

WEYMOUTH PLANNING BOARD
Town Hall – Council Chambers
August 7, 2012
Minutes

PRESENT:

Walter Flynn, Chairman
Sandra Williams, Vice Chairman
Mary Akoury, Clerk
Dave Chandler
Paul Hurley

ALSO PRESENT:

James Clarke, Director Planning & Development
MaryEllen Schloss, Conservation Administrator

Chairman Flynn called the August 7, 2012 meeting of the Planning Board to order at 7:00PM.

PRESENTATION OF OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

Mr. Clarke stated he and Ms. Schloss have been working on this plan for a long time now; this is a final draft. The Open Space and Recreation Plan is an action plan which provides the blue print for funding (Chapter 9). Mr. Clarke would like to tie the Open Space and Recreation Plan into the Capital Improvement Plan; he feels it will be useful for CPC for project approvals and decisions.

The first public meeting will be held on November 9, 2012 at the McCulloch School.

Mr. Clarke reviewed some recent (2010) census numbers for the Town. Mr. Clarke and Ms. Schloss presented a powerpoint on plan highlights.

- Land area 17 1/2 square miles
- Population 53,743
- Asian 3.2%
- African American 3.1%
- Female 52%

Ms. Schloss stated all waters in the Town are considered impaired; also there are invasive species in Whitman's Pond. These are the challenges from being such an urbanized town.

Survey Results:

Favorite Parks

- Great Esker
- Webb State Park
- Pond Meadow

Likes

- Waterways, rivers
- Peaceful
- Natural open space

Improvements

- Better parks
- Maintenance of parks

Table 9-1
Seven-Year Action Plan

Mr. Clarke stated the town has a park system that is over taxed. It is the town's top priority in this Open Space and Recreation Plan.

1. Give top priority to the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing parks, playgrounds, and indoor recreation facilities
2. Improve access to major open space areas where it is currently insufficient, including the Bradford Torrey Bird Sanctuary, Cavern Rock Park, and Conservation lands adjacent to Wampum Street. Create access points with parking and signage, create and maintain trails and trail signage, create trail maps.
3. Improve the public's awareness of passive conservation and recreation opportunities. Provide information, including trail maps, on the town's website.
4. Complete grass/turf field assessment study and begin to implement recommendations.
5. Develop a new plan for the redevelopment of Legion Field that respects the neighborhood while maintaining the property as a community-wide recreational facility. On August 16, 2012 there is a meeting regarding the conceptual plan for Legion Field.
6. Continue to monitor water quality and invasive vegetation in Whitman's Pond and provide public awareness of ways in which to improve water quality.
7. Examine feasibility of developing a river walk or preservation corridor along the major rivers within Weymouth.
8. Protect views along and from the coastline. Propose identification of Ocean Street, Regatta Road and Fort Point Street as a scenic waterfront route.
9. Increase access to indoor recreation facilities by creating a fair pricing structure that recognizes needs of organizations primarily serving low-income or disadvantaged populations.

10. Continue to participate in national "Walk to School" programs. Create recreation facilities that appeal to all age cohorts of Weymouth's population. Evaluate public ways as exercise venues when looking at sidewalks and bike lanes.
11. Incorporate Weymouth's historic resources, including the Abigail Adams Birthplace and the Old North Cemetery and Emery Estate, into the open space system.
12. Develop a way finding program for Weymouth's historic resources including signage.
13. Develop management plans for each major town-owned facility. In addition to planning for the routine maintenance of the facility and grounds, long-term capital needs and repairs can be identified and scheduled.
14. Establish an oversight committee or some similar entity to monitor progress in implementing this Open Space and Recreation Plan and report to Town Council on a regular basis.
15. Protect views along and from the coastline. Examine view shed protection regulations to control the impacts of new development.

Mr. Clarke asked for comments from the committee; please send any and all comments to the Planning Department.

The draft of the Open Space and Recreation Plan will be send to the State soon; hoping to move forward for calendar year 2013.

Mr. Chandler stated his comments:

1. Weymouth High School's water supply for the fields is well water.
2. There is no mention of the airbase sewage; this should be addressed somewhere.
3. CPC law change regarding recreation should be added into the plan.
4. Section 5, page 6 - Open Space Plan for airbase in 1999, has not been updated since 2005.

Ms. Akoury asked how were the goals set via priority. Ms. Akoury clarified her question stating that drinking water is #6, it should be higher. When she read over the plan she realized what a great community Weymouth is; why only reading about the problems. Ms. Akoury suggested the plan be presented as goals; the younger families in the town will help sustain the town.

Mr. Chandler stated that the beginning of the report gives a great history of the Town of Weymouth. This history should be mandatory summer reading for all school children and history teachers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda D'Angelo

Back River Water Shed Association

Ms. D'Angelo stated that the history of the town was presented thoroughly and thoughtfully. The importance of the Back River cannot be over stated enough. The Kibby family was generous to work with the Town of Weymouth; more signage stating this fact would be welcome and is needed. Also, the Herring Run has need for restoration.

