

**BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MINUTES--including
Joint meeting with CP AD Hoc Advisory Committee
Selectmen's Meeting Room – Town Hall
June 4, 2013**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeffrey Cohen, Chair; Shawn Hanegan, Clerk; Sandra Hackman Amy Lloyd; and Lisa Mustapich

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Glenn Garber, Planning Director and Cathy Silvestrone, Planning A.A.

STAFF ABSENT: Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AD HOC COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Jacqueline Edwards, Sam Petrecca, Carla Olsen, Stephen Carluccio, Brian O'Donnell,

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Siegenthaler; Selectmen Liaison

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Kathryn Madden, Roberta Cameron, and Larry Koff

Jeffrey Cohen, Chair, convened the meeting at 7:32 PM

Emergency Evacuation Announcement read by Shawn Hanegan, 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* Land Use Partial Element--

Glenn Garber, Planning Director, introduced a discussion session on a *partial* Land Use element of the Plan. The staff and consultant team has prepared a partial draft plan chapter on this topic, following a similar structure to the previous Service and Facilities element. Copies were distributed. Director Garber thanked the Ad Hoc Advisory members and the consultant team for attending and also urged people to steer away from implementation discussion and focus on strategies.

Kathryn Madden of the Madden Group thanked the Bedford Planning staff for its effort in preparing the *partial* Land Use 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 partial draft Land Use element as follows: snapshot page with key facts and graphics; summary of issues and opportunities; a vision; set of goals; thematic maps--focusing on Great Road Corridor & Centers, North Road Center, Depot Park Center, Middlesex Turnpike and Residential Neighborhoods.

Information was also provided in respects to: Town Census Population Figures, 2011 Land Use Breakdown calculations, future steps to complete the draft Land Use element, and an updated Comprehensive Plan work schedule.

The Ad Hoc Committee and Planning Board members discussed each of the components presented this evening and then raised the following points:

LAND USE ISSUE COMMENTS:

Sam Petrecca, referring to the Coast Guard property located off of Pine Hill Road, asked if the 17 % governmental number on the pie chart reflected this housing. Staff replied; it probably does.

Sandra Hackman, regarding issue #2, asked if “Commercial” should be changed to “Retail” in this sentence.

Board members also questioned the phrase “sense of place” in issue #2.

Jaci Edwards said she was not in favor of the term “hierarchy” when referring to routes. Kathryn Madden suggested using the term “fragmentation” instead.

Lisa Mustapich spoke about 54 Loomis Street (in relation to the issue of cut through roads and accessibility to neighborhoods), and pointed out that people chose to live in such areas due to the many amenities and advantages; however she also understands why some people may not want to live in these areas because of all the cut through traffic.

Issue #5—Outdated Zoning: Kathryn Madden spoke about the layers of discussion over the years to update zoning to respond to what Bedford wants to happen.

Sam Petrecca spoke about congested routes and what would work to encourage alternative transportation routes in the street network.

Roberta Cameron pointed out that Bedford has 25% of its residents work in town.

Kathryn Madden voiced that work is needed to set up conditions for people to make decisions to use alternative transportation modes and routes.

Lisa Mustapich mentioned that regionally there is amazing formidable employment base whether you work in Bedford or Boston; and therefore this resource should be protected.

Amy Lloyd stated that she doesn’t believe Bedford is rural; and that this term should be changed. Various speakers agreed strongly with this.

Lisa Mustapich expressed that smaller lots and denser housing is not what she is looking for as a Vision.

Jaci Edwards and Mark Siegenthaler pointed out that if we want compact development, there are likely to be some density increases necessary.

Kathryn Madden observed that most neighborhoods seem to be the same as they were years ago; and then commented that the most visible change is teardowns with larger replacement houses.

Lisa Mustapich commented that Bedford has been good about including a variety of diverse/denser housing; however this trend might need to slow down.

