Planning & Development Standing Committee
Wednesday, October 7, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.
City Hall
1st Floor Council Conference Room
9 Dale Avenue
Gloucester, MA 01930
-Minutes-

Planning & Development Committee Present: Chair, Councilor Jason Grow; Vice Chair, Councilor Dylan Benson; Councilor Hannah Kimberley

Also Present: Legislative Aide, Lynds Jones

This meeting was conducted in person and remotely through ZOOM

Councilor Grow called the P&D meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilor Grow announced the names of the P&D Committee members in attendance.

1. **PP#2026-005: Petition by National Grid to install underground facilities on Wheeler Street beginning at a point 194 feet South of the centerline of the intersection of Wheeler Street and Shore Hill Road and continuing approximately 2 feet in an East direction. National Grid is petitioning to install +/- 2 feet of underground conduit from pole 511 to property line of 115 Wheeler Street, Gloucester, MA.**

   - **Public Hearing Opened:** 6:07 p.m.

   - **Speaking in Favor: Ismail Mikou, 44 River Street, Beverly** stated that the customer would be digging the trench and installing the conduit. He stated that the digging would take place on a grassy area. He stated that there would be no traffic impact.

   - **Speaking in Opposition:** None.

   - **Communications: Legislative Aide, Lynds Jones** read the following memo from the **DPW Director, Michael Hale:**

DRAFT

Department of Public Works
28 Poplar Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

TEL (978)325-5600
FAX(978)281-3896
mhale@gloucester-ma.gov

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
MEMORANDUM

Date: August 28, 2026

To: Councilor Jason Grow, Planning & Development Committee Chair
Councilor Dylan Benson, Vice Chair
Councilor Hannah Kimberley, Member

From: Michael B. Hale, Director of Public Works

Re: Application (PP2026-005) Wheeler Street

Councilors:

The Department of Public Works has reviewed the above-mentioned application by Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc. requests permission to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Wheeler St – National Grid to install underground facilities on Wheeler Street. Beginning at a point 194 feet South of the centerline of the intersection of Wheeler Street and Shore Hill Road and continuing approximately 2 feet in an easterly direction. National Grid is petitioning to install +/- 2 feet of underground conduit from pole 511 to the property line of 115 Wheeler Street in Gloucester, MA.

In an attempt to maintain the quality of City roadways, the Department of Public Works requests the following be required of the applicant:

1. Notification to the Department of Public Works 72 hours in advance of the proposed work. A construction schedule will be prepared by the applicant for review and acceptance by the Department of Public Works.
2. In the absence of a detailed construction plan, the Department of Public Works requests: all proposed conduits and appurtenances shall be placed so as to cause minimum conflict with existing underground utility services.
3. All excavations must be secured at all times.
4. All excavated trenches shall be patched flush with the surrounding asphalt using hot mix asphalt binder at the end of each work day, to minimize pedestrian hazards. Asphalt shall be applied in two lifts of 2-inches, totaling 4- inches.
5. Sidewalks must be restored with like material immediately after pole set.
6. Paving conditions must be approved by Public Works prior to issuance of road opening permit.

Should you have any questions regarding the conditions requested, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

- **Questions from Councilors to Applicants/Staff: Councilor Benson** asked for clarification regarding the customer digging the trench. **Ismail Mikou** stated that the customer would have a contracted electrician dig the trench and install the conduit and National Grid would run the cable.

- **Public Hearing Closed:** 6:15 p.m.

Summary of Discussion: None.

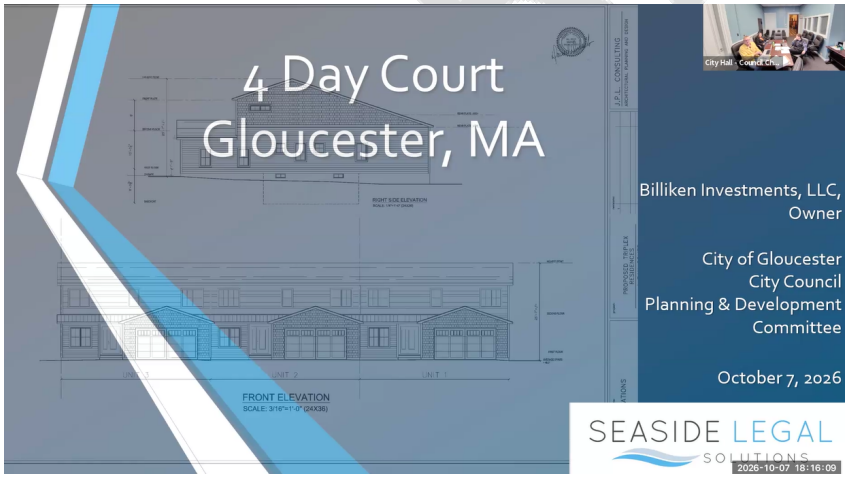
COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Grow, seconded by Councilor Benson, the Planning & Development Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council permit Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid, to locate poles, wires and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the public way, National Grid to install underground facilities on Wheeler Street. Beginning at a point 194 feet South of the centerline of the intersection of Wheeler Street and Shore Hill Road and continuing approximately 2 feet in an easterly

direction. National Grid is petitioning to install +/- 2 feet of underground conduit from pole 511 to property line of 115 Wheeler Street in Gloucester; MA - as shown on a plan included in the application dated July 8, 2026 – with the following conditions:

