

# Agawam Planning Board September 21, 2023

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## MEMBERS PRESENT:

Violet Baldwin, Acting Chairman  
Michael DiLullo  
Frank DeStefano  
Charles Elfman  
Michael Cleavall

## ALSO PRESENT:

Taryn Egerton  
Pam Kerr

Ms. Baldwin, Acting Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and introduced Michael Cleavall as the newest member of the Planning Board.

### 1. SITE PLAN – 384 Shoemaker Lane – Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative

Zachary Wallin and Jamie Fair with Weston & Sampson and Anna Bishop from Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative were present. Mr. Wallin stated they had received Agawam Engineering comments regarding the plantings adjacent to Shoemaker Lane. The Engineering Department is concerned with the roots interfering with the drainage pipes and leaching structures. Mr. Wallin stated he spoke with their landscape architect and they are not worried about penetration into the drainage structures. He stated the Agawam Engineering Department recommended the property owners regularly inspect the leaching structure to make sure they do not become blocked or damaged due to the roots. Mr. Wallin stated this would be difficult to inspect, but Ms. Bishop stated the company would do any periodic maintenance the Town required. Ms. Baldwin suggested using plants that have a spreading root system, such as azaleas. Mr. Wallin stated their landscape architect did not think the proposed plantings would have any effect on the system.

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. Elfman to approve the Site Plan for 384 Shoemaker Lane for the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative, conditional upon satisfying all professional staff comments.

VOTE 5 – 0

### 2. SITE PLAN – 685 South Westfield Street – DePalma

John Furman with VHB was present for this agenda item as well as Tina DePalma and Attorney Gary Liquori. Ms. Baldwin stated the applicant is requesting two waivers: to waive the requirement for the installation of street lighting and to waive the requirement of sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. The Agawam Engineering Department gave her a plan showing the area that the applicant is proposing sidewalks on only one site. Mr. Furman stated he had emailed the Engineering Department to question some of the previous comments and that they responded

## Agawam Planning Board September 21, 2023

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today. He stated that one comment was in regards to the scale of the plan but their most recent response stated that the scale is okay the way it is. He stated they will be submitting updated plans early next week. Ms. Baldwin stated they would first discuss the request to waive the street lighting requirement. Mr. Furman stated the street lighting is unnecessary since there will be ambient lighting. Mr. Elfman asked if he was referring to the lighting from the structures themselves and Mr. Furman stated yes. Mr. Cleavall asked how long the stretch of road was that had no buildings and Mr. Furman stated approximately 800 feet. Mr. DeStefano asked if the ambient lighting was referring to outside lighting on the structures and Mr. Furman stated yes. Mr. DiLullo questioned why they are asking for this waiver. Ms. DePalma stated it is not about the cost, but about energy efficiency and preventing light pollution. Ms. Kerr asked what the length of the road was to South Westfield Street and Mr. Furman stated about 1500 feet. Ms. Baldwin stated there is a safety factor and that there would be a long stretch of road with no lighting when children are going to school in the morning. Mr. Elfman stated residents have different routines that require street lighting, such as running at night, and also noted that they have the option to turn the outside light on or off. Ms. DePalma stated there are many streets in Agawam without street lighting. Ms. Baldwin stated there are 158 units and is a safety issue for future residents. Mr. DeStefano stated that waiving the street lighting and sidewalk requirement would compound the safety issue.

Motion was by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to deny the request to waive the requirement for the installation of street lighting (159-24-A).

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Cleavall)

Ms. Baldwin stated they would now discuss the request to waive the requirement to install sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Mr. Elfman stated that adding a sidewalk on both sides of the street is costly and having the pedestrian crosswalks help add to the safety of the design. Mr. DeStefano noted they added a second sidewalk to the more concentrated area of buildings in the center. He suggested adding a pedestrian crosswalk to the eight units at the west end of building two. Ms. Baldwin spoke with the Engineering Department and they didn't have concerns about having sidewalks on both sides as long as the crosswalks were added.

Motion was made by Mr. DiLullo and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to grant the waiver to install a five-foot sidewalk on only one side of the roadway, conditional on having a sidewalk on both sides of the roadway in the concentrated area of buildings in the center and adding the crosswalk to the eight units at the west end of building two.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Cleavall)

Motion was made by Mr. DeStefano and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to continue the Site Plan for 685 South Westfield Street for DePalma to the October 19, 2023 meeting.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Cleavall)

## Agawam Planning Board September 21, 2023

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### 3. FORM A – Walnut Street – Tang

Ms. Kerr explained this plan shows two lots being combined. She stated the owner previously submitted a plan to create the two lots but now wants to combine the lots so he receives only one tax bill. Ms. Baldwin stated they received Inspection Services and Engineering comments and neither department had an issue with the plan.

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DiLullo to approve the Plan for Tang on Walnut Street under “Subdivision Control Law Not Required.”

VOTE 5 – 0

### 4. Bond Release – D’Amato Way

The Engineering Department performed a site visit and submitted a punchlist with eight items that still need to be addressed.

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. Cleavall to deny the bond release the D’Amato Way Subdivision, citing Engineering comments dated September 21, 2023.

VOTE 5 – 0

### 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES September 7, 2023

Motion was made by Mr. DiLullo and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to approve the minutes for September 7, 2023 as written.

VOTE 4 – 0 – 1 (Cleavall)

### 6. Correspondences – None

Motion was made by Mr. Elfman and seconded by Mr. DeStefano to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE 5 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 6:26pm.