

**Needham Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting of June 24, 2020**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Chair Tom Jacob at approximately 6:00 pm via Zoom Video Webinar <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87655953321>

Present from the Finance Committee:

Tom Jacob, Chair; Carol Fachetti, Vice Chair

Members: Barry Coffman, John Connelly, Joshua Levy, Richard Lunetta, Louise Miller, Garrett Parker, Richard Reilly

Others speaking:

Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager

David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

Citizen Requests to Address Finance Committee

No citizens requested to speak.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

MOVED: By Mr. Connelly that the minutes of May 20 and May 27, 2020 be approved as distributed, subject to technical corrections. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a roll call vote of 9-0.

Election of Officers for Fiscal Year 2020

Mr. Jacob thanked the member for their cooperation and flexibility during the recent challenging months when all focus shifted unexpectedly to spending cuts and new revenue projections and meeting financial obligations. He stated that he was impressed with how well Town Meeting came off in spite of the situation. Mr. Jacob called for nominations for Finance Committee Chair for the next year.

Mr. Coffman nominated Ms. Fachetti to be Finance Committee Chair for fiscal year 2021. Mr. Reilly seconded the nomination.

VOTE: Ms. Fachetti was confirmed as Chair by a unanimous roll call vote of 9-0.

Ms. Fachetti thanked the Committee and nominated Mr. Levy for Vice Chair for fiscal year 2021. Mr. Jacob seconded the nomination.

VOTE: Mr. Levy was confirmed as Vice Chair by a unanimous roll call vote of 9-0.

Highway / Commercial 1 Working Group Appointments

Ms. Fachetti stated that the Town Manager is looking for two volunteers to join a working group to address proposed changes to Highway Commercial 1 zoning. She noted that there will be a meeting of the working group on July 7. Ms. Miller stated that the working group is a sounding board, and that the zoning changes must come before the whole Finance Committee for review.

She requested the time frame of the proposed changes. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that it was not yet determined, but the changes would not be on the October Special Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Connelly asked what had gone on so far on the working group. Ms. Fachetti stated that there was a discussion of why the Finance Committee did not support the initial proposal in Fall 2019, and what had happened to that point. She stated that what is needed is to maximize the utility of the property as well as tax revenue and to minimize traffic issues. It seems additional planning is needed. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that additional traffic counts were planned, but it does not seem that there will be anything even close a new normal of traffic even by September. They need to find a way to figure out how to consider the anticipated traffic. Mr. Levy asked if the \$60K appropriated at Town Meeting would be used for studying traffic. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that it is a funding source for any Planning Board study.

Mr. Connelly and Mr. Coffman agreed to join the Highway Commercial 1 working group.

FY2021 Planning

Mr. Levy stated that the fall would be especially busy and that the budgeting may be different once everyone has a better understanding of the effects of the current pandemic. He felt that better communication between the Finance Committee and the Select Board would be beneficial. He proposed creating a schedule so that a Finance Committee member would attend each Select Board meeting. Mr. Reilly, Mr. Jacob, Mr. Lunetta, Mr. Coffman, and Ms. Fachetti agreed to attend. Mr. Levy stated that he would put together a schedule.

Mr. Reilly asked if the liaisons to the Schools had met with members of the School Committee. Mr. Connelly stated that there had been a zoom meeting. He stated that they had asked the School Department to track the changes from the original spending plan, and said that it would be helpful to meet regularly. Ms. Fachetti stated that they do not know how things look for next year, but that Dr. Gutekanst wants to have students in classrooms if possible.

Ms. Fachetti stated that there was information distributed on proposed changes at Avery Crossing at the Carter Mill. Mr. Lunetta asked if why the zoning needs to be changed when the current use is a very similar purpose. Mr. Connelly stated that much of it does have the same purpose, but they are looking to build higher. Ms. Fachetti stated that they plan to add independent living units, so the zoning needs to change. Mr. Connelly stated that they expect fewer workers coming in on a daily basis. Mr. Levy requested the map showing the zoning change in the context of the surrounding area.

Adjournment

MOVED: By Mr. Jacob that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned, there being no further business. Mr. Parker seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote of 8-0 at approximately 6:35 p.m. (Ms. Miller had left the meeting at 6:30 pm.)

Documents: Avery Square Carter Mill Zoning Article; Carter Mill Fiscal Impact Analysis; Carter Mill Traffic Impact Study; Carter Mill Select Board presentation 6-23-10

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Mizgerd
Staff Analyst