

**GARDNER PLANNING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT
Fiscal Year 2010
Robert L. Hubbard, Director**

The Planning Board's primary responsibility is regulating the subdivision of land and the laying out and construction of ways in subdivisions. The Rules And Regulations Governing The Subdivision of Land guide the review and approval of applications to subdivide land and install public infrastructure. The Planning Board also has authority to prepare plans of resources, possibilities and needs of the City and to make recommendations to the City Council.

In addition, the Planning Board enforces the Site Plan Review section of the City's Zoning Ordinance and serves as the Special Permit Granting Authority under the Zoning Ordinance for Infill Development, Planned Unit Developments, Water Supply Protection District, Open Space Residential Developments and the Development Overlay District. The Planning Board has primary responsibility for keeping the Zoning Ordinance up to date subject to approval by the Mayor and City Council.

Rules And Regulations Governing The Subdivision of Land, Rules Governing Special Permits, and Rules Governing Site Plan Review are available on the City's web site – www.gardner-ma.gov, including all the relevant application forms and information on filing same.

The members of the Planning Board are appointed by the Mayor subject to confirmation by the City Council. They are:

- Allen L. Gross Chairman
- Robert J. Bettez, Sr. Vice Chairman
- Laura M. Casker
- Peter J. Sabettini
- Mark M. Schafron

Mr. Gross represents the Gardner Planning Board on the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission.

The Planning Board is assisted by Robert L. Hubbard, Director of Community Development and Planning; Robert Hankinson, City Engineer; and Terri Hillman, Administrative Assistant. Mr. Hubbard and Mr. Hankinson represent the Gardner Planning Board on the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee.

The Planning Board generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 PM on the second floor of City Hall's Manca Annex. Meetings are recorded for later broadcast over the City's cable television station – WGET.

Applications

The following applications were approved:

- Royco Distributors, Inc. – Site Plan Review Decision. Approved a proposed industrial building addition for Royco, 211 Colony Road, Gardner.
- Specialty Wholesale Corp. – 101 Linus Allain Avenue. Approved issuance of a foundation permit only to Specialty Wholesale Corp. for a proposed building on Linus Allain Avenue;
- Specialty Wholesale Corp. – Site Plan Review Decision. Approved plan for construction of a 31,265 gross sq. ft. single story addition to an existing two-story manufacturing facility at 101 Linus Allain Avenue.
- Lisciotti Development Corp. – Site Plan Review Decision. Approved proposed construction of a commercial building at 354 Main Street

Extension Requests

The following extensions were approved:

- Laitinen Drive Extension. Lance Korich, developer requested and was granted an extension of time to August 2, 2010 to complete the required work on Laitinen Drive Extension and to hold \$20,400 in the escrow account for completion of the work.
- Kiley's Way Condominiums. Mr. James Kraskouskas, developer of Kiley's Way Condominiums, requested a two-year extension to complete the paving the roadway. Due to economy, he has had to rent the units instead of selling them as planned. The Planning Board approved the extension subject to a \$20,000 security deposit which was presented in November 2009. An extension to October 2011 to complete the paving was approved.
- Pinewood Condominium Project. Ron Hakala, developer, presented a letter of credit from Rollstone Bank & Trust in the amount of \$30,000. The Planning Board accepted the letter of credit with the condition that the paving, any repairs to existing work, and inspection of work by City personnel must be completed by September 30, 2010. The work was completed and inspected by R. Hubbard, R. Hankinson, D. Arnold, and other City personnel. The Planning Board voted release of the Letter of Credit and the funds held in escrow for inspection fees on June 8, 2010.

Wilder Brook Subdivision

Attorney Elisha Erb completed the following documents for the Wilder Brook Subdivision: Notice of Subdivision Amendment, Partial Release of Mortgage, Release of Assignments, Trustee's Certificate, Deed, Declaration Establishing the Wilder Brook Estate Homeowners Association, and Affidavit Relative to Land Title. The documents were recorded at the Worcester Registry of Deeds. The name on the escrow account has been changed from R&D Homes, Inc. to Andrea Cormier, as Trustee of St. Paul's Trust.

