back left. The rear elevation will have two doors and an improved look, with all roof penetrations removed. The elevations have been reviewed by OCED. 5 School St. will be replaced more or less in kind, though it will be slightly taller due to modern framing dimensions. The proposal includes 8-foot ceilings on the first and second floors. They are maintaining consistency with a house of this age. A 12 by 12 single-car garage will be added as well. The site plan has been reviewed. The new structure is being moved slightly north to give the garage more breathing room. A 6-foot privacy fence will be installed on the left side and along the back. At the time of submission, there were moving parts; this section of the plan was a placeholder. Since then, additional discussions have taken place.

197. Brad Kucher commented that they have been in front of the TRC. The biggest discussion point was about the parking. They have worked with the fire department to shrink some green space and create more room for everyone. They will put in a retaining wall and increase the depth of the parking spots for everyone. They can work an agreement to allow the City to plow all the spots for continuity and control of the area.
198. Tom Salemi commented the project looked fantastic.
199. David Frick agreed and questioned if they could put in an ADU with the single family garage. Brad Kucher responded that they decided against it because they did not think there would be enough parking for that.
200. Tracey Chalifour questioned if this would go before DRC. Nipun Jain confirmed it would as well as Historical Commission.
201. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the public hearing to the January 26, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded David Frick.
202. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
203. Keith Ratner – YES
204. Joel Nice – YES
205. Michael Jewell – YES
206. Tracey Chalifour – YES
207. Tom Salemi - YES
208. David Frick – YES
209. Pascal Rettig – YES
210. Motion passed 7-0
211. Joel Nice motioned to extend the meeting to 10:37 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
212. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
213. Keith Ratner – YES
214. Joel Nice – YES
215. Michael Jewell – YES
216. Tracey Chalifour – YES
217. Tom Salemi - YES
218. David Frick – YES
219. Pascal Rettig – YES
220. Motion passed 7-0
221. **Administrative – Stantec Invoices**
222. There were two Stantec Invoices:
1. A Stantec invoice for 14 S Hunt Rd. in the amount of \$1,752.75.
 2. A Stantec invoice for Bailey's Pond in the amount of \$2,020.50.
223. David Frick motioned to approve the Stantec invoices listed above. Seconded by Joel Nice.
224. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
225. Keith Ratner – YES
226. Joel Nice – YES
227. Michael Jewell – YES

- 228. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 229. Tom Salemi - YES
- 230. David Frick – YES
- 231. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 232. Motion passed 7-0

233. **Adjournment**

- 234. Keith Ratner motioned to adjourn at 10:33 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
- 235. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call vote –
- 236. Keith Ratner – YES
- 237. Joel Nice – YES
- 238. Michael Jewell – YES
- 239. Tracey Chalifour – YES
- 240. Tom Salemi - YES
- 241. David Frick – YES
- 242. Pascal Rettig – YES
- 243. Motion passed 7-0

Amanda Graham – Public Comment – 45 Main Street

My name is Amanda, I am an Amesbury native, and have owned a condo at 57 Main St since 2019. I have concerns with the proposed project at 45 Main St.

The proposed updates to this building, specifically the updates to the commercial unit, will obstruct the only two remaining windows that receive natural light in my primary living space/kitchen. I have a total of 9 windows in my unit and right now 4 of them are already blocked by this existing structure. With the proposed 4ft raise of the roof for this project, an additional 2 windows in my unit will be blocked by this building. Along with losing what natural light I currently have, this update will raise my electrical costs as I will need to supplement the loss of the natural light by keeping my lights on for longer durations of time and I will need to add more lighting because these windows are located in my living room/kitchen and this is where I spend the majority of my time.

Another factor that will contribute to my increased electrical costs, is the prevention of air flow that I currently have from opening the windows. With the unobstructed windows open, the cross breeze through my unit allows me to keep electrical costs down in the warmer months. In addition to my monthly expenses increasing with the approval of this project, this will also decrease my property value as 6 out of my 9 windows will look directly at a brick wall. I have attached some pictures for reference if needed.

