



PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 27, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Town Hall - 41 South Main Street Randolph, MA 02368

MINUTES

Pursuant to the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law, public bodies may continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location. The public is invited to participate in the meeting in person, via telephone or computer.

A. Call to Order - Roll Call

Chairman Plizga called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

PRESENT

Alexandra Alexopoulos

Tony Plizga

Peter Taveira

Lou Sahl

ABSENT

Araba Adjei-Koranteng

B. Chairperson Comments

None

C. Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes of 4/22/2025

The Planning Board approved the meeting minutes of April 22, 2025, as presented.

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Alexopoulos to approve the meeting minutes of April 22, 2025, as presented.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahl

D. Public Speaks

None

E. Public Hearings

1. *Council Order 2025-015: Request for the Town Council to Initiate an Amendment to the Randolph Zoning Ordinance - Chapter 200 of the General Code of the Town of Randolph - Concerning Scientific or Research Laboratories*

Chairman Plizga opened the public hearing for Council Order 2015-015; an amendment to the Randolph Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 200 of the General Code concerning Scientific or Research Laboratories. Member Alexopoulos read the legal notice into the record which was published in the Patriot Ledger on May 6 and May 13, 2025.

Planning Director Michelle Tyler provided the Board with some background stating that the proposed zoning amendment change is related to the Green Communities Act. Mrs. Tyler noted that the staff report included in the agenda packet was from Assistant Town Manager Monica Lamboy.

The Assistant Town Manager Monica Lamboy introduced herself to the Board and began with a slide presentation. Ms. Lamboy reported some of the financial impacts the Green Communities Act has had on neighboring communities and highlighted the program's environmental impact on communities statewide. Ms. Lamboy stated that once Randolph receives its designation it will receive approximately \$240,000 in funding for projects consistent with our plan and will become eligible to compete for various grant awards. Ms. Lamboy listed the Green Communities application requirements:

1. Adopt as-of right siting for either: a) clean energy generation; b) research and design; or c) manufacturing (energy production requirements or capacity for 50,000 sf in aggregate)
2. Adopt expedited permitting process
3. Create an Energy Reduction Plan to reduce municipal energy use by 20% in 5 years
4. Adopt Fuel Efficient Vehicle Purchase policy
5. Minimize life cycle cost in new construction and some additions/renovations, i.e., adopt the Energy Stretch Code

Ms. Lamboy noted that they recently had an energy stretch code meeting and that there will be two more for anyone interested in learning more about it.

Ms. Lamboy stated that tonight's review will focus on the first two items: by-right siting and expedited permitting. To begin, Ms. Lamboy recommends adding the following definitions to zoning to provide greater clarity in the zoning: Scientific or Research Laboratory and Renewable or Alternative Energy.

Scientific or Research Laboratory

Ms. Lamboy felt it was important that the proposed definition provides a description and also sets perimeters so that the research and development (R&D) does not morph

into manufacturing. This will set a maximum square footage for fabrication purposes and make clear that it does not include production, wholesaling or the sale of products.

Renewable or Alternative Energy

Ms. Lamboy feels the definition is needed so that when the Town adopts the expedited permitting it is done in a narrow way for uses that qualify for R&D for the Green Communities Program.

Proposed Table of Allowable Activity - Scientific or Research Laboratory

Mrs. Lamboy reviewed the proposed Table of Allowable Activity for the Scientific or Research Laboratories with the Board. Projects under 25,000 sf will require a permit in the following zones: CSBD, NRBD, WCBD and BD. This change is not part of the Green Communities application but will establish a maximum size.

Projects of any size will be allowed by right in the following zones: ID, BRHD, GBHD, and GPCCOD. This is already allowed by right. The added language will make it explicitly part of the Green Communities requirements to be submitted with the application.

200-16.2 Expedited Permitting

Ms. Lamboy stated that there already is an existing code section related to priority development sites. The proposal is to add a clause for the Scientific and Research Laboratory for renewable or alternative energy facilities. The State requires that the Planning Board, after the site plan review, reaches a determination within one year from the date the completed application is submitted. The timeline will be suspended and reset if the application is incomplete or is found to contain false or misleading information or substantial changes.

Chairman Plizga opened the *public comments* portion of the meeting and closed it recognizing there were none.

Chairman Plizga opened the discussion up to the Planning Board members beginning with the Table of Allowable Activity.

