

**Planning & Development Standing Committee**  
**Wednesday, August 18, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**-Minutes-**

**Present: Chair, Councilor Val Gilman; Vice Chair, Councilor Jen Holmgren; Councilor Barry Pett**

**Other Councilors Present: Councilor Sean Nolan**

**Also Present: Clerk of Committees, Sherry Karvelas**

**Applicants: Elizabeth Gibeley Panagos and Ron Nordin**

This meeting was conducted remotely through ZOOM  
All votes conducted by ROLL CALL

**Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.**

**Councilor Gilman** announced consistent with Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. The public may not physically attend this meeting but every effort will be made to allow the public to view and listen to the meeting in real-time and participate when necessary. If you are calling in on a phone you can press Star 9 (\*9) to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or device, there is a “raised hand” button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options to be recognized to be speak.

**Councilor Gilman** announced the names of the P&D Committee members in attendance (Councilors Holmgren, Pett and herself), Councilor Nolan and City staff who were attending via Zoom.

***1. Special Event Permit Application: Request for street closures for a ceremony on Shore Road on September 25, 2021***

**Summary of Discussion:** **Beth Gibeley Panagos** stated she and her fiancé, **Ron Nordin**, were planning a wedding for Saturday, September 25, 2021, at 4:00 p.m. for approximately 130 guests at their home at 43 Shore Road in Magnolia. **Mr. Nordin** added that their property was on both sides of Shore Road including a strip of property by the ocean where they planned on holding the ceremony and was requesting, for safety reasons as guests would be crossing back and forth across Shore Road, to divert through traffic from Hesperus Avenue to Fuller Street away from that section of Shore Road. **Mr. Nordin** stated that they had spoken to the residents in the homes affected by the requested closure and had received their permission.

**Councilor Gilman** asked the **Clerk of Committees, Sherry Karvelas**, to share the informal map that the applicants had submitted:



to the community with food and monetary donations. **Members of the P&D Committee** agreed to suspend the Rules of Procedure to allow more discussion on this matter before offering a motion.

**Councilor Pett** again expressed concern about approving a road closure for a private event that did not benefit the community. He expressed his gratitude to the applicants for their commitment within the community, but stated he was opposed to setting a precedent for permitting a road closure for a private event. **Councilor Pett** offered alternative suggestions to the applicants including clear and polite signage near the event and hiring a police detail. There was further discussion regarding police details. **Councilor Gilman** added that she had spoken to the Assistant Police Chief regarding police details, and stated all details were paid at a four-hour minimum and further stated that if the detail was for a shorter time period for the event it had a better chance of being filled. The applicants were made aware that they were responsible for hiring a police detail.

The following motion was moved by **Councilor Gilman**, seconded by **Councilor Holmgren**:

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: To permit a street closure to through traffic in the area of 43 Shore Road between #58 Shore Road to #39 Shore Road on Saturday, September 25, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m., for the purpose of a private wedding ceremony with the following conditions:**

- a. **Applicant is responsible for providing a police detail during the time of road closure;**
- b. **Applicant must provide and post clear signage for a temporary route around the area of the street closure, specifically Hesperus Ave to Fuller Street;**
- c. **A formal traffic plan, in addition to signage, must be submitted to the Gloucester Police Department for review two weeks before the event;**
- d. **Applicant must officially notify abutters of street closure with details of traffic plan at least a week before the event;**
- e. **Applicant must allow enough space for emergency vehicle access in the area of the street closure;**
- f. **Applicant is aware that the area is open to walkers and bicyclists;**
- g. **All parking ordinances in the area must be adhered to.**

**Councilor Holmgren** stated she understood the matter from both points of view, including both the applicants' and **Councilor Pett's** concerns. She stated she appreciated how invested in the community the applicants were, but further stated the event was a private event and was also concerned about setting a precedent. She stated she would vote to refer this matter to the full City Council so every councilor would have an opportunity to weigh in on the matter.

**Councilor Pett** stated he could not support a road closure for a private event that did not benefit the community due in part to the concern of setting a precedent and also due to the restriction of vehicle access to the Magnolia Pier. He again stated that if the road closure was not approved if the matter went before the full City Council that he felt confident that the applicants would be able to work with the Assistant Police Chief to ensure a successful and safe event via a police detail. **Mr. Nordin** inquired about the precedent as, he stated, their property extended to both sides of Shore Road. **Councilor Gilman** explained that private roads had statutory public access.

**Councilor Gilman** stated she would be voting in favor of the matter. She stated the applicant had spoken to the abutters on that section of road and stated she was comfortable with a brief, one-hour detour. She further stated the applicants had asked for a longer timeframe, but had edited their request. **Councilor Gilman** asked **Councilor Nolan** to speak to the access of the Magnolia Pier. **Councilor Nolan** stated there were two parking spaces at the pier that would be affected by a road closure and agreed that pedestrians and bicyclists should be allowed access. He stated public money was used to maintain private

roads (and gave the example of plowing the road in the winter) which in turn allowed for public use of the road. **Councilor Nolan** agreed that the matter should come before the full City Council.

**Councilor Gilman** suggested the possibility of a sunset clause so the full City Council could revisit the matter for future applicants for the feasibility of street closures for private events with statutory public access, which would require a public hearing to receive public input on the matter of road closures for private events. **Councilor Holmgren** stated she was hesitant to support a sunset clause.

**Councilor Gilman** offered an amendment to the original committee recommendation:

**MOTION TO AMEND COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to AMEND the Committee Recommendation by ADDING “recommend that the full City Council” after the Planning and Development Committee.

**Councilor Pett** wished to clarify that a positive vote on the amendment was to send the matter before the full City Council and did not mean that the committee recommendation was a positive recommendation. **Councilor Gilman** confirmed. **Councilor Gilman** added that the matter, with Council President Steve LeBlanc’s approval, would be brought before the full City Council at the Tuesday, August 24, 2021 meeting.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Gilman, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 1 in favor, 2 opposed (Holmgren, Pett), to recommend that the full City Council permit a street closure to through traffic in the area of 43 Shore Road between #58 Shore Road to #39 Shore Road on Saturday, September 25, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m., for the purpose of a private wedding ceremony with the following conditions:

- a. Applicant is responsible for providing a police detail during the time of road closure;
- b. Applicant must provide and post clear signage for a temporary route around the area of the street closure, specifically Hesperus Ave to Fuller Street;
- c. A formal traffic plan, in addition to signage, must be submitted to the Gloucester Police Department for review two weeks before the event;
- d. Applicant must officially notify abutters of street closure with details of traffic plan at least a week before the event;
- e. Applicant must allow enough space for emergency vehicle access in the area of the street closure;
- f. Applicant is aware that the area is open to walkers and bicyclists;
- g. All parking ordinances in the area must be adhered to.

**MOTION:** On a motion by Councilor Pett, seconded by Councilor Holmgren, the Planning & Development Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Submitted by: Sherry Karvelas, Clerk of Committees

**Documents submitted at the meeting:** None.

**Meeting Recording:** <http://gloucester-ma.gov/1097/Past-Remote-Public-Meetings>