

**Meeting of the Planning Board
Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

The 20th meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2023 was called to order at 7:05 p.m. via Zoom.

Present: Planning Board members Meredith Hall (Chair), Cheryl Tougias (Secretary), Margaret Oldfield, Jim Davis and Sean Fahy; Director of Planning and Community Development Tim Czerwienski, Assistant Town Planner Josh Lee and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

1. Citizen's Speak

Megan Nolan of 1330 Canton Ave. said that a yes vote on February 13th for the referendum regarding MBTA Communities zoning would bring Milton closer to its goal of achieving an accessible, inclusive community and provide zoning for multi-family homes. She quoted a letter to the Select Board (SB) from the Attorney General (AG) noting the limited housing supply and its negative effect on economic growth. She said a yes vote is "critical" for Milton to comply with the law and a "positive means for shaping Milton's future."

Karen Friedman-Hanna of 3 Norway Rd. said that she hoped the PB would consider supporting the referendum. She did not comprehend why town officials continued to contest the law when the Governor and AG had explicitly expressed the need for compliance. She quoted portions of the AG's letter, believed it was the PB's "fiduciary responsibility" to prevent a potential lawsuit and the loss of grant funding. She said that hiring consultants may be an extra, unneeded expense should the article be shelved for two years and that a yes vote would allow the Town to maintain more control over the zoning and allow the opportunity to make the zoning better.

2. MBTA Communities Zoning

The Board postponed discussion of a list of criteria, prepared by Ms. Tougias, for ranking the appropriateness of certain zoning districts. Ms. Tougias suggested that the PB discuss the repercussions of a no vote and what constitutes substantially different zoning, which would be required to avoid a two-year delay. She urged the PB to consider a yes vote, which she believed would place the PB "in a stronger position" and allow the Board to continue to refine the zoning without having to wait two years. Ms. Hall said that that discussion was not on the agenda and that focusing on a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an affordable housing feasibility study and ways in which to improve site plan approval process would be a better use of time. The importance of having defined districts and dimensional standards, as laid out in Article 1 in the December 2023 warrant, in place before the feasibility study takes place was discussed.

It was noted that Mr. Czerwienski had circulated a draft RFP. Triggers for the inclusion of affordable units were considered, including adjustments to the Average Median Income (AMI) required and the percentage of square footage, as well as the percentage of renters vs. owners. Pursuing a monetary contribution to the Affordable Housing Trust from projects that do not trigger affordable units was proposed. The Board agreed to request the highest percentage of affordable units possible, between 15% and 20%, depending upon the triggers. Perpetual affordability and how it ties into 40B developments was discussed, and requiring affordable units to be on-site was considered.

Existing site plan approval provisions, how they apply to commercial areas, and how they will affect future developments under the MBTA zoning were discussed. The re-zoning of East Milton Square and the Milton Village overlay zoning were referenced. Current site plan approval provisions in the zoning bylaws, outside of the MBTA zoning provisions, were considered vague or incomplete, and it was agreed that the SPA provisions of other communities should be reviewed. Mr. Czerwienski said he would refer to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) for guidance on SPAs, and that he would consult with the Town Council team for recommendations on what the next steps should be.

Ms. Oldfield requested that the starting figures for the number of households in Milton calculated by RKG Consultants be adjusted for more precise and updated numbers. Mr. Czerwienski responded that the

state and RKG calculate the numbers differently, based on the number of year-round occupants, as opposed to the number of actual houses, and that both calculations may be considered accurate, although more information was required. It was suggested that a representative from RKG attend a PB meeting to resolve unanswered questions on the fiscal analysis.

Ms. Oldfield requested that comments made by Town Council at the October 23rd Warrant Committee meeting regarding statutes for the two-year delay be clarified.

3. On a motion by Ms. Oldfield, seconded by Mr. Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.



Cheryl Tougias, Secretary