1. Notification to the Department of Public Works 72 hours in advance of the proposed work. A construction schedule will be prepared by the applicant for review and acceptance by the Department of Public Works.
2. In the absence of a detailed construction plan, the Department of Public Works requests: all proposed conduits and appurtenances shall be placed so as to cause minimum conflict with existing underground utility services.
3. All excavations must be secured at all times.
4. All excavated trenches shall be patched flush with the surrounding asphalt using hot mix asphalt binder at the end of each work day, to minimize pedestrian hazards. Asphalt shall be applied in two lifts of 2-inches, totaling 4- inches.
5. Sidewalks must be restored with like material immediately after pole set.
6. Paving conditions must be approved by Public Works prior to issuance of road opening permit.
7. Any areas not paved be restored with grass and plantings as originally found.

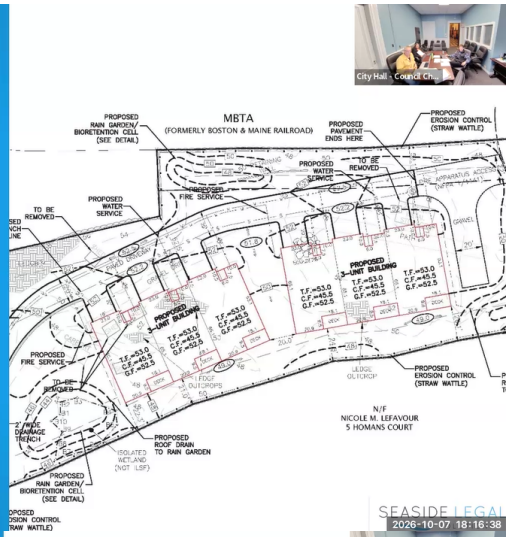
2. SCP2026-007: The application of Seaside Legal Solutions, P.C. (Owner, Billiken Investments LLC), Day Court #4, Map #219, Lot #155: GZO Sec. 2.3.1(7) "Conversion to or new multi-family or apartment dwelling, four to six dwelling units," and Sec. 3.2.2 fn (e) "No principal building shall be closer to another principal building on the same site than the sum of their respective heights; provided, however, that the City Council may by special permit authorize a reduction in said distance upon a finding that such reduction is not detrimental because of view obstruction, overshadowing, service access or visual crowding" in the R20 district. (cont. from July 22, 2026)

Summary of Discussion: **Attorney Aiden Church, 123 Main Street, Seaside Legal Solutions,** stated he was representing the applicant. **Attorney Church** shared his screen.



PROPOSED WORK RECAP

Construct two three-unit buildings for total of six units on one lot



RELIEF REQUESTED

ZBA Variances:

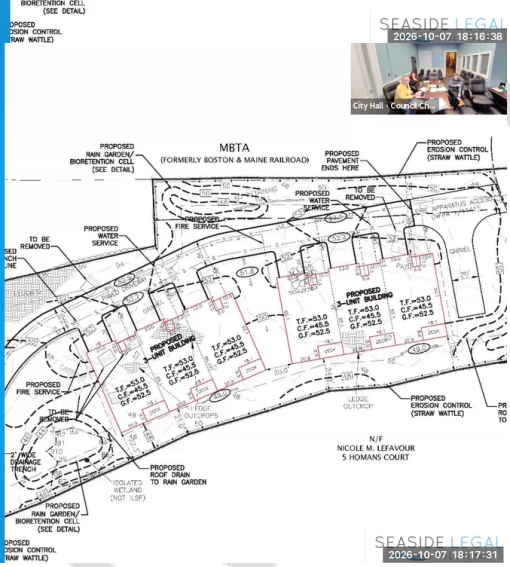
- Right side yard setback
- Distance between buildings
- Frontage

"CC" Special Permit

- New multifamily 4-6 unit dwelling
- Pursuant to GZO § 2.3.1(7)

Special permit pursuant to GZO § 3.2.2 fn(e)

- Principal building shall not be closer to another principal building than sum of their heights w/o special permit



Attorney Church stated the above. He stated that the owner of 4 Day Court owned the full layout of Day Court and any improvements would be considered off-site improvements. He stated that the buildings would be located close together due to the abutting wetlands and MBTA train tracks.

