

**TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
August 28, 2025**

**PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS**

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)  
Christopher Coelho – Vice Chairman (Present)  
Joel Silva (Present)  
Kathleen Houle (Present)

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
2025 OCT 10 A 9:17  
TOWN OF LUDLOW

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Conference Room.

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**Interviews for Town Planner Position**

**Haley Rivers**

Ms. Rivers introduced herself by saying that she is currently employed as an environmental planner at Tighe and Bond, went to Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley and got four degrees there including two majors in environmental science and coastal and marine science with minors in data science and English. She said that she's probably worked on close to a hundred different types of projects, specializing now with the 2016 Massachusetts municipal separate storm sewer system permit and all the requirements associated with that. Ms. Rivers said that she recently purchased a home in Ludlow and remarked that she thought it would be a great opportunity at the very least to come meet to the Board and see what their priorities are, because being a homeowner and a resident of the town, that she'll have an opinion on things as things proceed.

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**File Mail Item 55 – Legal Notice from Ludlow Conservation Commission – 612 Chapin Street**

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**File Mail Item 56 – Legal Notice from Ludlow Conservation Commission – 1252 East Street & 0 Ventura Street**

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*Carrie Ribeiro joined the meeting for the interview process.*

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**Joshua Carpenter interview**

Mr. Carpenter commented that he is a lifelong Ludlow resident, was a member of the Planning Board for the past five years and has been dedicated to the community for the past 15 or 16 years through various community service acts including being a town meeting member. He also noted that he was on the Housing Authority, was Chairman of the Town Administrator Search Committee, and a member of the Superintendent Committee. Mr. Carpenter said that he'd be the best candidate for this position because over the course of his tenure with the Board, he's seen where the Board has kind of started to move their vision towards for the town and he's fully on board with that and happy to help continue that vision including the Center Street Overlay District. He also mentioned that he has been doing customer service with his current employer for 17 years.

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## CONSENT AGENDA:

*The Board approved the Consent Agenda under unanimous consent.*

- ♦ FILE Mail Item 54. - Legal Notices from surrounding communities
  - ♦ SIGN Special Permits:
    - Dillon Price – 59 Lehigh Street (online work-travel job board)
    - Evarist Ndererubusa – 145 Coolidge Avenue (home office for travel & tourism)
    - Kevin Bradley – 6 Rosewood Drive (small batch bottling of wine)
  - ♦ SIGN Site Plan for ALM Group, LLC - 592 Holyoke Street (approved 4/10/25)
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Mr. Phoenix stated that the Board of Selectmen will be talking about warrant articles at their next meeting on Tuesday and they will be having a meeting on a Monday toward the end of September to talk about warrant articles as kind of a preview for town meeting.

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### **Change of Occupancy – 112 Sewall Street (120 Hubbard Street) Derek Scully – from antique store to office for cleaning business**

Mr. Phoenix explained that the Change of Occupancy is located at the same property that the Lighthouse is located on, and that the Lighthouse is submitting a site sketch for expansion of their business on the property with the condition that a full site plan is submitted within one year. He also mentioned that the Building Commissioner questioned whether there is a sprinkler system located in the building due to cleaning chemicals being stored at the property, in which David Plant, the owner of the property, called and said that there is sprinkler system at the Lighthouse building, but not at the separate building where the cleaning company will be and said that there are just normal cleaning supplies being stored there.

Mr. Phoenix: So, does anybody have any particular action they would like to take on the Change of Occupancy? I'll entertain a motion to approve it.

Ms. Houle: **SO MOVED.**

**SECOND** Mr. Coelho.

**4-0 in Favor.**

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### **Alvin Allen interview**

Mr. Allen introduced himself to the Board and explained that he has worked 17 ½ years as a planner mostly with the City of Springfield with the last two and a half months being the town planner/economic development director with the town of Southwick. He said that he started off as a senior planner and worked mostly with the historical commission, facilitating those meetings, and attended Pioneer Valley Planning Commission meetings with planners from surrounding communities. In regards to grants, Mr. Allen explained that he worked with the Valley Bike Consortium and was able to get multiple grants; one from Mass DOT Shared Streets Grant for \$50,000 to implement a bike station in Springfield; obtained a \$100,000 grant for expanding bike share in the City of Springfield and into Indian Orchard; and a grant from Massachusetts MHCD for just under 50,000 from them that was put

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towards string lighting in downtown Springfield. In addition, Mr. Allen noted that he created the McKnight home restoration program and received \$200,000 in funding for exterior house repairs in the McKnight area.

