

Approved February 6, 2019

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall
Wednesday, January 16, 2019, 7:00 p.m.**

Those present from the Advisory Committee included Jane Andrews, Julie Bryan, Todd Cook, Rose Mary Donahue, Bob Furlong, Mary Gard, Jeff Levitan, Bill Maynard, Paul Merry, Dave Murphy, Lina Musayev, Betsy Roberti, Tom Skelly and Andrea Ward.

Tom Skelly called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

7:05 p.m. Council on Aging Overview and FY20 Budget

Gayle Thieme, Director of Senior Services, Council on Aging (COA), and Linda Clifford, Assistant Director of Senior Services, were present. Several members of the COA Board of Directors were also present in the audience.

- COA recently completed one year at the Tolles Parsons Center (TPC) – very successful – new users, expanded programs, and new offerings
 - 40% increase in the total number of individuals served by the COA at the TPC from FY17 to FY18
 - 70% increase in social and recreational program offerings
- FY20 budget
 - Developed in collaboration with other boards
 - Main priorities and goals directly related to continued successful operations at TPC and expanding programs and participation
 - In FY20, 28% of Wellesley’s population will be age 60+
 - Budget meets BOS guidelines, with 2.5% increase over FY19
 - Personal services budget will increase 4.6% in FY20 due to:
 - Reclassification of a full-time program/office assistant (Group 47 to Group 49)
 - Reclassification was approved by the Human Resources Board in 11/18
 - Significant increase in fiscal and database duties for this position
 - Proposing addition of a second activities assistant at 10 hours per week
 - Current programming team (one full-time senior activities coordinator and one part-time assistant at 15 hours week) is spread thin
 - In order for COA to grow and expand, the activities coordinator needs time to focus on the big picture and long-term planning, including program evaluation; COA would like to see an expansion of intergenerational programs and a survey
 - New position will assist with program development and with logistics for every scheduled activity; the two activities assistants will ensure that programs run seamlessly
 - Some of the total increases in personal services (approximately \$25,000 increase) are being offset by an additional \$10,000 in grants
 - For FY20, \$43,432 of Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) grant will go towards personal services (\$10,000 more than last year)

- In addition, \$10,000 from the Eastern Development grant will be used for personal services (this is the second of the five years for this grant, which comes from Linden Street development)

A question was asked about the Town having to potentially assume the costs for these additional hours if the grant money is not forthcoming in the future: The State provides the COAs guidance each year as to what to budget per elder in terms of grants; last time any cut was made was \$0.30 per elder one year; increased from \$8/elder to \$12/elder last year; EOEA grant formula based off census and currently still using 2010 census, but 2020 census should result in additional grants since 60+ population has increased in Town; COA has a cushion of \$10,000, even with the offsets in the personal budgets; COA does not assume that Town will pick up the costs; COA has responsibility to look for other funding sources; COA is comfortable with the \$10,000 in reserves.

A question was asked if any of the funds are being used for something permanent, like salary: The Eastern Development agreement specifies that that \$10,000 grant must be used for intra-town transportation services for seniors; specifically offsets transportation wages in COA budget; COA is currently in midst of “deep dive” into transportation, which could result in reduction of personal services devoted to that area.

A question was asked whether the COA has a grant-writing program and what grantmakers look for: COA pursues grants periodically (e.g., Title 3 federal money through Springwell for transportation services and education); New Era Fund (dedicated to TPC FF&E and programs) has a grant application process, and any requests that go through New Era Fund are vetted by COA staff; there are also some broader regional grant opportunities with specific criteria.

- The COA’s FY20 expenses will decrease by 6.73%
 - This decrease is due to EOEA grant offsets; would have been an 11.5% increase without the grants
 - Use of grants allows the COA to print and mail the newsletter, undertake professional development and training, and attend conferences

A question was asked about the kitchen cleaning contract line item and why the Facilities Management Department (FMD) doesn’t do the cleaning: There is a full-time custodian for TPC, but custodians are “hands off” in kitchens in municipal buildings; minimal cleaning needs to date in TPC kitchen since haven’t been preparing or even catering meals in there, just using prepackaged meals; going forward, need for more “heavy duty” cleaning; COA has had conversations with FMD and has been given the names of cleaning contractors.

