

July 14, 2016

From: Dr Tom Failla <jtfailla@gmail.com>

To: Nina, Dennis, Chris,

Cy: Jane, Britta, Don, Kenneth, Richard, Sally, Tracy, Randi

Nina - Thank you again for attending and commenting at our July 11 meeting. Following and attached are details related to our request to be placed on the Board of Selectmen's July 21 Agenda. - Tom Failla, P&Z Chair

The Planning and Zoning Commission voted at its July 11 meeting to retain planning consultant Hiram Peck to advise the commission on proposed zoning regulation revisions related to recommendations from the 2010 Weston Plan of Conservation and Development (WPOCD). Accordingly, we request that the Board of Selectman appropriate \$5,000 for up to 40 hours of Mr. Peck's consulting time.

The main focus will be recommendation No. 6 to explore cluster housing regulations. The commission has been reviewing a concept called Open Space Residential Development (OSRD) that conserves environmental resources and preserves the low density residential character of Weston. As time permits, the commission would also like to engage Mr. Peck's services in addressing WPOCD Recommendations No. 7, No. 8 and No. 9, which relate to development in Weston center and use of municipal lands. These matters may well lead to a proposal from the commission for a capital planning budget to prepare an update of the 2010 plan. By state statute the Planning and Zoning Commission is directed to update the plan at least every 10 years.

Attached is a two-page paper that guided the discussion at the July 11 meeting.

7/11/16

WESTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

Introduction

The 2010 Town Plan of Conservation and Development (the “Plan”) highlights a number of areas for consideration. The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss an approach to implementing certain recommendations of the Plan. We hope that the discussion of these recommendations will also assist the Commission in considering its approach to the 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development.

We suggest that, with the assistance of a professional planner, the Commission discuss, and solicit community input on, three discrete issues: (i) the future of open space residential development in Weston; (ii) the appropriate amenities for the Town of Weston (and where to locate them) and (iii) the appropriate use and development of property owned by the Town.

Open Space Residential Development

On page 10, and again on page 24 of the Plan the Commission suggested that “cluster development” be considered, in part as a way of preserving open space in Town and also as a way to permit seniors to remain in Weston. Cluster development is defined by Connecticut law as a building pattern that results in at least one-third of the parcel remaining as open space to be used exclusively for recreational, conservation and agricultural purposes.

The Commission should discuss:

- Is cluster development of any kind desirable for Weston?
- If so, should such housing be limited to seniors?
- Should development occur on private or Town land?
- Where should such housing be located?
- How should the Commission regulate the design of such housing?
- What is the financial impact of such housing?
- Does the Town have the infrastructure to support such housing?
- What would the environmental impact be?

Amenities

On page 13 of the Plan the Commission cited the public’s support for additional commercial development, stemming “from the desire for additional services and places to gather as a community.” The Plan did note, however, that no clear consensus had emerged regarding the location of further commercial development (see footnote 10 on page 13).

Currently, those amenities afforded within Town (i.e., eating, dry cleaning, banking, hardware and other retail stores) are generally clustered in Weston Center.

The Commission should discuss:

- Is there a need for more amenities in Weston?
- If so, what additional amenities should be added/enhanced?
- Where should such amenities be located?
- How do we, as a Commission, support or encourage such changes, to the degree that they affect privately-owned property?

Town Property

It is important to note, preliminarily, that the Commission does not have jurisdiction over Town-owned property. Accordingly, any Committee observations in this area would have to come in the form of suggestions to the Town. If the Town were to be in favor of the Commission functioning in this area, the Commission could build upon its recommendations in the Plan. In the Plan, the Commission recommended consideration of additional commercial development across the road from Weston Center (i.e., on Town property). Similarly, the Commission, on pages 16-19, made additional proposals regarding Town-owned property.

The Commission should discuss:

- What is ideal Town "campus," including consideration of the 48 Norfield (former law office) the Jarvis property, Hurlbutt School and the current annex located near the Board of Education Central Office?
- What is the highest and best use of the school property that currently abuts Weston Road?
- How should the Town deal with the other properties it owns, including the Fromson-Strassler and Moore properties?

If the Commission favors exploring these topics, we will have to obtain a supplemental appropriation of up to \$5000 from the Selectmen to enable us to secure the services of a professional town planner.

Ken Edgar
Richard Wolf