

Town of Wayland
Economic Development Committee
August 29, 2013

Minutes

Present: Dave Watkins, Nick Willard, Sam Potter, Jim Grumbach, Jean Milburn, Becky Stanizzi

Guests: Gretchen Schuler, David Hill

Becky Stanizzi called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Planning Office of Town Building.

There was no public comment at the outset.

The group reviewed the minutes of the meeting of August 8. Nick made a motion to approve the minutes. Jim Grumbach seconded. The motion passed 4-0 with two members abstaining since they were not in attendance for the Aug 8 meeting.

The group reviewed the minutes of the meeting of August 14. Several edits were suggested. Nick suggested that the typo at the end of the third paragraph be corrected. Developer Giblin does “friendly” but not “un-friendly” 40B projects. On the first page, we will edit to make clear that Giblin was talking about a 3-story all-rental project, not a condo project. He was particularly interested in townhome-style rentals. A motion was made to accept the minutes as edited. The motion was seconded and passed 4-0, with two members abstaining again due to absence.

Chairman Stanizzi reminded the group that there is Open Meeting Law training on September 19 at 7 pm in the large hearing room which we should attend. And, she reminded the group that we have about a month to produce an annual EDC Annual report for submission to the selectmen.

Discussion moved to the River’s Edge project. We asked Gretchen Schuler if she had kept a copy of the points system that was used for Nike site evaluation. She will check her records.

Jim Grumbach spoke about his contact with cell tower consultants. Three have been recommended to him by knowledgeable sources. Thus far, one has submitted a proposal. Jim distributed a copy of the proposal from IDK Communications. IDK does not have a lawyer on staff but included a quote from a lawyer that they work with. Cityscape has staff lawyers. Jim will follow up with the other vendors and try to get additional quotes. The committee agreed to give Becky and Jim permission to assign the work as long as the bid is under \$5000 (Jim and Becky to confirm public bid threshold requirements). IDK was a bit higher than that, but perhaps they can reduce if necessary. If we don’t have

another bid by next Thursday, we need to engage IDK so that the analysis and recommendation can be completed asap.

Discussion moved to the topic of site selection for the DPW building. Having been discussed now with BOS – and we can return to BOS with revised, more conservative residential numbers since they thought our figures were “too high”, if necessary – the increased costs of putting DPW on Rt 20 alone are \$2.7 million, plus the lost value of having residential to River Road (since all developers are only interested in rental on Rt 20 and not interested in for-sale condominiums due to environmental constraints) are so substantial there appears to be no further reason to consider the move.

To move forward to evaluate options for Rivers Edge for Route 20, Becky distributed financial calculations describing the potential impacts and income from the Route 20 site under various assumption sets:

- Potential 3-story with 150-160 units with similar 66% age restriction;
- Potential 3-story version with 150-160 units with only 25% age restriction;
- Potential 3-story version with 216 units, if e.g. JCHE, the developer of Shillman House in Framingham were to develop a similar facility (JCHE units are smaller therefore potentially all 216 units might fit inside a 3-story envelope – feedback is due back from JCHE after Sept 9).
- Original 4 story 216 units with 66% age restriction (Baseline)

Note all are rental housing options, as developers have stated they are not interested in selling condos on this site, and because of the clear 40B benefits to the Town of rental housing (with 25% affordable units, 100% of rental units count toward Wayland’s 10% affordability requirement). Following up on Gordon Cliff’s comments in prior meeting, a commercial use value/impact, for flex office, can be added for comparison.

Sam thinks that the 66% senior option will significantly reduce the land value. One of the challenges of evaluating our options is the paucity of information about comparable projects with a 66% senior restriction. Dave suggested that we ask to see the planning documents of similar B’nai Brith projects, especially the one in Sudbury. Susan Gittleman had been very helpful to Sam in a previous conversation. We can check their land prices based on tax records, also for Shillman House in Framingham.

It was discussed whether to drop the zoning to 25% age restricted, as recommended by Gretchen Schuler; the selection process itself would then be weighted to encourage age-restriction and smaller units (and therefore higher unit count), instead of setting it in stone in the zoning. In this way, a group like JCHE may have a lower financial bid, but will receive bonus points for reaching 216 units in a 3-story envelope, for being 100% age restricted, and over 25% affordable. Each proposal would be weighed based on all its relative merits, since the benefits to the Town of Wayland are financial and non-financial and will vary between bidders.

The group moved to a discussion of how a point system might be devised to reflect the large number of objectives that we might have when we send out an RFP. It would be

created by the multi-disciplinary selection committee charged to evaluate the bids, not by EDC, to reflect a wide range of perspectives across the Town.

Gordon Cliff had suggested that TM vote on a menu of options for the site (size, age restriction, etc) but with time constraints at TM it does not seem feasible to explain each option adequately. It was discussed to identify one scenario to bring to Town Meeting floor.

We discussed remarks made at town meeting about density of the project; although some people seemed concerned about the number of living units, it appeared that the greater concern was the aesthetics and in particular the density/height of the building. It may be preferable to forego a 4th story in order to reduce the visual impact. If we do this, the number of units is likely to fall somewhere between 150 and 216, with only all-senior projects approaching the higher number.

Given current issues in the town, it is difficult to know if we should pursue the fall TM or wait until Spring 2014 when, perhaps, the DPW project issues will be settled. In the meantime, we will continue working on the zoning language, wireless review and wetlands issues.

It was reiterated that EDC voted to pursue wetlands delineation before the fall time window closes for the winter, so we need to get this moving. Sam to pursue.

In outreach to equity sources, it is still planned that 2-3 financing sources comfortable with an age restriction be listed as resources for potential bidders. Becky reported that efforts are ongoing and feedback should be available in September.

Before adjourning, Dave Watkins shared some information from the Energy Committee. Three locations in town have been identified as potential "solar farm" locations, the Happy Hollow well area, the Middle School and the High School. The primary location is the Happy Hollow well area, where 3.5 megawatts/year production might be able to be produced. The project will not require any financial investment from the Town, the Town would lease the land and be able to purchase discounted electricity. The group may wish EDC to co-sponsor, given the positive potential financial benefits to the Town. Dave will circulate the information as available as the process moves forward.

Motion to adjourn was made by Jean Milburn. Second by Jim. All voted in the affirmative. Adjournment at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Milburn