



Advisory Committee
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TOWN OF WELLESLEY



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE LETTER
 Special Town Meeting — Monday, May 13, 2019, 7:00 pm
 Wellesley Middle School Auditorium**

TERM ENDS 2019

Jane Andrews
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 Dave Murphy
 Tom Skelly, Chair
 Andrea Ward, Secretary

TERM ENDS 2020

Todd Cook, Vice Chair
 Mary Gard
 Paul Merry
 Lina Musayev
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TERM ENDS 2021

Julie Bryan
 Bob Furlong
 Jeff Levitan
 Bill Maynard
 Mary Scanlon

To the Citizens of the Town of Wellesley:

April 24, 2019

A Special Town Meeting (STM) will convene on Monday, May 13, 2019, at 7:00 pm in the Wellesley Middle School Auditorium. All residents are welcome to attend. The proceedings may be followed on Wellesley Media Corporation's Government Channel (Comcast Channel 8, Verizon Channel 40). The STM will also be live streamed at <http://www.wellesleymedia.org>.

I am writing on behalf of the Advisory Committee to provide you with an overview of the matters that the STM will address. The *STM Advisory Report*, which will be mailed to all Town Meeting Members, provides background information and discusses Advisory considerations and recommendations on the articles and related motions coming before this meeting. The report will be available at the Town Clerk's Office, the Wellesley Free Library, and online at <https://wellesleyma.gov/284/Town-Meeting>.

The primary focus of this STM will be Zoning Bylaw changes necessary to advance several residential development projects in Town. In addition, the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Health will seek additional funding for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) for mental health and social services.

Zoning Amendments Related to Wellesley Office Park Project

Articles 2 and 3 relate to the proposed project at the 26-acre Wellesley Office Park site on William Street, located at the intersection of Routes 9 and 128/95. For the past year, the Town has been working with John Hancock, the current owner of the site, on a development agreement that would allow a high-density mixed-use residential project on the site under the terms of the state's Smart Growth Zoning provisions, commonly known as Chapter 40R. Phase I of the project will entail replacing one of the eight office buildings on the site with a rental apartment community containing 345-350 units, 25% of which will be designated as affordable under state law. Town Meeting's adoption of the Chapter 40R provisions into the Town's Zoning Bylaw will, in conjunction with the development agreement reached between the Town and John Hancock, result in several benefits for the Town. First, it will advance the Town's goals of increasing the diversity and affordability of housing. All of the planned 345-350 rental units (not just the 25% designated as affordable) will count towards the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), thereby reaching the 10% statutory minimum that will allow the Town, not developers acting under the provisions of the state's Chapter 40B/comprehensive permit provisions, to control the location and scope of future affordable housing development. Second, the Town is expected to realize significant financial benefits from the Phase I development, including (i) a

series of incentive and bonus payments from the state under Chapter 40R, estimated to total \$1.3 million; (ii) building permit fees of approximately \$1.7 million; and (iii) net positive annual property tax and other revenues on the order of \$900,000. The development agreement provides that the Town will use some of the Chapter 40R incentive funds (up to a maximum of \$500,000) to reimburse John Hancock for a portion of specified infrastructure improvements (e.g., new water and sewer lines).

The development agreement and zoning provisions contemplate and set limits on future phases of development, including an additional 250 rental apartment units, a limited service hotel, small-scale retail establishments, and office space. While the development of the residential units is allowed “by-right” and is subject only to limited review under the specific provisions of Chapter 40R, any non-residential development on the site will go through the Town’s ordinary Project of Significant Impact (PSI) review and other relevant review processes. Please go to <https://wellesley.ma.gov/1326/Special-Town-Meeting-Documents> to find a variety of background materials about this project, including the executed development agreement, the proposed zoning provisions, presentations made to various Town boards and committees, analyses of infrastructure, traffic and fiscal impacts (including impacts on schools and other Town services), and a description of environmental strategies. For more information on the regulatory provisions governing affordable housing and the Town’s current status/goals, please see <https://www.wellesley.ma.gov/987/Housing-Production-Plan> (Housing Production Plan) and <https://www.wellesley.ma.gov/893/Chapter-40B-Development-Projects> (Chapter 40B information).

