

**BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES--including
Joint meeting with CP AD Hoc Advisory Committee
2nd Floor Meeting Room – Town Hall
January 9, 2013**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Silver, Chair; Jeffrey Cohen, Clerk; Sandra Hackman; and Lisa Mustapich (arrived at 8:17pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Shawn Hanegan

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Garber, Planning Director; Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner; and Cathy Silvestrone, Planning A.A.

STAFF ABSENT: None

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Kinzer, Stephen Carluccio, Michael Oleksinski, Carla Olson, Sam Petrecca, Terry Gleason, Christina Wilgren and David Cormier

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Kathryn Madden

OTHERS PRESENT: See Attached

Jonathan Silver, Chair, convened the meeting at 7:30 PM

Emergency Evacuation Announcement read by Jeffrey Cohen, Clerk

Note: All submittals are available for review in the Planning Office

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SESSION: Joint meeting with CP AD HOC Advisory Committee to discuss draft Housing Element.

Glenn Garber, Planning Director, introduced a discussion session on the Housing element of the Plan. The staff and consultant team has prepared a draft plan chapter on this topic, following a similar structure to the previous Economic Development element. Copies were distributed. Director Garber commented that the Housing topic has involved significant data analysis, some of which has been placed in an appendix.

Kathryn Madden of the Madden Group thanked the Bedford Planning staff for its effort in preparing the Housing element and then, acting as facilitator, presented a set of PowerPoint slides; first briefly reviewing the structure of the plan and then outlining the components of the draft Housing element: snapshot page with key facts and graphics; summary of issues and opportunities; a vision; set of goals; thematic maps--focusing on Existing Land Use and balance of housing styles and prices, connectivity to community amenities, and viable mixed use development; and strategies.

The Ad Hoc Committee and Planning Board members discussed each of the components presented and the following points were raised in the discussion:

Snapshot

Sandra Hackman shared the following edits; 1) under **Where We Live**, next to Ownership, retain (2010), but remove “ACS”; 2) under **Housing Needs**, (Housing Demand/Population remove “Characteristics” and provide a comparison of Bedford to surrounding towns on the last three bulleted items.

Jeffrey Cohen pointed out that under Housing Needs, the category Subsidized Housing Units should read—Subsidized Housing **Inventory**.

Sam Petrecca asked if the 455 multifamily homes constructed in 2005-2007, is a unit number. Ms. Madden replied; yes.

Terry Gleason asked if Bedford is tracking teardowns. Glenn Garber replied; that is something the town should try to do.

Jeffrey Cohen asked if Bedford is already nearing residential development capacity while others questioned if there was a way to determine the amount of available developable space.

Catherine Perry stated that this can be difficult to quantify.

Kathryn Madden mentioned that it appears as though Bedford is mostly built-out given the number of building permits that have been issued between 2000 and 2011. Ms. Madden also mentioned that that it's a good idea to think about tear downs and what the replacement buildings should be.

Planning Director Garber, in respects to quantifying buildable land, said build-out analyses are becoming a thing of the past; and that in the Land Use Chapter of the CP, an analysis will be done on the swaps of land that are available.

Christina Wilgren shared that calculations of 40B units in Bedford are misleading; and what's considered affordable, actually isn't because of the statutory way affordable units are accounted for.

Mr. Garber stated that the number of 40B units highlighted in the snapshot was provided by DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development).

Issues

The affordable housing percent dropped from 18.3% (2008) to 16.1% (2010); Mr. Garber explained that Bedford's exemption from 40B means that as market-rate housing is built, the percentage of affordable housing will drop.

Jeffrey Cohen commented that Bedford has the ability to still approve 40B developments.

Christina Wilgren expressed concern regarding those who are homeless in town; and then commented that not much is being done to address this issue.

Ms. Hackman expressed that currently there isn't much of an appetite to include more residence within commercial development; and then Ms. Hackman mentioned Middlesex Turnpike as a mixed use area that doesn't seem pedestrian friendly because of its lack of connectivity.

Kathryn Madden said guidelines would be needed, but it can be a tough sell.

Jonathan Silver mentioned areas near the Center of Town in which he believes would provide better pedestrian/walkable areas to support retail and housing.

Kathryn Madden said focus should also be placed on redeveloping the two major shopping centers in town to further promote support to retail, housing and walkable areas.

Ms. Hackman commented that the Great Road corridor is mixed use because of its balance between the residents and retail.

Jonathan Silver said he would like to see smaller/cottage style homes added to Bedford's housing stock for younger people starting out.

