

**TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
April 23, 2026**

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Joel Silva (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Absent)
Christopher Coelho (Absent)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Present)

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TOWN OF LUDLOW

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

**PUBLIC HEARING – Special Permit/Home Occupation – Alex Wurszt – 103 Jerad Drive
(Assessors' Map 41, Parcel 26G) (home office for electrical contracting)**

SEE SEPARATE MINUTES

Consent Agenda:

The Board approved the Consent Agenda under unanimous consent.

- ◆ FILE Mail Item 23. - Legal Notices from surrounding communities
 - ◆ APPROVE/SIGN Minutes of April 9, 2026
-

**SITE SKETCH – Jose Alves – 17-21 Lower Whitney Street (Assessors' Map 14B, Parcel 74)
(Proposed residential development with associated site improvements in Smart Growth Overlay District)**

In attendance: Rebecca Li – R Levesque Associates

The Board reviewed a revised site plan for a six-unit townhouse development previously approved in May 2019 within the Smart Growth Overlay District. Ms. Li explained that the revised plan is substantially similar to the original approval, with key changes including mirroring the layout to utilize an existing curb cut, a slight increase in front setback, reduction of one overflow parking space to improve landscaping and circulation, and the addition of an updated stormwater management system designed to current standards. A photometric plan was also added.

Departmental comments were reviewed. The Fire Department requirements for access, sprinklers, alarms, and addressing were acknowledged and incorporated into the plans. DPW comments included utility permitting requirements, sewer connection fees, and a revision to increase the sewer line size to eight inches, which has been addressed. No significant concerns were raised by the Board of Health or Conservation Commission.

The applicant requested waivers for signage design, a traffic study, and certain dimensional and density requirements, consistent with the prior 2019 approval.

Following discussion, the Board voted unanimously to waive full site plan review in favor of a site sketch and to waive the public hearing due to the limited scope of changes and similarity to the previously approved plan.

Mr. Phoenix: So presupposing that the language in the waiver request that we're gonna be getting is similar to what has already been mentioned. Is there a desire on the board's part to make a MOTION to waive the full plan in favor of a sketch based on those circumstances and further to waive a public hearing?

Mr. Silva: **SO MOVED.**

SECOND Mr. Ellison.

3-0 in Favor.

Mr. Phoenix: I'm gonna be entertaining a MOTION to approve the waivers for 7.1.5 o. 3 and 5 and then 5.5.7 as requested by the applicant given the reasoning provided in their associated letter and further to approve the site sketch as submitted, if anyone would care to.

Mr. Silva: **SO MOVED.**

SECOND Mr. Ellison.

3-0 in Favor.

Documents: Smart Growth Overlay District Plan Approval – Chapter 40R (Amendment) Proposed Residential Development (March 26, 2026); Master application; Waiver request; Comments from Town Boards/Departments; Smart Growth Overlay District Bylaw; Plans: Townhouses at 17-21 Lower Whitney St Ludlow, MA (February 11, 2022)

**PUBLIC HEARING - Site Plan – Michael Sotiropoulos – 648 Chapin Street
(Assessors' Map 16B, Parcel 84) (Proposed 500 SF accessory dwelling unit (ADU))**

SEE SEPARATE MINUTES

File Mail Item 24 - Reorganizations of town boards

File Mail Item 25 - Legal Notice – Ludlow Zoning Board of Appeals – 40 Turning Leaf

File Mail Item 26 - Legal Notice – Ludlow Conservation Commission – 33 Evergreen Circle

PVPC DLTA

The Board reviewed the updated scope of services provided by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), noting staff changes with Aiden no longer with the organization and Evan expected to assist moving forward. Updates to the scope included revisions to the final report, resulting in reduced costs.

The Board confirmed that the project had previously been approved and that the current action pertains to acceptance of the revised scope for technical assistance.

Mr. Phoenix: I'll entertain a MOTION to find that the scope of services as presented is satisfactory and to move forward with it as presented.

Mr. Silva: **SO MOVED.**

SECOND Mr. Ellison.

3-0 in Favor.

Documents: Ludlow DLTA 2026 Envisioning Smarter Density and Mixed Use for Housing

Town Meeting

Mr. Carpenter reviewed upcoming Town Meeting articles. Article 22 requests \$10,000 to retain a consultant for the first year of the Town's Housing Production Plan.

The Board also discussed a separate article submitted by the Police Chief, in coordination with the Select Board, proposing a ban on cryptocurrency ATMs in town. It was noted that there are currently two such machines located inside private buildings. The Police Chief's concern is that these machines have been used in scams targeting elderly residents and that removal would help prevent future incidents.