Valerie Sullivan

Healthy Way Coordinator

Ms. Sullivan stated it has been great to work with Mr. Clarke and Ms. Schloss on this project. The Town of Weymouth has a lot to offer with active and passive recreation, wonderful parks, etc. Ms. Sullivan commends Mr. Clarke on all of his work with the parks and on getting all the different departments to work together is just wonderful.

Mayor Susan Kay

Mayor Kay stated she agrees with Ms. Akoury's statement on the idea of selling Weymouth. Weymouth was just voted top town in the nation. Boston Magazine did an article to promote Salem called *Simply Salem*, Weymouth could use a similar article written about it.

Mr. Clarke stated the timeline for the Open Space and Recreation Plan is as follows:

- Finish summary
- Public comments added to document
- Check on priority, make sure items are listed where they should be
- Transmit document to State in September 2012
- Approval by end of calendar year 2012

Chairman Flynn stated that CPC has discussed a need to update its Needs Assessment. There will be increasing competition on CPC funds because of the new law regarding the recreation project allowance.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON MEASURE #12 098 **REQUEST TO REZONE CLAPP MEMORIAL BUILDING FROM** **RESIDENTIAL R-1 TO OPEN SPACE (POS)**

Mr. Chandler stated he did view the meeting on television and is aware of the measure and is willing to discuss and vote this evening.

Mr. Hurley stated he thought it was a good presentation.

Mr. Hurley made a MOTION TO APPROVE the REQUEST TO REZONE CLAPP MEMORIAL BUILDING from R-1 to OPEN SPACE. Mr. Chandler SECONDED the MOTION. Discussion.

Mr. Hurley stated if this motion passes it would not be just for this project. If denied, the land still stays open space, correct? Chairman Flynn stated yes, that is correct.

Ms. Akoury stated she thinks Mr. Deady's plans are to enhance the neighborhood.

Ms. Williams asked will the units be owner occupied.

Chairman Flynn and Mr. Clarke drafted a memorandum to Town Council from the Planning Board regarding the Clapp Memorial Property - Rezoning Recommendation:

The property owner, John Deady, has requested a rezoning of the Clapp Memorial Building property from Residential R-1 to Open Space (POS). The request was submitted to the Town Council as Measure # 12 098 and the Town Council and the Planning Board held a joint public hearing on the measure on July 16, 2012. The hearing was closed that night and the matter was taken under advisement.

The property under review is located at 203 Middle Street, Sheet 22, Block 291, Lot 9, the total land area is 102,366 square feet and has frontage on Broad Street (83') and Middle Street (260'). The Clapp Memorial Building is a four story structure, including a rear walkout basement that was built in 1903. The building is situated facing Middle Street and is designed in the Classical Revival - Beaux Arts Style. The building is a contributing structure in the Central Square National Register District.

The Davis Bates Clapp Memorial Building was built by the Clapp family in 1903 to honor a son who passed away early in life. The building was used by the community as a boys club and was overseen by a Board of Trustees. The building contained a stage, gymnasium, and indoor running track. The building was affiliated with the South Shore YMCA into the 1980's and was then sold. The western portion of the property was developed as elderly housing and the building was reused by religious organizations.

The current owner proposes to convert the Clapp Building to residential condominiums and build four, two and three unit condominium buildings behind the building. The current zoning Residential R-1, does not allow for the proposed use. The applicant has requested rezoning to Open Space (POS) which allows for multi-family use through the special permit process.

The town revised the Open Space zoning in 1981 to allow for the reuse of public and quasi-public properties. This was a direct result of the numerous school closings caused by declining enrollment and Proposition 2 1/2. The special permit process allowed the town to regulate the redevelopment of sites that had unique and historic structures and were situated in areas that required special review and attention. The special permit process through the Board of Zoning Appeals requires a public hearing and notification of abutters that will provide a thorough review of all issues associated with the proposed reuse of the building and property.

The Planning Board concurs that the Davis Bates Clapp Memorial Building and grounds qualifies as a quasi-public structure because of its boys club, YMCA, and religious use. The Board agrees that preservation of the National Register structure through adaptive reuse furthers the town's Master Plan goals. Therefore the Board agrees with the applicant's request and recommends favorable action on Measure # 12 098.

VOTE: The MOTION PASSED: it was unanimously voted TO APPROVE.

OTHER BUSINESS

FORM A - REGATTA ROAD

Mr. Hurley made a MOTION to APPROVE the Form A for Regatta Road. Mr. Chandler SECONDED the MOTION. It was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

FORM A - CLIFF/CANACUM/DRIFTWAY

Mr. Clarke stated this is a land swap; all parties agree.

Mr. Hurley made a MOTION to APPROVE the Form A for Cliff/Canacum/Driftway. Ms. Williams SECONDED the MOTION. It was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Planning Board will be held on September 18, 2012 at 7:00PM.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:15PM, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Mr. Hurley to ADJOURN and was SECONDED by Ms. Akoury. It was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Callbeck
Recording Secretary

Approved by:

Walter Flynn, Chairman

Date