Brookside Drive Extension (Gardner LLC)

The funds held in escrow for reclamation of the wetlands in the area of Brookside Drive Extension were released. The original amount of \$11,000 was deposited on October 31, 2003 and interest accrued through September 30, 2008 was \$1,117.07. Per the ConCom agent, D. Torres, there are no conservation problems and the Conservation Commission approved the release.

Zoning Amendments

- Political Signs and Posters – Approved by City Council – December 22, 2009.
- Zoning Ordinance Section 415 (64 – Scientific or research laboratory to be permitted in Industrial 1 and Industrial 2) Table of Uses – joint public hearing with City Council August 17, 2009. Approved by City Council – October 8, 2009.

Water Supply Protection Overlay District

The Department of Environmental Protection reviewed the Water Supply Protection Overlay District portion of the City's Zoning Ordinance to be certain it is compliant with State Law. Mayor Hawke provided \$4,000 to hire professional help to revise this section of the zoning ordinance. Mark Bobrowski, Blatman, Bobrowski & Mead, LLC, was hired to prepare a revised version of the Surface Water Protection Overlay District Ordinance. This will include a revised Section 520 for the protection of groundwater, and a new Section 560 for the protection of surface drinking water sources.

Wedgewood Heights Subdivision– Land off Clark Street

Wedgewood Heights Realty Trust offered the City approximately 7.11 acres of land off Clark Street as an alternative to tax taking and foreclosure as provided in MGL Chapter 60, section 77C. The Conservation Commission supported acceptance of this land. It would increase the amount of protected open space in Gardner. The City Council voted approval of the request in June 2010.

Deerberry Ridge Subdivision

Gardner, LLC offered the City lots A, B, C, D, G, I, J, and M (total 20.03 acres) in the Deerberry Ridge Subdivision off Fernwood Drive and Bear Hill Road for the purpose of conservation of open space. The Conservation Commission voted on January 11, 2010 to support acceptance of the 20+ acres by the City Council. The City Council voted approval of the offer on March 1, 2010.

Urban Renewal Plan

A draft of the Urban Renewal Plan was completed in April 2010. The draft was sent to the DHCD for review. When DHCD completes the review, there will be a formal presentation to the Planning Board for their recommendation. Then there will be a Public Hearing before the City Council for their approval.

Green Community Application

Preparation of a Green Community Application to have Gardner declared a green community was started. One criterion required that a municipality establish an energy use baseline inventory for municipal buildings, vehicles, street and traffic lighting. This criterion involved a lot of effort and cooperation from many departments to gather the required information.

Stretch Code Adoption and adoption of a policy to purchase only fuel efficient vehicles for municipal use whenever such vehicles are commercially available and practicable were other criteria needed to complete the application.

MRPC – Storm Water Pollution Reduction Project in the Montachusett Region’s Millers River Watershed Area

The Gardner Planning Board supported the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission’s (MRPC) 319 grant application to the Massachusetts DEP. Jennifer Siciliano, MRPC, presented information on this grant proposal which she was writing. The purpose of the grant is to address prevention, control and abatement of nonpoint source pollution through outreach and education, demonstration and implementation projects.

If the grant is funded, a series of free educational low impact development (LID) workshops will be held throughout the Montachusett Region’s municipalities that are in the Millers River Watershed. This watershed is an important resource that provides an abundance of recreational opportunities, out-door activities and most importantly clean drinking water for many. Gardner would be eligible to receive free technical assistance to explore the possibility of developing a LID bylaw.

Open Space and Recreation Action Plan

The State offered to grant extensions to 2013 for Open Space Plans without a complete re-write of the existing plan. D. Torres, Conservation Agent, reorganized the original committee and drew up the extension. The Planning Board approved the extension of the 2010 Open Space and Recreation Action Plan to 2013 and it was submitted to the State.

Other Activities

Laurie Blacquiere who served on the Planning Board from 2003 to 2008 passed away in February 2010.

The Gardner Redevelopment Authority provided funds for Planning Board members to attend sessions of the Citizen Planners Training Collaborative (CPTC) workshops. R. Hubbard presented *Introduction to Economic Development* at the October 2009 CPTC Workshop.