

REPORT OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Includes Reports for the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District Commission, Design Review Board, Fair Housing Committee, Historic District Commission, and Planning Board

This report summarizes the activities of the Town of Wellesley Planning Department during the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Planning Staff

The Planning Staff consists of a part-time secretary/technical assistant, a planner, an assistant planning director, and a planning director. The planning director is appointed and supervised by the Planning Board. The Planning Staff serves as professional staff to the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District Commission, Design Review Board, Fair Housing Committee, Historic District Commission, and Planning Board. The Planning Staff also assists the Community Preservation Committee, Historical Commission, and Housing Development Corporation with certain activities, as approved by the Planning Board.

During the reporting period there were vacancies in the assistant planning director and planner positions, however, the vacancies were filled during the same period.

Website and Social Media

The Planning Department and the boards staffed by the Department maintain websites accessible from the Town's main web address at www.wellesleyma.gov. Websites include updated information on the regular activities and special projects of the Department and boards. Additionally, within the reporting period, a Twitter account and Facebook page were established for the Department; these are regularly updated with information regarding meetings of boards and special projects managed within the Department.

Citizen Inquiries

The Planning Department Office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The Staff assists citizens with questions concerning zoning requirements, the various application types and processes, and the scheduling of meetings with staffed boards. Frequently people are referred to the Planning Department by other Town departments. It is estimated that the Planning Department handles approximately 100 such inquiries per week with approximately 25% of these involving in-office visits.

Special Assignments

In addition to work on many of the special projects and studies initiated by the boards staffed by the Department, staff also assisted and served on the following groups during the reporting period: North 40 Steering Committee, Transportation Advisory Group, Wellesley Square Initiative, Bicycling Committee, 900 Worcester Street Study Committee, and Housing Plan/Policy Study Group.

Meetings & Applications Processed

During FY15, the Planning Department staff attended fifty-eight (58) meetings of boards staffed by the Department (information on the number of meetings held by each board is detailed below). Additionally, staff attended sessions of Town Meeting, meetings of the Board of Selectmen and Zoning Board of Appeals, and meetings associated with special projects, such as the North 40 and 900 Worcester Street.

During the reporting period, the Planning Department staff processed 106 new applications for the boards staffed by the Department (information on the number of applications considered by each board is detailed below), not including the preparation of recommendations to the Planning Board for the 80 applications made to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Additionally, the staff managed aspects related to seven (7) Project of Significant Impact Special Permits (included 3 associated Inclusionary Zoning payments), two (2) Subdivisions, seven (7) Review of Adequacy applications, and seven (7) Large House Review applications approved by the Planning Board in previous fiscal years. In total, the staff of the Planning Department managed 209 applications during FY15.

Street Construction Bonds

In certain circumstances, the Planning Board requires the submittal of surety bonds to ensure the completion of studies and/or infrastructure work associated with projects. The requirement for these sureties is generally associated with Review of Adequacy, Large House Review, Project of Significant Impact, and Subdivision projects. At the end of the reporting period, the Planning Department was holding \$385,663.46 in bonds, comprised of \$94,216 associated with seven (7) Review of Adequacy projects, \$10,922 associated with two (2) Large House Review projects, \$107,525.46 associated with one (1) PSI project, and \$173,000 associated with two (2) Subdivisions.

Project Review and Submission Fees

The Planning Department collects project submission fees associated with the application types noted herein; fees offset the cost of copies, mailings, advertising, and staff time associated with the review and preparation of reports, plans and other materials. The Planning Department received \$43,215 in submission fees in FY15, collected for the following application types:

- Design Review Board: \$5,540
- Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District: \$200
- Historic District Commission: \$175
- Planning Board:
 - Review of Adequacy: \$2,400
 - Large House Review: \$11,350
 - Project of Significant Impact: \$20,050
 - Approval Not Required Plans: \$3,200
 - Scenic Road: \$300

REPORT OF THE DENTON ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

This report summarizes the activities of the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District Commission during the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Background

Article 46A, *Neighborhood Conservation Districts*, and, more specifically, Article 46B, *Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District*, establishes the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District and authorizes the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District Commission ("DRNCDC") to review and approve certain construction projects affecting properties and structures within the District.

