

**PLANNING BOARD
RECORD OF MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS
January 15, 2008**

The Planning Board of the Town of Weymouth held a public meeting on Tuesday, at 7:30pm at McCullough Building, Whipple Center Conference Room, 182 Green Street, Weymouth, MA.

Present: Walter Flynn, Vice Chairperson
Sandra Williams, Clerk
Mary Akoury
Frank Hawkins

Not Present: Paul Hurley, Chairperson

Staff: James Clarke, Director of Planning & Community Development
Robert Luongo, Economic Development Planner

Recording Secretary: Janet Murray

Walter Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Discussion/Decision

On the application for Preliminary Determination of Eligibility to adopt the provisions of the Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District Program (M.G.L. Chapter 40R) for a district known as the Clapp Memorial Smart Growth Overlay District at 203 Middle Street, Weymouth, MA

Mr. Clarke read from a list of notes from previous meetings covering a number of the issues discussed. He stated that he would like to get a sense of where the Board would like to go with this process. He noted that the public hearing was closed at the last meeting.

Mrs. Williams stated that she attended the tour of the church in Norwood that was redeveloped under this process. This development has low income units. She noted that there was a situation where it appeared that it was an “inside job” as to who got the units. She believes that Weymouth residents should get first shot and there should be a lottery, above reproach, to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

Mrs. Williams stated that she believes the affordable units should be affordable in perpetuity.

Mrs. Williams noted that the neighborhood is made up of many multi-family units.

Mrs. Williams questioned the proposal to rent some of the units until they are sold; she would like to see the units remain strictly owner occupied.

Mrs. Williams noted that there was a ladder at the Norwood site that was not tied down and was unsafe. She wants to ensure that OSHA regulations are adhered to and also that the project be under the Responsible Employer Ordinance (REO).

Mr. Hawkins agreed with what Mrs. Williams had said. He stated that he is not comfortable with this proposal and putting more housing units in Central Square. He noted that the town has met its affordable housing numbers through 40B. He did not see a need for 40R.

Mrs. Akoury noted that the newspaper this week stated that the Community Preservation Act would be underfunded. She expressed concern that the promised money from 40R and 40S would not be forthcoming.

Mrs. Akoury noted that many comments were made regarding the physical environment and the integrity Jackson Square has not been addressed by the town. She is concerned about this in regards to Central Square.

Mr. Flynn noted that there seems to be an increasing negative attitude in the town towards affordable housing. He commented that there are state requirement in regards to affordable housing and the town cannot rest on meeting this requirement solely through land use percentages.

Mr. Flynn expressed concern regarding the density. The current proposal is for 46 units. He suggested that a smaller number of units be considered.

Mr. Flynn commented that he is concerned about a conversation he overheard regarding a parent stating that her children did not live in Weymouth because they could not afford to buy a house.

Mr. Clarke noted that this is the start of a long process with multiple steps. He stated that the Board will be giving information to the Mayor so that she can review the project and then decide if the town wants to approach the state to request approval for the 40R zoning proposal. He noted that the 40R zoning proposal needs to go through the Town Council and the Zoning Board of Appeals before any proposal can go forward.

Mr. Clarke noted that this building has historical value and he noted that this needs to be preserved while still finding a new use for the building.

Mr. Clarke noted that many of the residents seemed to have a willingness to consider the proposal.

Mr. Flynn asked if the Town Council would have a public hearing prior to the Mayor submitting the proposal. Mr. Clarke stated that this public hearing would happen later in the process. He also stated that this is a preliminary request for eligibility for a 40R district.

Mrs. Akoury asked if the preliminary process could be cancelled. Mr. Clarke stated that he did not see why the process couldn't be stopped. He pointed out that there were additional steps after the initial request.

Mr. Clarke stated that he would get more information on the payments. He noted that the town would know prior to taking action whether funding was available for the one-time payments. He stated that the 40S funding for education is not as clear cut.

Mrs. Akoury stated concern regarding the fact that there are several three (3) bedroom units planned and how this could impact the school system.

Mr. Flynn stated that the amount of the payments is not a significant source of income to the town.

Mr. Flynn stated that there had been interest by some residents to consider the Clapp Memorial Building as a Community Preservation Committee project. He noted that these residents did not present anything at the meetings.

Mr. Flynn stated that the building could be considered as an alternative to the Libby Field library.

Mr. Flynn commented that the money is not the biggest issue as the town's need to have affordable housing available to its residents.

Mrs. Akoury stated that this process needs to continue to be processed through.

Mrs. Akoury suggested that the one-time money be used specifically to benefit the neighborhood of Central Square.

Mr. Flynn disagreed with this idea.

Mrs. Akoury stated that this process is about making recommendations.

Mr. Luongo stated that the Board should consider if this doesn't pass what other uses this property could be used for. He stated that he did not think that the town would have an interest in the property given the town's financial situation.

Mrs. Williams asked if there were any taxes paid on this property. Mr. Luongo stated that this property does not pay taxes.

Mr. Clarke said he would wait for December minutes and then sit down and prepare a document, either pro or con, which includes the narratives from the previous meetings' minutes and tonight's minutes. The consensus of the Board was to proceed with this process.

Councilor DiFazio asked if the report could outline the alternative development possibilities for the site if this particular proposal does not happen. Mr. Clarke agreed that this would be included in the description of the site.

Councilor DiFazio noted that there would be a meeting at the end of January with the Cecil Group. He was unsure of the date and suggested that Mr. Jennings, the attorney for the developer, be contacted to confirm the date.

Mr. Flynn stated that the Cecil Group in this project is the agent for the developer

Performance Guarantees

Seabury Street - bond adjustment

The work is proceeding, and the base coat and retaining wall are in; this is a request to reduce the bond from \$59,350 to \$43,250

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hawkins to reduce the bond for Seabury Street from \$59,350 to \$43,250 and was seconded by Ms. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Ashley Circle – bond adjustment

A lot of the work is done; this is a request to reduce the bond from \$43,000 to \$3000.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Hawkins to reduce the bond for Ashley Circle from \$43,000 to \$3000 and was seconded by Ms. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Update and Schedule for Capital Improvement Plan

The Board discussed the Capital Improvement Plan schedule. The dates were set as follows: 1/24/08, 2/5/08, 2/12/08, 2/14/08 and 2/19/08.

Adjournment

At 8:35 pm, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Mr. Hawkins to adjourn and was seconded by Mrs. Williams, and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Walter Flynn, Vice-Chairperson

Date