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### **Darsh Shah interview**

Mr. Shah told the Board that he got his Bachelor's Degree from India in urban planning and afterwards he worked as an junior urban planner associate research assistant. He said that he felt that community planning and that kind of municipal planning is something which really interested him, so he chose to do his masters in community planning from the University of Cincinnati, and worked most recently as a staff planner. Mr. Shah remarked that he has technical experience and knowledge with other applications such as GIS and Adobe Creative Suite, and also participated in and facilitated EPA funded online workshops as well.

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*Attorney Steve Chaplin and Ken Comia – PVPC joined the meeting.*

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### **Order of Remand issued by the Hampden County Superior Court – Special Permit/Site Plan – JLL Real Estate, LLC - 590-596 (0) Center Street (Assessors' Map 16B, Parcels 116 & 116A) (Redevelopment of site into a self-storage facility in an Agricultural Moderate Density Overlay District)**

Mr. Phoenix read both the approval and denial draft decisions. He then gave his thoughts on the project: "In thinking back over the history of this and in particular thinking back to our last hearing, I think one of the things that keeps coming back to me is Robin's question during the meeting about what's changed since the last time we voted on it, and I think basically what it really does come down to is that a lot of things have changed even if the plan itself has not fundamentally changed. And the biggest thing that has changed isn't even so much the membership of the Board, it's not the inclusion of hours of operation on the plan. I think it's time, time to be thoughtful, time to be deliberate and realistically even when we decided this one before, right up until the time that we voted on it, I personally was a coin flip as to how I was gonna vote. I saw merit and value in either decision. I saw a legitimate defensible position in either direction, and I think at this point the project that has been submitted is probably about the best project that we're going to be able to get for that property. I think it's an approvable one and that the criteria that we did deny on before were largely subjective. I think that it is not just approvable but like I said, it is the best project for both that neighborhood and the total town given that something is going to go there. I'm sure that there are other uses that people might feel would be more desirable, but the reality is, we're not looking at it staying undeveloped, we're not looking at it being single family homes. We're looking at a commercial use that is described by experts in the field as having limited numbers of trip generation, limited impact, and also is going to preserve a fair amount of vegetative buffer around the property versus a project that would have I think far greater impact both in terms of the character of the neighborhood, well not just both, but the in terms of the character of the neighborhood, in terms of the aesthetic of the neighborhood, in terms of the traffic flow on an already busy area. Again, not just for the neighbors, not just for the total town, but for everybody." Mr. Phoenix then read the Special Permit Criteria for Business in the Agricultural Moderate Density District and the Required Site Plan Contents Checklist as noted on the draft decision.

The Board agreed to add the following criteria to the Special Permit:

- Hours of operation shall be 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- The special permit will run with the applicant and not with the property.
- The applicant is responsible for obtaining all permits, approvals, and licenses from all other town departments and regulatory bodies as appropriate.
- The project shall be completed in accordance with the approved documents and project plans that are incorporated in by reference.
- Construction hours are to be 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.
- The Decision shall be recorded at the Registry of Deeds.

Mr. Phoenix: So, with that in mind, I would entertain a MOTION to make the findings as elaborated in the document for approval with the minor modifications as to the, the word proposed in a couple places and the letter O instead of the number that's in the document, and to grant the approval with the conditions as elaborated in the document with those minor modifications to the words and to approve the Site Plan and Special Permit in the AMD district with the conditions as discussed this evening.