Membership

The DRNCDC consists of five (5) members and at least two (2) alternates, appointed by both the Historical Commission and Planning Board; one (1) member and one (1) alternate shall be designees of the Historical Commission and one (1) member shall be a designee of the Planning Board. Three (3) members and one (1) alternate shall be residents of the District, to be appointed by the Historical Commission. When reasonably possible, the DRNCDC shall include an architect, architectural preservationist, or landscape architect.

The membership of the DRNCDC for FY15 was as follows:

- Tucker Swan, Chair (District Resident)
- Janet Giele, Vice Chair (District Resident)
- Herbert Nolan, (District Resident)
- Tucker Swan, (District Resident)
- Helen Robertson (Historical Commission Designee)
- Joel Slocum (District Resident, Alternate)
- Eugene Cox (Historical Commission Designee, Alternate)

The Planning Board Designee position was vacant during FY15.

Meetings and Project Reviews

Generally, the DRNCDC meets only when needed to review applications. During FY15 the DRNCDC held five (5) regular meetings during which four (4) applications were consider for alterations affecting two (2) properties within the District.

Other Business

During FY15, members of the DRNCDC assisted the Standish Road NCD Study Committee in the review of the establishment of a conservation district for the

Standish Road neighborhood. Additionally, the DRNCDC discussed reviewing the District's Design Guidelines, expected to be initiated in FY16.

REPORT OF THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

This report summarizes the activities of the Wellesley Design Review Board during the period July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Background

Section XXII, *Design Review*, of the Zoning Bylaw, authorizes the Design Review Board ("DRB") to review and make recommendations on all applications for signs and other identification devices, awnings, antennas, certain retaining walls, and projects defined as Minor and Major Construction projects in Section XVIA, *Project Approval*, of the Zoning Bylaw. Section XVIIID, *Large House Review*, of the Zoning Bylaw, authorizes the DRB to review and make recommendations to the Planning Board on all applications for single family home projects that meet or exceed the Large House Review thresholds. The DRB is also responsible for providing a recommendation to the Planning Board for Wellesley Square Commercial District Density Special Permit.

Membership

The DRB consists of five (5) regular members and three (3) alternate members, appointed by the Planning Board as specified in Section XXII, *Design Review*, of the Zoning Bylaw. The membership of the DRB is required to consist of a member of the Planning Board or designee of the Board who is a resident of the Town, a person qualified by training and experience in architecture who shall be a resident, a person qualified by training and experience in landscape design and landscape architecture who shall be a resident, a person qualified by training and experience in the art or design professions who shall be a resident, and a person recommended by one or more of the Town associations representing Wellesley retail business owners. Alternate members shall meet one or more of these qualifications.

The membership of the DRB for FY15 was as follows:

- Johnathan Law, RLA, Chair (resident; training and experience in landscape design and landscape architecture)
- Robert Skolnick, Vice Chair (representative of Wellesley retail business owners)
- Ingrid Carls (resident; training and experience in art or design professions)
- Helen Robertson (resident; training and experience in architecture)
- Robert Broder, AIA (resident; training and experience in architecture)
- Sheila Dinsmoor (Alternate; resident; training and experience in art or design professions)
- Howard Raley, AIA (Alternate; resident; training and experience in architecture)

- Amir Kripper, AIA (Alternate; appointed by the Planning Board on April 6, 2015; resident; training and experience in architecture)

Meetings and Project Reviews

During the reporting period the DRB held twenty-one (21) meetings during which sixty-six (66) projects were reviewed, as follows:

- Major Construction Projects (Site Plan Review; recommendation to ZBA): 8
- Minor Construction Projects (recommendation to Inspector of Buildings): 17
- Signs, by-right (recommendation to Inspector of Buildings): 23
- Signs, Special Permit (recommendation to Zoning Board of Appeals): 5
- Antenna (by-right and Special Permit): 5
- Retaining Wall (by-right and Special Permit): 1
- Large House Review (recommendation to Planning Board): 7

Major Construction Projects reviewed by the DRB include Site Plan Review applications for Schofield Elementary and the DPW Salt Shed, as well as applications for the Linden Volkswagen, buildings at Babson College, townhomes on Pleasant Street, modifications to the Belclare/Wellesley Inn project, alterations to a building at Wellesley College, and alterations to a building at Dana Hall.