- Increases in expenses for FY20 include hardware upgrades and software licenses; COA worked closely with IT in the exploration of the online registration system and associated upgrades and on phone system
- Gasoline cost increases are related to an increase in the use of the COA bus

A question was asked about the postage expense increase and whether there is an effort to do more electronically rather than mailing: COA has noticed over the years that there is less mailing and an increase in electronic communication; however, there has also been an increase in the number of communications/letters on certain topics (e.g., transportation); newsletter expenses are carried under the separate “printing and mailing” line item; working group of staff and board is researching what other COAs do in terms of paper vs. electronic communications; with COA clientele, still have a fair number who are paper-dependent; may develop an initiative where people can “opt out” of paper copies for year ahead; will see if this brings costs down.

A follow-up question was asked whether there is a way to find out what portion of seniors in Town only have access to print and are not online: Not sure.

- COA will be piloting/exploring extended hours (welcome breakfasts, spring speaker series focused on target populations)
 - Strong desire among younger, working seniors to use TPC outside of normal business hours
 - Survey will be distributed to get feedback and levels of interest (types of programs and services; days and times of week people are most interested in)
 - COA will partner with Municipal Light Plant to have survey go out with the February electric bills; Survey Monkey will also be used.

A question was asked about COA's position on the use of TPC space for Town board meetings or even as a revenue source from outside groups: COA's first and foremost focus is accommodating COA's own programs and clientele; COA is still interested in growing its own programs; however, COA is keeping track of all inquiries for the use of the space; COA has been able to respond to requests from some Town boards for meeting use during the day; TPC is not open beyond that for civic groups. A follow-up question was asked as to what the logistical considerations are that prevent the use of TPC for meetings now: COA is trying to maximize the use of the building during the day; not a lot of vacant rooms for meetings. An additional follow-up question was asked about the use of TPC after 4 p.m.: Once COA defines what its own evening programming would look like, there might be an opportunity for use for meetings by Town boards on those night(s).

Another question was asked as to why the Town (or other groups) can't use TPC after 4 p.m., even when it's *not* being used by COA for programming: Practice in Town that when there is a public meeting in a building, there must be a custodian and therefore additional custodial costs would result; active discussion between COA staff and board, Board of Selectmen (BOS), etc.; COA's first priority must be to satisfy the already-expressed demand by younger seniors/taxpayers who support programs but can't access them.

A comment was made that when the TPC was under consideration/in design, it was anticipated that rooms might be made available for Town boards to use for meetings; there is a great need for meeting spaces, particular given impending renovation of Town Hall interior.

A suggestion was made that the COA form a sub-committee to investigate opening the TPC for additional meeting use: COA has a working group on policies and procedures; has already collected information from Library and Recreation re: room rental policies, etc.

- COA has polled other COAs and senior centers throughout the state to learn more about extended hours; received more than 70 responses from peer communities
- BOS has asked COA to come back in May with the results of the survey, including the demand for programs and what the programs will look like; BOS is in support of COA interests and extended hours
- FMD FY20 budget will include additional custodial costs to support the extended hours pilot program

A question was asked about social services and whether COA is tracking the number of visits and number of contacts, as there may be a way to better coordinate these services across various departments in Town: COA uses a database to track social service needs; social worker is extremely busy, helps not only seniors themselves but families of seniors trying to coordinate services; social worker also coordinates the bi-monthly interdepartmental group (Police, Fire, Board of Health); strong network in Town.

7:45 p.m. Planning Board FY20 Budget

Catherine Johnson, Chair, Planning Board, and Michael Zehner, Director, Planning Department, were present.

- The Planning Department staff consists of Director, two planners, one part-time planner and a support staff administrative assistant (20 hours per week)
- 87% of the Planning Department budget is for personal services (approximately \$290,000 out of \$333,000)
- FY20 budget is at guidelines, with a 2.5% increase over FY19
- Planning Department works with a variety of boards and provides staff assistance to departments throughout Town (Design Review Board, Historical Commission, and on occasion Zoning Board of Appeals)
- Have taken in more funds than anticipated
 - Funds go to offset staff position hired for demo delay, as well as increased postage and advertising

A question was asked, in terms of overall revenues and expenses, whether the Planning Department makes the Town money: Legally the Planning Department should at most be offsetting costs, not making money; currently revenues generated offset about a third of the Planning Department's budget; actual numbers are in the Department's annual report; approximately \$150,000 in revenues are taken in via various applications.

