

**Meeting of the Planning Board  
Thursday, August 24, 2023**

The 4th 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, Assistant Town Planner Josh Eckart-Lee and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

**1. Administrative Items:** On a motion by Mr. Fahy, seconded by Mr. Davis, the approval of meeting minutes was deferred, 5/0/0. Upcoming meetings were confirmed for September 14<sup>th</sup> and September 28<sup>th</sup>.

**2. Staff Update:** Mr. Czerwienski stated that the MBTA would be closing the red line from JFK to Ashmont as well as the Mattapan line for two weeks in October. Mr. Eckart-Lee mentioned that the MBTA Community Zoning comment letter drafted by Town Administrator Nick Milano, Select Board member Mike Zullas, Mr. Czerwienski and Chair Hall, which was amended by the Select Board (SB) and discussed at the August 10<sup>th</sup> PB meeting, would be included in Milton residents' water bills.

**3. Citizen's Speak:**

Donna Dickerson of 14 Capen St. said she favored multifamily housing in Milton and believed the MBTA Communities Zoning would increase housing stock and housing opportunities for people of varying income levels. She believed the zoning should include the entire half mile area within the transit district, including historic properties, and questioned why larger lots are excluded from the transit zone when lots as small as 5,500 SF are considered appropriate. She asked that the bus infrastructure of Milton be expanded, more time be given to drafting the zoning and more meetings be scheduled to discuss the zoning exclusively.

Peter Jackson of 14 Capen St. said he supported the MBTA zoning as a means for providing broader housing opportunities and said that he did not agree with the edits made by the BOS to the initial zoning proposal and approved at its August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. He believed as of right zoning allowing 5,500 SF lots with three stories and three parking spaces to be "unthinkably bad" and not an appropriate style of housing for Milton. He said that 7,500 SF lots would provide greater design flexibility.

Jim Coyle of 21 Bunton St. expressed concerns about the number of "unsightly" electrical wires in East Milton and said that public safety should be addressed when considering the MBTA Communities zoning. He agreed that the zoning should include larger lot sizes and noted that Quincy requires all wires to be underground.

Diane DiTullio Agostino 147 Ridgewood Rd. said that the MBTA zoning was a "critical" issue and that the primary job of the BOS is "fiduciary." She said that zoning issues are under the jurisdiction of the PB according to the law and discussed the fiscal impacts that multifamily units may have on schools and public safety. She said that the financial impacts of the zoning would need to be studied using the minimum number of required units and that the law needs to define an MBTA community.

**4. New Business: Wolcott Woods Special Permit Amendment**

Developer Jack Dawley described issues with groundwater on the upper portion of the site and said the engineer was proposing a 75-80 foot concrete block retention wall in place of a masonry wall approved in the special permit. He said that plantings would obscure the wall and it would have a "weathered" look within three years. Ms. Tougias noted that the special permit required all walls to be faced with natural stone in compliance with the zoning bylaw. She asked if structural or technical engineers had been consulted and suggested looking into other options. Mr. Dawley stated that he would not be open to adding stone facing to a cement wall and did not agree to hiring a structural engineer. He said he would attend the Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> PB meeting but would most likely be withdrawing the request.

## 5. Old Business: MBTA Communities Zoning Update

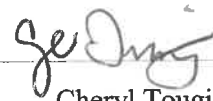
Mr. Czerwienski discussed the fiscal analysis being conducted by RKG consultants, the compliance model from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), and Utile's technical assistance work. He said the BOS, at its August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, had based its vote for compliance on the zoning in accordance with the studies and that the PB should do the same. Mr. Fahy stressed the importance of knowing what the fiscal implications of the zoning might be and said that a vote had been taken before any of RKG's analyses had been provided. He mentioned a letter he had provided to the BOS in January addressing these concerns, for which he received no response.\* Ms. Hall mentioned that the BOS voted for compliance when they have not seen a build out plan or fiscal analysis. Mr. Czerwienski described the check points set up by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (DHCD) for "interim compliance" which have been met.

Eric Halvorsen of RKG gave an overview of the firm and its priorities and strategies for conducting the fiscal analysis. He said the firm had been gathering data from Town departments, including the Assessors, DPW, Fire, Police and Schools to build the fiscal impact model as well as drawing data from the compliance models by Utile and the MAPC. He discussed how the layout of the new districts and their "propensity for change" as well as the number of new residents the new units will draw will impact the fiscal analysis. Parcel sizes, setbacks, parking ratios, open space and lot coverage and how they factor into the model were discussed. He said the 20% open space default could be increased. Mixed-use commercial spaces were considered. Unit sizes and floor area ratio (FAR) considerations were discussed. Revenue from building permits, special permit fees and taxes were discussed and build-out in basements was considered. He said that while the districts are in the process of being established a "per unit" analysis could be developed. An update would be provided at the September 28<sup>th</sup> PB meeting.

Zoe Mueller and Rahi Patel of Utile gave a presentation addressing the compliance model for the zoning. They discussed the parameters of the MBTA Communities Act, district size, location, density and unit capacity, zoning standards, Milton's criteria for compliance, the metrics of the model unit capacity, open space and lot coverage estimations. Districts studied included Granite Ave., the Milton Station area, Mattapan station area, the transit area triplex area, East Milton Square, Randolph Ave./Access Rd., Randolph Ave. south and Brush Hill Rd. Pathways to compliance included one option with and one without including East Milton Square. A metrics chart, including maximum units per acre and lot, parking spaces, building height, unit capacity, acreage, density (units per lot), percentage of land and units in the transit area and mixed use subdistrict was discussed. The transit area subdistrict framework and parameters and how to disperse density in the transit area were addressed and eligible parcels in the transit area were identified. Different scenarios for adjusting building heights and allowable units per acre to disperse density throughout the districts were discussed.

Mr. Fahy raised the issue of having Milton reclassified as a non-rapid transit community. Ms. Mueller believed it was "not going to happen" and did not comment. Having a district created along Blue Hills Parkway and at the old Knights of Columbus house on Brook Rd. was considered. A meeting to discuss MBTA zoning exclusively was scheduled for September 7<sup>th</sup>.

**6. Adjourn:** On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Ms. Oldfield, the meeting was adjourned at 10:51 p.m.



Cheryl Tougias, Secretary

\*Town Administrator Nicholas Milano asked that this email to Mr. Fahy, dated January 26, 2023 be included in the minutes:

Good morning –

Thank you for sending and I appreciate the time you and Rick put into this. I will review and think about any comments/suggestions. As I understand it, this will be a component of the work that the consultants brought on will look at.

I also wanted you to know that I led a similar effort to identify costs / expenses for a large project when I was in Medfield so I appreciate and understand the importance of this exercise. That was certainly an easier effort since it was smaller overall (334 units) we knew the exact number of units and the exact timing of the project, but we did a comprehensive Fiscal Impact Analysis of revenues / expenses and had them peer reviewed:

<https://www.town.medfield.net/2102/Trinity-Financial-Due-Dilligence-Informat>

I would be happy to sit down with you or with you and Rick at your convenience if you would like, just let me know.

Thank you,

Nicholas Milano