The Board continues to publish and have available its agenda, meeting minutes, sign regulations, design guidelines, project updates, as well as other related matters, on the Town's website and in the Planning Department. The DRB's regular meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Great Hall.

REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY FAIR HOUSING COMMITTEE

This report summarizes the activities of the Wellesley Fair Housing Committee during the period July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Background

On October 25, 1983, the Board of Selectmen designated the Town's Planning Director as the Fair Housing Officer and committed to establishing a Fair Housing Committee, both of whom would work to develop a Fair Housing Plan (adopted March 27, 1984, revised June 12, 1984). The Fair Housing Committee was established on or before July 1, 1984 and, per the Fair Housing Plan, the Committee is to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Under the adopted Fair Housing Plan, the responsibilities of the Fair Housing Committee are:

1. To review and approve or modify and approve the Implementation section of the Fair Housing Plan.

2. To periodically update the Implementation section of the Fair Housing Plan.
3. To evaluate and analyze any overconcentration or under representation of minorities in the Town and to prepare recommendations to address inequities that may exist.
4. To design and implement an audit and reporting system that will measure the effectiveness of the Fair Housing Program, and to suggest any improvements.
5. To keep other town boards and the public, including banks and real estate brokers, informed of fair housing law and amendments to the law.
6. To generally promote public awareness of the Town's responsibilities under the Fair Housing Program.

Additionally, the Committee investigates complaints regarding housing discrimination.

Membership

As indicated in the Fair Housing Plan, the Committee is to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen and shall consist of five (5) members to include:

1. A designee recommended by the Wellesley Housing Authority;
2. A designee recommended by the Planning Board;
3. A designee recommended by the Public Housing Tenants Association;
4. A real estate broker/developer or banker to be named by the Board of Selectmen; and
5. A designee recommended by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or if that agency declines to make a recommendation, a designee shall be recommended by the Fair Housing Officer.

The last appointed members of the Fair Housing Committee were John G. Schuler, Gretchen T. Underwood, and Peggy Lawrence Levin. These members were last reappointed in 2002 for two-year terms through 2004, however, Mrs. Underwood and Mrs. Lawrence Levin have since moved from Wellesley. Michael D. Zehner, as Planning Director, served as the Fair Housing Officer in FY15.

Complaint Intake

No complaints were received during the reporting period.

REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

This report summarizes the activities of the Wellesley Historic District Commission during the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Background

The Commission has the powers and duties of Historic District Commissions in accordance with the Historic Districts Acts, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Membership

Per Article 18 of the Wellesley Town Bylaws, the Wellesley Historic District Commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. One member shall be a member of the Wellesley Historical Society, one a member of the American Institute of Architects, one a member of a Board of Realtors, and one a resident or property owner in the Historic District; however, members from each category need not be appointed if such specially qualified persons are not available.

The membership of the Historic District Commission for FY15 was as follows:

- David Giangrasso, Chair (Member of Board of Realtors)
- Lisa Abeles, AIA, Vice Chair (District Resident/Property Owner; Member of American Institute of Architects; Member of Wellesley Historical Society)
- Edwina McCarthy
- Eric Cohen
- Carolyn Morris
- David Smith (District Resident Property Owner)
- Barry Friedman (District Resident/Property Owner; appointed November 2014)

Meetings and Project Review

During the reporting period, the Historic District Commission held six (6) meetings during which seven (7) applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, one (1) modification to a previously issued Certificate of Appropriateness, and one (1) Categorical Determination of Appropriateness were reviewed.

The Commission continues to publish its agenda, meeting minutes, Historic District regulations, as well as other related matters, on the Town's website. Additional materials may also be obtained in the Planning Department.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD

This report summarizes the activities of the Planning Board during the period of July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 ("FY15").

