

TOWN OF AUBURN, MASSACHUSETTS  
AUBURN PLANNING BOARD  
Minutes of the Meeting  
Auburn Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room | October 22, 2024 – 7:00 PM

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**Members Present:** Chair John Regan, Vice-Chair Jason Asirifi, Member Ron Brooks, Member Dwarakesh Nallan, Member Glenn Feldman

**Members Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Town Planner Dr. Adam Menard and Staff Assistant Danielle Chamberland Roberts

Mr. Regan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The Town cable staff was present, and the meeting was recorded and televised. No other attendee was recording the meeting.

**I. ANR: None**

**II. Public Hearings:**

- a. 7:00 Applicant Lee Morse requesting a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval under section 3.2.5.4 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaw for an indoor entertainment facility at 366 Southbridge Street, Auburn, MA 01501, Map 33 Parcel 81.**

Mr. Regan announced that the applicants have requested to withdraw their application without prejudice. He requested a motion at 7:01 PM to accept the withdrawal. Mr. Asirifi made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

- b. 7:05 Applicant Sunshine Adult Daycare Health Center LLC requesting Site Plan Approval under section 3.2.3.1 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaw for an adult daycare facility at 27 Midstate Drive, Auburn, MA 01501, Map 47 Parcel 75.**

Mr. Regan requested a motion at 7:02 PM to open the public hearing. Mr. Asirifi made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Feldman.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

Attorney Joe Duquette of Bowditch & Dewey was present, as was Project Architect Jesse Hilgenberg and LeeAnn Zhang, the Principal for the Applicant. Mr. Duquette gave an overview of the project, stating that the facility would occupy approximately 9,550 square feet, including office space, ADA-compliant showers and bathrooms, and a warming kitchen. The building is located within the Highway Business Zoning District and the Watershed Protection Overlay District and will offer services weekdays with no overnight stays. The services provided will include transportation services via vans, social activities, and health monitoring. The facility would require 33 parking spaces with overflow available in a larger lot with over 600 spaces on adjacent properties owned by the landlord.

Mr. Robert Duff of 36 Goulding Drive asked about the hours of operation and whether the facility would operate on weekends or major holidays. Mr. Duquette said that the facility will operate Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Major holidays like Christmas and will be closed, but some minor holidays may have operations. The facility may also be closed on some Chinese holidays per their client base. Mr. Duff also asked about the vehicle operations, and Mr. Hilgenberg replied that the vans used for transportation will not remain parked overnight. Drivers will take the vans home and use them to pick up and drop off clients each day.

Mr. Feldman asked how the applicants will handle power outages with the facility being located on the second floor of the building. Mr. Hilgenberg said that the building is a split-level and the fire department has reviewed emergency access procedures. In case of a power failure, there is a secondary emergency exit and most clients are able to use stairs if needed. Mr. Feldman questioned how the applicant would ensure that drivers are making the scheduled pick-ups and

drops off. Mr. Hilgenberg posed the question to Ms. Zhang, who stated that the facility trusts its drivers, but if necessary, GPS monitoring could be used to track vehicles.

Mr. Nallan asking if the site is currently unoccupied, which Mr. Hilgenberg confirmed. Mr. Nallan asked if the 33 intended parking spaces would be marked separately, and Mr. Duquette stated that the landlord would prefer to allow all of the businesses in the area free use of the 600 available parking spaces as needed.

Mr. Brooks questioned if the building becomes fully tenanted how this will affect the parking. He also inquired about the previous use and operating hours of the building, which the applicants were unaware of.

Mr. Asirifi inquired about the applicant's intended construction timeline. Mr. Hilgenberg stated that pending approval, they would apply for a building permit by early November 2024. Engineering plans are almost complete, and the construction would take approximately 2-3 months, with the facility expected to open by March or April 2025. He also noted that the construction workers would not use more than the allotted 33 spaces.

Mr. Nallan asked whether the Board of Health needed to review the facility's plans, particularly regarding the "warming kitchen." Mr. Duquette clarified that the applicants would need to go before the Board of Health.

Mr. Regan asked for clarification of "warming kitchen," to which Mr. Duquette explained that it will use convection ovens and microwaves, with no stove involved. Mr. Hilgenberg explained that a restaurant delivers the food to the facility each day, it is kept warm in the convection ovens and then served. There will be a 3-bay sink and a grease trap installed for the kitchen area. Mr. Regan raised concerns about parking as the lot is fairly busy, but Mr. Hilgenberg noted that the back parking lot is almost always empty. Mr. Regan also questioned the signage, as the building is not very visible from the street. His concern was that clients or delivery drivers might have trouble finding the entrance to the daycare. Mr. Duquette noted that there is no current plan to add signage, but the applicants are open to adding a sign directing people to the back of the building where the daycare is located.