A question was asked whether Planning is happy with the way the demolition delay bylaw is working: Property owners, building community and Town boards are still learning how it functions, but it is going well after a year and half; the volume of applications has noticeably dropped since August, though seems to be very recent upswing as people get ready for spring building season; Historical Commission starting to understand what justifies a delay and what doesn't; there are still people in the community who want to find ways to work around it; bylaw may not be as onerous as people perceive it to be; applicants telling us that result of the proceeding is a better product.

- FY2020 capital budget includes \$30,000 for a mobility plan
 - Will look at transportation more holistically, including vehicular, bicycle and public transportation
 - Will think about how community needs to evolve with respect to transportation; hope to help with reducing carbon emissions
 - Need is seen for Town organizational structure to look at transportation differently and figure out how to cut down on some of the traffic issues in Town

A question was asked whether this plan will fall under the direction of the new mobility working group: This request preceded the establishment of that group; Planning Board started to talk about what could be looked at and the items that could be implemented from the Unified Plan. The mobility working group has representatives from the Planning Board, other boards, and residents; the group could perhaps steward the mobility plan, if funded.

A question was asked as to how many houses were not preserved under the demo delay bylaw: Will forward exact numbers to Advisory; one of the biggest time commitments with the process (about one-quarter of the time spent administering the bylaw) is review of additions and partial demolitions; bylaw is triggered if more than 50% of the exterior is being affected.

A question was asked whether the Metrowest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) bus routes are expanding and whether they are part of the mobility plan: Yes, they would be part of the plan, just like the MBTA; currently MWRTA runs two lines in Wellesley; Route 1 is the flag down bus on Route 9; Route 8 bus goes to Woodland MBTA station, and that route was recently changed so it now goes by Babson.

A comment was made that there may be additional/other opportunities to fund mobility issues, for example from the 40R project, that can/should be pursued: The Town also receives a share of the state ride share funds and those may be added to this project.

A question was asked whether a new Planning Director has been hired: No. A follow-up question was asked whether, since the FY19 and FY20 numbers reflect the current director's salary, the hiring of a new director could change the budget: Typically, the attempt is to hire just below mid-point.

A question was asked whether the Planning Department has a relationship with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and whether they provide services or support: MAPC is the regional planning agency and they have provided a lot of assistance to the Town; great resource; sub-planning agency (MetroWest Regional Collaborative) has been a good advocate for the Town, as well; Town received a technical assistance grant which helped with the Unified Plan.

A follow-up question was asked if the MAPC support covers the dues: Yes; they also help us leverage state and federal transportation grants.

A comment was made thanking the Planning Department and Board – and in particular the departing Mr. Zehner -- for all their hard work on behalf of the Town, and wishing Mr. Zehner well in his new position in North Carolina.

8:15 p.m. ATM Citizen Petition re: Dexter Road/Wellesley Avenue Rezoning

Attorney David Himmelberger was present on behalf of the petitioning property owners, several of whom were also in attendance: Tim Raeke, 1 Dexter Road; Jane and Richard Kett, 5 Dexter Road; and John and Mary Sullivan, 7 Dexter Road. Also in attendance were Gil and Melissa Dailey, 8 Dexter Road, who oppose the citizen petition. Michael Zehner, Planning Director, and Catherine Johnson, Chair, Planning Board, were also present.

- Petition was brought by a number of citizens who live in the Dexter Road neighborhood and want to rezone this area from the General Residence district to the Single Family Residence district
 - Looks like an attractive single family neighborhood
 - Comes off Wellesley Avenue and significantly abuts Fuller Brook area
- Impetus for this rezoning request was the discovery that the neighborhood was in the General Residence district when a home (8 Dexter Road) was sold and underwent demolition review
 - Absent a change of zoning, a two-family structure could be built on the lot and this would alter the single-family character of the area

A question was asked as to how many properties are in the General Residence district: Nine total; all owners have signed the petition except for 8 Dexter Road and one other.

