

**Town of Wayland  
Economic Development Committee  
April 25, 2013  
Meeting Minutes**

In attendance:

Rebecca Stanizzi, Chair  
George Uveges  
Jean Milburn  
Sam Potter  
Nick Willard  
Sarkis Sarkisian

Public guests: Edward Collins, Alice Boelter, Gretchen Schuler, Molly Upton, Margo Melnicove

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. in the planning office at the town building.

Citizens present were invited to make public comment. No comments.

Given the number of guests in attendance, review of lengthy meeting minutes was pushed to later in the meeting, to discuss substantive topics that guests had likely attended to hear/discuss.

Becky indicated that we would begin by discussing those topics that members of the public were concerned about during discussions at the Chateau meeting and through other feedback received by committee members.

The first area of citizen concern was the Wireless Communication Overlay District (WCOD) and any impact that the River's Edge overlay (REHOD) might have on it. Sarkis had provided a map of the area, showing both districts. The areas of the WCOD that would remain available for use if the REHOD was created were colored yellow so that they could be seen easily.

Ed Collins spoke about the history of the WCOD, outlining the citizen effort that was required to prepare and pass the article at town meeting, and the benefits that the town receives from having a designated site for towers. He expressed concern that there might not be away for both overlay districts to "co-exist".

Gretchen Schuler spoke about the town being sued over a cell tower matter with the result being the creation of the Reeve's Hill district by court order.

Jean Milburn asked how we might determine if the total square footage of wireless district land was sufficient to support future cell tower(s)? George indicated that he had a cell tower at a company that he ran and that the space required is actually quite small. One tower can support antenna for multiple carriers.

Sam asked Ed some questions about how we might determine if the land available met the requirements of the telecommunications act. Ed talked about a meeting that he had recently attended in which telecommunications matters were discussed. In Europe, he said, the usual distance required

between a tower and human habitation was 1200 feet. Ed said that he thought that the last paragraph of the proposed REHOD zoning by law needed to be changed to preserve the underlying WCOD. Becky and Sam felt that this change was possible, to clarify everyone's understanding that the REHOD should co-exist with the WCOD.

The committee agreed that a telecommunications consultant of appropriate experience and credentials should be engaged to advise us about River's Edge and the relationship between its zoning and the Wireless district. Our objective is to confirm that wireless towers are still possible on the remainder of the WCOD area if River's Edge were to be built. It was suggested to jointly review this zoning issue in conjunction with the Planning Board.

The second area of citizen concern is the location of the potential future DPW building. Citizens have asked if the locations should be "swapped" placing the DPW on Route 20 and River's Edge on the River Road site. They have also said that they could not dedicate land to River's Edge until the DPW building was approved and sited, in case the Route 20 site later proves to be the only viable location due to unforeseen problems with the road, the wetlands, possible artifacts of indigenous people, large cost overruns, etc.

Sam indicated that we should offer all of our resource documents about the River's Edge site to the PMBC. They may wish to do a "what if" scenario to determine if their building design could be made to fit on the River's Edge site. All agreed that this should be done to avoid unnecessary expenditure and delay.

Molly Upton suggested that the offer of sharing documents should be made by written memo to the PMBC so that they have it for their records. The citizens discussed their knowledge of the history of the site proposed for use by the DPW. It was mined for gravel and then purchased by the town after it was deemed to be unbuildable for a subdivision due to methane contamination emitted from the adjacent landfill. Gretchen Schuler said it is possible that there is a deed restriction on that land which will not allow it to be used for housing. Sam and Becky will follow up on this question; if this is true, a swap is not possible.