Table of Allowable Activity

Chairman Plizga feels the second line should read: Scientific or Research Laboratories: 25,000 sf or greater rather than all.

Mrs. Alexopoulos inquired why this amendment isn't part of the zoning recodification project already underway. Ms. Lamboy replied that they must provide a packet with the application to the State showing that the Town adopted specific changes related to Green Communities by December. Ms. Lamboy felt doing it separately from the zoning recodification project would be the cleanest way to accomplish that and meet the deadline. Chairman Plizga agreed.

Mrs. Alexopoulos inquired about the application process. Ms. Lamboy stated the application deadline is semi-annual. The Town will not meet the July deadline, so the

application will be submitted in December. The \$240,000 funding will be received in 2026 and the Town will become eligible to apply for competitive grants every year.

Chairman Plizga has concerns over where Scientific or Research Laboratories may be located in Crawford Square and recommended adding a footnote to the *Table of Allowable Activity* under business districts CSBD and NRBD for them not to be located on first floor in those districts. Ms. Lamboy pulled up a list of possible amendments related to restrictions for first floor uses in the Crawford Square for the Board to consider. Chairman Plizga felt they should add a similar amendment for the North Randolph Business District (NRBD).

Member Sahlu asked if other Towns have Research or Scientific Labs located on the second floor of buildings in their business districts. Ms. Lamboy stated that she is familiar with communities that strive to maintain pedestrian traffic and closely define what could be located at ground level citing Cambridge is an example.

Member Taveira felt that both business districts (NRBD and CSBD) would benefit from adding amendments to restrict ground floor use. Member Taveira inquired about potential hazards (i.e. viruses, chemicals) these facilities may bring and wondered if the Board needed to take measures. Planning Director Michelle Tyler stated that those hazards would be regulated at the State level, and the Health and Fire Department at the local level and feels it is out of the Planning Board's authority.

The Planning Board made the following amendments to the proposed zoning ordinance:

Amendment 1 - Definitions:

Make a minor change to the Renewable or Alternative Energy definition. In the first sentence, insert: *are considered* after "The following, and after, considered. The new sentence will read: The following *are considered* renewable or alternative energy...

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Taveira under the *Renewable or Alternative Energy* definition is to insert: *are considered* after "The following, and before, considered..."

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Discussion on the motion:

Mrs. Tyler pointed out to the Board that the definition may need clarification regarding the phrase: including advanced batteries and recharging stations, so as to not be confused or conflict with the EV Charging Stations Ordinance. Chairman Plizga feels that the second definition Scientific or Research Laboratory adequately explains what we are doing with the various types of renewable or alternative energy products, thereby eliminating confusion. Member Taveira thought it would be helpful to rename the definition: Research and Development of Renewable or Alternative Energy. Mrs. Tyler disagreed and thought it should remain generic as it may relate to a possible future ordinance. In looking at the EV Charging Ordinance, Ms. Lamboy doesn't feel there will be any overlap, as this use is intended as elements of research. There was

a brief discussion initiated by Member Taveira about what is considered renewable or clean energy.

Amendment 2 - Definitions:

Make a minor change to the Scientific or Research Laboratory definition as follows:

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Sahlu under the *Scientific or Research Laboratory* definition at the end of the first line, to insert the word "or" between scientific and research operations, for consistency with the rest of the document (to be read as follows: ...for scientific *or* research operations).

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Amendment 3 – Table of Allowable Activity:

Make a change to the second use on the Table of Allowable uses from *all* to *25,000 sf or greater*.

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Taveira on the table shown of the screen (Table of Allowable Activity), the second use item currently says: Scientific or research laboratories (all). Change (all) to (25,000 sf or greater).

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Amendment 4 – Section 200-11.C.1:

An amendment to improve the visibility of the Crawford Square Business District (CSBD):

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Taveira to insert into section 200-11.C.1 under sub-item C (1), add a new condition (a) *Scientific or Research laboratory on the second or higher floors, or other locations where the use will not impede pedestrian oriented activity as determined by the Planning Board*.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Discussion on the motion:

The Board discussed pedestrian activity and if the term was too vague. Ms. Lamboy explained that the language is such that in the Planning Board's review they would still be able to determine whether or not the use could be located on the first floor perhaps at the back of the building.