Mr. Brooks noted that there is a post near the entrance that could potentially be used for a sign, but this would need to be confirmed in coordination with the landlord and the lease agreement. Mr. Duff agreed.

Mr. Regan noted that calling the facility an "Adult Day Nursery" could be confusing, as "nursery" often refers to facilities for children. Mr. Duquette agreed that it might be more appropriate to call it an "Adult Daycare Center."

Mr. Regan requested a motion at 7:22 PM to close the public hearing. Mr. Brooks made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Nallan.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

Mr. Regan requested a motion at 7:22 PM to approve the application as submitted with the conditions that the applicant meet the plumbing code, building code, and obtain all necessary permits. Mr. Nallan made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Feldman.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

c. **Applicant CEMS, LLC c/o Henry Resnikoff requesting a Special Permit and Site Plan Approval under section 3.2.5.3 of the Auburn Zoning Bylaw for a coffee shop and other site improvements at 602 Southbridge Street, Auburn, MA 01501, Map 56 Parcel 148. (Cont. 9/24/2024)**

Mr. Regan announced that the applicants have requested to continue the public hearing to the November 12, 2024 meeting. He requested a motion to continue at 7:23 PM. Mr. Nallan made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

**III. Other Business:**

**a. Discussion: None**

**b. Modification: None**

**c. Decisions:**

**i. 368 Southbridge Street**

**ii. 7 Duncan Street**

**iii. 46 Oxford Street North**

All Board members have signed all decisions.

**d. Minutes: 9/16/2024**

Mr. Regan requested a motion at 7:24 PM to approve the September 16, 2024 Meeting Minutes as submitted. Mr. Feldman made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Asirifi.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

**e. New Business Unforeseen by the Chair:**

Mr. Regan discussed the recent approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for a 21-building, 42-unit development at 25 Vinal Street. While the ZBA approved the use of the property for housing, Mr. Regan would like to seek an appeal to that approval. He expressed concerns about the development's infrastructure, particularly the lack of adequate sidewalks. He emphasized the safety risk of forcing pedestrians, especially children, to walk behind parked cars, and the need for sidewalks on at least one side of the development. Mr. Regan discussed the utility right-of-way, which there was some confusion about. It is not the paved surface, but an area where utilities like water and sewer would be located.

Mr. Brooks noted that the road should meet highway department standards, and the project should ensure there is enough space for both the road and sidewalk.

Dr. Menard noted that the ZBA's approval only covered the use of the land, and the Planning Board still has the authority to decide on the specifics of the development, such as the number of units, layout, and road design. The Board is still awaiting peer-reviewed traffic studies and other technical reviews before moving forward. If the board wishes to challenge the ZBA's decision, the only recourse would be through Land Court or Superior Court.

Mr. Regan stated that as of now, the issue isn't with the zoning approval but with ensuring the development meets appropriate standards for infrastructure and safety. The discussion will continue once the developer presents more detailed plans, including responses to traffic and infrastructure concerns.

**f. Member/Town Planner Update: None**

**g. Adjournment/Next Meeting: 11/12/2024**

Mr. Regan requested a motion at 7:30 PM to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Asirifi made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Brooks.

Roll call vote:

**Aye:** Mr. Feldman, Mr. Nallan, Mr. Brooks, Mr. Asirifi, Mr. Regan

**Motion passed 5-0**

Next meeting will be November 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Chamberland Roberts, Staff Assistant to the Town Manager

**Meeting Minutes Approved November 12, 2024 by a vote of 4-0.**

#### 4 Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes of October 22, 2024

To access video playback of the Planning Board meetings, please visit [www.auburnma.gov](http://www.auburnma.gov) and click the YouTube icon on the homepage to go directly to ACTVAuburn's page.

##### **Planning Board Packet Documents:**

- 27 Midstate Drive
  - Site Plan Approval Application and Site Plans
- 366 Southbridge Street
  - Special Permit Application
- 368 Southbridge Street
  - Site Plan Approval Decision Letter
  - Special Permit Approval Decision Letter
- 46 Oxford Street North
  - Special Permit Approval Decision Letter
- 602 Southbridge Street
  - Email request for continuance dated 10/7/2024
- 7 Duncan Street
  - Site Plan Approval Decision Letter
- Planning Board Agenda
  - October 22, 2024
- Planning Board Meeting Minutes
  - September 16, 2024