A question was asked whether Dexter Road is surrounded by the Single Residence district: Washington Street is General Residence, but as you come up from Washington Street through this particular section of Dexter Road/Wellesley Avenue, you continue into all Single Family; across the street is Single Family (Amherst, etc.).

An additional question was asked about zoning on Brook Street, as there are some existing multi-family homes there: A portion of Brook Street is in the General Residence district.

Ms. Johnson spoke to the process regarding this citizen rezoning petition: Planning Board opened a public hearing in July and continued it for a few months; applicants presented to Board; Board has not yet voted on it, but more than likely will produce a report after Planning Board public hearing in February.

Ms. Johnson noted that the General Residence district has been revised twice since zoning bylaw enacted in 1925; all the houses in the proposed revision are single family residences; Town Meeting will be asked to consider this same type of zoning change with two other properties, 148 Weston Road and Delanson Circle, should those projects move forward.

A question was asked as to what happens to the owners of 8 Dexter Road, who have filed an application for demolition and to build a two-family house: Mr. Zehner responded that the owners have only filed to take down the house; the application for the multi-family hasn't happened yet; once an owner receives a delay they can't proceed with demolition for a year and the owners haven't sought a waiver. Even assuming there were no delay in effect, once the petition to rezone the property as Single Family had been filed and notice of a public hearing published in the newspaper, the property is treated as if it has been rezoned, and the owners would be proceeding at their own risk in any building project.

A comment was made that the owners of the property purchased the home on the assumption that they could build something conforming to the General Residence district in which the house is presently zoned.

A question was asked whether the owners of the two properties affected by the petition who have not joined it have been polled as to whether they support it or not: Of the two, one is new to the neighborhood and is verbally supportive of the petition; the other is the owner of 8 Dexter Road, and they are not in support of the petition.

Advisory Committee member Dave Murphy recused himself from further discussion of this issue because he is a trustee of a church in the neighborhood, which owns an abutting property.

A comment was made that the General Residence district by design provides a mix of single family and duplex homes; this is a part of Town that benefits from having alternate kinds of housing; walkability is a factor and being close to the Town center are reasons why this area is in the General Residence district: This has been discussed and is a good concern; the residents believe the homes on Dexter Road do provide diversity to the housing stock insofar as they are more modest homes at the lower end of total living area than found throughout the rest of Town; noteworthy that the condos on Brook Street are valued at \$1.5 million, so not clear that General Residence district is really providing diversity of housing stock, at least in terms of affordability; affordability component is represented by existing housing stock in the neighborhood.

A question was asked about what would prevent the owners of 8 Dexter Road from building a single family home of the same size that the petitioners are concerned about in the case of a two-family home (i.e., 7,500 square feet): Large house review process would be triggered in the case of a single-family home; 3,600 square foot proposal is a trigger in a 10,000 square foot district; haven't seen a 7,500 square foot house approved in such cases; sizes tend to be more in the 4,000 square foot range.

One of the owners of 8 Dexter Road, Gil Dailey, stated that they were drawn to the property as it was zoned General Residence; love the mixture of housing stock and the great neighborhood; disappointed to learn that the other residents were not aware of the zoning; mission of Planning Board is to foster diverse

housing stock, and since General Residence only makes up 1% of the housing stock in Wellesley, this rezoning seems counter to Board's mission; feel they have been targeted unfairly after purchasing the property under one set of zoning.

A question was asked if the owners of 8 Dexter Road intend to live at the property: Yes, that is intention. An additional question was asked as to the owners' interest in building a duplex on the property/living in a multi-family unit: Have not fully determined that that is what we will do, but don't want to limit options.

A comment was made that one of goals of Unified Plan was to encourage a range of housing to attract younger and more diverse families.

There was a question as to what the process would have been if the demo delay were not in effect: The owners likely would have applied for a demo permit and notice; once demo was completed, then the owners would have applied for a permit to construct a single family home or duplex; the building of a duplex would not have triggered another review; a single family home might have triggered large house review; wetlands review is also required.

