



The City of Worcester

Planning Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Worcester City Hall – Levi Lincoln Chamber,
with remote participation options available via Zoom online at
“<https://worcesterma.zoomgov/j/1617314979>” and call-in
number 1-669-254-5252 (Access Code: 161 731 4979 #).

Attendance:

Board Members Present: Albert LaValley, Chair
Conor McCormack, Vice-Chair (*Participated Remotely*)
Stephen Toomey
Brandon King (*Participated Remotely*)

Anthony Dell'Aera

Board Members Absent:

Staff Present: Michelle Smith, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Stephen Cary, Division of Planning & Regulatory Services (DPRS)
Andy Truman, DPW
Kobe Boaten, LAW

Call to Order:

Board Chair Albert LaValley called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Mr. LaValley read requests for continuances, postponements, and withdrawals into the record.

Item 1: 0 Chester Street (PB-2025-048) – Definitive Site Plan

Request to Continue the Public Meeting & Hearing to June 3, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 25, 2026

Item 3: 28 Harrington Way (PB-2025-093) – Special Permit

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to June 3, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 25, 2026

Item 4: 26 & 28 Milton Street (PB-2026-017) – Definitive Site Plan & MGL 81-G and/or GRO Ch. 12, §12, Private Street Improvement

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to June 3, 2026
Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 25, 2026

Item 10: Portions of Mill Street (ST-2026-001) – Discontinue & Remove

Request to Postpone the Public Meeting & Hearing to June 3, 2026

Extend the Constructive Grant Deadline to June 25, 2026

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to grant the continuance and postponements.

Mr. LaValley stated that agenda items 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9 will be taken out of order.

New Business:

Item 5. 14 Emery Street (PB-2026-020)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Donald O'Neil, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Gold Star Builders Inc, stated the proposal seeks to construct a single-family attached building with three units. He described the relief that was previously granted by the ZBA and noted the plans received significant updates based on their review. Mr. O'Neil stated they are in agreement with the staff recommended conditions of approval but requested clarification on condition 1d which requires a white reflective roof for the structure and he wanted to be sure this would only apply to the flat portions of the roof.

Michelle Smith of DPRS confirmed the white reflective roofing would only apply to flat portions of the roof and stated the condition's language could be updated accordingly. She stated this three-unit townhouse development is before the Board for Site Plan Review due to the presence of slopes steeper than 15% on the site. She reviewed the relief granted by the ZBA and described the staff recommended conditions of approval. She noted the majority of the comments relate to erosion control measures and test pit findings reflecting the presence of ledge on site. She asked the applicant to clarify how grading will be managed with the ledge on site and how restoration of vegetation will be handled with exposed ledge. She noted that DPW's conditions should be added to the Board's motion as well. Ms. Smith concluded, explaining that the property is on a corner lot and any alterations to the abutting private way would need review and approval from the Planning Board prior to any work being done.

Andy Truman of DPW stated they have three comments for recommended conditions of approval and described them to the Board. He noted that similar to DPRS, DPW needs to understand how ledge will be handled on site.

Nick Facendola, engineer for the project, stated they will use mechanical means to handle the ledge on site, keeping the nearby residential uses in mind. He stated the ledge should be able to be cleared by hammering and the structure was designed to best work with the existing grades on site. He additionally explained how drainage will be managed on site given that subsurface infiltration is not possible here. Lastly, he confirmed that exposed rock areas will be treated with loam and then seeded and final plans will include additional details to demonstrate how the re-graded areas will be stabilized.

Public Comment:

Stephen Manna, Worcester resident and abutter to the proposed development, asked how residents of Lachapelle Street and Kelleher Way will be affected in terms of access while utility work is taking place on Emery Street. He also asked if the existing fire hydrant in the area will be relocated and if a transformer will be installed.

Mr. O'Neil stated no work within Lachapelle Street is proposed and Emery Street will not be blocked off during utility work, which will be addressed in the construction management plan that will be provided

as part of the conditional approval. He stated there are no plans to relocate the fire hydrant at this time and it would only be moved if it needed to be moved. He noted any transformer would need to be appropriately screened as per the conditions, however, the location will ultimately be determined by National Grid.