Board Membership

As of July 1, 2014, the membership of the Planning Board was L. Deborah Carpenter, Jeanne S. Conroy, Neal Glick, Catherine Johnson, and Sara Preston. At their Annual Retreat in June 2014, the Board elected Ms. Preston as Chair, Ms. Carpenter as Vice Chair, and Ms. Johnson as Secretary; these members served in these roles from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

On March 3, 2015, an election was held, with Mr. Glick running against Harriet Warshaw; Ms. Warshaw was elected to a 5-year term.

The Board's Associate Member position was vacant through the course of FY15; the position has been vacant since June 2013.

Meetings

During the reporting period the Planning Board held 26 meetings; fourteen (14) of these meetings included public hearings.

Regional Liaison

A Planning Board member is a member of the Metrowest Regional Collaborative (MWRC). The Town's membership in MWRC is vital to keeping the Board and the Town informed on State legislation and programs affecting our community, and to participate collectively with neighboring communities in promoting our interests and needs before State agencies. Catherine Johnson served as the Board's appointee to the MWRC during the reporting period, being reappointed for FY15 at the Board's Annual Retreat on June 23, 2014.

Special Town Meetings

Special Town Meetings were held on October 27, 2014 and January 20, 2015. The Planning Board did not sponsor articles for these two meetings. Related to the business of the Planning Board, the October 27, 2014 Special Town Meeting included articles concerning the North 40 and 900 Worcester Street; the January 20, 2015 Special Town Meeting concerned the North 40.

Annual Town Meeting

The Planning Board sponsored eight (8) articles for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting, all amendments to the Zoning Bylaw. Four (4) of the articles (Articles 27, 28, 29, and 30) proposed to re-codify portions of the Zoning Bylaw; however, based on concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee and other members of the public, the Board tabled and sought no motion on these articles. Rather, the Board presented a letter to Town Meeting indicating that they would initiate an effort to appoint a Re-Codification Subcommittee to investigate the re-codification of the Zoning Bylaw. For similar reasons, the Board sought no action on Article 32, which would have established setback requirements for residential driveways.

The Planning Board pursued motions on the remaining three (3) articles (Articles 31, 33, and 34). The sponsored articles were as follows:

Article 27 - Re-Codification of Preamble of the Zoning Bylaw

The Article proposed to re-codify the Preamble of the Zoning Bylaw as Section 1., *General Provisions*, and to amend the Zoning Bylaw by deleting Section XXVI., *Adoption/Amendment Procedures*, Section XXVII., *Existing Bylaws Not Repealed*, and Section XXVIII., *Invalidity*, and by incorporating the existing provisions of those sections within re-codified Section 1., *General Provisions*. The Planning Board sought no motion on this Article at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 28 - Re-Codification of Section IA of the Zoning Bylaw

The Article proposed to re-codify and restructure Section IA., *Definitions*, of the Zoning Bylaw as Section 1A., *Definitions*, and to amend the section by adding, deleting and/or revising provisions for the use and meaning of certain terms and constructions, and to further amend the Zoning Bylaw by updating references throughout from Section IA to Section 1A. The Planning Board sought no motion on this Article at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 29 - Re-Codification of Section I of the Zoning Bylaw

The Article proposed to re-codify Section I., *Establishment of Districts*, of the Zoning Bylaw as Section 1B., *Establishment of Districts & Zoning Map*, and to amend the section by clarifying the classification of general and overlay zoning districts, and to further amend the section by adding provisions addressing the zoning of properties that were divided by a boundary of two (2) different zoning districts. The Planning Board sought no motion on this Article at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 30 - Re-Codification of Section II of the Zoning Bylaw

The Article proposed to amend Section II., *Single Residence Districts*, of the Zoning Bylaw to clarify that the Single Residence area districts function as separate zoning districts. The Planning Board sought no motion on this Article at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 31 - Outdoor Dining

The Article proposed to amend Section IXC, *Wellesley Square Commercial District*, and Section XI, *Business Districts*, of the Zoning Bylaw to authorize outdoor dining in connection with Restaurant Uses with the issuance of a Special Permit. The Article was approved by Town Meeting, and subsequently by the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Article 32 - Driveways

The Article proposed to amend the Zoning Bylaw to establish regulations for the location of driveways on residential properties. The Planning Board sought no motion on this Article at the 2015 Annual Town Meeting.