PLAN UPDATES

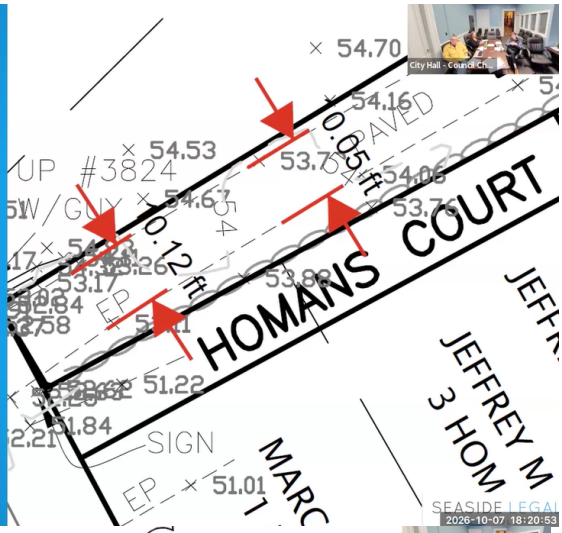
- Expand width of pavement at entry
  - Widening from +/- 10' to 12' at mouth and expanding to 16.5' 150' into property
- Revise drainage to add 2' wide trench on southern border of Day Court
- Proposed fencing between Day Court and Homan's Court



PLAN UPDATES
Access

Expand width of pavement at entry

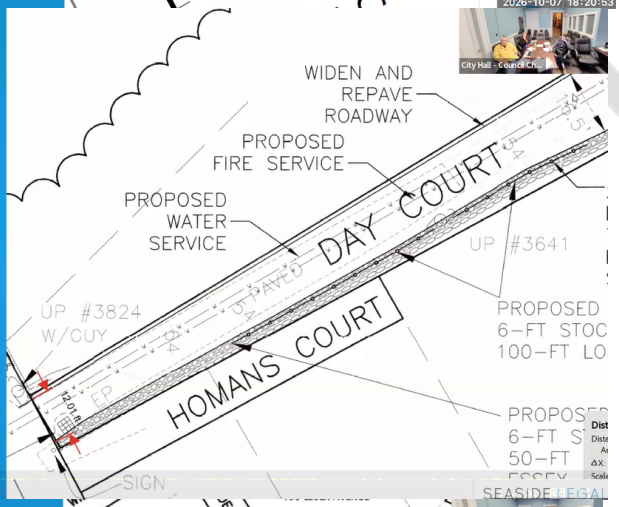
- Existing pavement →
- First plan iteration did not detail roadway improvements



PLAN UPDATES
Access

Expand width of pavement at entry

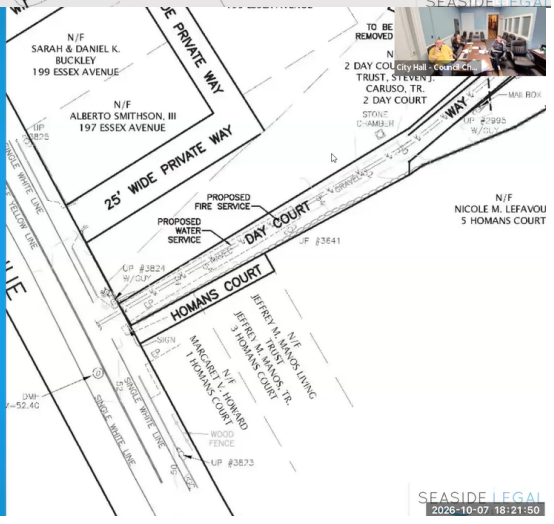
- Widening from +/- 10' to 12' at mouth and expanding to 16.5' 150' into property

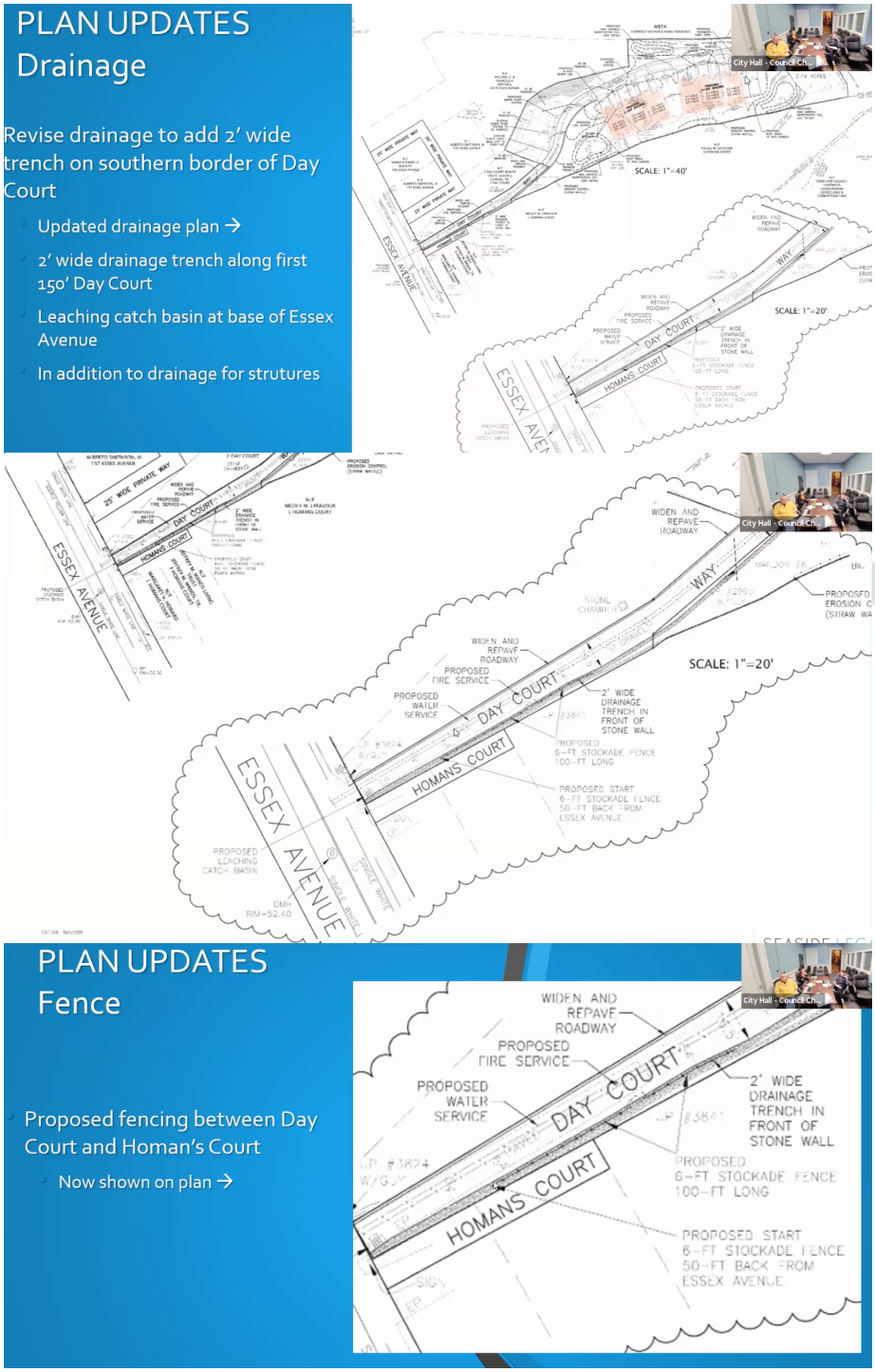


PLAN UPDATES
Drainage

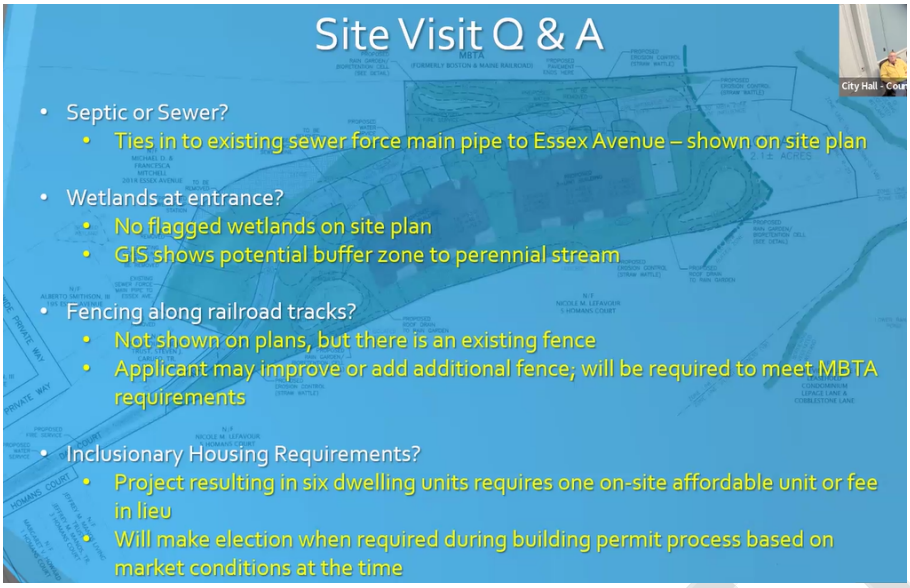
Revise drainage to add 2' wide trench on southern border of Day Court