Aside from the direct concerns with my home, I also have concerns about the decrease in availability for parking downtown if the proposed project is approved. From my experience living in the downtown area over the last 6 years, I feel there is already a shortage of parking options for the current business customers and residents on Main St, Friend St and the surrounding areas. Adding more residences would further stress the limited parking options we have and could deter visitors from planning a visit to Amesbury, and in turn hinder the support for our existing local businesses.

I appreciate the planning board for giving me an opportunity to comment publicly, thank you for your time.

Best,
Amanda & Tom
57 Main St.

Tracey Chalifour – Public Comment – 27.5-29 Clarks Road

Transportation Peer Review VHB

I would like to note that Traffic studies are a snapshot in time, and never represent the LIVED EXPERIENCE of Residents living in the area and using the roads on an ongoing basis. The analysis of a short traffic study is woefully inaccurate. The study area should include Evans Place, Main Street and Rocky Hill Road because they will be impacted.

I would also like to share with the public the following:

Massworks Improvement Year 1 include

Route 110 at Clarks and Elm \$2,800,000 - nothing specific to Clarks Road other than Clarks Road Sidewalk Extension to Eagles Crossing Residential Driveway \$75,000 at 29 Clarks (not BP)

In response to Presentation points:

1. "Automobile Intensive area" indicates vehicles are required = more parking spaces needed.

2. Clarks Road - It isn't just about the speeds, it is about the volume of vehicles already on Clarks, and the increase that will occur as a result of these 152 units and another potential 650 units on Elm Street forthcoming.

3. Clarks is used as a short cut - while I can appreciate and welcome the recommendation to redo the trip counts, need to factor in 30 more units that will be in Eagles Crossing than in BP, so Also, you need to count cars at corner of 110 and Clarks because of the road being a shortcut to Newburyport

4. Parking - need more detail on how will it be handled - management of unit spaces and delivery vehicles and move ins. ME - Also, snow storage concerns should be addressed.

this is what I did not get to read

CIVIL ENGINEERING & STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

1. The memo indicates missing materials and lists 17 items (this was not a complete list) and there are countless VHB recommendations that correlate to these missing materials. I encourage the public to access the materials and come back with questions and comments for accountability

2. Regarding Snow storage - I know from experience as the Condo Board president at BP, it won't be hauled out during a storm, it will happen after the storm. There will need to be spaces allocated to that procedure as it happens, which will result in a loss of spaces available to residents and visitors. No vehicle management plan for identifying resident vehicles can change that.

As a member of the PB I am confident that my colleagues will perform due diligence. and I encourage the public.

Also, I would like to reinforce that the items I asked for have NOT been provided:

1. Architectural Visuals of large building with mechanicals on roof. ONLY SCHEMATICS have been provided.
2. Architectural Visuals (from July meeting) of the view from adjacent buildings - the back of Building 25 at Birchwood Pointe has not been provided. Nor has 33 Clarks Road been provided.
3. Architectural Visuals of the garage entry area
4. The Height of the large building - with Mechanicals. a 52' height was provided, but there was no specificity on if this included mechanicals.

Nancy Leavy – Public Comment – 27.5 – 29 Clarks Road

POINT SHORE TRAFFIC SITUATION - FOR PUBLIC COMMENT 12/22/25

My name is Nancy Leavy and my husband, Frank, and I purchased 450 Main Street 1½ years ago. Because we looked at our house on a weekend, we had NO idea about the traffic situation! In fact, I initially thought we'd made a huge mistake moving here for we had difficulty even backing out of our Clark's Road driveway (which we had to modify to make safer).

To answer Peter Ippedicco's two questions...

1) If you are in favor of limiting access from Rt. 110 onto the Rocky Hill/Clark's Rd/Main St. Point Shore neighborhoods please let me know. Our answer: Yes.

2) If you are in favor of at least eliminating truck traffic that is not doing business in the neighborhood, please let me know. Our answer: Yes.

Because we live on the corner of Clark's Road and Main Street (and have a bird's eye view of the intersection), I'm passing along our personal observations.