Article 33 - Internally Illuminated Window Signs

The Article proposed to amend Section XXIIA, *Signs*, of the Zoning Bylaw, to regulate illuminated signs inside of building, not attached to the glass of a window or door, but within one (1) foot of such glass, as window signs. The Article was approved by Town Meeting, and subsequently by the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Article 34 - Historical Information Signs

The Article proposed to amend Section XXIIA, *Signs*, of the Zoning Bylaw, to exempt certain signs containing historical information, as sanctioned by the Wellesley Historical Commission; generally, this amendment was intended to allow the Commission's historic home plaques. The Article was approved by Town Meeting, and subsequently by the Massachusetts Attorney General.

Special Projects, Studies, and Comprehensive Plan Implementation

In 2007, the Planning Board completed the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan. Since the completion of the Plan, the Board has been working towards implementing goals, objectives and projects recommended by the Plan. A copy of the Comprehensive Plan can be found online at www.wellesleyma.gov.

In the past year, the Board and Staff have worked on several tasks, some of which are outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, and others being special projects and/or efforts initiated by the Board. These include the following:

COMPLETED IN FY15

Off-Street Parking Study

The Comprehensive Plan recommends seeking to implement new parking management tools in Town parking lots, encouraging housing development where feasible in commercial districts, and strengthening zoning regulations and guidelines to ensure continuity of Town character. In efforts to improve out of date off-street parking provisions, the Planning Board hired Howard/Stein-Hudson in April 2013 to begin an Off-Street Parking Study to investigate ways to maintain the village character of the commercial districts while bringing the parking provisions up to date with innovative provisions such as shared parking, valet parking, and parking management. The Consultant completed work on the Study towards the end of the FY14 and provided the Board with a Final Report for consideration. On November 3, 2014, the Planning Board accepted the Final Report with modifications. The Planning Board has decided to reevaluate the recommendations contained in the Final Report in the future.

Noise and Outdoor Lighting Study

The Board initiated a Noise and Outdoor Lighting Study in the Spring of 2014 (FY14), appointing a multidisciplinary committee to study the issues associated with

excessive noise and light, and ultimately present recommendations to the Board. Final recommendations were presented to the Planning Board in January 2015 and a letter to affected Town departments and boards with several recommendations was sent in June 2015. This Study is considered complete, however, the Planning Board may consider seeking amendments to the Zoning Bylaw based on the Study in the future.

Wellesley College North 40

Wellesley College announced its intent to sell several “fringe” properties in the Spring of 2014. Staff and members of the Board were appointed to a Town Committee tasked with studying the viability of the Town’s acquisition and eventual use of the property. While initiated in FY14, the Study continued into FY15. In the Fall of 2015 the Committee recommended that the Town acquire the property, which was approved by Town Meeting in January 2015.

Wellesley Commercial Initiative

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town try to preserve the character of village commercial districts and maintain a diverse array of independent businesses. With the most recent economic downturn there was a need to attempt to reinvigorate the Town’s primary village, Wellesley Square. Therefore, the Wellesley Square Initiative was formed in 2011 and included members of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Executive Director, and Planning Staff. The mission of the Initiative was to evaluate Wellesley Square and to begin coordination between the Town, merchants, and property owners. In May and June of 2013 the initiative was expanded to include Wellesley Hills. Since the concept was expanded from Wellesley Square, the Town renamed the initiative as the Wellesley Commercial Village Initiative. The intent of the initiative is to take a measured, collaborative approach to pursuing current problems, identifying solutions, and taking actions that are beneficial to the commercial villages of Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, Lower Falls, Linden Square, and the Fells, its stakeholders: merchants, property owners, residents, and the Town. There were no meetings associated with the Wellesley Square Initiative in the reporting period, and given current successes and a lack of vacancies in the commercial villages, the Initiative as previously coordinated is generally viewed as complete.