Mr. Manna asked for additional clarification that Arcadia Street will be accessible from Emery Street during construction.

Mr. LaValley stated Emery Street is wide and they will be required to provide a construction management plan to ensure the road remains passable during construction as part of the permitting process.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated he has no concerns with the proposal and asked for clarification that condition 1d should be modified to reflect that only the flat portion of the roof shall include white reflective coating.

Mr. LaValley confirmed and noted that the motion should also incorporate DPW's comments as conditions of approval.

Mr. King, Mr. Toomey, and Mr. LaValley stated no additional comments.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan subject to staff recommended conditions of approval, modifying condition 1d and adding DPW conditions as articulated in the discussion.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Application; filed 2/5/2026; prepared by Donald J O'Neil, Attorney
- Exhibit B: Project Impact Statement; submitted 3/12/2026; prepared by Level Design Group
- Exhibit C: Site Plan set; revised 3/9/2026; prepared by Level Design Group
- Exhibit D: Architectural Plans; dated 11/21/2025; prepared by Goldstar Builders Inc.
- Exhibit E: Test Pit Calculations; dated 6/25/2025; prepared by Zack Kelling - SE#15038
- Exhibit F: Survey; dated 3/10/2025; prepared by B&R Survey, Inc.

6. 17 Pearl Street (PB-2026-027)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan
- b. Public Hearing – Extension of Time – Special Permit (CCOD) to modify dimensional requirements for off-street parking in the Commercial Corridors Overlay District (Article IX, Section 7.E.)

Mark Borenstein, attorney on behalf of the applicant, HHM Cube Properties, stated the applications before the Board are for an Extension of Time to a previously approved Special Permit and a new Definitive Site Plan since the previously approved Site Plan lapsed before an Extension was sought. He stated the applicant has been advancing the design of the proposed building since it was last before the Board and highlighted modifications which include changes to the façade, driveway, and utilities on site. Mr. Borenstein stated the staff recommended conditions are generally acceptable to the applicant, but requested modifications to condition 1f to include the language “if determined to be feasible by the Fire Department” and swap out the word “racks” for “spaces”. He deferred to staff to read the modifications to condition 1m.

Stephen Cary of DPRS stated staff is amenable to moving condition 1m to “prior to issuance of a building permit” and modifying the language to read “The applicants engineer shall collaborate with DPW to confirm whether the storm drain will connect to Pearl Street or Pleasant Street based on site and invert elevations and the location and elevation of existing utilities in both public ways to confirm feasibility. The applicant shall prioritize the connection to Pearl Street to the extent feasible”.

Andy Truman, DPW, confirmed that the revised language is acceptable and the preference would be for the connection to go into Pearl Street.

Mr. Borenstein additionally requested a reduction in the filing fee for the site plan application, from \$5,000.00 to \$660.00, given that the project had only been slightly modified and the fee should be reflective of what would be charged for an amendment rather than a brand new application.

Mr. LaValley stated the Board is not inclined to grant the request given the amount of time staff has put into reviewing these changes for a fairly large project.

Mr. Cary outlined the applications before the board, which involves construction of an 11-story mixed-use building containing 139 dwelling units and a commercial use on the ground floor. He described the changes made to the building and site since this was last approved by the Board. He confirmed staff would be comfortable with modifications to condition 1f as described by the applicant’s attorney.

Mr. Truman, DPW, informed the applicant that when patching for trench restoration takes place, the applicant will be responsible for full or half width restoration to the affected lanes.

Public Comment:

Addison Kahale, Worcester resident and abutting property owner, stated they are concerned about egress and passageways. He stated the applicant has assured them that they will be granted rights to use of passageways, but would like this to be recorded in writing or required by the Board.

Mr. LaValley stated they are not legally able to mandate this requirement but does believe documentation is in the works.

Ms. Smith clarified that the private passageways around the property are a private matter which the City is not able to mandate.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated he is happy this project is still moving forward and he takes no issues with the modifications to conditions. He encouraged the applicant to continue working with the abutter on their concerns.

Mr. King and Mr. Toomey stated no comments.

Mr. LaValley stated this is a major project he would love to see come to fruition. He feels confident that staff has adequately reviewed the proposal and applauded DPW for requiring applicants to repair streets upon tearing them up for installation of utilities.