Board members acknowledged that the proposed ban does not significantly fall under their jurisdiction, as the machines are located indoors, but discussed the broader policy approach of regulating emerging technologies in response to public safety concerns.

Application Fees

The Board discussed an anticipated site plan submission from the Ludlow Housing Authority for improvements to a parking lot on Wilson Street. The proposal involves a minor expansion of approximately 400 square feet to add several parking spaces. The updated plan is required as the original dates back to the late 1980s.

Mr. Carpenter noted that the applicable site plan review fee is approximately \$2,100. The Board discussed whether the Housing Authority should be considered a Town entity for purposes of waiving the fee. It was clarified that while the Housing Authority is affiliated with the Town, it operates as a separate entity and is not part of the Town's financial structure.

Board members noted that fee waivers are typically granted only when funds would otherwise move between Town departments (e.g., School Department), and not for independent or quasi-public entities. Comparisons were made to other organizations, including nonprofits and utilities, which are generally required to pay applicable fees.

The consensus of the Board was that the applicant may request a waiver but should be prepared to provide justification. It was further noted that an application is not considered complete without either the required fee or an approved waiver. Mr. Carpenter indicated that the applicant may submit the fee with the application, which could be returned if a waiver is subsequently granted.

Remote Participation

The Board discussed the use of remote participation, noting it has primarily been implemented during Select Board meetings and has generally been effective in recent use.

Members observed that the current process still requires participants to log in using the established procedures previously discussed. Concern was raised regarding the public posting of meeting access credentials within the meeting room, which could allow unintended access. The Board noted this as a potential security issue and an area for improvement.

Open Meeting Law

The Board discussed ongoing concerns related to compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, particularly as it relates to access to Town Hall during meetings.

It was noted that, while proper meeting notice and procedures are followed, there have been instances where building access has been restricted (e.g., doors locking during scheduled meetings), potentially placing the Board in violation of the Open Meeting Law. Members emphasized that a quorum of the Board, once properly posted, must be able to access and utilize the meeting space without reliance on specific staff availability.

The Board expressed concern that current practices require coordination with staff to ensure access, which may not always be feasible. Members stated that a reliable system must be in place to allow Board members to access the building and conduct meetings independently, regardless of staff presence or time constraints.

It was further noted that continued access issues could necessitate escalation to appropriate state authorities if compliance concerns persist.

Crosswalks at East Street

Mr. Carpenter reported coordination with the Department of Public Works regarding installation of a flashing pedestrian crossing sign near the crosswalk at East Street School. The sign will function similarly to existing flashing crosswalk signals in town, activating to alert drivers when pedestrians are present.

This installation is intended to improve safety in the school zone. It was noted that additional locations may be considered in the future, but the current effort is focused on the school area.

Abutter notification fees

The Board revisited the process and costs associated with abutter notifications following recent experience with a subdivision application requiring approximately 60 mailings. Mr. Carpenter noted that preparing and sending notifications in-house required significant time and expense.

Historically, applicants were responsible for sending abutter notifications; however, this created administrative challenges, including confusion over mailing requirements and staff time needed to verify certificates of mailing. As a result, the Board transitioned to handling notifications internally for efficiency and consistency.

It was discussed that while existing application fees were previously adjusted to account for some administrative costs, increases in postage, materials, and staff time may no longer be adequately covered. The Board also noted that other Town boards and departments conduct mailings but charge applicants accordingly.

The Board discussed the potential to establish a separate fee for abutter notifications or to reevaluate existing fees to better reflect actual costs. Any revised fee structure should account for all associated expenses, including:

- Postage (including certified mail where applicable)
- Materials and office supplies
- Staff time for compiling abutter lists (including coordination with the Assessor's Office)
- Preparation and mailing of notices

The consensus was to further review and develop potential fee structures for future consideration, with staff to prepare options for discussion at a later meeting.

Mr. Silva **MOVED** to adjourn.

SECOND Mr. Ellison.

3-0 in Favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

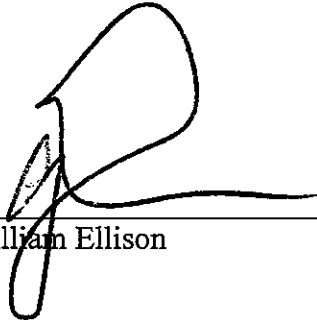
APPROVED:



Raymond Phoenix



Joel Silva



William Ellison

SU

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

**TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING – SPECIAL PERMIT/HOME OCCUPATION
103 Jerad Drive (Assessors' Map 41, Parcel 26G)
Alex Wurszt
(home office for electrical contracting)
April 23, 2026**

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Joel Silva (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Absent)
Christopher Coelho (Absent)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Present)

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

In attendance: Alex Wurszt, attendees

Mr. Phoenix advised the public that the hearing is being recorded, gave the applicant a copy of the Turley Publications invoice, and read the legal notice which included the description of: home office for electrical contracting.