Amendment 5 – to be inserted in Section 200-11.D, creating a new subsection 1:

An amendment to improve the visibility of the North Randolph Business District (NRBD):

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Alexopoulos to add a new section in 200-11.D and add a new section (1) Permitted uses in the North Randolph Business District (NRBD). The following uses are permitted in the NRBD: (a) Scientific or Research laboratory on the second or higher floors, or other locations where the use will not impede pedestrian oriented activity as determined by the Planning Board.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Recommend Adoption of Council Order 2025-015

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Taveira to recommend adoption of Council Order 2025-015, as presented with the aforementioned five (5) amendments that have been approved by this Board.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

Mrs. Tyler explained the next steps in the process for approving the Council Order, which will go back before the Town Council on June 9.

Ms. Lamboy thanked the Board for their thorough review and consideration.

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Sahlu to close the public hearing for Council Order 2025-015.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

2. *6:30 pm - Special Permit Continuation - North Street Proposed Two-Family*

Chairman Plizga opened the public hearing continuation for a special permit for a proposed two-family on North Street. Planning Director Michelle Tyler reported that owner's attorney informed her that the plans requested at the last meeting were not ready for this evening's meeting and requested an extension in writing. Chairman Plizga continued the public hearing until June 24, 2025 at 6:30pm.

Motion made by Plizga, Seconded by Sahlu to continue the public hearing until June 24, 2025 at 6:30pm.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu

F. New Business

1. ANR - Gold Street

Planning Director Michelle Tyler advised the Board that the attorney representing the Buyer was not available this evening and requested an extension. Chairman Plizga continued the item to June 24, 2025.

G. Staff Report

259 Allen Street

Planning Director Tyler met with the owner and new tenants to review the landscaping plans. The building signage and lighting have been approved, but there may be modifications to the post sign. Chairman Plizga asked if the Town Engineer has made a site visit. Mrs. Tyler replied that the engineer would have reviewed the trenching some time ago, but she made the site visit to review the landscaping, parking area and fencing.

21 Randolph Road

The remaining punch items for 21 Randolph Road include the top course of asphalt, lining and striping, and some landscaping items. An additional 15-20 shrubs and trees have been planted than what is on the approved landscape plan. There have been challenges with the abutting residential property (at Broadmeadow) planting their own shrubs on the property. Mrs. Tyler instructed the construction team that they should be removing anything that is not on the landscape plan. Mrs. Tyler discussed the timeline for planting in Massachusetts with the residents at Broadmeadow advising them that the project is not behind on their landscaping schedule. Mrs. Tyler also advised the residents of Broadmeadow that any challenges they may have should be directed to the Planning Board, not the contractors. Mrs. Tyler noted that a monument sign has been approved for the corner of North Street and Randolph Road that will incorporate signs for the other businesses on Randolph Road. There will be directional signs further down on Randolph Road. DPW Superintendent Neil McCole has started the process for an engineering study at the intersection of North and Oak Streets using mitigation funds set aside from the project.

647 North Main Street - Day Care

Mrs. Tyler made a site visit to meet with Mr. Constantine and MassDOT was there working on the timing of the traffic signal. Chairman Plizga stated that the signal timing is much better. They unearthed some large boulders while working on the landscaping plan and asked if they could remain on site. Mrs. Tyler agreed. There was a slight adjustment to the walkway required by MassDOT. Dumpster enclosures are going in along with top course pavement and lining and striping. They may request more signage within the parking lot area to deter folks from cutting through the parking lot to access the light on North Main Street.

Scanlon Drive and High Street - Core Invest - DCR Access

Mrs. Tyler requested an update and anticipates a response soon regarding the status of the DCR parking lot. They may have some plans for the Lantana property to bring before the Board in early fall.

Planning Board Fee Schedule

Chairman Plizga requested a discussion regarding the Planning Board Fee Schedule in early June.

Planning Board and Town Council Zoning Recodification Workshop

Mrs. Tyler stated that there will be a Zoning Recodification Workshop held on May 28 at 6:00pm and encouraged Board members to attend. Chairman Plizga thought it may be helpful to do a preliminary review of the proposed zoning at a regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting in July.

H. Board Comments

None

I. Adjournment

Upcoming Meeting Dates

6/10 & 6/24

7/8 & 7/22

The meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Motion made by Taveira, Seconded by Alexopoulos to adjourn the meeting.

Voting Yea: Alexopoulos, Plizga, Taveira, Sahlu