On the motion, by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King the Board voted 4–0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4–0 to approve the Special Permit Extension of Time for one-year and to approve the Definitive Site Plan subject to staff recommended conditions of approval, modifying conditions 1f and 1m as articulated in the discussion.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed 2/25/26; prepared by Mark A. Borenstein, Prince Lobel Tye LLP

Exhibit B: Special Permit (CCOD) Application; filed 2/25/26; prepared by Mark A. Borenstein, Prince Lobel Tye LLP

- Exhibit C: Site Plans; revised 3/16/2026 and received 05/11/2026; prepared by VHB
- Exhibit D: Architectural Plans, Renderings, and Exterior Treatment Details; dated 12/17/25 and received 05/11/2026; prepared by Silvestri Architects
- Exhibit E: Fire Access Plan; dated 1/17/25, prepared by VHB
- Exhibit F: Lighting and Photometric Plan; dated 12/31/24; prepared by Empire Lighting
- Exhibit G: Shadow Study; dated 12/4/25
- Exhibit H: Stormwater Management Memorandum; dated 1/2/25; prepared by VHB
- Exhibit I: Traffic Impact and Access Study; dated 12/31/2024; prepared by VHB

Item 7. 120 Washington Street (Lot 3B) (PB-2026-033)

- a. Public Meeting – Extension of Time – Definitive Site Plan
- b. Public Hearing – Extension of Time – Special Permit (CCOD) to modify dimensional requirements for off-street parking in the Commercial Corridors Overlay District (Article IX, Section 7.E.)

Anthony Rossi, petitioner, stated project is seeking an extension of time while construction financing is finalized.

Michelle Smith, DPRS, stated the Board approved a Definitive Site Plan and Special Permit for this project on April 9, 2025. She reminded the Board that the project proposes a 6-story mixed-use building with commercial space on the ground floor and residential units above. She stated the applicant seeks a two-year extension of time for the site plan, extending the approval to April 9, 2028 and a one-year extension for the Special Permit, extending to May 1, 2027.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated his support for the extension.

Mr. King and Mr. Toomey stated no comment.

On the motion, by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King the Board voted 4–0 to close the public hearing.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4–0 to approve the Special Permit Extension of Time for one-year and Definitive Site Plan Extension of Time for two years subject to original staff recommended conditions of approval.

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit A: Original Definitive Site Plan and Special Permit Application; filed 04/08/2026

8. 625 Franklin Street (PB-2026-035)

- a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Mark Borenstein, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Mr Capitalx LLC, shared a video presentation with the Board. Through the video, Mr. Borenstein described the existing conditions on site and the

property's zoning designation. He stated the applicant seeks to raze the existing structure and construct a new three-story multi-family building with 28 units and other site amenities. He described the exterior site improvements proposed in conjunction with the development. Mr. Borenstein discussed how the building will blend with the existing neighborhood while breathing new life into the property and improving the neighborhood.

Following the video, Mr. Borenstein described the relief approved by the ZBA and explained that during their review, the total number of units was decreased to 27 units. He requested modifications to staff recommended condition 1d to strike "and use a contrasting color for the entry awning" and to move condition 1g to "prior to issuance of a building permit". Mr. Borenstein asked for clarification that previously issued comments from staff related to the proposed infiltration unit's proximity to the building have been resolved.

Stephen Cary, DPRS, stated if the proposed location for the infiltration unit is the only feasible location for infiltration, staff would be comfortable with it but would defer to DPW.

Andy Truman, DPW, stated that staff would be amenable in this case given the grade of the slab and the limited real estate available.

With that discussion, Mr. Borenstein requested DPW condition 2 be struck and deferred to staff to discuss the remaining conditions.

