

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall
May 8, 2019, 7:30 p.m.**

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

Tom Skelly called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

Update on Warrant Articles for Special Town Meeting

Victor Panak, Interim Planning Director, provided a brief update on the warrant articles for Special Town Meeting (STM).

- The Planning Board (PB) held the continuation of its public hearing on the zoning-related articles (Articles 2-8) on Monday evening, May 6.
- There was no additional public comment at the PB hearing.
- The PB approved all articles unanimously. Articles 2, 3 & 8 were approved 5 to 0; due to PB member Frank Pinto's recusal from Articles 4-7, those were approved 4 to 0.

A question was asked about any recent changes to the language of the zoning articles since the last time Planning had come before Advisory: The only change in the last few weeks, other than formatting/typographical, is related to the sign allowances in the Residential Incentive Overlay (RIO) provisions for projects in residential districts. Signs for RIO projects in those districts are limited in number, square footage and type.

7:40 p.m. Discussion and Voting on Warrant Articles for Special Town Meeting

Discussion and Votes on Articles 2 and 3

An Advisory member commented that this project is being proposed in the context of hostile 40B developments around Town; despite imperfections, it is wise for the Town to go forward with the project.

Another Advisory member commented that, despite that member's initial concerns about the optics/perception of separating/isolating affordable housing recipients in one area of Town, the Wellesley Office Park project will be a major part of satisfying the Town's goals for affordable housing; understands that there are projects with affordable components in a variety of locations spread around Town; relying on expertise of boards/groups in Town who have voted in support of this project.

An Advisory member stated that concerns initially raised by staff and other groups in Town about sewer, water, Fire, etc. have been addressed; everyone is satisfied; cooperative approach between the Town and John Hancock.

An Advisory member noted that the mixed use development seems to be fundamentally a higher and better real estate use for this site; helps solve the affordable housing issues in Town; as a financial matter, will be a net positive for the Town, with reimbursements for infrastructure improvements and increased tax payments; seems like a very fair and decent deal for the Town and well thought through.

An Advisory member commented that the project would offer a little village, with shopping, recreational amenities and good access to transportation.

Another Advisory member commented that the potential benefits outweigh the risks with the project, but Town should not be completely blind to some of the risks, including traffic impacts.

A clarification was requested whether WOP solves the 40B problem: Victor Panak responded that Phase I will get the Town to the 10% Subsidized Housing Index (SHI) affordable requirement; however, Planning views the provision of affordable housing as a long-term problem that is not just about reaching the 10% goal; Town is missing the “middle” of housing affordability; also, with the upcoming 2020 census, there may be an adjustment in the number of housing units that could affect whether the Town is exactly at 10%. There was a further clarification that active 40Bs, like Stearns Road, will not be stopped; those are grandfathered.

An Advisory member emphasized that the number for satisfying the SHI quota is not a static number. Also, the Town needs to provide a range of housing possibilities across Town; Town has done its best to make sure there is a variety/mix of types of affordable housing, such as condos. With regard specifically to Wellesley Office Park, zoning and development will present challenges to infrastructure, but the development agreement goes far in identifying how these challenges will be resolved. Need to keep in mind that these projects will have to go through additional permitting and review; trust that policies and zoning in place will help mitigate challenges.

A comment was made that it is important and fortunate that the redevelopment of Wellesley Office Park can occur in a way that will accomplish so many of the Town’s goals, identified in the Housing Production Plan and Unified Plan, with respect to affordable housing. Comfortable that the zoning provisions – specifically Section 14J.1, the Wellesley Park Smart Growth Overlay District – spell out the contours and scope of this project, including the permissible types of uses at the site and the allowable size of those uses. Because they are specified in the Zoning Bylaw, those limits are controlled by Town Meeting and can only be changed by a 2/3 vote in the future.

A comment was made that, with respect to risks and challenges, this is a project that has to work for the developers as well as the Town; developers have a strong interest in making this a success.

Andrea Ward made and Rose Mary Donahue seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 2, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw to adopt two new sections: Section 14J “Smart Growth Overlay Districts” and Section 14J.1 “Wellesley Park Smart Growth Overlay District.” The motion passed 12-0.

Andrea Ward made and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 3, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Map to add to the Wellesley Park Smart Growth Overlay District the properties located at 20, 40, 45, 55, 60, 65, 80 and 100 William Street, totaling approximately 26 acres. The motion passed 12-0.

Discussion and Votes on Articles 4, 5 and 6

An Advisory member commended the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the Planning Board (PB) for their thoughtful evaluation of the Delanson Circle and Weston Road projects and their willingness to take another look at the RIO provisions and modify them to address these residential projects. The changes being made to the RIO provisions enhance their flexibility and allow them to be applied to a variety of sites. This will help the Town provide additional alternative types of housing.

Another Advisory member commented that any future use of the RIO provisions to develop other properties in Town would have to go to Town Meeting (TM) for approval and then through the Town permitting process; this is a multi-step process. RIO is intended to allow denser than usual zoning.

An Advisory member commented that these projects came almost out of the blue two years ago, and since then, there has been very thoughtful and professional involvement by the neighborhood; exemplary process. The end results for both projects are compromises, but they are so much better than what was originally proposed. This Advisory member expressed strong support for more dense development in Town; thinks in the long run this will be a very popular project.

Another Advisory member noted that, in response to concerns about RIO provisions opening the way to future development throughout the Town's residential districts, not only would a two-thirds vote of Town Meeting be required to place any future parcel within the RIO district, but the RIO provisions by their terms are limited to parcels that are "located in close proximity to the Town's commercial districts and public transportation." This will serve as an additional check on where in Town any future RIO development can occur.