Mr. Phoenix: So that's kind of the highlight from the legal notice as far as what's going on as far as the paperwork that I have in front of me, the home occupation special permit says you've got total area is 2,310, you're looking to use about 10 square feet. Number of non-resident employees is zero. You got a whole bunch of no's circled for planned signage at the business, customers at the house, deliveries unlike those of a normal residence, and changes that make it look less residential. You're listing one vehicle in connection with the business, which would be a Ford Transit 250, which has a GVW of 7,500, which is below our 10,000 pound GVW limit. And I also have a signed request for a waiver of a full site plan in favor of a sketch and photos as to be prepared by the applicant. So, that's what I have on my side. If you could just kinda let us know what you're, what you're looking to do.

Mr. Wurszt: Yeah, just I don't, don't really need the office at home. It's mostly mobile. Everything's gonna be out of the van by my phone or the laptop. Just need to know an address for the business. That's it.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay.

Mr. Wurszt: Nothing's really gonna be going through the house at all.

Mr. Phoenix: Nothing Really for storage, anything like that?

Mr. Wurszt: No. No, the van's got plenty of storage.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. I think most of the questions that I would typically have are part of the checklist at this point that we already went over. So, I'm gonna ask if anybody from the Board has any comments, questions, concerns at this time?

Mr. Silva: Not on my end.

Mr. Phoenix: Hearing nothing, this is a public hearing, so I will open this up to the public. If you do have anything that you would like to add or ask, I would ask that you state your name and address for the record and address anything that you have through myself as Chair, I'll do my best to get you any information that you need. Does anyone have anything at this time? Hearing nothing, I think the first thing that I'd be looking for if the Board is so inclined would be a finding, followed by a waiver, followed by either discussion or action on the item itself and then possibly followed by closing public hearing. So, if somebody would care to make one or more of those as a motion, that'd be fantastic.

Mr. Ellison: Yeah, I'll make a **MOTION**.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. So just to be clear, this is a motion in the standard form to accept this as a to, determine that it is a suitable home occupation, to grant the waiver, to approve, and to close the public hearing?

Mr. Ellison: Correct.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. With that understanding, was there a second?

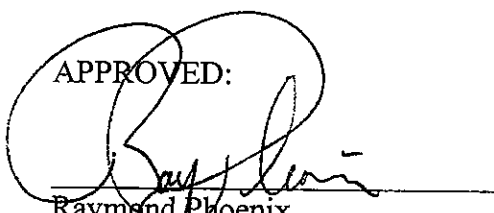
SECOND Mr. Silva.

4-0 in Favor.

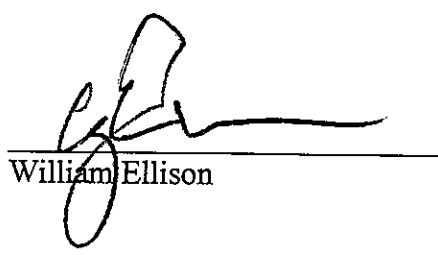
Roll call vote: Ms. Rivers – yes; Mr. Silva – yes; Mr. Ellison – yes; Mr. Phoenix – yes.

The public hearing closed at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVED:


Raymond Phoenix


Joel Silva


William Ellison

su

Documents: Master application

(Documents pertaining to this hearing are available for viewing in the Planning Board Office during regular business hours).

**TOWN OF LUDLOW PLANNING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING – SITE PLAN
648 Chapin Street (Assessors' Map 16B, Parcel 84)
Michael Sotiropoulos
(Proposed 500 SF accessory dwelling unit (ADU))
April 23, 2026**

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS

Raymond Phoenix – Chairman (Present)
William Ellison – Vice Chairman (Present)
Joel Silva (Present)
Kathleen Houle (Absent)
Christopher Coelho (Absent)
Haley Rivers, Associate Member (Present)

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

In attendance: Michael Sotiropoulos, attendees

Mr. Phoenix advised the public that the hearing is being recorded, gave the applicant a copy of the Turley Publications invoice, and read the legal notice which included the description of: home office for electrical contracting.

Mr. Phoenix: As far as comments that I've received back from our own office, see a lot of check marks. When we get to o., which frequently does have waivers and things, I do have some yellow on 1., which is the lighting plan with Luminaire Schedule, 3. which is the signage design with dimensions and locations and 5., which is the traffic study, and a note that says applicant will need to request a waiver for 1, 3 and 5, waiver form included. I do have that form here. If it is your intention to have those waived, I would...

