

**Town of Wayland
Economic Development Committee
March 14, 2012
SENIOR HOUSING FOCUS GROUP
Wayland Senior Center
Meeting Minutes**

**Economic Development Committee Members
in Attendance:**

Rebecca Stanizzi

Jean Prince

Dave Watkins

Nick Willard (present only prior to meeting start as a greeter; left meeting at 7:15 pm)

The Focus Group began at 7:05 pm. Wayland seniors were invited to discuss potential senior independent rental housing following a tentative agenda as follows:

- 1) Brief overview of proposed Route 20 Septage/DPW site senior housing project
- 2) Senior housing open discussion
 - a) Reasons to downsize
 - i) Too much space and/or cost
 - ii) Freedom from maintenance responsibilities
 - iii) Community
 - iv) Proximity to family
 - v) Other?
 - b) House vs. condominium vs. rental housing
 - i) Costs
 - ii) Benefits
 - iii) Preference?
 - c) Type of housing units
 - i) Size/type – Studio, 1BR, 1BR+Den, 2BR
 - ii) Finishes
 - iii) Private outdoor space?
 - iv) Outdoor or garage parking?
 - d) Potential amenities/services
 - i) Common areas
 - ii) Food service and other services
 - iii) Programming (classes, activities, trips)
 - iv) External shuttle and connections
 - v) Which amenities would residents be willing – or not willing – to pay for?
- 3) Review results

Meeting Results:

- 1) A brief overview was provided of the proposed senior housing location and process.
- 2) Senior Housing Open Discussion

Discussion then moved to potential facets of senior housing, and seniors provided the following feedback during discussion:

a) Reasons to Downsize

1. Size of existing home
2. Financial
3. Planning for later years
4. Eliminate upkeep
5. 2nd floor bedrooms – looking for 1 level
6. Fill a social/community sense
7. No longer driving
8. Avoid potential of escalating property taxes
9. Do not want kids to move in or to have to move in with kids

Reasons to stay in Wayland

1. Close to Family and Friends
2. Financial concerns are main driver for people leaving
3. Do not want to live with kids

b) House vs. condominium vs. rental housing costs

A common question is, how much would rent be in the current market, and would seniors be willing to pay it?

A chart was provided with sample costs of owning a house, or owning a condominium, as a comparison point to paying rent. (attached)

Two typical scenarios were estimated:

- A median Wayland homeowner (\$550,000 home or condo value) spends over \$4,000 per month on housing costs, separate and aside from debt service, between taxes, insurance, general and deferred maintenance, energy/utilities, and costs of having equity tied up in one's home.
- A moderate Wayland homeowner (\$400,000 home value) who spends minimal amounts on maintenance still spends over \$2,000 per month on housing costs, in taxes, insurance, energy/utilities, and costs of having equity tied up in one's home.

Blanks allow participants to fill in their own costs. For those who think that rent is “just throwing away money”, the chart provides a useful comparison of even what a “free and clear” or low-debt mortgage holder still pays every month as a homeowner, as many seniors well know as they struggle with taxes and other costs.

c) Type of housing units

Unit Sizing

1. 2 Bedroom IIIII (All chose this)
2. 1 Bed & Den

Amenities/Features

1. Do people have a washer dryer in their unit – No one on each floor
2. Trash room on each floor?

Outdoor space

1. The other bedroom ☺
2. Common Patio on ground floor
3. Ground floor where people can walk out
4. Housing authority has a lot of requests for gardening raised beds
5. 2 Car spaces

Amenities - What would you be looking for:

1. Social Activities – Social Planner
2. Common areas
3. Garage Parking
4. Washer Dryer Space
5. Soundproofing between units
6. Medical doctors nearby or on site
7. Restaurant on Route 20 that others could come to also?
8. Trails and Bike Path
9. Storage
10. Handicap accessible shower/Bathroom
11. Bicycles storage
12. Carport (with storage in the back of it) instead of garage (less expensive)
13. Commercial Laundry Machines
14. Fitness
15. Club Room
16. Rooms to rent out (Party rooms)
17. More than a place to live
18. “Perpetual Bingo Games”
19. Cleaning of unit
20. Accessibility to Education (onsite and/or virtual)
21. Food service on either fixed plan or a la carte so people can pick their spending

Shuttles

1. ITMA – volunteers/for pay drives – it started in Framingham – shuttles to get rides for other people
2. MWRTA – Fairs are going up

Site concerns to review

1. Noise from Sudbury transfer station
2. Busy Route 20
3. Edge Effect - Adverse Uses - Distance from Town activities and difficult to get to. Economic marketability.
4. Reflection from solar panels and wind turbine and noise if installed at Sudbury landfill

5. Hazardous materials on existing site - River Road was supposed to have been a project but methane underground was issue

Questions/Observations from Crowd:

1. Is there another site that might be used if this one does not work out?
2. All the area is fill. Will there be settlement of the area? [Much of the area is natural sand deposits]
3. Is any of the Raytheon/Town Center site available for renters? [Not currently]
4. Project needs a developer/buyer who is socially conscious (so it's not too expensive and it's done well)
5. Need Building – affordable and market rate – has potential built in for 2 meals a day
6. Imagine all regular rental units being one building?
7. What is the capacity you have in mind?
8. If there is a high percentage of elderly how will security be handled?
9. Don't want to live in an enclave – want to know more how the site might be enhanced by the wetland behind it? Connections to a trail system?
10. Could there be an option for a sidewalk with Sudbury to get to Longfellow for recreation/exercise?
11. Is this planning partially paid by CPA monies?
12. What are people's preferences on food service, If you had a fixed plan or a la carte?
13. Will there be trails and Bike Path connection with outdoor amenities and planning?

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm.