

**Meeting of the Planning Board
Thursday, January 4, 2024**

The 18th meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2024 was called to order at 7:22 p.m. in the Blute Conference Room of Milton Town Hall.

Present: Planning Board Members Meredith Hall (Chair) Cheryl Tougias (Secretary), Sean Fahy, Maggie Oldfield, and Jim Davis; Director of Planning and Community Development Tim Czerwienski and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

1. Discussion of MBTA Community Zoning

The Board discussed initiatives on how to move the zoning forward depending on the results of the ballot submitted to the Town Administrator December 19th. Studies on economic feasibility, site plan approvals, buildout analyses, design guidelines and traffic were proposed, and it was suggested that town officials weigh in on certain budgets. Ms. Oldfield supported submitting a May 2024 Town Meeting (TM) article, noting that the ballot question had spread awareness of the MBTA zoning and that significant work had been put into the process, while Ms. Tougias considered May to be “ambitious” due to the need for the development of a scope of work and budget review. Adhering to the guidelines of the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and identifying the goals of the town were discussed. Applying an affordable housing percentage to the new districts and how those calculations tie into the build-out analyses was addressed.

Mr. Czerwienski stated that the town’s contract with Utile Consultants, which had provided several compliance models, could be extended to assist with new models. He discussed a compliance model that Utile had developed summarizing unit capacity calculations in different districts and how different inputs such as unit counts, height restrictions, and Floor Area Ratios (FAR) automatically adjusted the parameters of model. He noted that consultants are experts on modeling and have access to the geological/parcel data of different districts.

Ms. Tougias mentioned the importance of setting clear goals for the public and suggested developing a district criteria scorecard to rate how certain priorities associated with the zoning may apply to existing districts. Ms. Oldfield suggested that the Board be given the opportunity to test different scenarios within the model independently of Utile. Mr. Czerwienski noted that only the consultants would be able to manipulate district geographies, but that the model would be shared with the Board nonetheless.

The Board discussed the development of the priorities list to use as a basis of the scorecard criteria and agreed that all previous iterations of the subdistricts should be considered.

Potential traffic impacts were discussed and it was noted that the Beta Group traffic consulting group is employed by the town to address engineering and design work alongside the Traffic Commission, and had created a traffic model for East Milton Square which can have data plugged in. It was also noted that there is no way to determine what kind of development will occur over the next 10 years and that traffic projections were questionable.

Mr. Fahy asked if state-owned land on Granite Ave., currently used as a DPW yard, could be developed into a 40B. Mr. Czerwienski responded that because Milton is no longer in “safe harbor” from 40B development that a 40B would be a legal use. He said that a scope of work for an economic analysis regarding affordable housing had been drafted and that he had planned a meeting with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), which if chosen to conduct the analysis, would not require a procurement process. He said that what is allowable in terms of building capacity in different districts will guide the affordability unit factor.

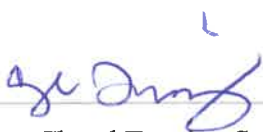
The Board discussed engaging a legal consultant specializing in zoning to help the PB write its own zoning. Budget considerations and the legal right for the PB to use its budget for legal counsel were considered. Ms. Oldfield discussed the need to “cover all bases” with the zoning language and said that although the PB could not hire a lawyer, a legal consultant would essentially provide the same service. It was suggested that the PB review the zoning drafted by the other 11 other communities faced with the December 31st deadline to comply with the statute.

Ms. Oldfield made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to investigate hiring an outside zoning attorney to help write the MBTA Communities Zoning Act bylaw, investigate whether the PB's funds can be used for that purpose and if the PB has the authority to hire outside counsel for that purpose, and to attain a cost estimate.

Mr. Czerwienski said that any compliance sheets that have been submitted that include a geography aspect would be shared with the Board, new geographies would be added to a model sheet, and a scope of work for the economic feasibility analysis would be provided by three vendors. Ms. Tougias and Ms. Hall offered to inquire about potential legal consultants and Ms. Hall said she would provide a list of priorities for determining criteria for the scorecard, which would be drafted by Ms. Tougias.

An upcoming meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, January 17th.

On a motion by Mr. Fahy, seconded by Ms. Oldfield, the meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.



Cheryl Tougias, Secretary