

**REVISED
PLANNING BOARD
RECORD OF MINUTES AND PROCEEDINGS
July 22, 2008**

The Planning Board of the Town of Weymouth held a public meeting on Tuesday, July 22, 2008, at 7:30pm at McCulloch Building, Whipple Center Conference Room, 182 Green Street, Weymouth, MA

Present: Paul Hurley, Chairperson
Walter Flynn, Vice Chairperson
Sandra Williams, Clerk
Mary Akoury
Staff: James Clarke, Director of Planning & Community Development
Recording Secretary: Janet Murray

Chairman Hurley called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Discussion of Town Development Issues

Mr. Clarke stated that he would like to have a discussion of a number of town development issues such as the Master Plan, zoning, and Chapter 40R.

Mrs. Akoury stated that she believes that the town needs to develop infrastructure and support services before more growth and development takes place. She stated that she is thinking specifically in terms of public safety, schools and other problems that happen with growth.

She asked what is the percentage of the student population receive free lunches and/or are in special education programs. She noted that these numbers directly impact the town's budget.

Mrs. Akoury asked how many vacancies currently exist in the Weymouth Industrial Park and in some of the villages such as Jackson Square.

Weymouth is a diverse town, but at the same time we want to blend and balance the town. The strength of a community is its families. Attracting these families requires the town to have a strong, well developed infrastructure.

Mr. Flynn stated that a lot of time was spent on the Master Plan Steering Committee addressing the area of affordable housing. He stated that he gets the impression that people do not understand what affordable housing is. He stated that it is not subsidized or low income housing. He pointed out that it is for those who make 80% of the median income of the town.

Weymouth's is median income is \$87,000 thus 80% is \$57,000.

Mr. Clarke stated that the median cost of a home labeled affordable is \$150,000. These are mostly condominiums.

Mr. Hurley pointed out that a lot of the water infrastructure was improved in the past few years because of Department of Environmental Protection consent orders.

Mr. Hurley stated that he has seen the development in Weymouth decline from subdivisions of 30 or 40 lots to subdivisions of 2 or 3 lots.

Mr. Clarke stated that Weymouth is looking more at redevelopment rather than development.

Ms. Williams stated that she agrees with what the other members have been saying. She also is concerned about density. She sees condominium complexes going up on very small parcels of land. She also expressed concern about keeping the traffic in town moving.

Ms. Williams stated that she wants to see community standards maintained. She pointed out that a developer for the town of Braintree from Texas had the site raided by the Attorney General's Office. The developer had employed illegal immigrants, didn't pay minimum wage, and allowed employees to sleep at the site. She stated that she does not want to see this type of incident happening in Weymouth.

Mr. Clarke stated that he agreed that the town needs to have standards but we must ensure that the standards are allowed by law. He also stated that the standards need to be enforced.

Mr. Flynn stated that commercial development opportunities are becoming depleted. He stated that raising property taxes is not a popular decision.

Mrs. Akoury stated that in speaking with others, when asked what they like about Weymouth and what they don't want: she stated that the response was that Weymouth has a good school system; didn't like condominium complexes on small lots; didn't like the increase in traffic. She also stated that many wanted to preserve the neighborhoods to maintain the small town feel.

Mr. Clarke stated that the town's Master Plan focuses on village centers. He stated that he believes that bringing more residents into the village centers is helpful. He did point out that sometimes this does not work as planned. He pointed out a specific proposal on Sea Street in North Weymouth. This proposal renovated an older house and also added six units. He then pointed out that on an adjacent lot the site did not work out as well. He also pointed out a development on the corner of North and Sea Street that did not work out well, either.

Mr. Clarke stated that his staff is working to put together design standards for developers to use.

Mrs. Akoury stated that growth cannot drain the resources of the town. Until we can address and build in the needed resources, we need to watch how we grow.

Mrs. Akoury suggested that the town review how growth has impacted the town in areas such as schools, recreation, and other services.

Mr. Clarke stated that he has not seen a surge in school enrollment when a residential development is built.

Mr. Flynn asked the question, what kind of growth and how much of it can the town tolerate.

