

Bellingham Planning Board
Town Hall Annex
Bellingham, Mass.

Special Meeting - November 19, 1984

Members Present - Carl R. Rosenlund, Chairman
Sergio P. Rotatori, V. Chairman
John P. Murray
Glenn E. Gerrior

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rosenlund at 7:50 P.M.

Members are meeting with consultant Phil Herr to discuss the Master Plan Update. He presented several maps of Bellingham including an overlay, which were displayed and reviewed by the Board and Mr. Herr. He suggested the Board might consider certain zoning changes to Industrial. Mr. Herr also prepared a draft for review entitled "Economic Development, A Proposed Element of the Bellingham Master Plan" which covers all of the items to be discussed. These include Jobs in Bellingham, Infrastructure of Development, Land for Industry, A strategy for Development, and further steps to be taken regarding the future. It was suggested another joint meeting with town boards be held. Mr. Rosenlund asked if Bellingham is supposed to be finalized. Mr. Herr said yes as far as EOCD is concerned, but there still is work to be done. A copy of the above draft to be sent to Town Dept. heads by Herr. It was pointed out that the Board has to show EOCD that Mr. Herr has invoiced all of the job phases. The part of the contract on Project Budget concerning the payment schedule was reviewed. Mr. Rosenlund suggested the board send in the entire amount of billing to EOCD.

Members reviewed the large maps presented by Mr. Herr showing the areas of town to be discussed; map showing the possible areas for re-zoning, the water resource districts, flood plain zones, the corps of engineers lines, map by the Geological Survey, map of industrial areas. Mr. Herr said they tabulated the areas to find out how many acres of industrial land there is. Reference was made to the Draft on Economic Development Table L-1 following Page 8 which discusses land for industry. He said of the approximately 1900 acres industrially zoned, most of that has some kind of problem such as inadequate roads, more than 500 ft. from public water, is in the area of water resource district, wetlands, owned by the Corps of Engineers, or has inadequate water pressure. There are about 50 acres of industrially zoned land that could be considered perfect.

Maple Street is considered to have the potential of being the best industrial area; however, there are some problems with access to be considered. Also development in sewerage and in well sites.

It was mentioned by Mr. Herr that the Racicot people are proposing putting in a water main on Maple St. He noted that they were going to give Trudel anything he asked for. He said they intend to put in a larger main.

Regarding the development on North St., it was pointed out the water pressure is less than half. These areas are shown on Map 2 of the Draft. Map 3 shows the sewerage proposals. It was noted by Mr. Herr that Legislation has been adopted authorizing Bellingham to provide connections to the Town of Milford's sewerage system providing the sewer commission of the two towns work out an agreement.

The draft contains 7 maps showing areas to be considered. Mr. Herr said the zoning overlay is a tough one and about does away with industry. He said one of the things we need to do is take what is now a tough proposal and refine it.

In a discussion about jobs in Bellingham Mr. Herr said there are about 1800 jobs in town. The big employer is the town with about 500, chiefly in the schools. The next is retailing. He said there are probably about 800 jobs in retailing. Manufacturing is small and speculative as to whether it gets bigger. Retailing we know will probably grow. It was pointed out the largest local job category is the retail and wholesale trade.

Mr. Herr discussed the impact of adding jobs in the town as outlined in the draft. Some of these concerns would be housing, services, traffic, schools. He created hypothetical new businesses as examples for analysis, which is outlined under Appendix B of the draft and shown as "Prefab - Hitech - Both" using basic data 1983.

Included are similar analyses for for three proposals which came before the town during this study period; American Realty Corp., for proposed industrial rezoning on Hartford Ave.; Maple Brook Condominiums/ Celtic Construction Co. proposed at Mechanic & Maple Streets; and the Twin Brook condominiums/ Onallam Realty Trust, proposed for Hartford Ave.

Mr. Herr said the town can do the business of creating a CARD district (Commercial Area Revitalization District). Details of this program are included in the draft, which introduces the program, how to establish these districts, and the benefits. Herr pointed out that one location is in the center and the other is the south of town.

He said when the districts are established and approved by EOCD some low-interest loans and other aids to businesses are available.

Mr. Herr again referred to Maple Street and considers the area the best piece of land for industry and feels it should be given priority in basic commitments of development, such as sewerage, well sites, and the I-495 interchange. He also noted that the district has natural buffers provided by Mine Brook and the Charles River wetlands. He said the bridge connecting Franklin and Bellingham is going to be rebuilt entirely. He also recommended rezoning to industrial the area between High St. and the Conrail right of way, which is essentially undeveloped and is presently zoned agricultural.

Also recommended is rezoning Farm Street area that is industrial to agricultural, and create a buffer for the industrial area by moving the Valley View Road residential boundary.