Mr. Cary noted that staff has some concerns regarding infiltration functionality based on the test pit data that was provided and proposes new condition under "prior to and continuing during all construction activities" stating "A third party registered professional engineer currently licensed to practice within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts specializing in stormwater system design, installation, and management, shall be on site during installation of the stormwater infiltration system and shall ensure any fill is suitable for infiltration". Additionally, he recommended to modify condition 7 under "prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy" to read "A registered Professional Engineer, currently licensed to practice within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, shall provide a written certification that the stormwater system has been constructed in substantial compliance with the approved plans and that the infrastructure functions as designed. *The certification shall document installation of the impermeable barrier to prevent stormwater seepage through the proposed retaining walls, in coordination of the structural engineer, and document subsurface soil conditions for the stormwater system.* One (1) original of said certification, and a .pdf of the same, shall be provided to each the Department of Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works & Parks, and the DPRS."

Mr. Borenstein confirmed that the applicant is amenable to the modifications discussed and the remaining conditions of approval.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated he takes no issue with the site plan and believes the size and scale of this development is appropriate for this location.

Mr. King stated he is happy to support the project.

Mr. Toomey and Mr. LaValley stated no comments.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan subject to staff recommended conditions of approval, modifying conditions 1d, 1g, and 7, adding a new condition 3, and adding DPW comments as conditions except for comment 2 as articulated in the discussion.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed April 22, 2026; prepared by Mark A. Borenstein, Esq.
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated April 9, 2026; prepared by Spruhan Engineering
- Exhibit C: Architectural Drawings, dated April 29, 2026; prepared by Integrity Modular Design & Construction
- Exhibit D: Stormwater Report; dated April 9, 2026; prepared by Spruhan Engineering
- Exhibit E: Transportation Management Plan Application; filed; dated April 13, 2026; prepared by Creighton Manning
- Exhibit F: Site Plan Lighting; dated May 4, 2026; prepared by Spruhan Engineering

9. 9 Beckland Street (PB-2026-036)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Ahmed Hatim, applicant for the proposed development, stated the project seeks to construct a new single-family detached dwelling with a septic system and other site improvements. He noted that the grades on site exceed 15%, triggering Definitive Site Plan approval. He stated all staff recommended conditions are acceptable.

Stephen Cary, DPRS, stated the single-family development is triggering Site Plan Review due to the slopes on site. He described the grading and staff recommendations related to slope stabilization and protection of the wetland area with appropriate erosion controls. He noted that the architectural plans show a walkout basement, but the applicant has since updated the architectural plans to include a note that indicates the structure will be slab on grade as shown on the site plan. Mr. Cary stated the applicant should request the waivers identified by staff.

Mr. Hatim confirmed he requests the waivers.

Andy Truman, DPW, confirmed DPW has no comments.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

The Board unanimously expressed support.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan subject to staff recommended conditions of approval.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Definitive Site Plan Application; filed April 22, 2026; prepared by Ahmed Hatim
- Exhibit B: Definitive Site Plan; dated January 28, 2026; revised March 10, 2026, prepared by M.A. Elbag Engineering

Old Business:

2. 1103 Millbury Street (PB-2026-008)

a. Public Meeting – Definitive Site Plan

Joshua Lee Smith, attorney on behalf of the applicant, Asmyra Construction Inc, stated the proposal before the Board seeks Definitive Site Plan approval to construct a three-story multi-family building with 40 units and other site improvements. He stated this project was previously heard by the Board at their last meeting and was continued so the applicant could provide additional information in order to address concerns raised by staff. He described the updates that have been submitted in order to address comments made by staff and noted the only remaining condition to be resolved is regarding the previously proposed fence and row of arborvitae, given the vegetated buffer to be maintained in the rear of the property will provide the privacy that the fence and arborvitae would have provided.

Michelle Smith, DPRS, stated this application was before the previous meeting and described the proposal before the Board. She stated staff recommends all conditions of approval be retained and asked the applicant to clarify the location of the proposed transformer and how many trees the area could accommodate with a recommendation for a minimum of one tree but preferably two. She described recommended modifications to the conditions as outlined by staff, including modifying 1u to “Provide a cut/fill analysis plan, a dewatering plan, and a haul plan”. She stated staff would prefer to see the previously proposed fence and arborvitae at the rear remain as the existing vegetative buffer may not provide privacy during leaf off conditions. She asked the applicant to comment on the proposed slope stabilization product and its functionality for this site as well as drainage for the proposed retaining walls relative to groundwater.