1. No tractor trailer trucks or huge flatbeds should be allowed on Clark's Road. They have great difficulty maneuvering the corner (have to back up and block traffic) for the road isn't wide enough for an easy turn. Just last month I saw a tractor trailer truck coming in the direction of Newburyport, attempt to turn onto Clark's Road... only to have to drive up on the sidewalk and nearly hit our house to make the turn. (This probably explains why a large portion of the sidewalk was missing when we moved here.)

2. In order to get momentum driving up Clark's Road, every truck has to gun it and drive as fast as they can. They also drive really fast coming down Clark's Road.

3. Because no one seems to stop at the stop sign, I recently did a 15-minute observation during Friday morning rush hour. Out of all the vehicles that drove down Clark's Road, only one car came to a complete stop. The only thing that stopped the other vehicles was the traffic on Main Street. Everyone acts like it's a yield sign, and with the steady flow of traffic on Main Street, they don't stop if there's a break in the traffic. Therefore, the town might as well change the stop sign to a yield sign, for its "do as you wish" at that intersection.

4. In general, few drivers stop for pedestrians at the crosswalk. I've crossed many times, and only remember one car stopping. Instead, they zoom by and ignore you.

5. We've never noticed a policeman pulling over a speeder or a speed trap in this vicinity, and like the stop sign, people seem to know they're not held accountable while driving in this area. And in the summer, motorcyclists drive by at excessive speeds.

To conclude, as much as we love our new house, we can't help but feel that the town MUST do something before it gets even worse. The traffic situation totally shocked us, and we've often wondered why there are no speed bumps on Clark's Road, raised sidewalks on Main Street, weight limits for side roads, posted roads for unnecessary large trucks, etc. But then again, if they impose new traffic regulations, will the town enforce them?

Thank you for your attention to this matter, for any improvement regarding the traffic situation will be a gift to the town for generations to come.

Sally McKay – Public Comment – 27.5-29 Clarks Road

To The Members of the Planning Board:

I understand you are considering developments at the Golden Triangle, Rocky Hill Road & Clark's Road. I am very concerned about the impact this will have on an already horrible traffic situation on Point Shore.

I have lived on Point Shore for 55 years. I have served the Town in many capacities, among which are School Committee & Selectwoman. Also, I have participated in several traffic committees for Point Shore. There has been a drastic change over my lifetime regarding traffic using Main Street as a connector from 95 to 495. The posting of 25 mph signs & flashing speed indicators has not resolved the speeding issues. The town officials have done little to address our safety issues. I have often thought of organizing a Traffic Calming Brigade that would share turns driving up & down Main Street doing the speed limit between the hours of 6-9 am & 4-6 pm. In driving the speed limit on our street, I have been passed many times, been honked at, been given the finger, & once almost hit a man exiting a delivery truck while a truck passed me. I've witnessed a child almost being run over while attempting to cross the street to attend classes at Lowell's Boat Shop.

With the new development going on, the situation will only worsen. Something has to be done now to protect our neighborhood, the highest taxed land in Amesbury.

There have been many requests to make Clark's Road & Rocky Hill Road one way. Good start but that does not address coming from Nbpt or the reverse, down Beacon Street toward Nbpt. Stop signs at intersections or speed bumps would work.

With Starbucks opening soon & all the new inhabitants, something must be done to preserve our neighborhood & make it safe.

I know your role is planning. I am sending this to the Mayor & Police Chief, as well. It is high time we address these matters & come to a resolution.

Thank you for serving us as public servants at a difficult time. Also, thank you for taking time to read this missive.

Sally McKay.

Joe Miller – Public Comment – 27.5 – 29 Clarks Road

To whom it may concern,

In regards to the current and future traffic issues on Rocky Hill Road, Main Street, and Clark's Road and the impact of future developments in the area, I would like to state that the traffic on Rocky Hill Road, during commuting hours is far too great for the size and structure of the the road. Traffic has never been good in the 20+ years we've lived here, but seems to have worsened significantly in the last few years, despite the addition of the speed humps. Not only is it unsafe in many ways, it's particularly infuriating to have commuters (many with NH plates) lay on their horns in protest when we need to park on the street.

I would support limiting access to Rocky Hill Road from route 110. The infrastructure of a community should prioritize the safety and well being of its residents over the convenience of commuters.

Thank you,
Joe Miller
5 Rocky Hill Road