Andrea Ward made and Jane Andrews seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 4, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend Section 14F of the Zoning Bylaw, the Residential Incentive Overlay, as shown in the Motion accompanying the article, for the purposes of allowing its application over a greater number of zoning districts, allowing for additional levels of residential density, and making other associated changes. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention.

Andrea Ward made and Lina Musayev seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 5, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend Section 19 of the Zoning Bylaw, Yard Regulations, as shown in the Motion accompanying the Article, for the purpose of exempting parcels in the Residential Incentive Overlay District from frontage requirements. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention.

Andrea Ward made and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 6, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Map to include in the Residential Incentive Overlay District the properties that are described in the Article and accompanying Motion on Delanson Circle, Hollis Street and Weston Road. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention.

Discussion and Vote on Article 7

Andrea Ward made and Jane Andrews seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 7, Motion 1, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Map to rezone the properties on Delanson Circle listed in the Warrant and Motion from the Single Residence District and 10,000 Square Foot Area Regulation District to the General Residence District. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention.

With respect to Motion 2, an Advisory member commented that the Weston Road project (unlike the Delanson Circle project) does not have a general neighborhood agreement and a neighbor/abutter is very opposed to the project.

Another Advisory member commented that the College Heights Neighborhood Association has been involved with the Weston Road project, as well, and that if the Town does not approve Articles 4-7, that project will go back to the larger 40B proposal with 55 units.

Andrea Ward made and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 7, Motion 2, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend the Zoning Map to rezone the properties on Weston Road listed in the Warrant and Motion from the Single Residence District and 15,000 Square Foot Area Regulation District to the General Residence District. The motion passed 10-1, with one abstention.

Vote on Article 8

Andrea Ward made and Mary Gard seconded a motion for favorable action on Warrant Article 8, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, that the Town vote to amend Section 1A, paragraph A of the Zoning Bylaw, by adding the following districts to the list of zoning districts as specified in the Motion: the Commercial Recreation Overlay District, the Smart Growth Overlay Districts, and the Wellesley Park Smart Growth Overlay District. The motion passed 12-0.

Liaison Reports

School Committee/Jane Andrews & Lina Musayev

- On Monday, there was a budget debrief with School Committee (SC) and the Superintendent
- Addressing how to coordinate earlier between SC and BOS to set expectations around guidelines and coordination; need to have board-to-board conversations
- Cindy Mahr had interesting insights about process; in Weston, which has a Town Manager, there are no real guidelines
- Regarding new special education (SPED) budgeting process – there have been no major claims so far, but never know what can come in the door
- State Department of Education is reporting that the claim rate will be lower next year (in the 60 percent rather than 70 percent range)
- Cindy will adjust the budget every fall; by late October they will know what level service is going to be
- Will be important for Advisory to review the end-of-year report (available in August); will show turnbacks and what is behind them, claims rate and circuit breaker; enrollment figures will be available in October
- It has been helpful to have Cindy on board; transparency with SC has been very good

A question was asked about preparation of the Schools' 5-year plan: The plan is being wrapped up now and will be implemented in 2022; facilities will be a big piece of the plan; don't foresee any other major initiatives coming out of it.

School Building Committee/Jane Andrews

- No voting at last week's meeting, but extensive discussion about the Hunnewell building
- Educators (principals, superintendent) came down strongly in favor of the new building vs. the add/reno option; there is a feeling that the new building meets the educational program much better than trying to work around an old building.
- Security would be better in a new building
- No SBC member spoke in favor of the add/reno option
- There are many other questions, such as parking, that are unresolved
- Swing space is a hot issue and the parent population is very engaged; St. Paul's is being considered again; lots of brainstorming; if Town ends up with late Hunnewell option, at least every stone will have been turned over
- Public forum Thursday, May 9 at the Middle School

A question was asked about the status of the Upham/Hardy feasibility study: It is a different process because of the MSBA involvement; list of 8-10 architects (including many that are familiar to Wellesley) are to going to be reviewed by the MSBA; Wellesley only has 3 of 14 votes on this matter; that selection should be finished up in mid-late June; study will get underway in August.

A question was asked about internal swing space for Hunnewell: This idea has not been well-received; there are some new ideas about busing to shorten time; people seem to want to keep school together and think it would be better to wait and do late Hunnewell option unless something like St. Paul's would work.

Playing Fields Task Force (PFTF)/Mary Scanlon

- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has asked PFTF to create a working group to study the issue of outdoor lighting for fields; NRC coming on Friday to the PFTF meeting
- There is discussion about a practice wall for lacrosse at Sprague and where to put it
- Storage containers are being discussed for use as rest rooms at the stadium and at Hunnewell field
- Weather monitoring system being investigated – approximately \$5,000 per year

Recreation/Mary Scanlon

- Proposals are being collected for feasibility studies for renovations of Morses Pond – pond, trails and buildings

Municipal Light Plant (MLP) /Bill Maynard

- Some years ago MLP contracted with American Tower to put antennas throughout Town on poles to improve cell service, with understanding that American Tower would help get carriers on board
- Agreement has been financially beneficial to Town, but American Tower has not lived up to its end – there is only one cell provider and there are antennas only south of Route 9
- MLP Board has decided to give notice to American Tower and will reach out to the big three cell providers to talk about creating individual agreements
- One of the issues with 5G service is that antennas cannot be shared; each carrier must have a dedicated antenna

Advisory's third year members were recognized and thanked for their service.

Adjourn

Bob Furlong made and Todd Cook seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.