Glenn Garber said he agrees with Amy Lloyd that “Rural” might not be the correct terminology when describing Bedford; and that we may need to come up with a term for these areas when replacing the old cluster laws.

Roberta Cameron, referring to denser development, said; since the town is mostly developed the areas under question are very limited and changes therefore would not affect long-established single family neighborhoods.

Kathryn Madden and Sandra Hackman commented that we should look to protect some of the less developed residential areas if Bedford is built-out.

Kathryn Madden asked what the future of these neighborhoods is and what can be done about it?

Lisa Mustapich cited the Coyne property, located around the corner on Concord Road, and how they combined lots to create the Abbott Lane subdivision (which also included a teardown).

Glenn Garber talked about the provision in the Zoning Act that implies towns can't dictate what happens to the interior of single family homes, in response to questions about establishing a residential FAR.

Amy Lloyd and Jeff Cohen said we need to reframe certain areas where density would work.

Lisa Mustapich gave Port Charlotte, Florida as an example of development which truly protects open space and then she spoke about the trade-offs in doing this.

Jaci Edwards said she is in favor of reframing the redevelopment discussion so that people will know what they are buying into.

VISION COMMENTS:

Kathryn Madden asked; does this Land Use vision meet what Bedford wants; and then she said; this needs to be determined.

Jeff Cohen, referring to Middlesex Turnpike, said he is not comfortable with the vision of adding more housing in this area; and then voiced that there is already enough housing there for now.

Roberta Cameron replied; a strategy can be to limit the Middlesex Turnpike area for further residential expansion.

Amy Lloyd expressed that she is not sure if Middlesex Turnpike area makes sense for residential and business to be mixed.

Larry Koff and Glenn Garber both agree that we need to be careful with terminology and buzzwords.

GOALS COMMENTS:

Goal #2—Jaci Edwards suggested that the town try to retain starter homes; as we are losing them to mansionization.

Goal #2—Lisa Mustapich spoke about the existence of small grants available through MORI Housing Trust to give qualified homeowners the ability to make older homes safe without having to demolish and rebuild them.

Goal #3—Sandra Hackman asked that this language be refined. Kathryn Madden agreed.

Goal #4—Amy Lloyd suggested including pedestrian/bicycle information.

Goal #4—Jaci Edwards said she believes the town is getting there for walkability; and then she spoke about the value of the walkability survey that Carla Olsen was involved with through Healthy Bedford.

Kathryn Madden and Shawn Hanegan said they agree with goal #1; that the town is really trying to structure zoning to enhance the character of the commercial and employment areas .

DISCUSSION COMMENTS:

Carla Olsen spoke about pedestrian connectivity within the centers.

Sandra Hackman pointed out that the Great Road Master Plan will assist with some of these issues.

Kathryn Madden commented that we can include sidewalk and seating places within these areas

Jeff Cohen pointed out that these are two separate types of area that we are discussing: Great Road and older Centers

Mark Siegenthaler commented that the height of buildings can be trouble; and then spoke about floor space and height of structures.

Brian O'Donnell shared Lexington as an example of outreach to strengthen community preservation as a goal for both community character and economic development.

Shawn Hanegan mentioned that Blue Ribbon Plaza is an example of what Bedford doesn't want; and that we should look to include appropriate examples.

Kathryn Madden suggested that we be clear to the developers as to what the town really wants to have built.

Roberta Cameron suggested providing specific examples in the Plan.

Jaci Edwards suggested including traffic calming measures to improve the experience in centers.

Sandra Hackman voiced that participants did support that approach during discussion of other elements.

STRATEGIES COMMENTS:

Roberta Cameron reviewed the bullets under Regulatory Tools and Incentives, Municipal and Regional Planning and Capital Investment.

Under Municipal and Regional Planning--Glenn Garber spoke about MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and what their function is.

Under Municipal and Regional Planning--Mr. Garber said that T.I.P. is a critical document.

