

# THE BEDFORD CITIZEN

## **Amy Lloyd – Candidate for Planning Board**

*Incumbent and Caucus Nominee*



### **Events:**

No events scheduled

### **Contact information:**

617-623-3979

[amy\\_lloyd@hotmail.com](mailto:amy_lloyd@hotmail.com)

## **Candidate Q&A – February 18, 2016**

### **What major challenges do you expect to face during the next three years?**

Most of the major challenges we currently grapple with will continue to confront us into the next few years. The Planning Board has taken a proactive approach to meeting these issues head-on.

Traffic remains an enduring problem. In addition to requiring all new developments to provide pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, the Board is drafting a set of Transportation Demand Management regulations to help mitigate some of the commuter congestion in the industrial zones. The regulatory requirements for the ever increasing number of residential real estate developments consumes much of the Planning Board and staff's time, and will continue to do so. And of course our efforts to craft significant updates and changes to Bedford's outdated zoning bylaws – business *and* residential – will remain a focus as well.

**Beyond changing zoning bylaws, how can the Planning Board strengthen the character of Bedford's built environment, sharpen a vision for Bedford's village center and invigorate the Great Road?**

To anyone who has read the announcement that Planning will be seeking funds at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting to completely “renovate” Bedford’s business zoning, it may come as no surprise that zoning issues are the focus of my attention right now. The reason we are asking for this appropriation is precisely because we feel that the business district bylaws are inadequate and should be extensively updated.

Bedford has recently completed a number of intensive and constructive self-evaluation processes – the Great Road Master Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the Bike-Pedestrian Master Plan. To be frank, I believe that the townspeople’s vision *has* been expressed and while there will certainly be refinements as we go on, now is the time for implementation and getting on with the work that needs to be done. And transforming our business zoning to align with these plans is an absolutely essential tool in achieving our goals. Furthermore, because Bedford’s current business zoning is largely a relic of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century suburban “strip-mall and sprawl” type land use, the economic re-invigoration of the Great Road also largely depends upon significant zoning change.

So perhaps the blunt answer to the question ‘how can the Planning Board strengthen the character of the built environment, sharpen a vision for the center, and invigorate the Great Road, *aside* from changing zoning’ is, it essentially can’t.

The Board uses – and will continue to use – every means at its disposal to guide and influence new and re-development to fit as harmoniously as possible within its neighborhood, but that guidance is only as strong as the underlying zoning that regulates every decision that we make. When larger or potentially controversial projects are proposed, we strongly urge, but cannot require, the owner to conduct public meetings early in the process to gather input and gain trust. Site Plan reviews allow us to scrutinize every aspect of the site layout around a building, but does not permit the Board to control the architecture of the building itself. Special Permits carry greater regulatory authority, and the Board gives a great deal of consideration of how the project can best fit into and benefit the town. But in every scenario, the zoning determines basic attributes such as height, setbacks, density, types of use and mixes of use.

Bedford has a unique asset in that our business districts are along a walkable corridor near the center of town, rather than out on a remote highway, and I would like us to grasp this opportunity to craft our zoning to strengthen us economically and better express our individual personality.

## **2016 Citizen’s Caucus Statement**

It has truly been a privilege to serve on the Planning Board for the past three years. I suspect that most people think our work consists primarily of approving – or not – subdivisions and

shopping centers, and this is certainly a large part of what we do. But I consider our deeper and more critical obligation to be that of stewards. The work I do on the Planning Board affects the health and wellbeing of this community not just now, but far into the future. And I take that responsibility very seriously.

These last three years have been busy, productive, occasionally frustrating, and always stimulating. When I started on the Planning Board, work on the Comprehensive Plan was in its final stages. At its completion, the Board quickly began to prioritize then implement its suggested actions. That work continues today and will guide our initiatives into the future as well. I've long been concerned about our aging business zones and the negative impact that has on residential tax rates so I'm pleased that the citizens passed the packet of industrial zoning amendments that the Board brought to Special Town Meeting in 2014. That work continues too, because this March, we will again put before the voters an ambitious series of proposed industrial zoning amendments that will bring our industrial districts into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Economic revitalization is critical to maintaining our tax base, but preserving our historic resources and the physical character of our neighborhoods is critical to maintaining our unique identity. This is why the Planning Board will also be bringing to the voters in March an amendment that will adjust our residential height regulations, helping new construction to better fit into our existing neighborhoods and bringing them more in line with regional standards.

Three years ago, I first ran for the Planning Board because I was interested in the issues that the board confronts. What I didn't quite realize at the time was just how much I'd love the work we do – even the hard parts. As a child, I worked alongside my father and grandfather in our family's small construction business. Dinnertime conversations in typically centered around topics of business development, historic preservation and land-use in my small hometown. And these early experiences left me with an abiding interest in all aspects of planning, design, and architecture.

I feel very fortunate to serve on Bedford's Planning Board, and I would be grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve for another term. Thank you so much.