

# Montague Planning Board

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February 24, 2015 7:00 PM  
Town Hall Upstairs Conference Room

## MEETING MINUTES

**Members Present:** Ron Sicard – Chair, Fred Bowman, Bruce Young and George Cooke

**Staff Present:** Walter Ramsey, AICP- Town Planner

**Members Absent:** Bob Obear

Ron Sicard opened the meeting at 7:05 PM.

### Approval Minutes:

**Motion** by Fred Bowman to accept the December 23, 2014 Planning Board minutes. Seconded by George Cooke. **Motion passed unanimously.** (January 27 meeting was cancelled due to weather.)

### Discussion: Accommodating projected increase of seniors through zoning recommendations in the 2015 Housing Plan.

Planner has begun researching senior living facility regulations by exploring other communities. Examples explored included Milford, Westborough, and Greenfield. Walter spoke to David Jensen (Zoning Enforcement Officer) who would consider a “Senior Living Facility” a “Lodging House” under current use definitions in the bylaws. This type of facility is allowed in General Business, Neighborhood Business, and Central Business by special permit. Fred Bowman feels a lodging facility is different from a senior or assisted living facility. “In a lodging house you get a room and nothing else where a place like the Arbors has amenities and offers more than just a room to its residents”. The Planning Board has to decide how to define this type of facility. in the future. The population of seniors is increasing dramatically. It is expected by 2030 that residents 65 and older will number 2,500- a 30% increase. Senior Housing (Park Villa & Sunrise Terrace) is very different than an Assisted Living Facility so some definitions and clarifications are needed going forward.

There was consensus that the purpose of such a bylaw would be to diversify Montague’s housing stock by specifically addressing the needs of its aging population and that the definition should include independent senior housing, assisted living facilities, and continuing care residence communities and their accessory uses. The Board reviewed the State definition. Planner recommended Allowing senior living facilities by Special Permit by the Planning Board in the (RS) Residential, (GB) General Business, (RB) Rural Business, (NB) neighborhood Business?, (CB) Central Business.

The Planner was directed to explore the following:

- Identify regulatory difference between a subdivision/condo/and planned unit development for senior living
- Identify density examples such as Sunrise Terrace – Turners Falls, MA and Elm Terrace – Greenfield, MA
- Identify preferred sites on public and privately owned land

The discussion will continue at a future meeting.

**Correspondence from AECOM for Tennessee Gas Pipeline:** A voluntary request for information was received from AECOM for the Tennessee Gas Pipeline. The company has sent letters to many town boards. The Massachusetts Audubon Society sent a response letter suggesting that the Town respond through the FERC process rather than directly to AECOM, or to charge as public records request. Planner notes that most of the information they seek in the letter is publicly available via MassGIS. Walter will release information in the future, to FERC when prompted. The pipeline is proposed to bisect the Hannegan Brook Well Water Supply Protection District

**Comprehensive Plan:**

Walter has started reviewing and updating the 1999 Comprehensive Plan which calls for being updated every 5 years and incorporate with the other plans (Natural Hazard Plan, Housing Plan, and Economic Development Plan...). The mission is to evaluate what has been done over the last 10 years and see if the current goals and plans will or should change. Walter distributed the 8 goals from the last plan and added in some new draft goals for the group to review at the leisure. There would be some public outreach including: discussion groups and public surveys. The new plan is to be focused heavily on implementation and demographics which should be helpful given the population will be changing greatly and increasing into the future. Some examples of demographic shifts not reflected in 1999 are as follows: 1) 30% increase by 2030 in the population that is 65 and older and 2) a major decrease in age bracket of 19 and under as well as the child bearing age persons.

The Board reviewed the four Key Elements of the plan:

- Health of downtown area – streetscape improvements and lighting and skate park in late summer
- Maintain all the vitality of the 5 Villages- each village has seen major improvements made or have improvements pending
- Carefully Plan for the future of the Montague Plains – since 1999 much of the Plains has been protected and is under state control. The northern 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 100 acres have been retained the utility company (Eversource). The area is zoned for industrial use and slated for development under the 1999 plan.
- Capital Improvements – The 1999 plan established that the CIC have a representative from the Planning Board. Fred Bowman is the representative currently holding this position.

Planner will work on this project as time allows.

**Next meeting:** March 24, 2015

**Motion** by, Fred Bowman at 8:04 PM to adjourn the February 24, 2015 Planning Board meeting. Seconded by George Cooke. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_