Glenn Garber spoke about 40R development, which encourages the creation of clusters of homes on smaller lots near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as the Center of Town, and in other highly suitable locations.

Terry Gleason mentioned that education should be provided regarding the mindset of today's young adults; as young adults prefer to rent versus buy a house.

Sandra Hackman suggested adding some information on page 5, in the narrative, to reflect Mr. Gleason's recommendation to educate people on this subject.

Tom Kinzer spoke about making public health benefits and connectivity more prominent in mixed use developments. Mr. Kinzer suggested including a playground or other amenities for kids in housing developments that are located far distances from the Center of Town.

Steve Carluccio asked if the town knows what the number of school aged children is from the housing units located in the Middlesex Turnpike area.

Sandra Hackman said it is misleading to analyze the number of school children on just multi-family housing as new subdivisions with single family homes can also bring in many new school –aged children.

Vision

Kathryn Madden said that for the most part the vision is straightforward, but may need some work.

Jeffrey Cohen asked if the sentence in the vision statement starting with: Market rate, but more modest housing types have been added to the housing stock in *logical locations* where there is *compatible density* is contradictory.

Sandra Hackman mentioned her concern about losing commercial areas.

Kathryn Madden said the town can promote industrial or commercial areas, but it is difficult to control the market; and therefore you need to carefully review what you are aiming for.

Terry Gleason shared further concern regarding teardowns. Mr. Gleason said; unless you re-zone, more of Bedford's smaller/more affordable housing stock will be lost to teardowns that are replaced with McMansions.

Jeffrey Cohen said he is also concerned with losing too much commercial use; and then gave converting schools to condos as an example of how the town can lose land uses that it may need at a later time.

Glenn Garber said gradual change can be achieved with the overlay districts.

David Cormier voiced concern about losing tax base when commercial use shifts to residential.

Tom Kinzer agreed that the town should be working towards revitalizing the industrial/commercial tax base; and not just rely on residential.

Jonathan Silver said there are limited pedestrian-viable walkable areas where mixed use development is zoned; and that more connectivity needs to be mandated.

Goals

Jeffrey Cohen, referring to goal #2 on page 4, asked; what is a comfortable percentage for Bedford to remain above the 10% affordable housing threshold in the subsidized housing inventory as determined by the MA Division of Housing and Community Development.

Kathryn Madden replied that this is a relative changing number depending on how much development there is in town.

Carla Olson asked how Ashby Place fits into the affordable housing numbers.

Glenn Garber informed Ms. Olson that this information can be found in the appendix.

Sandra Hackman pointed out that Ashby Place is affordable housing for seniors.

Ms. Olson mentioned that residents of Ashby Place have issues with transportation and accessibility to shopping centers. Ms. Olson also spoke about the long waiting list Ashby Place has for senior that seek affordable housing, and voiced that seniors actually prefer to be in a multi-generation complex rather than a senior housing development.

Lisa Mustapich said we should be monitoring the quality of affordable housing in Bedford, and not just the quantity. Ms. Mustapich said affordable housing units should be well maintained, energy efficient, and accessible.

Glenn Garber agreed with Mr. Petrecca's statement, but added that Ashby Place, Elm Street, and Concord senior housing units are rentals.

Specific goals discussed:

Sandra Hackman wanted to add a health aspect (under goals), such as creating walkable areas.

Tom Kinzer requested connecting pedestrian trails to major shopping centers.

Jeffrey Cohen suggested identifying/define what "more diverse" housing stock really means.

Christina Wilgren reiterated the need to address teardown concerns.

Jeffrey Cohen suggested including incentives that will make it desirable for developers to build smaller houses and still make a profit, and establishing provisions that will allow the construction of detached accessory/in-law apartments.

Glenn Garber mentioned that the town could consider senior-only zoning.

Christina Wilgren stated that seniors don't want to be segregated from the community; they would prefer a vibrant neighborhood with all ages. Ms. Wilgren added that she would like the needs of single people, seniors, and the homeless considered.

Discussion/Comments:

David Cormier said he prefers that the town review provisions for in-law apartments rather than creating senior only zoning.

Sam Petrecca, referring to the last bullet under Housing Demand/Population Characteristics that 34% of Bedford households have children under 18, commented that he was surprised by that percentage and thought it would actually be higher.

Sandra Hackman pointed out that Bedford has a lot of seniors still living in town.

Jeffrey Cohen asked if housing on Middlesex Turnpike should be better defined or restricted.

Terry Gleason said if there is a goal to continue building mixed-use housing developments in the Middlesex Turnpike area, then there should be a demand for developers to provide parks/playgrounds and other amenities to support housing in this area.