Update/Revision of Rules & Regulations

During the reporting period the Planning Board considered amendments to the Tree Protection Bylaw Rules and Regulations and the PSI Rules and Regulations. The Board approved an amendment to the Tree Protection Bylaw Rules and Regulations to ensure that funds contributed to the Tree Bank could not be returned to an applicant once a Certificate of Occupancy had been issued for a project. Additionally, the Board amended the PSI Rules and Regulations to allow for the Planning Board to request that Town review departments utilize an outside consultant for peer review of Town projects.

ONGOING

Zoning Bylaw Re-Codification

A recommended goal of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Bylaw Re-Codification generally involves the rewrite of the Zoning Bylaw to modernize and correct the regulations. Efforts have been made in recent years with the assistance of a consultant to prepare a complete rewrite; however, the Planning Board found this effort to be complicated. The Planning Board prepared several articles for the 2015 Annual Town Meeting to re-codify eight (8) sections of the Zoning Bylaw, as a first step in re-codifying the entire Bylaw. However, there were several concerns expressed about this process. The Board decided to seek no motion on these articles at Town Meeting and committed to establishing a Re-Codification Subcommittee to investigate and make recommendations on the re-codification of the Zoning Bylaw. This effort was continued into FY16.

Route 9 Enhancement Study & Plan

During FY14 the Planning Board determined that they wished to conduct a study and develop a plan for the Route 9 corridor, generally due to a MassDOT project to resurface the roadway in FY18. As authorized by the Board, Planning Department Staff applied to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for District Local Technical Assistance ("DLTA") funding in the Spring 2015 to complete Phase 2 of the Study & Plan, with Phase 1 being funded by Department funds. MAPC awarded \$25,000 to \$30,000 in DLTA funds in May 2015 and the Board entered into a contract with MAPC and Metrowest Regional Collaborative staff in June 2015 to execute Phase 1 of the project. This project continued into FY16.

Transportation Advisory Group

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town actively participate in regional transportation planning and explore the possibility of a shared-use shuttle bus system. On September 14, 2011, the study titled "Developing Fixed-Route Bus Service in the Town of Wellesley, A Report and Recommendations of the Public Transportation Working Group" was released. The two key findings of the report were to recommend the Town join the Metrowest Regional Transportation Authority (MWRTA) and to establish a Transportation Advisory Group to respond to transportation related questions and concerns and to advise the MWRTA representative should the Town join. The Board of Selectmen voted to join the MWRTA in January 2012, and the TAG was created to begin work on finding funding opportunities to create fixed route bus service in Wellesley. In March of 2013, the Town was awarded a Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Federal Grant in the amount of \$400,000 to fund a pilot bus program for two years. In October 2013 the MWRTA began service of the route (Route 8). The Planning Director and continues to work with the Transportation Advisory Group to assess the status of and look for opportunities to improve and extend MWRTA service to other parts of the Town.

900 Worcester Street Committee

With the Town's acquisition of the 900 Worcester Street property, the 900 Worcester Street Committee was formed to pursue the development of the property for recreational uses. The Planning Director and a member of the Planning Board serve on the Committee. During the reporting period the Committee determined to pursue a public-private partnership to develop the property, released a Request for Information from private entities potentially interested in developing and operating the recreational uses and reviewed the responses received. At the end of the reporting period a Request for Proposals from interested developers was forthcoming and the project continued into FY16.

FUTURE INITIATIVES

In the upcoming fiscal year the Planning Board intends to continue work on the Route 9 Study & Plan and on Re-Codification, and members of the Board will continue to assist with the work of the Transportation Advisory Committee and 900 Worcester Street Committee. Additional projects to begin in FY16 include

Zoning Map Update

Review and consider updates and corrections of Zoning Map based on inconsistencies with previous Town Meeting actions.

Housing Consistency & LHR Study

Study Zoning regulations pertaining to residential construction to determine the impact on character and consistency, and identify amendments, if necessary.

Comprehensive Plan Update & Collaboration with BOS on Town Strategic Plan

Begin to develop a plan and budget for the update of the Town's 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan (Master Plan).

Stormwater Workshop

Coordinate a workshop on stormwater regulations and goal-setting for Town board members and staff.

Washington Street Resurfacing - Phase 3

Continue to advocate for the position that alterations to the streetscape of Washington Street need greater and more detailed review by the Planning Board, Design Review Board, and the public.

