

A regular meeting of the Bath Planning Board was called on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, for the purpose of conducting regular business.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bob Oxton, Chair  
Greg Johnson  
Haley Blanco  
Mark Hranicky  
Andy Omo

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

James Hopkinson, Vice Chair  
Cal Stilphen

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rod Melanson, Director of Sustainability

Planning Board Chair, Bob Oxton, called the meeting to order in the third-floor Council Chambers at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

**Minutes: October 3 and 17, 2023, meetings**

**MR. OMO, SECONDED BY MR. JOHNSON, MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 3 AND 17, 2023, AS PRESENTED.**

**PLANNING BOARD UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

**Old Business**

None

**New Business****Item 1**

**Public Hearing – Request for Land Use Code Text Amendment – Article 11.42 – Supportive Housing; Larry Bartlett, applicant.**

Mr. Oxton noted that the Planning Board held several workshops regarding language for the proposed amendment, for which the next step in the process is to hold a public hearing.

Larry Bartlett, applicant, explained the lengthy approval process of the application which includes amendments to several sections of the Land Use Code. City Council has already approved changes to definitions in Article II definitions, district regulations in Article 8, and performance standards for parking in Article 10. Article 11, however, has not yet been approved by City Council. This section, which includes specific performance standards, activities, and uses, was debated at length. Mr. Bartlett noted that in writing the amendments he was purposefully specific due to the unusual nature of the proposal and his previous experience on the Planning Board. The intended purpose would be to allow for a supportive transitional housing facility to house eighteen to twenty-year olds which have been determined to be a vulnerable demographic within the community. He spoke to the need for support for those transitioning into the workforce. Language included in the amendment closely mirrors the definition for Supportive Housing.

Mr. Bartlett stated that he was unsure of the hesitancy by City Council. He then suggested that perhaps it was a lack of understanding regarding security measures, which was not a primary focus of the application. Another concern was whether or not the language was too specific. The final determination by City Council was that the application returned to the Planning Board for additional review with a sixty day review period prior to returning to City Council for approval.

Mr. Bartlett worked with City Planner, Jenn Curtis, who drafted a letter of recommendation regarding Article 11 Section 42. He then spoke to language contained in paragraph E regarding security as the most substantive change to the amendment.

Mr. Omo asked if City Council was concerned for security regarding residents or staff of the facility. Mr. Bartlett stated that the concerns were unclear, but discussed locks and cameras within the facility.

Ms. Blanco spoke to comments from the first meeting by City Council, which she attended. At that time there were no comments. At the second meeting, for which Ms. Blanco had watched the recording, she stated that she does not recall discussion regarding security but suggested that perhaps there was a misunderstanding to the purpose of the project.

Mr. Omo compared the project to other facility-specific sections of the Land Use Code such as bed and breakfasts, which do not require specific security standards.

Mr. Bartlett stated that he was unable to find any other requirements for security outside of cannabis facilities. He then noted that he is working closely with the Midcoast Youth Center, which will ultimately operate the facility and has very strict security provisions for their facilities. He stressed the importance of safety for all those involved.

Mr. Omo suggested reducing language to require applicants to provide a security plan as reviewed by the Chief of Police.

Mr. Bartlett spoke to the hardship of waiting sixty days and stated that any requirements would be amenable to those looking to move the project forward.

Ms. Blanco agreed that any security plan should be sufficient. Discussion followed on the focus of security whether it is internal or external.

Mr. Omo recommended that the second sentence in paragraph E. be removed altogether.

Mr. Oxtan opened the floor to public comment. Seeing none, Mr. Oxtan closed the public comment session.

**MR. OMO MOVED, SECONDED BY MR. JOHNSON, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO ARTICLE 11.42 WITH THE AMENDMENT THAT THE SECOND SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH E IS REMOVED.**

**PLANNING BOARD UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

Mr. Bartlett thanked Jenn Curtis and the Planning Board for making the process as smooth as possible.

**Other Business  
Election of Officers**

Mr. Melanson asked for a motion.

**MR. OMO MOVED, SECONDED BY MR. HRANICKY, TO ELECT BOB OXTON AS CHAIR AND JIM HOPKINSON AS VICE CHAIR.**

**PLANNING BOARD UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

**MR. JOHNSON, SECONDED BY MR. HRANICKY, MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED BY UNANIMOUS ACCLAMATION AT 6:22 PM.**

Minutes prepared by Karly Perry, Recording Secretary