Mr. Hurley stated that if people want to maintain the small town feel, they need to remember to shop in the village centers.

Mr. Clarke stated that he could arrange to have a representative from the School Department speak to the Board regarding the effect of growth and development on the system.

Mrs. Akoury asked what the occupancy rate was at Avalon Ledge. Mr. Clarke stated that he would find out. She asked what percentage of the units is affordable/subsidized. Mr. Clarke stated that 25% of the units at Avalon Ledge are affordable/subsidized housing, in perpetuity. There are approximately 303 units in the complex.

The Board had no comments regarding 40R redevelopment.

Columbian Square Design Plan

Mr. Clarke gave an overview of the conceptual intersection design for Columbian Square with a traffic light solution. The plan looks to improve safety for vehicles moving through the square, protect pedestrian safety with bump outs and shorter crosswalks, improve the street scapes, preserve a large portion of the parking and to impose no parking regulations along Pleasant Street in the morning during peak hours – 8am – 10am; after this time parallel parking will be allowed.

The town is planning to formalize a Parking Management Association made up of merchants. He stated that there is an ad hoc group currently in place. The plan attempts to make connections from the hospital into the square and improve the entrance to Stella Tirrell Park.

Mr. Clarke stated that burying utilities was explored but it is extremely expensive at approximately \$4 million. This will most likely have to be scaled back due to the town's current financial difficulties.

He stated that a façade guideline as to maintaining the original building designs is recommended. Mr. Clarke stated that he reviews and signs off on all sign applications. He reviews them for color, location, size, etc.

The project will be phased: I A, I B, II, III. Phase 1A costs \$1 million for the municipal parking lot, 1B costs \$2 ½ million for the Columbian Square area. Phase II is for down Pleasant Street and Stella Tirrell Park and Phase III is for Columbian Street and the area around the Fogg Library.

Mr. Clarke stated that he is looking at grants and other agencies to help fund this project. He also stated that \$2 million has been allocated from LNR. It is hoped that the town will receive these funds beginning next spring

Mrs. Akoury asked about on street parking on Pleasant Street for Fogg Library. The spots have been eliminated and will be used as a right turn lane from Pleasant Street onto Columbian Street.

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There is potential for onsite parking for the Fogg Library when it re-opens. The library's re-opening would increase the pedestrian traffic in the square area

Form A

Sheet 53, Block 582, Lot 4 – Fulton School

This Form A is for the separation of the former school building from the playing fields, an access easement to the playing fields and to the water treatment plant, and easements for water and utilities.

This is a private project to develop senior housing units.

Ms. Williams made a MOTION to ENDORSE the Form A for Fulton School and was seconded by Mrs. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Sheet 48, Block 542, Lots 11 & 13 – Wampum Street

This Form A is located off Forest Street. This was approved by the Board of Appeals for one buildable lot.

Mr. Flynn made a MOTION to ENDORSE the Form A for Wampum Street and was seconded by Mrs. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Sheet 5, Block 13, Lots 2, 9 – Neck Street

This Form A is for the reconfiguring of the lots. Mr. Clarke stated that this Form A endorsement has no standing as to zoning compliance.

Ms. Williams made a MOTION to ENDORSE the Form A for Neck Street with the condition that this endorsement has no standing as to zoning compliance and was seconded by Mrs. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Other Business

Minutes – 4/18/06

A MOTION was made by Mr. Flynn to accept the minutes from the 4/18/06 Planning Board Meeting and was seconded by Ms. Williams.

A correction was made to the minutes as follows: Page 3, 1st paragraph, line 3, 19 inches (") should read 19 feet (').

The motion as AMENDED was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

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Appointment to the Community Preservation Committee

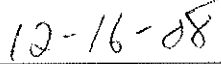
Ms. Williams made a MOTION to APPOINT Mr. Flynn to the Community Preservation Committee and was seconded by Mrs. Akoury and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Adjournment

At 9:05 pm, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Mr. Flynn to adjourn and was seconded by Mrs. Akoury, and UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.



Paul Hurley, Chairperson



Date