Discussion moved to the topic of the trade-offs related to unit sizes and age-restrictions. Sam described visits to properties which had only 1 & 2-BR units and how very few children resided in these properties. He compared this to the Concord Mews project which includes many 3-BR units. That project now has nearly 100 children in residence. His point was that he believes that we can control the number of children by programming only 1 and 2-BR units, so do we really need to place an age restriction on the property? Discussion on this point went to the topic of amenities for seniors. Some asserted that without an age-restriction we will not get a developer who will be motivated to add amenities designed to meet the needs of seniors. We will get general amenities designed for a range of ages only. Jean mentioned that Wayland is "graying" very rapidly and that demand for senior housing will be very strong for the next 20 to 30 years since it is predicted that the baby-boomers will be a long-lived population.

This age-restriction question necessity was asked based on some feedback that perhaps senior housing should not be located here; however, public guests confirmed that senior or not, affordable or no, their main concern was housing in general. A public guest asked if housing was the right use for the property, mentioning reservations about placing housing near closed former landfill locations. Becky reviewed the process by which, starting two years ago, EDC reviewed all the potential uses of the land. The charge from the selectmen was to look for highest and best use of the site for the town, public or private. Various public, retail and commercial options were examined and ultimately multi-family residential created the clear highest and best use for the property. Another guest raised the subject of transportation and how big a problem it is in town. Nearly everyone must drive a car to go to any service, commercial or municipal. Residents at the River's Edge site would have to drive cars. Becky replied that the River's Edge project, while appearing isolated on the river, is actually closer to services and shopping than most of the housing in town.

Jean Milburn said that, while transportation is important, the most important strategic problem that we face is the final density of housing when the town reaches the total-build-out stage. Our models for provision of town services are built on our town zoning, including the assumption that there will be one single-family home on each remaining buildable lot in town. The existence of the 40B regulations changes that significantly. Because we are 216 units of affordable housing short of our goal, builder can add several hundred additional housing units, an additional 600-800 units, raising the total-build-out size of our town significantly. These additional units will strain all parts of our infrastructure and be immensely costly to serve.

Margo described her very positive experience with Shillman House in Framingham where her father resides, describing its many amenities. The committee mentioned that we have been using Shillman House as an example of a facility that would be very suitable for Wayland. Becky has visited Shillman House and they have expressed interest in our project, which could possibly be a new model for them in which the seniors could live in a community that had some non-senior residents as well.

Discussion moved to how we might best prepare for the next town meeting. How can we inform the public effectively. How can we help to design a process for selection of the developer which would give weight to the various aspects of the project appropriately, so that the value of the price offered for the land was balanced correctly against the value of the amenities offered to the residents of the property.

Nick reminded that group that the Middle School was built on the site of a former dump to no apparent ill effect. Perhaps we have done a less than perfect job of communicating with the voters. We continue to ask questions what will attract developers to make a bid to purchase this land. Perhaps we need to make some more visits to developers and ask for some tangible expression of interest that would reassure voters who are worried that this land might not sell? There was some further discussion of spending some more time on visits, to be made by committee members other than Sam and Becky who have already have made several such visits.

Gretchen spoke to raise a couple of issues. Wouldn't it be good to find some of the people who know that they want to live in this apartment building and have them share their thoughts and motivations with others?

And, she continues to be very concerned that we are not proposing a Special Permit process for this land. She was a leader of the Nike Site effort and involved with Payne Estate/Traditions. While the Nike site went smoothly, even with a Special Permit, the town struggled to get all the amenities that they wanted for the Payne Estate and never got all of them. So her concern is if the Town does not have Special Permit rights.

Sam raised the concern that Wayland's reputation in the developer community is so very difficult that requiring the Special Permit process from a builder (where it could be outright denied) would result in either no bids or very low bids, or gaining bids from only non-desirable builders. Much can be accomplished by having very specific, measurable design guidelines, appropriate deed restrictions, especially based on the wealth of experience we have at the Payne estate and Nike Site. However, Gretchen was still concerned about future buildout, if it were to ever change. Becky and Sam thought that requiring Special Permit for later buildout down the road would not be overly onerous for the original buyer/builder, so that it could likely be revised in the zoning to address Gretchen's remaining concern.

Given the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to review and approve minutes at our next meeting. A motion was made to adjourn. The meeting ended at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Jean Milburn