- Previous drainage plan →
- Primarily sheet flow on Day Court



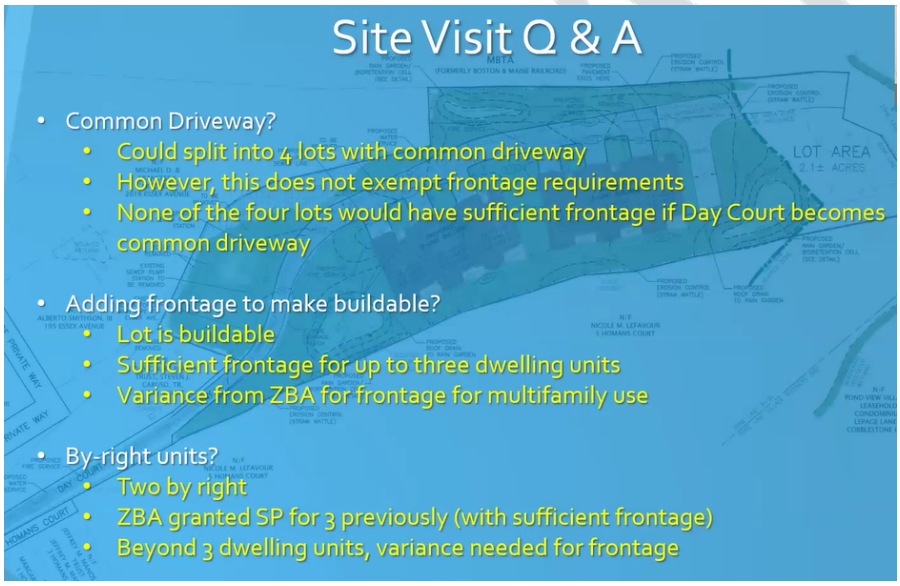


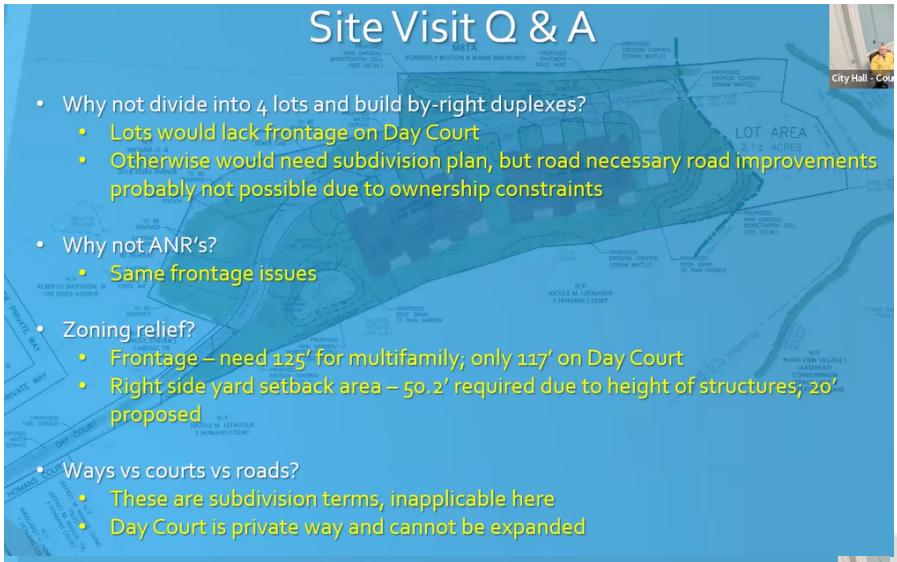
Attorney Church stated the above.

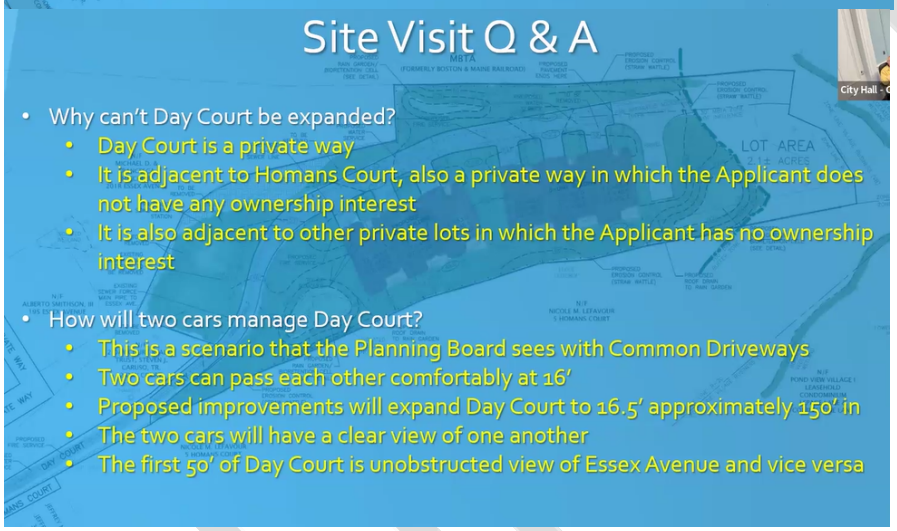


Attorney Church stated the above.

Councilor Grow asked for clarification regarding a fence preventing access to the MBTA train tracks. **Attorney Church** stated that there was currently a fence, and any new fence would need to be approved by the MBTA and be at least six feet tall.



