

**Meeting of the Planning Board  
Thursday, August 10, 2023**

The 3rd meeting of the Milton Planning Board for FY2024 convened at 7:03 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 (remote), Assistant Town Planner Josh Eckart-Lee (remote) and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

**1. Administrative Items:** Approval of minutes was deferred. Upcoming meetings were confirmed for August 28<sup>th</sup>, September 14<sup>th</sup> and September 28<sup>th</sup>. A public forum on MBTA Community zoning was confirmed for August 14<sup>th</sup>.

**2. Staff Update:** Mr. Czerwienski stated that an amended site plan approval for increased parking at 7 Pleasant St. (Bent's) would be coming before the Board on September 14<sup>th</sup>. He said that consultants from RKG Associates were in the process of collecting data from Town departments as part of its fiscal analysis and will be attending the September 24<sup>th</sup> PB meeting, as will consultants from Utile, which has been studying compliance models for the zoning. He reported that a Request for Proposals (RFP) had been received for a modular structure for a new animal shelter on the access road off of Randolph Avenue and that the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee would be working on pricing for the project. Mr. Eckart-Lee stated that the Select Board (SB) and the Milton Landing Committee had voted to give notices to the occupants of lots B and C at Milton Landing to relocate boat trailers and that a comment letter would be sent to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding its involvement in a community advisory group, citizen-led and EPA staffed, to address community engagement around the site. It will request that the EPA expand its cleanup area to include the Milton Landing area, where hazardous materials have been found. Plans for dredging are in process pending resolution of hazardous materials removal.

**3. Citizen's Speak:**

Echo Bergquist of 42 Lincoln St. supported the revisions to the letter to the MBTA Board of Directors from the Select Board regarding MBTA zoning and the Town's status as a rapid transit community. She expressed concerns about the focus on transit service as a requisite of qualifying as a rapid transit community and supports increased attention to trolley service and upgrades. She believes the zoning will be a "great benefit" to the town, is "smart planning" and will help combat the issue of climate change.

Jim Coyle of 21 Bunton St. asked about townwide work being conducted by Verizon and the running of wires across property lines. He expressed safety concerns and asked about Town oversight. Mr. Czerwienski responded that the wire department and DPW manage this type of work, there is a design review committee and telecom bylaw, and that the SB has a review process for small cell wireless devices.

Tom Callahan of 16 Orono St. reported on Milton's slow population growth statistics since the 1970s and the unaffordability of the town and emphasized the need for more housing types and affordable units. He said that compliance with the MBTA zoning "is the right thing to do."

**4. Public Hearing: 152 Robbins St. Site Plan Approval** (continued from August 3<sup>rd</sup>)

Attorney Edward Corcoran, representing Community Boston LLC and property owner representative Brian Johnson, discussed adjustments to the site plan approval, including a reorientation of a greenhouse and raised beds. Dimensions outlining the distance from the new buildings to the street and the existing house were requested for the site plan. He said that the timing of construction was expected to take one year and discussed the building materials to be used. A redlined version of the site plan decision was read through and discussed, and adjustments to the language were made. On a motion by Ms. Tougias,

seconded by Mr. Fahy, the hearing was closed, 5/0/0. On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Mr. Davis, the site plan decision was approved 5/0/0 as amended.

#### **5. Old Business: 111 Highland St. Memory Care Facility Site Plan Approval (Cont.' from 7/13)**

Mr. Corcoran, representing Northbridge LLC, stated that “significant” modifications had been made to the plans since the hearing opened in February 2023 with work from the Conservation Commission and noted that PB member Jim Davis, had since joined the Board. He requested that the Board approve a motion to withdraw the application without prejudice and the right to refile and start a new hearing in September. On a motion by Ms. Oldfield, seconded by Mr. Fahy, the Board voted 4/0/1 to approve the motion with Mr. Davis abstaining. It was noted that the SB had recently approved traffic consulting services from Beta engineers which should be included in the new plans.