Under Capital Investment—Mr. Garber commented that capital investment is primarily used to provide private investment to define infrastructure projects.

Brian O'Donnell (referring to the Regulatory Items) asked how much is being done to promote proactive participation when long-term property owners are selling.

Glenn Garber stated that dedicated advocacy organizations such as, Local Land Trusts, do a good job of encouraging people to dedicate land for green space. Glenn Garber also suggested adding "Outreach" under Strategies.

Jaci Edwards suggested adding "Outreach" as a Strategy or Action.

Mark Siegenthaler pointed out that the town has a Land Acquisition Committee and that this committee contacts land owners.

Someone suggested that Bedford needs a dedicated, proactive staff to pursue Economic Development objectives.

Kathryn Madden suggested that Board members think further about their vision(s) for the town.

Glenn Garber conveyed that it will take time and a public education effort to change the consciousness about compact development patterns and walkability/bikeability.

Jaci Edwards suggested to encourage a pedestrian /bicycle friendly community and mentioned that the town needs to say what it is they really need.

Sandra Hackman shared that she liked how the town brought everyone together to work on a vision for the Great Road.

Larry Koff mentioned that area-specific plans would be very desirable to have in the future.

Mark Siegenthaler spoke about transfer of redevelopment rights as a planning tool; and added that we need to place people to areas where the town needs them to go.

Amy Lloyd asked if the town has defined the amount of commercial/retail that it can handle. Someone suggested doing a market study.

Kathryn Madden shared that the consulting/staff team is beginning to integrate all comments from past sessions.

Sandra Hackman asked when Action items will be prepared. Glenn Garber explained that this is a separate chapter which is often done mostly in matrix form.

It was suggested that we should strive for the fall to get a bigger public hearing setting to get the Comprehensive Plan Updated Information out to the public.

Planning Director Garber thanked members of the CP Advisory AD Hoc Committee members for attending the CP work session on the draft partial Land Use element and for sharing their valuable input. Committee and Board members were encouraged to send any further thoughts to Glenn Garber or Catherine Perry by phone or email. Mr. Garber mentioned that the CP work schedule may vary depending on the backlog of regulatory and development items that are before them.

BUSINESS SESSION:

1. Athena Lane Definitive Subdivision-- Planning Board endorsed Athena Lane Definitive Subdivision Certificate of Action approved during the May 14, 2013 public hearing.
2. Bedford Business Park/4-18 Crosby Drive—Planning Board endorsed Bedford Business Park Special Permit Decision with findings and conditions approved during the May 20, 2013 public hearing.

STAFF REPORT: (verbal updates given by Director Garber)

1. Walk The Plank LLC/100 Plank Street—applicant will re-submit a special permit amendment application for a mixed use project to be reviewed during the June 18, 2013 meeting.
2. Freedom Estates—Planning Board discussion regarding a determination to clarify the status of a trail segment between 22 and 24 Liberty Road will take place during the June 28, 2013 meeting.
3. Depot Park Area Mixed-Use Overlay District—update on an informal discussion that took place during the April 16, 2013 meeting regarding the potential to include a café near the Minuteman Bikeway; Mr. Garber reported that property owner Ken Larson recently discovered that a portion of this land is owned by MBTA.
4. Homestead Circle—potential for an application to be submitted for a definitive subdivision off of Homestead Circle.
5. 201 Burlington Road—potential Industrial Mixed Use redevelopment project at this site.

BUSINESS SESSION: (Continued)

3. Minutes—May 14, 2013 Regular Session

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to approve May 14, 2013 Regular Session Minutes with minor amendments. Shawn Hanegan seconded the motion.

VOTE: 5-0-0

4. Planning Director’s Review—Planning Board discussed Planning Director Garber’s Performance Review.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Lisa Mustapich moved to adjourn the meeting. (Amy Lloyd seconded the motion)

VOTE: 5-0-0

TIME: 10:30PM