Zoning Amendments Related to Delanson Circle and Weston Road Projects

Articles 4, 5, 6 & 7 facilitate the development of two multi-family condominium-style residential projects – a 35-unit project located at Delanson Circle/12-18 Hollis Street and a 25-unit project at 140/148 Weston Road. Both projects were originally proposed as significantly larger Chapter 40B projects (90 units at Delanson Circle and 55 units at 140/148 Weston Road) and both projects received preliminary approval from the state. See <https://www.wellesley.ma.gov/893/Chapter-40B-Development-Projects> for more information on the original proposals. The Town has worked with the developer and the neighbors over the past eight months to reach agreement on the redesigned lower density projects. In order for the projects to proceed, Town Meeting must approve a series of Zoning Bylaw changes, including amending the Town’s current Residential Incentive Overlay (RIO) District to enable its use in Single Residence and General Residence Districts and on smaller parcels than currently allowed. Additional zoning changes include (1) amending the Yard Regulations to allow relief from frontage requirements for projects in the RIO District and (2) amending the Zoning Map to overlay the RIO District onto the project sites and to rezone included parcels currently zoned (or split-zoned) as Single Residence into the General Residence District. Please go to <https://wellesley.ma.gov/1326/Special-Town-Meeting-Documents> to find background materials on these projects, including the development agreements, project narratives and plans, and the proposed zoning changes.

Additional Funding for Mental Health and Social Services

Article 9 seeks an additional \$175,000 in FY20 funding for mental health and social services. In response to questions raised by the Advisory Committee last year about existing mental health/social services capabilities and the coordination between Town departments providing such services, as well as discussions during the 2018 Annual Town Meeting, an interdepartmental Social Services and Mental Health Committee was established last spring. The committee issued its report in January 2019, and the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the Board of Health (BOH) now seek to implement several of the report’s recommendations, including: (1) hiring a full-time Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker to directly address the increasing number and complexity of cases being seen in Town, as well as to help coordinate existing Town social services (\$110,000, including benefits); (2) contracting with the Town of Weston for a shared law enforcement clinical support position that can assist the police departments of the two towns in responding to the scene of a mental/behavioral health crisis and following up as needed with affected individuals and families (\$40,000); and (3) adding \$25,000 to the Town’s contract with Human Relations Services, Inc. to allow for increased mental and behavioral health care services to Town residents (approximately 450 additional counseling hours per year). Please go to <https://wellesley.ma.gov/1326/Special-Town-Meeting-Documents> to read a copy of the Report of the Social Services and Mental Health Committee and view the presentation provided by the BOS/BOH to Advisory on April 8, 2019.

Other Matters

The remaining two articles on the warrant are housekeeping in nature. Article 8 will amend the list of zoning districts in Section 1 of the Zoning Bylaw to include the Smart Growth districts proposed under Article 2, as well as to add another district that was established by a prior vote of Annual Town Meeting but never added to the list. Article 10 will amend the General Bylaws to change one of the two required posting sites for Notice of Town Meeting from Wellesley Square to the Police Station; this is the corollary to the change in posting location for Notice of Elections approved several weeks ago by Annual Town Meeting under Article 35.

As explained in the *STM Advisory Report*, the Advisory Committee has unanimously voted to support the two non-zoning articles that are on the STM warrant: the increased mental health/social services funding (Article 9) and the change in posting location for Notice of Town Meeting (Article 10). Advisory will be voting on the remaining zoning-related articles following the scheduled May 6 vote of the Planning Board on those articles.

I am thankful to my colleagues on the Advisory Committee for their work, during and on the heels of the Annual Town Meeting, preparing for this STM and producing the *STM Advisory Report*. I also appreciate the citizens who shared their views and raised questions, whether by attending Advisory Committee meetings and the Public Hearing for this STM or through emails. Finally, we should all be grateful to the Town Board members and Town staff who have collaborated tirelessly over the past year in an effort to ensure that the projects underlying this STM advance the long-term interests of the Town.

Sincerely,

Tom Skelly, Chair
Advisory Committee