Kathryn Madden agreed with Mr. Gleason that higher standards for building mixed-use housing developments in the Middlesex Turnpike area are needed.

Sandra Hackman agreed that the Mixed Use bylaw needs to be modified.

A further discussion took place regarding how to address the housing needs of underserved groups—

Kathryn Madden expressed that coordination of services and education is needed for these underserved groups.

Christina Wilgren spoke about the housing needs of individuals whose income falls below 22k; and then asked if the vacant Coast Guard Housing located off of Pine Hill Road could become affordable housing for some of the underserved groups.

Jonathan Silver explained that it's a long process for the town to try to acquire the vacant Coast Guard Housing: 1) the Town would need to approach the GSA (General Service Administration) to see if any Federal Agencies are interested in the property; 2) if no Federal Agencies want the property then the town needs to contact the State; 3) if the State doesn't want the property, then Bedford could try to acquire it.

Glenn Garber spoke about future plans to add SOR (Single Occupancy Residence) units at the Bedford VA to address homeless veterans.

Ms. Wilgren commented that it would be ideal if women vets could get separate housing units from men instead of living dormitory style.

Planning Director Garber thanked members of the CP Advisory AD Hoc Committee members for attending the CP work session on the draft Housing Element and for sharing their valuable input. Mr. Garber stated that the CP work schedule will slow down a bit so Planning staff can address regulatory and development items that are before them.

STAFF REPORT

1. Blake Block/64-68 Great Road—Sandra Hackman asked staff to dedicate time on the January 22 agenda to discuss strategies in addressing concerns/issues at the Blake Block development. Jeffrey Cohen commented that this discussion should be based on how to deal with what's currently unacceptable at this site and how to move forward in a positive manner so a situation like this doesn't happen again.

2. 54 Loomis Street – Cerundolo-Larsen Realty Trust and Tambone Investment Group, Inc. requested Planning Board consideration to accept a withdrawal (without prejudice) of a Special Permit application dated, June 19, 2012 for a mixed-use development at 54 Loomis Street so that they can later present a new design for the project.

MOTION: Sandra Hackman move to accept Cerundolo-Larsen Realty Trust and Tambone Investment Group, Inc. written request, dated December 27, 2012 to withdraw without prejudice a Special Permit application dated, June 19, 2012 for a mixed-use development at 54 Loomis Street. Jeffrey Cohen seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

3. 100 Plank Street—Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner, reported that developer Vince O’Neill continues to review options before returning to the Board to further discuss amending the Industrial Mixed Use Special Permit for this site.

4. Victoria Road—Catherine Perry noted that the property owners of Victoria Road will be on the January 22 agenda seeking approval of an Approval Not Required (ANR) plan under Subdivision Control Law to separate the ownership of the rear portions of two existing lots on Charles Street prior to obtaining subdivision approval for the creation of a buildable lot on Victoria Road.

5. Other/MAGIC (Minuteman Advisory Group on Inter-local Coordination)—Sandra Hackman reported that MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) provided a summary of the region’s transportation needs and that Rte. 62, 225 and 4 was identified as an area with severe bottlenecks for local highways and arterial roadways. Ms. Hackman added that this finding should be incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan as something to address.

MINUTES:

a. November 27, 2012-- 213 Burlington Road Special Permit Amendment Public Hearing Minutes/Panera Bread

MOTION: Sandra Hackman moved to approve the November 27, 2012 Special Permit Amendment Public Hearing Minutes for Panera Bread, 213 Burlington Road, with minor amendments. Lisa Mustapich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

b. November 27, 2012-- Regular Session Minutes; including the joint meeting with Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Economic Development draft element discussion.

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to approve the November 27, 2012 Regular Session Minutes; including the joint meeting with Comprehensive Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Economic Development draft element discussion with minor amendments. Jeffrey Cohen seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

c. December 12, 2012—Regular Session Minutes

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to approve the December 12, 2012 Regular Session Minutes with a minor correction. Jeffrey Cohen seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0

d. December 12, 2012—100 Plank Street Industrial Mixed Use Special Permit Amendment Public Hearing Minutes.

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich move to approve December 12, 2012 Industrial Mixed Use Special Permit Amendment Public Hearing Minutes for 100 Plank Street with minor amendments. Jeffrey Cohen seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

e. December 20, 2012 Regular Session Minutes

MOTION: Jeffrey Cohen move to approve the December 20, 2012 Regular Session Minutes with minor amendments. Lisa Mustapich seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to adjourn the meeting. Jeffrey Cohen seconded the motion.

VOTE: 4-0-0

TIME: 10:15PM