Rezoning of NRC Properties

Work with the Natural Resources Commission in pursuing the rezoning of NRC-owned properties used as parks or conservation land from the current Single Residence District zoning to Conservation zoning.

Review and Update of Rules & Regulations

Conduct complete reviews of the Subdivision, PSI, and Review of Adequacy Rules & Regulations and determine whether updates are necessary.

In addition to any projects that extend beyond FY16, the Board anticipates working on Design Guidelines for the Historic District, Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District, and general DRB-administered guidelines in FY17.

Application Review

A significant portion of the Planning Board's work involves the review of applications for development. These include Special Permits for Projects of Significant Impact and Inclusionary Zoning, Review of Adequacy for projects on unaccepted ways, Scenic Road Review, Large House Review, actions under the Subdivision Control Law, and the consideration of recommendations for projects under review by the Zoning Board of Appeals. Of these application types, the Board reviewed 29 total new applications during the reporting period, not including the 80 applications reviewed as part of the ZBA process, or the consideration of matters pertaining to applications acted on by the Board in previous fiscal years.

Projects of Significant Impact

The Project of Significant Impact (PSI) regulations mandate an assessment of the impacts of developments on the Town's infrastructure. Under this provision, any new project exceeding 10,000 square feet of floor area, and building renovations exceeding 15,000 square feet for a change of use, requires the issuance of a Special Permit by the Planning Board. The Planning Board is authorized to approve a project if it deems that there are adequate municipal services available. If the services are not adequate, an applicant may propose off-site improvements (e.g. street and sidewalk improvements, new storm water drainage systems) to correct the inadequacy and/or to ensure that the development does not overburden the roads and other municipal facilities. The cost of necessary mitigation is borne by the applicant.

During the reporting period, the Planning Board considered one (1) new PSI for a 6-unit townhouse development at 22 Pleasant Street (PSI-14-01), and two reapplications for the previously denied (October 2013) Tolles-Parsons Senior Center project.

The Planning Board approved the issuance of a PSI Special Permit for the townhouse project at 22 Pleasant Street on January 5, 2015.

The first reapplication for the Tolles-Parsons Senior Center was filed in October 2015. Since two years had not passed since the original application had been denied, the Board was required to first consent to the application, and then determine that there had been specific and material changes in the conditions upon which the original unfavorable action was based. While the Board consented to the reapplication, on December 15, 2014, the requisite supermajority of the Board failed to find that there had been such changes. The Town's Board of Selectmen filed an appeal of this action to Land Court. A second reapplication was filed in May 2015. The Planning Board

consented to the reapplication on June 1, 2015. Subsequently, on June 15, 2015, a supermajority of the Board found that there were specific and material changes in the conditions upon which the previous unfavorable action was based, allowing for the Board's consideration of the reapplication based on the PSI standards; however, there were no other actions on this application during the reporting period.

In addition to the above, during the reporting period the Planning Board considered matters pertaining to the following previously issued PSI Special Permits:

PSI-06-01 - Wellesley Inn Site: The Board considered modifications to the site, determining that changes were not material and did not result in an intensification of use.

PSI-08-01 - 978 Worcester Street: The Town, along with the Board, were named defendants in bankruptcy proceedings pursued by the previous owner. The matter was not resolved in the reporting period.

PSI-09-01 - Wellesley High School: As required by the PSI Special Permit decision, a Follow Up Traffic Monitoring Study was produced for the project. The Study was not officially accepted by the Board within the reporting period.

PSI-12-01 - Wellesley Country Club Maintenance Facility: The Board considered modifications to the site, determining that changes were not material and did not result in an intensification of use.

PSI-12-02 - Wellesley Country Club Pool: The Board considered modifications to the site, determining that changes were not material and did not result in an intensification of use.

Inclusionary Zoning

On a motion jointly developed between the Housing Development Corporation and the Planning Board, the 2005 Annual Town Meeting adopted Inclusionary Zoning as a requirement for Projects of Significant Impact in commercial districts. This requirement was extended to residential subdivisions at the 2006 Annual Town Meeting. Triggering projects are required to provide a ratio of affordable housing units based on the size of the proposed development. No projects triggered Inclusionary Zoning requirements during the reporting period.

