

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2011  
APPROVED: October 17, 2011**

Chair Kara McGuire Minar opened the meeting at 7:37pm in the Hildreth House under M.G.L. Chapter 40A and the Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 125

**Members Present:** Kara McGuire Minar, Michelle Catalina, Wayne McFarland

**Others Present:** Maggie Green (appointed to PB by BOS, but not sworn in), David Browchuk (GPR-Inc.) and Marty Green (reporter)

**Approval Not Required (ANR)**

McGuire Minar opened the hearing at 7:45pm. McGuire Minar is concerned about the first condition not being met on the Special Permit for the backland lot (Lot 1) adjacent to this ANR (Remaining Land) at 69 Whitney Road. McGuire Minar made sure David Browchuk understood the uncertainty associated with the Special Permit. After briefly discussing the requirements for an ANR, Catalina motioned to endorse the ANR for the property referred to as Remaining Land at 69 Whitney Road. McFarland seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 to endorse the ANR.

**Committee Reports**

Catalina attended the August 31, 2011 Devens Economic Analysis Team (DEAT) meeting and reported the following details regarding the Trinity Financial Proposal for Vicksburg Square

Vicksburg Square is zoned as commercial but it is not attracting businesses. The buildings are historical and in disrepair and one way to save them is to attract a developer to make them into housing. Mass Development asked for proposals to develop this space as housing. Trinity Financial has submitted a proposal.

The Proposal:

- 246 Rental Units: 20 three bed, 133 two bed, 93 one bed.
- 80% Low Income Restricted ( 80% or less of the area's median income)
- 198 affordable, 48 market rate units
- 78 of the 246 units are senior; all within Ayer's historical boundaries
- 54 of the units are in Harvard's historical boundaries (14 one bed, 35 two bed, 5 three bed)

Changes that need to be made in order for this proposal to come to fruition:

1. Under Chapter 498 the current housing cap is 282 units. Mass Development will be asking for an increase in this housing cap.
2. Under Chapter 498, developments are only allowed to contain 25% affordable units. In order to make this proposal financially feasible, the developer is using Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) from the federal government and wishes to make this development 80% affordable.
3. Under Chapter 498, the current zoning for Vicksburg Square is commercial. This will have to be changed to residential.

Concerns with this Proposal From the DEAT Meeting

1. Lack of workforce housing. It is unlikely that workers in Harvard, Ayer or Devens will qualify to live in any of the 198 affordable housing units. DEAT is looking to identify a definition for workforce housing that accurately reflects the average worker in Harvard.
2. Number of school children

3. Devens housing will be 80% affordable. Town's are aiming for 10%. The resulting demographics from this proposal could make it impossible for Devens to become its own town, and make it undesirable for either Harvard or Ayer to resume jurisdiction.
4. Two of the large apartments straddle the historical boundaries of Ayer and Harvard. If jurisdiction of Devens goes back to these traditional boundaries, people living in the same apartment building will be living in different towns and sending their kids to different schools.
5. High density, low income housing in a rural area.
6. Cost of maintenance to roofs, common spaces, etc. Upkeep over time.
7. Increased costs of police, fire, government, social services not determined.
8. Loss of revenue compared to ownership/25% affordable model.

Maguire-Minar brought up the lack of public transportation and grocery store as an additional concern. Maguire Minar asked Green about metrics used in urban planning to calculate rates to be used to calculate increased costs of police and fire.

### **Nominations**

Catalina was nominated as Vice Chair on a motion by McFarland. McGuire Minar seconded this motion. The vote was 3 - 0 in favor of this motion.

Green was nominated as Clerk on a motion by McFarland. McGuire Minar seconded this motion. The vote was 3 - 0 in favor of this motion.

### **Appointments**

The board briefly discussed the BOS appointment of Jim Stevens to the EDC. The PB was not notified of this nomination and did not vote to jointly appoint Jim Stevens. McGuire Minar will look into this matter.

The PB will monitor agendas for MJTC meetings and send representation when necessary.

Green agreed to serve as the representative to the CPC if the meetings take place on the second and not third Wednesday of the month.

### **Adjournment**

McGuire-Minar made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm. McFarland seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle Catalina, Clerk

## **DOCUMENTS & OTHER EXHIBITS**

### **Informal Review -**

- Google Map from David Browchuk of a site off of Cove Drive. Presented a question for opinion only, whether driveway development at the site would require a Special Permit.