#### **6. ANR: 10-18 Central Avenue**

Attorney Marion McEttrick, representing the O’Neill family, discussed plans to create two lots from the one parcel containing a drycleaning business and mechanic’s shop, which required a variance from the Board of Appeals (ZBA) due to a six-foot setback requirement. She said that the purpose of the ANR was to allow the owner of the property to sell to the owners of the two businesses. She said that any new buildings put on the site must comply with zoning or will require ZBA approval. On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Mr. Fahy, the Board voted 5/0/0 to authorize Mr. Czerwienski to endorse the plans as not requiring subdivision approval and to sign on the PB’s behalf.

#### **7. Discussion of East Milton Zoning**

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s (MAPC) Principal Planner, Josh Fiala and City Planner Sarah Scott gave a presentation on rezoning initiatives in East Milton and discussed the process for writing the new zoning. Design guidelines and bylaw standards were addressed. The scope of the rezoning process was laid out in four phases: Data review/ past studies and community engagement strategy; Preparation of draft zoning concepts and outreach to stakeholders; Preparation of draft zoning language and design guidelines; Preparation of final zoning for preferred zoning approach, public hearings and Town Meeting. Project timelines, goals, incentives, principals and district boundaries were discussed as well as strategies for community engagement and accommodating parking. The discussion was continued to September 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### **8. Old Business: MBTA Communities Zoning Update**

Ms. Hall reported that she and Mr. Czerwienski, SB Chair Mike Zullas and Town Administrator Nicholas Milano had drafted a letter to the MBTA addressing the challenges of the mandate faced by Milton and its classification as a rapid transit town. She said the letter had since been significantly altered by the SB without input from the PB and believed it should not be sent. Reviewing a redlined version, the PB discussed how the intent of what had been a “collaborative effort” had shifted and how significant information had been deleted. The PB debated how a reclassification would allow for more time to develop the zoning and how the studies currently being conducted by Utile, MAPC and RKG consultants will help guide the zoning while showing good faith with compliance with the law. Mr. Fahy emphasized the need for options and did not believe that bad zoning should be produced “because we have a gun to our head.” Ms. Tougias believed that the revised MBTA letter was “in the spirit of compromise.” Ms. Oldfield made a motion not to support sending the revised version, seconded by Mr. Fahy, which passed 4/1/0 with Ms. Tougias opposed.

Mr. Czerwienski presented a spreadsheet addressing potential new MBTA community-compliant districts, addressing issues involving unit capacity, density, and acreage. Setbacks, open space requirements, height and lot coverage restrictions, and capping the number of units allowed for certain districts were discussed. Test fitting maps of new units in the upper Granite Ave. area were considered. Inclusion of mixed-use buildings and ways in which to incorporate affordable housing and disperse density across districts were addressed.

Public Comment:

Chris Trakas of 50 Meadowview Rd. stated that he was against the zoning but a “believer in compromise,” and that reclassifying Milton as a non-high speed transit town was considered a compromise. He believed that the first letter sent to the MBTA was “good,” and that the edited version, “said nothing.” He believed that the PB should compromise with the SB and that the PB should write its own letter. He believed the zoning would bring expensive units to the town which will not help the unaffordability of Milton.

The Board discussed options for informational mailings to the public about the zoning and made edits to postcards and letters that had been drafted. It was discussed whether a simple or super majority vote would be required at Town Meeting to pass the zoning. After a brief discussion the Board voted to expend \$1,300 from its budget for the printing of the amended postcards and flyers.

**9. Discussion of Potential Zoning Articles**

The discussion was deferred.

**10. Budget Review**

The discussion was deferred.

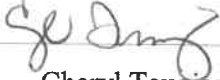
**11. Committee Reports**

The discussion was deferred.

**Public Comment:**

Mark Christo of 17 Waldo Rd. requested that the next MBTA zoning meeting be held at a large venue to accommodate as many people as possible.

**12. Adjourn:** On a motion by Ms. Tougias, seconded by Mr. Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 11:44 p.m.

  
Cheryl Tougias, Secretary