Review of Unaccepted Streets

The Zoning Bylaw authorizes the Planning Board to determine whether an unaccepted street provides adequate frontage prior to the issuance of any building permits for construction on lots located on such streets. There are 105 unaccepted streets in Wellesley comprising approximately 12 miles of roadway. A number of inadequate ways have been upgraded at no cost to the Town since this provision was adopted.

During the course of the reporting period, the Planning Board reviewed eight (8) applications proposing to build new homes whereupon the above described review

was triggered (there were 2 applications in FY14). The applications reviewed were for properties on Cartwright Road (2), Fenmere Avenue, Granite Street, Laurel Terrace, Pickerel Road, Pinevale Avenue, and Russell Road. The Planning Board granted approval of these applications with conditions requiring certain work to upgrade the conditions of the way and/or to reduce the potential for negative impacts to the ways.

In addition to reviewing these new applications, the Board also received requests during the reporting period to approve completed work and release bonds associated with six (6) Review of Adequacy projects from previous years at Caroline Street, Edgemoor Avenue, Hopkinson Street (2), Lake Road, and Twitchell Street.

Scenic Road Review

There are seven (7) roads in Wellesley that have been designated by vote of Town Meeting as Scenic Roads under the State Act; these include Benvenue Street, Cartwright Road, Cheney Drive, Pond Road, Squirrel Road, Brookside Road, and Waterway/Brookway. The Act grants the Planning Board approval authority, at a public hearing, to review the proposed removal and/or alteration of trees, stone walls or portions of stone walls along any designated Scenic Road.

During the reporting period there were three (3) applications for work on Scenic Roads submitted for the Planning Board's consideration (there were no applications in FY14). One of these, an application by the MLP to install street lights along Squirrel Road at the request of a resident, was withdrawn at the request of the property owner (Natural Resources Commission) prior to the Board's action. The remaining two (2) applications were for 60 and 64 Cartwright Road.

Large House Review

The Planning Board received and reviewed eight (8) new Large House Review applications during the reporting period, however, the Board only acted on seven (7) of these applications during the period (the Board received and acted on 4 applications in FY14). Three (3) of the applications were for new homes (19 Wingate Road, 30/34 Wachusett Road, and 57 Valley Road) and five (5) were for additions (6 Lilac Circle, 21 Seaver Street, 50 Woodlawn Avenue, 21 Albion Road, and 9 Hundreds Circle). The Board approved seven (7) of these applications with conditions, with action on 30/34 Wachusett Road extending into FY16. The Board also considered major revisions for six (6) previously approved projects.

Subdivision Control

There were no new subdivisions submitted for the Board's consideration during the reporting period. Staff, on behalf of the Planning Board, continued its administration of two active subdivisions which are in various stages of development: North Star/Polaris Circle (7 lots) and #15 - 27 Pembroke Road (3 lots). While the Planning Board was provided with updates on these projects, the Board took no action on either subdivision during the reporting period. Additionally, while not submitted during the reporting period, the Board and Staff anticipated the submission of a subdivision plan for an approximately 12 acre property at 135 Great Plain Avenue.

Seven (7) Approval Not Required (ANR) plans were submitted for the Planning Board's review during the reporting period; however, the Board only reviewed six (6) plans, as one was withdrawn prior to Board consideration, and later resubmitted (the Board reviewed seven (7) plans in FY14). Of the six (6) ANR plans reviewed, five (5) of these plans were endorsed by the Board, and one was denied endorsement. One of the plans was a reapplication of a plan that had been denied endorsement by the Board in FY14, resulting in litigation against the Board and the Town; the Board's endorsement of this plan was as directed by the Land Court.

Review of Zoning Board of Appeals Petitions

The Zoning Bylaw authorizes the Planning Board to review and recommend action on all petitions before the Zoning Board of Appeals. Recommendations are made on cases based on planning principles, legal requirements, fairness, maintaining the integrity of the Zoning Bylaw and Map, and what the Board believes to be in the best interest of the Town. The Board submitted recommendations on eighty (80) applications during the reporting period, including 55 special permits, 19 variances, and 6 site plan review applications.