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yes, please.

Mr. Phoenix: ...ask that you sign off on that.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yep.

Mr. Phoenix: And then we can discuss those once we get a little bit further. Safety Committee says they have no comment, ConsCom has no wetlands. Board of Health says property is not on septic or well, no additional permits required from BOH. Thank you. Fire Department: Site plan submitted to the Fire Prevention Office for 648 Chapin Street. ADU has been reviewed for compliance following will be required. Unobstructed site access and or pathways to at least one exterior door of the proposed ADU in the event of an emergency for personnel 527CMR 1.0018. 2.3.1 and 18.2.3.1. Clear and visible address in unit numbering. Approved smoke and or carbon monoxide alarms in designated areas per 527CMR 1.00 and 780 CMR and IRC current editions. Please note any omissions or missed items during this plan review does not relieve the owner/contractor from meeting all applicable codes, laws, regulations, and standards as they apply to the construction maintenance or use of this building. As always, feel free to contact the

Fire Prevention Office if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter. Public Works says we've reviewed the site plan for proposed accessory dwelling unit 648 Chapin Street prepared by Paul S. Smith Land Surveying with an issuance date of March 25th, 2026, and have the following comments. 1. A sewer connection permit will need to be obtained from the Department of Public works by a licensed drain layer. 2. All water work involving the water service to the ADU must be approved by Springfield Water and Sewer Commission. 3. Confirm all utility connections for the ADU with the appropriate utility companies. And 4. will there be a paved path to ADU for accessibility. If you have any questions regarding these comments, do not hesitate to call. Reserve the right to review and comment on revised submittals. So, that's all that I have from other boards. And on the application, the detailed description of the proposal says building 500 square foot ADU, 25 x 20 typical wood frame construction with cast concrete foundation per working drawing, all complying with 2024 IRC residential code. And I have a signed certification of ownership and authority. Oh, and here's also a waiver request for 1, 3 and 5. Yeah, so we already had that in the file it looks like. Regards to Section o. items 1, 3 and 5: 1. Lights to be installed to be entryway lights; 3. There will be only house numbers at entryway; and 5. The only traffic will be personal vehicles owned by tenant. Thank you. The proposed project is a 500 square foot ADU. So, that's what I have in the file to get us going. If you could, what are we up to?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, thank you all for being here. I appreciate you listening to me. I have about 1.3 acres there and my proposal is to build a 500 square foot tiny house on this property. That's it. That's the plan. I think I met the setbacks and all the requirements that were presented before me. It'll be a one bedroom, one bath.

Mr. Carpenter: Mr. Chairman, there's two sets of plans. One shows the, just the elevations and the other one is the actual site plan.

Mr. Phoenix: Okay. And of course, as luck would have it, I opened the one that I'm less interested in. Thank you for telling me before I started looking at every --- in the set. I may as well if we close it up, we're gonna need it 'cause that's the way luck works. So, you are looking to put it about 40 feet or so behind the existing house?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Forty-one feet back the left back of the left corner of the existing house, about a 10, 12 foot setback on the left. About a 40, about a 35-foot setback from the water department easement, which also includes their buffer. They have a buffer that it's additional safety cushion for them. And the frontage would be from the crown of the road back would be about 130 feet as indicated on the site plan there.

Mr. Phoenix: And the shed that's on there, that's an existing shed?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah, that's just.

Mr. Phoenix: So, the rear of the ADU, you're proposing to be basically in line with the front of the shed

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Just about. Yep. Yes. Yep.

Mr. Silva: What, how's the access to the ADU?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: The ADU, the front door will be facing east and there will be a door at the backside of that house where that 10 foot setback is. You see that?

Mr. Silva: The back of it right there. Yeah.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: And then the rear of the building will be a doghouse entryway into the basement.

Mr. Silva: But I don't see a walkway or sidewalk for the resident to walk to the house.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, there's gonna be a, there's I proposed a...

Mr. Silva: Or, or a driveway or so.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, there's, there's a driveway there now, for, for the main house.

Mr. Silva: Correct.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: I'm gonna marry another parking space next to where the parking space is there.

Mr. Silva: Correct.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: And probably have either a walkway from that point to the ADU, which is about 80 feet, or I might put a gravel or asphalt pathway driveway so that tenant can get better access to that ADU.

Mr. Phoenix: Is there a reason that's not on the plan in front of us tonight?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: It is on site plan. I believe there is on the site plan, there's a footnote, is there a footnote to the bottom that might give an indication as to a proposed driveway?