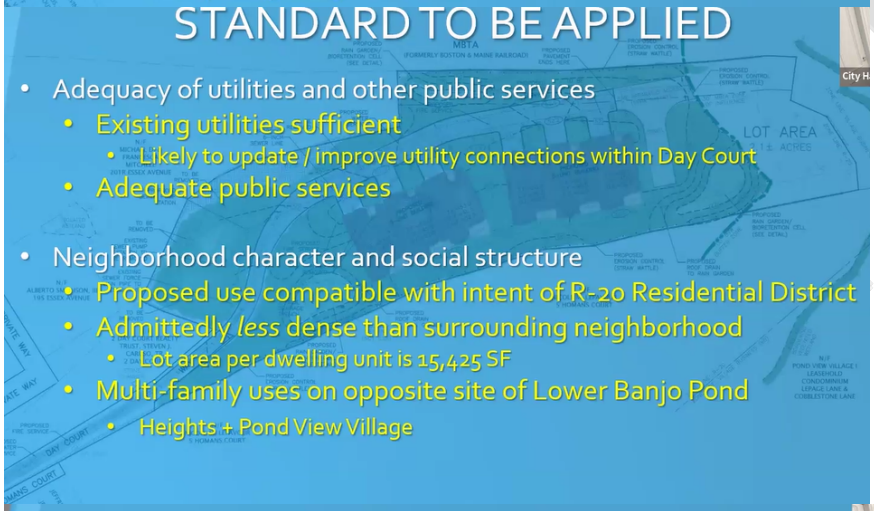


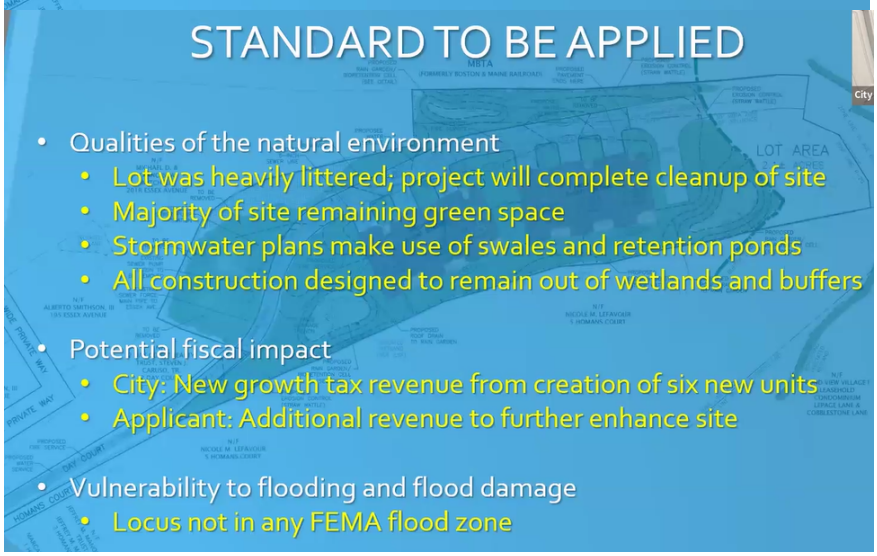


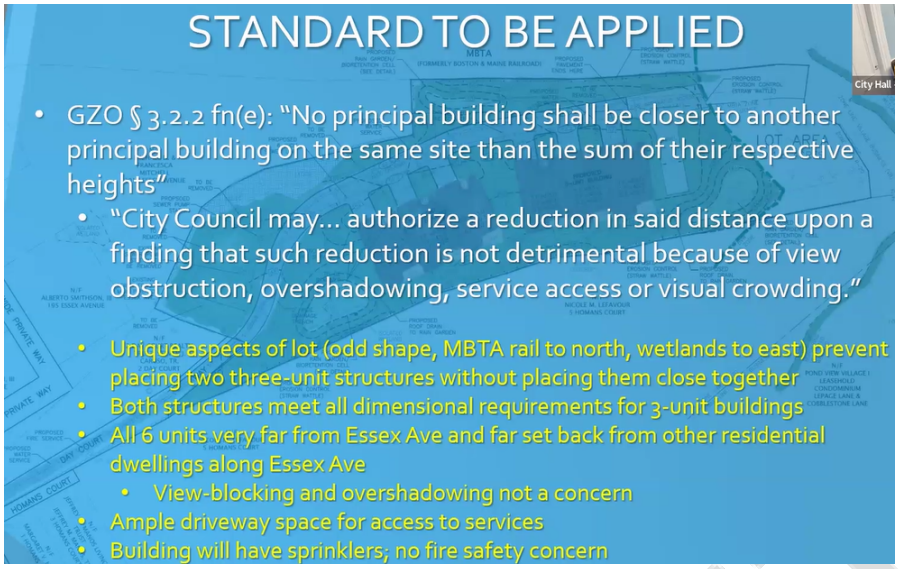
Attorney Church stated the above.

Councilor Kimberley asked for clarification regarding the number of units. **Councilor Grow** stated that the ZBA had originally approved three units, but had suggested increasing it to six, which was what the applicant was now proposing.