Lar Greene, engineer for the project, described the flexterra product proposed for slope stabilization and how it functions. He explained that this product has proved successful for slopes as steep as 1:1 and it is an odorless product. He confirmed a meadow/no mow mix could be added to the plan. Mr. Greene additionally discussed the test pits that were conducted and stated details will be added to ensure wall discharge is located in an appropriate location.

Ms. Smith recommended condition 1e be modified to read “Highlight the areas where flexterra is proposed to be used for stabilization (on all slopes $\geq 2.5H:1V$) and provide details for products specified for the slope steepness. The seed mix shall reflect use of a wildlife conservation or meadow seed mix.”

Ms. Smith recommended condition 1e be modified to read “Reflect expanded landscaping, including a minimum of one shade tree within the enhanced landscape island adjacent to the fire turnaround and the location of the proposed transformer.”

Mr. LaValley expressed support in eliminating the arborvitae along the proposed fencing at the rear given they are behind the fence and mature vegetation already exists behind the fence. He noted he agrees with staff that if any trees are removed to install the fence, they should be replaced.

Ms. Smith recommended condition 1o be modified to read “The fence shall be installed to avoid removal of mature vegetation. If necessary, any trees removed to accommodate fence installation along the eastern property line shall be replaced at a 1:1 ratio with a [city recommended tree species](#) that are no less than 3” caliper inches.”

Mr. Lee Smith asked if condition 1g could be moved to “prior to issuance of a building permit”.

Ms. Smith confirmed staff would be comfortable relocating this condition.

Andy Truman, DPW, stated no comments.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Board Discussion:

Mr. McCormack stated he is supportive of all the condition changes and has no issues with the site plan.

Mr. King stated he appreciates the collaborative process between the applicant and staff.

Mr. Toomey stated no comments.

Mr. LaValley stated he will be glad to see the project move forward.

Mr. Lee Smith asked if “third party” could be deleted from conditions 9 and 11.

Ms. Smith stated someone other than the engineer who designed plans should be providing this certification given the unique design characteristics with the proposed infiltration unit located in fill.

Mr. Lee Smith asked if the Board would be willing to strike the first sentence and keep the rest.

Ms. Smith said a third-party should be witnessing the work being done.

Mr. LaValley stated this is standard condition language and it should not be modified.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Definitive Site Plan subject to staff recommended conditions of approval, modifying conditions 1g, e, n, o & u as articulated in the discussion.

List of Exhibits:

- Exhibit A: Application & Statement in Support; filed 1/15/2026; prepared by Joshua Lee Smith, Bowditch & Dewey, LLP
- Exhibit B: Layout Plan; dated 2/27/2026; prepared by McCarty Engineering, Inc.
- Exhibit C: Site Plan set; revised 2/3/2026; prepared by McCarty Engineering, Inc.
- Exhibit D: Architectural Plans; dated 1/6/2026; prepared by Dixon Salo Architects
- Exhibit E: Slope Stability Letter; dated 1/28/2026; prepared by John C. Spink & Linea Cronin, P.E.
- Exhibit F: Survey; dated 1/28/2026; prepared by HS&T Group
- Exhibit G: Stormwater Management Report; dated 11/24/2025; prepared by McCarty Engineering, Inc.
- Exhibit H: Supplemental Soil Testing Data; dated 1/9/2026; prepared by Lawrence C. Greene
- Exhibit I: Traffic Impact & Access Stud; dated 10/29/2024; prepared by Fort Hill Infrastructure

Other Business (Public Meeting)

11. Approval Not Required (ANR) Plans

- a. AN-2026-020 – 4 Svea Street (Private)
- b. AN-2026-021 – 1 Attleboro Street (Private) & Clay Street (Private)
- c. AN-2026-024 – 127 Blithewood Avenue (Public)
- d. AN-2026-025 – 55 Pocasset Ave (Public)
- e. AN-2026-027 – 32 Marmion Ave (Public & Private)

Stephen Cary, DPRS, described ANR items 11a – e to the Board.

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board voted 4-0 to endorse ANR plans 11a – e.

12. Communications

No discussion.

13. Board Policy and Procedures

No discussion.

14. Approval of Minutes – 4/22/2026

No discussion.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. McCormack, seconded by Mr. King, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:08pm.