Mr. Phoenix: For notes I've got existing sewer location based on (inaudible) on file with DPW, zone line shown based on Ludlow GIS, existing elevations and runoff patterns to remain unchanged, and all snow to be stored on lawn and area adjacent to the driveway. And it was also noted in the comments from, was it Building or Fire or Public Works, --- one of them called that out.

Mr. Silva: Or we --- of requirements to access the ADU.

Mr. Ellison: DPW called that out. I think you're right. They did. They have a question at the end.

Mr. Phoenix: Will there be a paved path to ADU for accessibility? Item number four under the DPW comments.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Either, either asphalt or gravel/dust packed. And I think aesthetically that would work and it would suffice for, for foot traffic and for a vehicle, tenant's vehicle to get back there.

Mr. Silva: So, you have to make it wide enough to go around your house to get there?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah. From, from the, from the left side of the house to the left property line is 33 feet.

Mr. Phoenix: Right. And there's, there's probably enough room there, but I, I think the problem is it's not showing on the plan, so nobody that was reviewing the plan was able to review it to make sure that it meets any criteria that they need to be reviewing it for.

Mr. Silva: Just like, I don't know how all the reg, what the regulation is, but if the Fire Department has to come and, and get a stretcher in the house, the way they paved or gravel, does that impact as well?

Mr. Ellison: Yeah, I can't, I was gonna bring it up, but you're, you got ahead of me, but thank you. Because getting access to a medical emergency in that back without any kind of, we may not need a driveway.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah.

Mr. Ellison: But a hard surface to roll a stretcher that far, we're not gonna carry, you know.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: I understand.

Mr. Ellison: So, we need to, you know what a stretcher is on wheels.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah, I do. I do know what a stretcher is, yeah. To carry an ill person onto the ambulance.

Mr. Ellison: Yeah. So rather than trips across the lawn or something.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Absolutely. No, like I said, I got that as I previously prefaced this subject with, there's gonna be a third parking space married into the existing parking space.

Mr. Phoenix: Right. You've got that showing on here.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: And then from there to the ADU, will either be a hard pack walk to that ADU or I might incorporate a driveway, either asphalt or hard pack dust, what's it called? Stone dust all the way back there. And that would suffice for vehicles to ride over.

Mr. Silva: Well, if, if you incorporate a driveway into one of these parking spots, you lose one of the parking spots because then it becomes the parking spot itself. It's part of that driveway. Right?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Are you viewing the site plan?

Mr. Silva: Yes, sir.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay. Do you see in front of the house?

Mr. Silva: Yes. Yes.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Number three, two and three?

Mr. Silva: Yes.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay. If I take that and then move that driveway all the way to the left side of the house where it's 33 feet, correct. Two, three and a half feet and make a driveway all the way straight back there with either hard pack or asphalt without suffice.

Mr. Phoenix: We can't necessarily comment on that. We can make sure that it's on the plan, but the people that need to review that and comment on it would be the Engineering Department, Building Department, Fire Department. They would be the ones that need to review it, and they couldn't because it wasn't on the plans yet. So I would assume, based on the conversation that I'm hearing so far, and it is just kind of an assumption at this point, that at a minimum we'd want to see that put on the plan and be able to go out for review from those groups before we'd be willing to take action on this. Is that kind of straw poll that sound about right to everybody? So that.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: May I interject? I'm sorry if I interrupted you there, but if I may just interject. Leaving that because it's a one bedroom, one car. Probably one person, one car there in, in lane two there. Okay. How about, would just a walkway, a hard, a walkway suffice for that as the example that he said about the stretcher getting in and out?

Mr. Phoenix: I mean that, that's gonna be up to Fire and Public Works and, and whatnot to review that, Building Department, anything that they might need to look at that for. So, we can, like I said, we are here mainly to make sure that the plans have everything on them. That they've gone out to the right people, that the public has the ability to comment on 'em and that we're following the, the bylaws of the town. We are not the subject matter experts in each individual part of it. That's why we have an engineering department, a building department, et cetera, is to review for those things.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: So, you know, we can continue looking at it. We can take public comment, see where everything lies.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: But I, I'm guessing unless something changes at a minimum, we're gonna be looking to have that updated on the plan and then have them get a chance to review it before we're gonna be willing to take any action on it.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay. That's, that's fair enough.

Mr. Phoenix: Speaking of the public, before I do go to the public, does anybody on the board have anything else at the moment? Hearing nothing, this is a public hearing, so I will ask for any public comments, questions or concerns. If you do have anything, I would ask that you address it through myself as chairman and I'll do my best to get you any information that you need. Does anybody have anything that they would like to add or ask at this time? You can just sit, stand, whatever makes you comfy.