On the American Realty Corp. Public Hearing for rezoning, Mr. Murray referred to the questions and answers sheet under Considerations For Rezoning, and said these should be presented in advance. These questions were gone over at the hearing, however, there was not time enough to go over these questions in detail.

Regulations for industry was discussed as presented on Page 19. Mr. Herr commented that industrial district allows any kind of commercial stuff and that is not a good idea. He said the Use regulations should be changed. Also, the major commercial complex is not allowed in Industrial district but it should be, and that use regulation should be changed.

Discussion was held on a 9 point program designed for Bellingham on things it can do as a strategy for development, presented on Page 9.

Mr. Herr said it would appear there is not at this time a good understanding of the various financial incentives available in this town. He said Mr. Lord was familiar with it and no one else seems to know, and now he has resigned from the Industrial Development Commission.

Mr. Herr suggested a work shop be held so that most people can know what is going on, rather than one person. Bellingham did not have a package of financial incentives. Mr. Herr noted that Milford got Data General via incentives. Five steps were drafted for study on Page 20.

The town should buy land to protect its water resource which the state could fund. Along with developing industry there is the concern over groundwater contamination. Mr. Herr noted that there is some conflict between certain businesses and water resource protection. He said unfortunately the best locations for industry lie within areas tributary to the Town's wells.

Mr. Herr drafted 6 steps for study regarding protecting water resources and providing for industry.

He also said the Town should make sure the population does not get out of balance with the jobs, although he said Bellingham is not likely to become a "balanced" community with reference to having about as many jobs as residents. However, he said Bellingham should try to match job and population growth so that the imbalance doesn't get any worse than it is.

He noted that the key to balance is in controlling residential growth. He suggested a growth rate limitation in the Bylaws regarding the number of houses that can be built in the future. This can be adopted at Town Meeting.

Mr. Herr also pointed out that in this area Blackstone has these controls which they adopted 5 years ago. They limit it to 50 per year.

Mr. Murray said he feels the town is in fine condition presently as far as housing, jobs, and industry is concerned. Mr. Herr feels the imbalance is in jobs. Mr. Herr also said the Town will be in trouble at a later date because the Town has to have sewerage.

Mr. Herr said the next things that could be accomplished would involve four agencies; the Planning Board, to sponsor a workshop on economic strategy, refine and hold hearings on zoning articles, refine the hazardous materials bylaw; the Board of Selectmen, to prepare the CARD plan (Commercial Area Revitalization District) in the Pulaski Blvd. area; the Industrial Development Commission, to sponsor a workshop on finance techniques; the Water Dept., to identify appropriate area for Aquifer Acquisition.

Mr. Herr suggested that the Board review the report and then meet and decide how to deal with town agencies. Mr. Murray commented that the Town has to find a solution to the traffic problem going through Town.

Mr. Herr said he will make more copies of the draft on Economic Development and send them to all the Town Boards.

In a discussion about water resources, Mr. Herr noted that the town well #10 is never going to operate because of pollution; well #8 is also down due to pollution from iron and they hope to bring it back.

The Board members and Mr. Herr were in agreement to meet and hold discussions with town departments. Mr. Herr said he will draft up a letter to send to the town departments. On a Rotatori/Murray motion the Board voted 4-0 to meet on January 24, 1985 at 7:30 P.M.

Regarding the Master Plan Update payment schedule, the Board on a Rotatori/Murray motion voted 4-0 to submit copies of the bills presented by Mr. Herr for consultant services to the EOCD per contract agreement.

The Board on a Rotatori/Murray motion voted 4-0 to pay the first payment of \$7,500.00 to Philip B. Herr per contract agreement for consultant services re Bellingham Master Plan Update.

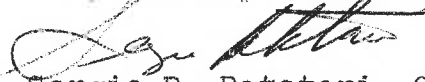
On a Rotatori/Murray motion the Board voted 4-0 to pay the bills of: The Call for \$90.72 for public hearing advertising of American Realty and Onallam Realty; \$83.00 to Milford News for public hearings of American Realty and Onallam Realty (paid to the Board by the above advertisers); \$33.40 to Crowley Office Supply; \$73.00 to Bliss Press for letterheads and envelopes imprinted; \$20.00 to Carl Rosenlund for reimbursement of postage; \$6.33 to Martha Russo for reimbursement for postage; \$20.00 to U.S. Postal Service for one roll of stamps; \$120.00 for secretary's salary for the month of November.

Memos were read by Mr. Rosenlund regarding the request for annual report and inventory which will be due January 11th.

On a Rotatori/Murray motion the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn.

Adjournment at 10:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Sergio P. Rotatori", written over a horizontal line.

Sergio P. Rotatori, Clerk