

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Town Hall Council Chambers

November 18, 2004

Present: Colin McPherson – Chairperson
Greg Shanahan, Michael Smart, Paul Leary.

Not Present: Joseph Connolly

Also Present: Sue Kay-Councilor at Large-James Wilson – Chief Financial Officer, James Clarke – Director of Planning and Community Development

Recording Secretary: Janet Murray

Chairperson McPherson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

LENNAR'S PROPOSAL FOR THE REUSE OF THE FORMER SOUTH WEYMOUTH NAVAL AIR STATION

The Chairperson noted that this presentation is about what Lennar is proposing for the site. This is for the town's review.

James Clarke stated that there is a review process in place. This process is as follows:

1. State and Federal review
 - Navy
 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - Community development
 - Department of Environmental Protection
 - Housing and Community Development
 - Metro Area Planning Council (MAPC)
 - Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC)
 - Massachusetts Highway Department
2. South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation Board
 - Weymouth has two members on this Board
 - Town liaisons
 1. James Clarke, Weymouth
 2. Dan Crane – Abington
 3. Tony Matera – Rockland
3. Lennar Corporation
 - Interact with public through community meetings
 - Questions from public
4. Town of Weymouth Department Coordination
 - Meet internally every 2 weeks
 - Discuss impacts
5. Weymouth's Town Council
 - Interaction with Council through Planning Department
 - News briefs and/or memos.

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Mr. Clarke noted the following issues are currently under review:

- School population
- Peer review – a draft scope of work to be analyzed. This will cost about \$140,000.
- Potential zoning changes – a working group will evaluate this. Text changes will need to be made to the Town's bylaws.
- Financial incentives thru 40R.

James Wilson spoke about the financial impacts of the plan. He noted at this point the plan is conceptual. There are components of this plan that still need to be reviewed such as assessing price point units and land assessment value. The foundation of this project is based on the original reuse plan approved by the Navy and legislation.

Tri-Town's responsibilities included documenting information and presenting it to the town. The town is still awaiting further information on how the property will be taxed for both commercial and residential lots. Mr. Wilson stated that he would like to see the financial analysis completed by the end of December. He needs to ensure that the numbers on Page 14 of the proposal can be supported by detail.

Paul Leary asked about a blended tax rate for commercial and residential property. Lennar has asked for community input about when will plans reflect changes/adjustments. He noted that there have been many meetings but the presentations are all the same.

Councilor Mathews stated that he would like to see a breakdown of housing, including affordable housing, and a breakdown of the number of students per housing type (multi-family vs. single family).

Councilor McPherson noted that Lennar is asserting that this development will have a lower impact on schools because the majority of the housing will be one or two bedroom units. He also noted that \$5000 per unit of housing does not seem to be a realistic price point.

Councilor Smart requested a copy of the 40R law. This law is currently being written. The law's intent is to encourage and promote new affordable housing units with overlay zoning and a streamlined permitting process.

Councilor Smart questioned where the money from this goes. The money goes to the Corporation. This incentive would create a revenue stream from which operational expenses, and reserve fund capital could be drawn. The bottom line would be available to the community.

Councilor Kay also questioned where the incentive money would be going. She also questioned who would conduct the peer review. MAPC and OCPC will conduct a peer review of the traffic flows. Tri-Town will conduct its own reviews with the coordinating group. This review would include a review of zoning, land use control, and the master plan. She noted that in this case redundancy is good.

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Councilor Leary questioned why the town, and not Lennar, are paying for Jim Clarke's time on the Coordinating Committee.

Councilor McPherson asked who decides what project will be approved. Mr. Wilson stated that Lennar presented its formal conceptual plan to the Tri-Town Development Corporation on September 24, 2004 as well as to members of the communities. Tri-Town has 90 days to submit a formal proposal to the towns per the contract. Tri-Town is responsible to each of the three towns (Weymouth, Rockland, and Abington). They are charged with reviewing Lennar's proposal and then presenting their recommendation to the three towns.

Mr. Wilson noted that according to the DDA contract, the towns must respond (take action) within 90 days from the submission by Tri-Town of a formal proposal. The contract could be extended with the approval of both parties. This is according to the legislation.

After Mr. Wilson has completed his review of this conceptual plan, he will make a recommendation to the Mayor and the Mayor, in turn will make a recommendation to the Town Council.

Councilor Shanahan asked about what will happen once Tri-Town submits their formal recommendation to the towns. It was noted that the towns would then have to vote either for or against the proposal. No amendments are allowed.

Councilor Smart stated that the number of bedrooms per unit is still unclear.

Councilor Kay asked if the state would review or analyze the project. The state will have its departments review each portion of the proposal since that is their expertise.

Councilor Leary was concerned that although housing has been discussed at length, there has not been any talk of job creation.

Councilor Smart questioned the economic feasibility of the commercial aspect of this proposal. The proposal calls for Biotech, Research and Development, and Pharmaceuticals.

Councilor McPherson asked what control would Weymouth have over zoning if the proposal were approved. Weymouth has two members on the Tri-Town Board. The Tri-Town Board would be constrained by the Master Plan. Any significant changes must come back to the town for approval.

Councilor Leary noted that the zoning is currently under the control of the town. He also questioned the need for the legislation to be amended as the current legislation was put in place specifically for the Mills Corporation.

Councilor Matthews stated that he would like to see more senior housing as there is currently a waiting list for senior housing in Weymouth. This need should be part of the housing analysis.

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Councilor Smart questioned how the voting would work for this proposal. It was noted that the conceptual plan would require a majority vote but the zoning changes would require a 2/3 vote. It was noted Lennar has rights if the plan is not approved within the time frame.

Councilor Kay expressed concern about what impact the DDA contract would have on the town.

Councilor McPherson noted that the area is a special use district and would be controlled by Lennar. Any permitting fees would go to Lennar if they have jurisdiction.

Councilor Leary noted that the current reuse plan allows senior residential housing only.

Mr. Wilson stated it is unclear when the next meeting will be held. He will inform the Committee when he has more information. He is looking for more information on the following:

- School enrollment study
- Number of bedrooms per unit
- 40B
- 40R incentive/copy of law
- Job creation and office space
- DDA changes in regulatory procedures

The Economic Development Committee plans to schedule a joint meeting with the Budget Management Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:30pm a MOTION was made to adjourn, was seconded, and VOTED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approved by: _____
Councilor McPherson, Chairperson