



City of Lowell - Planning Board

Planning Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 16, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, City Hall

City of Lowell, 375 Merrimack Street, Lowell, MA

Remote Participation Optional via Zoom

Note: These minutes are not completed verbatim. For a recording of the meeting, visit www.ltc.org

Members Present

Chairman Linnehan

Vice Chair Frechette

Member Walker

Associate Member Sar

Members Absent

Member Cheng

Member Tenczar

Associate Member Cardoso Silva

Others Present

Mary Brundage, Associate Planner

A quorum of the Board was present. Chairman Linnehan called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

I. Minutes for Approval

3/2/2026

L. Walker asked that the word “water” be amended to “wattage” in her statement in the discussion of the Data Center Moratorium.

T. Linnehan motioned to approve as amended as indicated by L. Walker. G. Frechette seconded. Motion passed unanimously, (4-0).

II. Continued Business

III. New Business

Special Permit - 260 High Street, 01852

The Lowell Planning Board will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons relative to an application by Quynh Quach to open an adult day care facility at 260 High Street. The subject property is in the Urban Mixed-Use (UMU) zoning district. The proposal requires a Special Permit per Article 12.3 for the use.

On Behalf:

None

Speaking in Favor:

None

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan stated that he visited the property today. He explained to the applicant that the sign was not up for the required 14 consecutive days before the hearing. Because of that, the Board would not be able to act on her petition until that requirement is met.

Motion:

T. Linnehan motioned to continue to 4/23. T. Sar seconded. Motion passed unanimously, (4-0).

Public Shade Tree Hearing – 209 Crawford Street, 01854

In Accordance with MGL Ch. 87.5 and the Chapter 260 of the Lowell Code of Ordinances, the Lowell Planning Board will hold a public hearing to hear all interested persons about the proposed removal of one (1) tree in the vicinity of 209 Crawford Street with a DBH of 60". The removal of this tree is necessary to reclaim and pave the roadway and allow for proper roadway maintenance during winter months.

On Behalf:

T. Linnehan read a memo from Paul St. Cyr, Commissioner of Department of Public Works, to the Planning Board Chair. The memo stated P. St. Cyr was in agreement of the City Engineering office's request to remove one large oak tree at 209 Crawford Street due to the fact that it's necessary to reclaim and repave the road as well to allow proper maintenance of the street during winter months

T. Linnehan read a memo to Paul St. Cyr from Daniel Lewis, Engineer, CC'ed David Beati, Assistant City Engineer. The memo stated that it is necessary to remove the 60" DBH tree at Crawford Street. According to nearby residents, the overgrown root system continues to encroach into their private property and is having the asphalt and both the roadway and the adjacent driveway. The removal of this tree is necessary to reclaim and pave the roadway and allow for proper roadway maintenance during the winter months. The memo included pictures of the tree and the plan of proposed work.

Speaking in Favor:

Don Liu, 340 - 342 University Ave.

D. Liu stated that his property is behind the property where the tree is located. He said that the branches are overgrown and is concerned about the tree falling. He has called to have the tree trimmed

multiple times over the years. The branches are affecting the powerlines, and the roots are damaging the driveway. He is in favor of the tree removal.

Speaking in Opposition:

None

Discussion:

T. Linnehan stated in the guidelines that a tree that size needs to be replaced with two more trees. The proposed two new trees down toward East Meadow Street. While the preference is for planting on the same street or neighborhood, they are still meet the requirement.

J. Frechette stated that the tree is really large. The sidewalk is completely cracked and taking some area of the driveways. The tree poses more harm than benefit to the neighbors. He would have like to know how the location was selected for the two new trees but the requirement is being met.

L. Walker stated that she was sad because there isn't a lot of trees in that section of Crawford Street but recognizes that the removal is necessary and sees how the trees affects plowing in the winter and the driveway next to it. She appreciated the replanting plan to replace the existing tree.

T. Sar agrees that the tree is pretty large and is destroying the property in the neighborhood.

T. Linnehan stated when he visited the location that he spoke with a neighbor. The neighbor said that he was totally in favor of it. T. Linnehan reiterated that the plan meets the requirements of removing one tree and put up two new trees.

Motion:

T. Sar motioned in favor of removing the tree. L. Walker seconded. Motion passed unanimously, (4-0).

IV. Other Business

V. Further Comments from Planning Board Members

J. Frechette mentioned that at the NMCOG meeting there was a robust discussion on At Home in Greater Lowell – regional housing strategy plan. NMCOG has been working on that as a result of the strategic planning sessions that took place over a year and a half at the NMCOG. All nine communities indicated one the challenges were meeting the housing needs at various levels in their own communities. There are shortages across the board but particularly in affordable housing in surrounding communities. The Council embarked on a regional housing plan and this part one of the plan. J. Frechette introduced to the Planning Board about a month ago. Representatives of NMCOG were asked to go back to their respective boards to look at their strategies and ask members to review the document of 17 strategies and six goals and come up with one or two strategies to adopt in their communities. He stated that many of strategies such as transit oriented development (MBTA Zone), reduced parking requirements, and form-based zoning. He also stated that the City is above the minimum requirement for affordable housing. He asked members to take a look at the suggestions in the document. He mentioned that Lowell has just embarked on the re-evaluation of the zoning code and that he attended the zoning subcommittee meeting that he was appointed to. The hope is complete by December where there is possibly some revisions the zoning code. He mentioned that inclusionary

zoning was looked at a few years ago but the economics did not work out to implement. He stated that he will reporting back to NMCOG

T. Linnehan followed up that NMCOG was going to come back with a presentation. He suggested that it should be the only agenda item in a future meeting to give it the full attention.

VI. Adjournment

J. Frechette motioned to adjourn. T. Sar seconded. The motion passed unanimously, (4-0). The time was 6:53 PM.