Ms. Houle: **SO MOVED.**

**SECOND** Mr. Coelho.

**4-0 in Favor.**

**Roll call vote: Ms. Houle – yes; Mr. Coelho – yes; Mr. Silva – yes; Mr. Phoenix – yes.**

*Documents: Notice of Decision for Proposed Self-Storage Facility at 590-596 Center Street*

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### **Follow up on Site Plan compliance issues**

Mr. Phoenix touched on the outstanding site plan compliance issues in town that include the Town Hall parking lot, sheds located on the Town Hall and school property, and the traffic flow at Harris Brook School. The office has not been contacted by Marc Strange or Superintendent Tiano regarding any intention to get the site plans taken care of.

Mr. Phoenix: Given that, I would entertain a motion from the Board to reach out to the Zoning Enforcement Officer about their opinion on getting the town and its various departments to set a good example of what should be happening in regards to proper planning and documentation of changes to sites and do the same things that are expected of all other entities within the Town. And if necessary, to ask town counsel for any advice as to how we can move this forward given that the zoning enforcement officer, no matter how well intentioned, is also an employee of one of the people that's responsible for for submitting a site plan that is currently delinquent, which could put them in a very awkward professional position. And I wanna be cognizant of that and try not to put undue stresses on that. Does anyone care to make a motion to that effect?

Mr. Coelho: **SO MOVED.**

**SECOND** Mr. Silva.

**4-0 in Favor.**

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## Interviews

The Board members discussed the applicants for the Town Planner position and totaled their numbers for each applicant.

Mr. Phoenix: So, I would entertain a motion to initiate an offer with Mr. Carpenter with the understanding that if that does not work out, that Mr. Allen is our, our next in line, our next preference. And then I would also ask as part of that, that the Board include a liaison to work with HR as part of that process.

Ms. Houle: **SO MOVED.**

**SECOND** Mr. Coelho.

**4-0 in Favor.**

Ms. Ribeiro will contact Josh Carpenter regarding the job offer.

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### Review/approve site sketch for 321-325 East Street (James Carvalho/Casa Pizzeria)

The Board reviewed the site sketch and table.

Mr. Phoenix: So, I guess at this point, unless somebody has something that they want to shout out at me, I would entertain a MOTION to conditionally approve the site sketch as submitted. I think we already did all the waivers that we needed to before on it, but to conditionally approve with the conditions being that the parking requirements be updated based on the square footage of the retail area. Updating that to nine and the number of bedrooms since that is four, updating that to six for a total required of 15 parking spaces with the possible also addition of the other two spaces that are called out within the garage as part of the provided spaces and further to waive the parking that is currently lacking as requiring that additional parking would not be to any benefit of the neighborhood and parking is scarce around that area to begin with and the additional spaces are not presumed to be needed based on the changes contemplated within this plan. Anyone care to make that as a motion or something similar?

Ms. Houle: **SO MOVED.**

**SECOND** Mr. Coelho.

**4-0 in Favor.**

*Documents included: Master application; Site Plan of Land in Ludlow, Massachusetts surveyed for East Street Investments, LLC (Revised 9/4/25); Comments from Town Boards/Departments*

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### Millside Drive street acceptance

Mr. Phoenix read the letter from Jamie Tomas of the DPW which stated that according to Alex of Tighe and Bond correspondence dated 8/13/25, all final inspections conclude that any outstanding items associated with this roadway project were completed. Based on the engineered plans and specifications, DPW is recommending the acceptance of Millside Drive.

Mr. Phoenix: I would entertain a motion to recommend acceptance of Millside Drive as a public way at town meeting and to prepare a formal written statement to that effect to be given to the Select Board.

Mr. Coelho: **SO MOVED.**  
**SECOND** Ms. Houle.  
**4-0 in Favor.**

*Documents included: Email from Marc Strange re: Millside Drive – Materials for Street Acceptance (August 18, 2025); Memo from Jamie Tomas to Select Board - subject: Millside Drive Roadway Acceptance (August 26, 2025)*

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Mr. Coelho **MOVED** to adjourn.  
**SECOND** Ms. Houle.  
**4-0 in Favor.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
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Kathleen Houle, Secretary

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(All related documents can be viewed at the Planning Board Office during regular business hours.)