

**PLANNING BOARD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**January 13th, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.**

Members present: Eric Flint, Paul Cormier, Steve Cormier, Rob Oliva-City Engineer

Members absent: Robert Swartz

Also present: Jason Stevens- Director of City Planning and Development, Susan Storm -City Planning and Development – Minute Taker, John Plifka – McCarty Engineering, Inc., Daniel Sheehan – Haley Ward Inc., Tom Christopher – Christopher Environmental Associates

ANNOUNCEMENT - Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the Chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All Documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Director of Community Development & Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

***Mr. Flint, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.***

**1. CONTINUANCE OF PUBLIC HEARING:**

Applicant: GAAMHA, Inc.

For: Proposed Building Construction and Other Site Improvements

Location: 827 Green Street, Gardner, MA

Mr. Plifka introduced himself. Since the last meeting there were changes made to the plans that were introduced the day of the meeting, therefore, staff and the Board did not have time to review the changes. There has been no further changes to the plans since the last meeting. However, since then, they have received their Conservation approval just the night before along with an email from Mr. Oliver accepting the changes that were made to the plans. Mr. Plifka was happy to answer any questions the Board might have had but looking for site plan approval for the proposed improvements. Eric Flint asked if there were any comments. Mr. Oliva stated he had reviewed the changes and was happy with them. Mr. Stevens offered to go over the Conditions of Approval that he had drafted. He had sent them to Wes at McCarty who had no issue with them. Mr. Stevens then went over the Conditions of Approval.

*Motion to close the Public Hearing.*

*S. Cormier/P. Cormier.*

Vote: 3 – 0 (All in Favor – Mr. Swartz absent)

*Motion to Approve the Site Plan Decision with the Conditions as Stated by Staff  
S. Cormier/P. Cormier.  
Vote: 3 – 0 (All in Favor – Mr. Swartz absent)*

**4. OLD BUSINESS:**

**2.2 MassDEP Referral -Hubbardston Pond Expansion**

Jason Stevens spoke and advised that the applicant had a few new documents in regard to the distance of the pond, compared to Snake Pond. He questioned the Boards justification to make any determination on this project as it is in Hubbardston and not Gardner. However, he feels that Mass DEP should be aware that the documents were presented to the Gardner Planning Board for their knowledge of the project. And that Mr. Christopher has done his due diligence to share the project information. However, this should be a decision for Hubbardston to make where it is a Hubbardston project and lies within their boundaries. Mr. Stevens believes that the documents and these meeting recordings should be sent to MassDEP as part of their review of the project, showing that the City of Gardner is aware of this project continuing. Mr. Christopher requested a letter from the Board to add to his documents that he will be presenting to Hubbardston Conservation Commission, their Planning Board and MassDEP. Mr. Flint spoke that he felt that the Gardner Planning Board should not provide any formal approval or objection of this project as it is outside the jurisdiction of the Gardner Planning Board.

*Motion to draft a letter stating the documents that were provided and that the project was discussed as two public meetings.  
S. Cormier/P. Cormier.  
Vote: 3 – 0 (All in Favor – Mr. Swartz absent)*

**3. NEW BUSINESS:**

**3.1 Preliminary Site Plan Review – FWP Realty Partners, LLC – Pearl Street Subdivision**

Dan Sheehan with Haley Ward introduced himself to the Board. The parcel they are proposing is approximately 55 acres in total. What they are proposing is about a 3000 linear foot, looped road around the parcel itself. They have tried to mitigate as much as possible to the wetland system. There is an extensive wetland system that kind of bisects the property from the South and the Northern portion of it. Mr. Sheehan directed the Board to the Conditions Plan which shows the site. They have also looked at stormwater management areas, which they showed on the Conditions Plans as well. The plans show a larger stormwater system at this time to be on the safer side, he said. They are also proposing to install a sidewalk on one side of the street. This would tie back into the Pearl Street sidewalk. This part of the Subdivision would be 12 Lots. They are all residential. There will be several quadplexes and a duplex. The reason for the duplex is that there is a certified vernal pool on the abutting property. Therefore, it was not able to be fully delineated at this time. They are proposing a total of 46 dwelling units. The prior plans presented some hardships with the crossing of the wet lands on Matthews Street, which is why the changes have been made from last years plans. This would provide an internal

loop of utilities. Jason asked if they have had this reviewed by the Conservation Committee. They have not gone before the Conservation Committee as of yet, this is still very preliminary. Rob Oliva asked what would be happening with the remainder of the parcel, other than what's being developed? Mr. Sheehan stated that the remainder of the parcel on the other side of the wetland will be left as is, as open space. Erik asked if there was any consideration of doing this as an open space residential subdivision? Mr. Sheehan stated that they had not considered that yet but going into definitive planning, he'd be more than happy to look into that avenue. Eric stated that he thought having smaller lot sizes with a higher density would be a better use of the property. Jason asked if they had reviewed the new Home Zoning Ordinance yet. Mr. Sheehan thought they had spoken before on the subject and is will to discuss it further, but for this project, what they have presented is the format of what they would like to pursue. Paul Cormier noted that there is only one entrance/exit off of Pearl St. Paul brought up that they are 800' to the intersection, not the 900' allowed for cul-de-sacs, would they be willing to make the entrance a little wider? Eric asked if the plan for storm water management, is it tentatively to do just open infiltration basins? Mr. Sheehan answered "Yes." Rob asked if they had done any testing in those areas yet? Mr. Sheehan stated that they have not. The Board decided to continue this meeting as a Preliminary Review at February's meeting.

## **5. ANNOUNCEMENTS~~NEWS~~ARTICLES~~EVENTS:**

### 2025 Meeting Schedule

Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 10, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

Jason stated that with the new home ordinance adopted and the time lapse for a lot of residential properties, given the 90-day period that they have to review. He thinks there is the potential that the Board may have to meet more than once a month in order to see through any smaller residential developments as well as multi-family.

### Adjournment

*Motion to adjourn.*

*S. Cormier/P. Cormier.*

Vote: 3 – 0 (All in Favor – Mr. Swartz absent)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

*All documents referenced or used during the meeting are part of the official record and are available in the Department of Community Development and Planning pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law.*