A comment was made that the General Residence district is a very thoughtful application of zoning involving areas that abut commercial districts and that are close to Town services and transportation; district was drawn distinctly to match those criteria and to take into account natural boundaries such as Fuller Brook Park; need to be sensitive to where there are other opportunities for General Residence zoning to occur; understand petitioners' viewpoint that they would like to continue to enjoy the particular character of their neighborhood; perhaps we need to think about what kinds of regulations/review are required in General Residence district, as most will abut another residential area: What has happened is this area has been built up as single-family; even if this proposal is not passed, most of the other lots in the area are non-conforming and don't have the 10,000 square feet necessary for two-family homes in General Residence district (5,000 square feet required per dwelling).

Mr. Zehner commented that, in his view, this request is shortsighted; he has suggested that the parties work together to develop a solution rather than to react and rezone this area out of the General Residence district.

A comment was made by one of the petitioners that the owners of 8 Dexter Road were not targeted; petitioners wish they had known about the zoning prior to the sale of the property.

A question was asked as to how many duplexes or multi-unit dwellings are in this area: Some townhomes on Brook Street; some two-family Victorians closer to the church.

A question was asked as to how many of the Dexter Road lots are greater than 10,000 square feet: Only three, 7 Dexter, 8 Dexter and 25 Dexter.

A question was asked if the owners of 8 Dexter Road are in the commercial development business: Have renovated houses, but not primary business.

8:56 p.m. Community Preservation Committee FY20 Appropriations

Barbara McMahon, Chair, Community Preservation Committee (CPC), and Allan Port, Vice Chair, CPC, were present.

- At this point, CPC does not have its updated financial plan that will go in the Advisory Report; still waiting to verify numbers
- There are no surprises; revenue from surcharges is where it is expected to be (a little over \$1.2 million) and the state match will be a little higher than anticipated (19%, or \$236,000)
 - CPC is hopeful that there will be some headway on efforts to raise Registry fees, which will then replenish the State fund and allow for matches to return to the 50% level
- CPC consists of nine individuals
 - Representatives appointed from the Planning Board, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, Natural Resources Commission and Recreation Commission
 - At-large members appointed by the Moderator
- CPC has four known recommended appropriations for this year's ATM, to be discussed below; hopeful for a fifth one (softball field) and possibly a sixth one (outdoor space/pollinator garden at the Fells Branch Library) that is currently still in the planning stages
- The four recommended appropriations this year are:
 - The digitization of maps for the Wellesley Free Library Reference Department (\$21,500); no additional costs for the Library to do this
 - Reconstruction of the Duck Pond Bridge (NRC/DPW, \$91,000)
 - This is Phase II; last year CPC funded design/assessment
 - Site work and re-grading will make path and bridge ADA-compliant
 - Rehabilitation of Church Park (NRC, \$30,000)
 - Small square of Town-owned land in front of the Village Church
 - Under direction of DPW (Cricket Vlass), invasive plants and concrete remains of old bus stop will be removed; new plantings will be installed; existing irrigation system will be replaced; brick walkways will be reset and stepping stone path will be added
 - Morses Pond Erosion Remediation, Phase I (NRC, \$150,000)
 - Morses Pond Erosion Study (available on NRC website) was funded by CPC
 - Consultants (Horsley-Witten) prioritized sites around pond; Pickle Point and Pine Point most in need and will be addressed by this phase
 - Anticipate two remaining phases after this, each approximately \$150,000
 - Softball field rehabilitation project is the possible fifth appropriation; will be hearing from project engineering firm (Weston & Sampson) at February CPC meeting
 - Regarding possible butterfly garden at Fells Branch Library, CPC still needs to have conversations with the Library and the NRC

A question was asked when CPC's February meeting will be held: February 13, but not sure CPC will be able to vote on softball project that night; could be done at the eleventh hour, right before ATM.

A question was asked as to whether any projects were turned down this year, and whether the Historical Society came back with additional archiving requests: Many changes at the Historical Society; they are working on their new building; CPC actually is getting some of last year's funding back, as the Historical Society can't do some of the archiving they intended to; hope to hear from them again in the future.

- In the past, CPC appropriated money to the Housing Development Corporation, but starting three years ago, put that on hold; CPC retains the funds in reserves

- Town's Open Space requirement is satisfied via the debt service payment on the North 40
 - Ongoing conversations with BOS and Town Counsel re: North 40
 - Need to make progress to put portion of CPA-purchased land in deed restriction

A question was asked as to the current reserves. Open space reserves for FY18 were \$369,277; historic reserves were \$268,113; and community housing reserves were \$550,565. These numbers will be updated.