Ms. Maio: So, my name is Jamie Maio, and we live on East Akard Street. And our lot abuts that land. I built the house there 20 years ago. I spent a couple of nights in here, you know, too, so I understand. I built next door to my grandparents' home. So that has been my yard for 47 years. That being said, I have multiple letters from neighbors that unfortunately with the short notice, a lot of the people on the street are elderly, they asked that we reschedule because we are very much against this now. I guess one of my first questions is there's already a home on the property and so does Mr. Sotiropoulos plan on residing, because when I read about these, and I haven't done all of my due diligence, but I've spent some time reading up on these dwellings that nine times outta ten, they're for a family member or whatever, and the, the person who rents usually lives on the property as well. Are we now turning this into two rental properties? Because my understanding is that he's lived in Wilbraham since 2000 and is now buying rental properties. And is this just going to turn into something that happens? I don't think it's appropriate for our town. I really don't. Because I think once somebody sees that they can do this, it's gonna happen a lot. If they can just slap up, you know, another house for rent and I, we all have very strong feelings, it's gonna take away the woods and it abuts Randalls on the other side, there's water and then it's Karen's land. So, you know, I don't know if she got a letter about it, but I'm just, I we just would like to know more about it and, and you know, are we renting, this is literally right in our backyard now. It'll take away all the little woods that we have and it's devastating to the whole street to be honest.

Mr. Phoenix: So, to start off, I would say that the ADU process is a new thing. We're actually still in the middle of adjusting the bylaws that we have here in town in order to make the Attorney General happy because the state rolled out new regulations for everybody to adopt and they didn't have sample language for people to use. So pretty much the whole state had to come up with what seems to make sense, what makes the AG happy and go from there. So, we've, we've gone on what, two rounds already and we're, we're looking at the third one to try and get it cleaned up?

Mr. Carpenter: Yeah, I think we're going onto our third one.

Mr. Phoenix: The, the older process was Accessory Apartments, which would be probably more what you're thinking of as the traditional, it'd be occupied by a family member. We'd have attestation of that every so often. That was the standard that we had where it was, you know, part of the main dwelling, that it had to be able to be disassembled, that whole thing. The state came out with these new ADU regulations which are a lot lighter regulatory standard that for us to be able to hold people to.

Ms. Maio: Right.

Mr. Phoenix: So, we're still getting adjusted to some of this ourselves. Like I said, it's, we're going to town meeting in a couple months to try and, or a month now it's getting close, to try and finally clean up that language and make the Attorney General completely happy. As far as what the applicant's intention is, can you speak to what your intention is for the property?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, my intention is to, as it's intended and as the AG and the Governor's Office, and it's actually going across the, across the country, because there's a shortage of housing and if people have land, they have the right to build what is called an ADU, accessory dwelling unit. And my intention is a one-bedroom apartment and rent probably to one person or a couple.

Ms. Maio: And the home?

Mr. Phoenix: So first of all, I would just say, and we could go 27 rounds on this. There is a housing shortage, but most of that is because we have empty housing instead of having people in houses. I think that's the bigger issue. Having the option for ADUs is fine and the state and their infinite wisdom has said that this is a path that they wanna pursue and we don't have a whole lot of choice in that. So, we're riding along the wave with everybody else. As far as, you know, the, the neighborhood's concerned, again, we've got some standards that we're able to hold people to, but it is, we don't have the same teeth that we did under accessory apartments based on the way that the state law was passed.

Ms. Maio: Just say this, I did read that it was being allowed in the state in certain areas because of a shortage of houses being built, being able to be built. Now in that area you have 1, 2, 3, 4 on Loopley and Swan, you have a couple on Fuller, you have the whole new housing project. And my understanding, and I spoke with an attorney, this will almost guarantee that our property values will go down. We will lose the woods in our backyard. This directly affects us and I just don't think this is the right neighborhood for it. And I feel very strongly about it. And, and so do the neighbors. We happily welcome, we're not, it's nothing against, you know, Mr. Sotiropoulos, we just, this is.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, you is, can I just touch on what she just said because you're not really losing the woods. The woods is, is found, it's a found buffer for those residents there. I understand that, but it's also the landowner's property and right to do so, to do this. So, you know, talk about.

Ms. Maio: Like the Chairman said, you know, they're just learning all about it too and I...

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Oh, I know about that. February of '25 they came out with it.

Ms. Maio: We request that, you know, multiple people and obviously, you know, the plans aren't ready. So, we just ask that we have a little bit more time.

Mr. Phoenix: Heard. Absolutely heard.

Ms. Maio: Thank you. I appreciate it. Anybody else have anything? Yes sir.

Mr. Lubas: Phil Lubas, 646 Chapin Street, and I'd like to know if the applicant is planning on seeking variances for this project and what would they be?