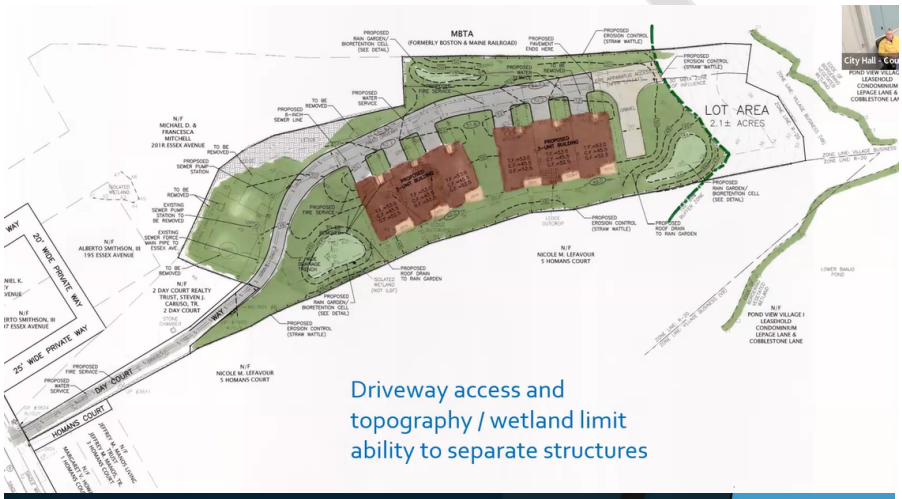

STANDARD TO BE APPLIED
"CC" Special Permit
• GZO § 1.8.3 provides the standard for use table special permits, including the "CC" Special Permit for a new multifamily structure with four to six dwelling units
• Seven Factor Test
• Social, Economic, or community need served by the proposal
• Six new residential units
• City still short of housing creation goals
• Traffic flow and safety
• Located near state highway
• Conditions proposed to mitigate potential conflict
• "Offsite" improvements to Day Court extend to Essex Avenue
• Delivery vehicles, emergency vehicles, etc. can access
• Exceeds required parking minimums

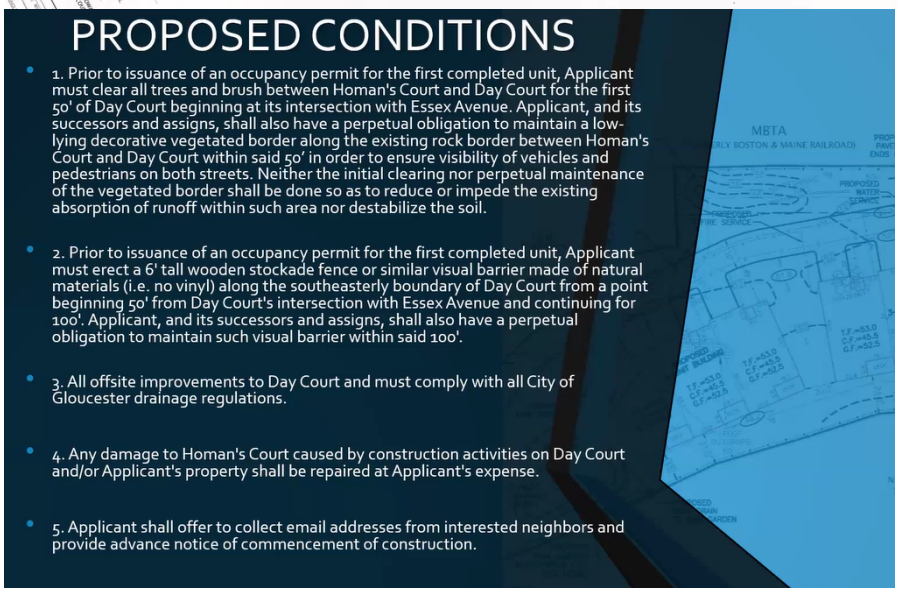

STANDARD TO BE APPLIED
• Adequacy of utilities and other public services
• Existing utilities sufficient
• Likely to update / improve utility connections within Day Court
• Adequate public services
• Neighborhood character and social structure
• Proposed use compatible with intent of R-20 Residential District
• Admittedly *less* dense than surrounding neighborhood
• Lot area per dwelling unit is 15,425 SF
• Multi-family uses on opposite site of Lower Banjo Pond
• Heights + Pond View Village


STANDARD TO BE APPLIED
• Qualities of the natural environment
• Lot was heavily littered; project will complete cleanup of site
• Majority of site remaining green space
• Stormwater plans make use of swales and retention ponds
• All construction designed to remain out of wetlands and buffers
• Potential fiscal impact
• City: New growth tax revenue from creation of six new units
• Applicant: Additional revenue to further enhance site
• Vulnerability to flooding and flood damage
• Locus not in any FEMA flood zone



Attorney Church stated the above.