A comment was made that the Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a wonderful resource for the Town and a wonderful way to maintain natural and historic resources in Town; CPA has enabled a whole list of projects to be funded that otherwise wouldn't have been (e.g., Fuller Brook): Seventy-nine projects have been fully or partially funded through CPA funds.

9:15 p.m. Liaison Reports/Administrative Matters

Department of Public Works (DPW)/Bill Maynard

- Dave Cohen, current Assistant DPW Director, has been appointed the new Director; Board now looking for new Assistant Director to replace him

Schools/Jane Andrews

- Schools were given a guideline of 3%; the School Committee (SC) decided to aim for a 3.75% increase; the current proposed budget has a 3.9% increase
- Complicating factor this year is a new way of budgeting for special education (SPED); SC will be budgeting only for known out-of-district (OOD) SPED students, and will assume that any spike in OOD placements/SPED costs can be dealt with via stabilization fund/reserves
 - Last year, SC budgeted for 71 OOD placements; actual OOD placements were 58; significant turnback to Town resulted
 - Ongoing discussion within Town Hall re: adding \$500,000 to SPED stabilization fund
- Puzzling piece to the budget is the proposed increase in 12 new FTEs when there are 64 fewer students overall
 - There is a decrease of 69 elementary students, but SC asking for an increase of one section due to rigid class size guidelines
 - There is one section with one student over guidelines

A question was asked whether class size guidelines are established by SC: Yes.

- The Superintendent's cited reason for the increase in FTEs/budget is that general education has suffered and been deferred in recent years and the strategic plan hasn't been initiated
- Several new administrative positions (e.g., Director of Diversity) being proposed; also expanding WMS language arts program and proposing four additional teaching assistants for the global disabilities program at Sprague (increase in number of students who will be joining program)

There was a comment that an argument can be made for each of the added FTEs, but it is hard to see a path that will get the school budget to the 3% guideline. In addition, class size is a complicated situation; sections do drop off over the long term, but in the short term, the decrease in enrollment isn't isolated to one school or one grade; a number of elementary classes throughout the system have gone from 22 students to 17/18 students, but that doesn't result in elimination of sections.

A question was asked whether relaxing the class size guidelines could allow elimination of a few sections: Probably; would need to review numbers; but class sizes are weirdly uniform across the district; a lot of grades have two sections with 17/18 students each.

There was a comment/question as to whether redistricting could happen sooner rather than later.

A question was asked as to the actual dollar difference between an SC budget that is 3% over last year vs. 3.75% over: About \$500,000 - \$600,000; the difference between 3% and 3.9% is about \$900,000.

There was a brief discussion about class sizes in other contexts (e.g., private schools, Boston public schools).

A comment was made that, in the context of other budgets coming to Advisory, it is difficult to see the SC at such a high percentage over guidelines; education is certainly one of the most important services the Town provides; although it is great to have a wonderful/thorough strategic plan, such plans are by nature aspirational, and it is sometimes difficult to fund all the aspirations given other demands.

A question/comment was made that the drop in the Schools budget guideline (from 3.5% to 3%) might have been too drastic for one year, almost guaranteeing this kind of pushback/response: The 3% guideline might have been a response to the large turnback last year.

There was a question whether the SC would be seeking a supplemental appropriation for FY19 at ATM: Perhaps not, but will be waiting til the last minute to decide.

Advisory members were encouraged to review last year's Advisory Report to get a sense of the School budget.

9:36 p.m. Adjourn

Bob Furlong made and Julie Bryan seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Items Reviewed During the Meeting

- *Wellesley Council on Aging, FY20 Budget*, Power Point Presentation to Advisory (January 16, 2019)
- *Memo from Gayle Thieme, Director of Senior Services, to Advisory Committee re: EOEI Formula Grant* (January 14, 2019)
- *Planning Department FY2020 Budget*, Power Point Presentation to Advisory, (January 16, 2019)
- *Community Preservation Committee: 2019 Update*, Handout/Presentation to Advisory (January 16, 2019)