Mr. Phoenix: I don't believe this project would require any variances. I think the only thing he's looking for are some waivers off of 7.1.5 o., which routinely people do ask for waivers on depending on their circumstances. Those items are surrounding things like lighting plans and signage plans and snow storage and traffic studies. So not all projects really need those types of things. So, I believe on this one you were looking for what, 1, 3 and 5 to be waived sir?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah, whatever, yeah, whatever the line items were; 1, 3 and 5 I believe.

Mr. Phoenix: So, looking for a waiver on 1. saying that lights to be installed to be entryway lights, 3. there will be only house numbers at the entryway and, 5. the only traffic will be

personal vehicles owned by the tenant. So that's, that's what we're being asked to waive. We have not made any decisions on that. We haven't even really discussed those yet.

Mr. Lubas: Will another meeting be held on this particular issue?

Mr. Phoenix: In all likelihood, yes, because the plan as submitted doesn't show everything that we would need to be able to see. So, we would be able to ask the applicant to go back and update the plans to include that information. Have time between when that gets turned into us for the experts to review it on our end again and have that scheduled out that way. Alternatively, you know, we could look to take action tonight, but it would be unlikely to be favorable for the applicant in that circumstance.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well could you take action on it with the footnote indicating that it just, you need, you need a more definitive plan for that driveway or, or for that walkway?

Mr. Phoenix: No, because it requires expert review, it requires discussion, and that all needs to happen in public session. That can't happen outside of the public hearing.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: We can only, when we take action, do it based off of evidence that's been entered in during the public hearing.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: So when we do a motion subject to, it's usually just subject to getting a line notated or you know, getting a pin indicated where it's, it's clear that that's all that's missing is, oh you've got a circle on the plan, but the key doesn't say whether that's a concrete bound, an iron pin, whatever that is. So, mark that up on the plan and we'll be good to go. You know, there, there's no real conversation about that. It's just, it's just clerical.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: So, you need the plans redone with that indicating the driveway? Is that, is that what you need? Or just an amendment to it, kind of a report?

Mr. Phoenix: It would need to show on the plan.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Show on the site plan. Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: And again, we haven't looked at the waivers yet, the board's had some conversation on this, but I don't know how much more they care to have. We're also almost at eight o'clock on this, so I don't have much conversation, we're gonna really wrap up on this tonight either.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Is the waivers, if I may just add, expand on the, the waivers. Is that a big issue to speak about? You know, no signage because that's not coming into play except for a house number. Lights wouldn't be lights that really matter on a residential lot, I think. I don't think that would matter. And a traffic study for one car for the tenant. So, is that, is, is that a big thing? You know, is there pushback on that?

Mr. Phoenix: It's, it's up to the board. It's up to the board.

Mr. Ellison: Mr. Chairman. So, on the first two, the way I look at it is if there was a problem, again we're gonna just gonna go back to that as an example. A medical emergency in a proposed ADU where it sits for whatever, how would that get called into the 911? Would that get called in at 648 and then we'd have to figure it out? Or is that gonna be?

Mr. Carpenter: Building will assign up a new number.

Mr. Ellison: A new number. And that number will be where on the building back in the back there? Like say it's 648A or something just to make it up. So, you're 648 in the main, the existing building. So, say they said it's gonna be 648A or whatever they say, how would somebody driving along on Chapin Street know where to go?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well after they see 648, they're gonna see the mailbox or something else or, or a house number...

Mr. Ellison: Stay with that.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: That's affixed to the house to that's going to.

Mr. Ellison: To the ADU?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Yeah.

Mr. Ellison: Well, that's how far off the road?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: 125 feet.

Mr. Ellison: Yeah, I mean they're not gonna be able to read that unless they've signed the things are this big.

Mr. Phoenix: More importantly, I would say when we're granting waivers, we look at whether they're relevant or not. We look at whether it's in the town's best interest to waive something or not and how it would be dissimilar from other things. Otherwise, we wouldn't have the regulations if the whole point is to waive 'em whenever somebody doesn't want to do 'em. If the regulation says that there's supposed to be a lighting plan, then we generally wanna have a lighting plan. Except when you know, somebody says we're not changing the lighting at all. Okay, well then, we don't really need a lighting plan 'cause we know what the existing conditions are. They've been there for X number of years, nothing's changing. There's no benefit of the town to make you go out and have that work contracted and figure it out. If you are looking to put in new lighting to support safety and things like that on the site, it's very likely in the town and the neighborhood's best interest to make sure that we know what the luminaire schedule is gonna look like for the property and whether those lights are gonna be shielded and going off the property or whether they're gonna all be maintained on the property and what that's gonna look like. As far as the signage, if all you're talking about is making sure that there's signage showing what the number is for the unit, that sounds like a pretty low threshold to meet, and I don't know how avoiding doing that would be in anyone's best interest personally. And then as far as the other one, I think the snow storage again, oh no, it was the traffic study. Snow storage was just gonna be on the grass. As far as the traffic study, I mean, that might be something we could talk about. But again, you know, we don't have a whole lot of data to go off of on these types of units. We can assume certain things, but I'm not a traffic engineer. We haven't had a ton of ADUs