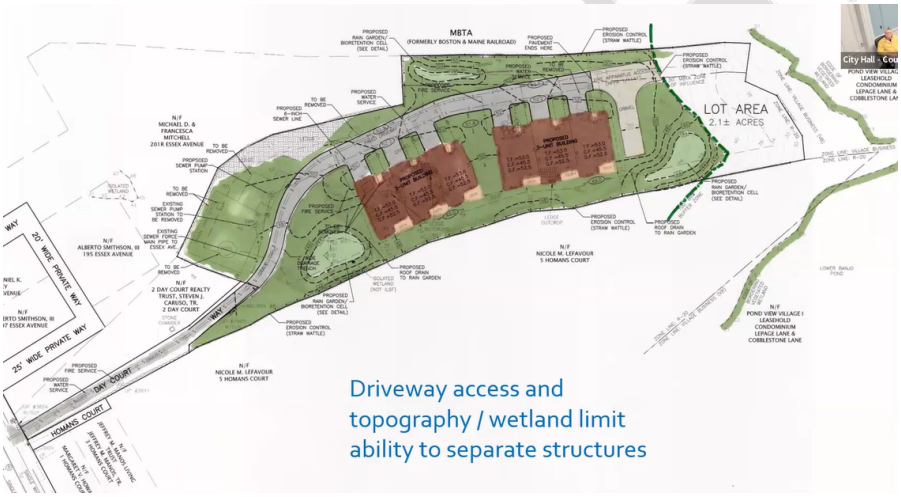


Attorney Church stated the above.



Attorney Church stated the above.

Councilor Kimberley asked for clarification regarding how vehicles would turn around on Day Court. **Attorney Church** stated that there would be driveways for each individual unit, as well as a turn around area at the back of the property as can be seen below.



Councilor Benson asked how many cars could park at each unit. **Attorney Church** stated that each unit would have a two-car garage and space outside for two more cars, and the requirement was 1.5 parking spaces.

Councilor Kimberley asked what the cost of the completed units would be. **Attorney Church** stated that would depend on market rates at the time.

There was a brief discussion regarding the need for affordable housing.

Maggie Howard, 1 Homan's Court, stated she was a direct abutter, and asked what the depth of the drainage ditch on Day Court would be. **Attorney Church** stated that he was unsure. **Councilor Grow** stated he was concerned the trench could fill in with silt over time.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Grow, seconded by Councilor Kimberly, the Planning & Development Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council grant to Billiken Investments LLC, a Special Permit (SCP2026-007) for the property located at Day Court #4, Assessors Map 219, Lot 155, R-20 district, pursuant to Gloucester Zoning Ordinance Sec. 2.3.1(7), "Conversion to or new multi-family or apartment dwelling, four to six dwelling units" to construct six dwelling units and grant a special permit pursuant to GZO 3.2.2 fn(e) "Dimensional Requirements for Multi-family Dwellings and Their Accessory Uses (other than signs)" to reduce the required distance between two principal building as follows:

	Combined Heights	Proposed Distance	Granted Relief
Combined Heights of Buildings (feet):	51.2	20	31.2

The special permits are granted on the basis of plans and elevations dated October 21, 2025 (four plans for 4 Day Court), and submitted to the City Clerk on June 30, 2026, entitled "Existing Condition Plan," "Survey & Layout Plan," "Grading and Drainage Plan," "Construction Details Plan," "Floor Plans," "Elevations," "Roof Plan," and "Improved Roadway Plan." The Special Council Permit will have the following conditions:

1. Prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the first completed unit, Applicant must clear all trees and brush between Homan's Court and Day Court for the first 50' of Day Court beginning at its intersection with Essex Avenue. Applicant, and its successors and assigns, shall also have a perpetual obligation to maintain a low-lying decorative vegetated border along the existing rock border between Homan's Court and Day Court within said 50' in order to ensure visibility of vehicles and pedestrians on both streets. Neither the initial clearing nor perpetual maintenance of the vegetated border shall be done so as to reduce or impede the existing absorption of runoff within such area nor destabilize the soil.
2. Prior to issuance of an occupancy permit for the first completed unit, Applicant must erect a 6' wooden stockade fence or similar visual barrier made of natural materials (i.e. no vinyl) along the southeasterly boundary of Day Court from a point beginning 50' from Day Court's intersection with Essex Avenue and continuing for 100'. The Applicant, and its successors and assigns, shall also have a perpetual obligation to maintain such visual barrier within said 100'.
3. All off-site improvements to Day Court must comply with all City of Gloucester drainage regulations.
4. Any damage to Homan's Court caused by construction activities on Day Court and/or Applicant's property shall be repaired at Applicant's expense.
5. Applicant shall offer to collect email addresses from interested neighbors and provide advance notice of commencement of construction.
6. The Applicant will construct a fence along the railway according to MBTA requirements.

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7. The Applicant consult abutters regarding the final drainage plan to ensure proper drainage is maintained in the future.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: On a motion by Councilor Benson, seconded by Councilor Kimberley, the Planning & Development Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Submitted by: Lynds S. Jones, Legislative Aide

Documents submitted at the meeting: Presentations by Seaside Legal.

Matters appearing on the agenda that are to be continued:

1. CC#2026-012 (Memhard): Amend GZO Sec. 3.2.1 "Dimensional Requirements for Single, Two-Family and Three-Family Dwellings" by increasing the minimum lot area per dwelling unit (sf) requirement for the RC-40 (Coastal Residential) zoning district by DELETING "20,000 sf" and ADDING "40,000 sf." (cont. from July 8, 2026) (cont. to October 21, 2026)

Meeting Recording: http://gloucester-ma.gov/1097/Past-Remote-Public-Meeting

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