come in in the past where we were able to kind of draw on past experience. I don't even know if the books that generate numbers for traffic studies and what the expected trips for the units would be, have been developed for ADUs yet, let alone something that we'd be able to pull from. So, maybe it is in the town's best interest to get that traffic study done. That's a question that, you know, we can contemplate as a board. But again, we're now approaching eight o'clock, so I think the better use of our time instead of doing that is to give you some time to prepare whatever you think is necessary as far as updating the plan to show the access to the building and any other things that are currently not shown and then we can try and schedule out when you're gonna be able to come back in to show off what you've, what you've done for homework.

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Okay.

Mr. Phoenix: And my caveat on that is whatever you think you need for a timeline to get that work done, we can work from there and then we're gonna add on, depending on when things hit, probably a two to three week window to be able to give all of those other departments time to be able to review. Same as when we're publishing legal notice. They get a couple weeks to be able to review things. So, what amount of time do you think would be sufficient for you to prepare updated plans and additional information for this project?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: Well, I can act on it as soon as tomorrow, you know, on my end. And then I'm at the mercy of the people that have to redraw, redo the site plan, right? And make alterations to it, and amendments. Am I on track?

Mr. Phoenix: I mean, yes, but I mean you're also in control of some of that schedule as well. Yeah, well as, as the person paying their bills. So yeah, as soon as I'm asking you what do you, because I'm not going to schedule this for a month out and then you come back in in a month and say they didn't gimme all my stuff. So, I need to know from you what you think would be an adequate amount of time to connect with your professionals, get that work done and get it turned into us. What would make you comfortable?

Mr. Sotiropoulos: In all due respect, Ray, I don't know if I call the surveyor tomorrow and ask him to, he's the one that has to redo the site plan, I don't know what that person's book looks like. So, he might say, Mike, we can turn it around in one day. It might be a week, but I would, I would guess 10 to 12 days I should have that notation made on a, an amended site plan, 10 or 12 days. Or I could shoot for a week and then call Josh's office back tomorrow and say, it's not gonna be a week, it's gonna be two weeks. And if that's okay with you guys.

Mr. Silva: I'd give yourself a bit more time.

Mr. Phoenix: Why don't we say we'll schedule for about six weeks out.

Ms. Urban: May 28th.

Mr. Phoenix: May 28th at 7:00. Is that what you said, Sue?

Ms. Urban: 7:15.

Mr. Phoenix: So, we'll look at May 28th at 7:15 with the understanding that the information will be turned into town hall no less than three weeks prior and then it can go out for review. We'll

have to, you know, continue to that time anyway. But we will plan to not necessarily take any action at that session unless the stuff is turned in prior to that. Does that work for everybody?

Mr. Silva: Yes.

Ms. Maio: Thank you so much.

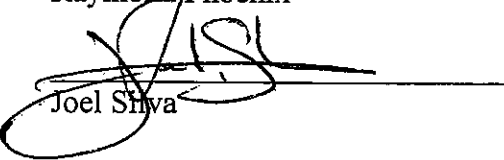
Mr. Phoenix: So, I'll entertain a motion to that effect to continue to May 28th at 7:15 PM with the understanding that we will be discussing the matter related to anything that's submitted at least 21 days prior to that.

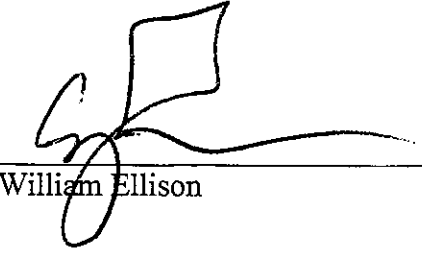
Mr. Silva: **SO MOVED.**
SECOND Mr. Ellison.
4-0 in Favor.

The public hearing was continued until May 28, 2026, at 7:15 p.m.

APPROVED:



Raymond Phoenix

Joel Silva

William Ellison

su

Documents: Master application; waiver request; comments from town boards/departments; letters from abutters; Site plan – 648 Chapin Street Ludlow, MA (March 25, 2026)

(Documents pertaining to this hearing are available for viewing in the Planning Board Office during regular business hours).