



TOWN OF BELLINGHAM

10 MECHANIC STREET BELLINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 02019

Thursday, March 7, 2024
MBTA (Section 3A) Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
5:30 pm
Arcand Meeting Room

Subcommittee Members Present:

Sahan Sahin, William F. O'Connell, Elizabeth Berthelette, Robert Lussier, and Jeffrey Scornavacca

Not Present:

Also Present:

Town Administrator, Denis Fraine
Amy Sutherland, Assistant Town Planner

Present on Zoom:

Tim Aicardi, Director of Planning, Zoning and Conservation

The meeting for the MBTA (Section 3A) was opened at 5:30 pm.

Barrett Planning Consultant Overview:

Barrett Planning Consultant Sarah Maran was present via zoom and provided an overview to the Committee about the consulting services which will be performed. She explained that she is a Senior Planner at Barrett Consulting who has worked with over twelve towns on 3A projects.

The Committee viewed a screen share of slides which explained the 3A process.

The Consulting services will help to create plan to guide the town through district selection along with technical modeling and writing draft zoning language for town meeting. The scope of services will be split into two parts.

The first stage is district selection and modeling.

- Brainstorming on where the potential districts could be.
- From list, put those through compliance model
- Technical memo will be provided which sites work and those areas will be refined.
- There will be scenarios from compliance
- There will be two or three scenarios for compliance.
- The next steps would be discuss language for warrant
- Public Outreach with community.

These agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.



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The Consultant next went over the requirements to fulfill is minimum unit capacity 750, minimum district size, 50 acres, and minimum gross density 15 units.

When looking at where to zone excluded land:

- Wetlands
- Conservation restriction
- Most public land (could use some State land if an argument can be made)

Eligible locations for majority town meeting vote:

- Criteria for passing zoning with simple majority instead of 2/3 vote from MGL Chapter 40A
- “An Area of concentrated development including town or city or existing commercial district or existing rural village district.”
- “Area is a highly suitable location for residential or mixed use development based on its infrastructure, transportation access existing underutilized facilities.”
- If the town is creating zoning by right the town is possible eligible for majority vote but it does need to be in an eligible location. T
- The location will determine what zoning district the town is working with.

District Design Consideration – Non-Contiguous:

- At least half of the total district area must be contiguous (25 acres)
- Each part of the district must be at least 5 acres.
- There is flexibility
- Do not have to have same regulations all subdistricts need to average to at least 15 units/acres
- Visit <https://residency.mhp.net>

The Committee began to discuss the possible locations.

The town would like assistance to determine if what is designated will be considered as a majority vote for town meeting. A question was asked what towns similar to Bellingham has the consultant worked with. The Consultant has worked with the Town of Medway and Wayland. Another question was asked if there are examples of towns who put in place intensity requirement overlays which were denied by the State. The Consultant noted that the dimensional requirements can be modeled and adjusted directly to look at the intensity requirements. She also communicated that the Attorney General has issued letters of warning about putting intensity requirements in overlays. Some of the towns have submitted their designation plans for a pre-read. Currently the State is backed up with this review process.

The Consultant communicated that the Town can identify areas in town already with structures. The Committee discussed that there are already apartments units in town which are already built and could be identified. It was recommended by the Consultant, that if these areas have overlays, be prepared to have some areas which allow for development.

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The Curtis Apartments have 250 units with area beyond this which could be expanded for more units. There is also the Charles Apartments which has 290 units. A suggestion was made to designate the shopping plaza and this could also have some residential on the top of the existing businesses and this area could be mixed use.

The Consultant communicated that the task of the Sub-Committee would be to create a list of parcels to run through the model.

The possible Sites:

- Curtis
- Charles
- Oakwood

The Subcommittee was informed that at the last departmental meeting, staff (Police, Fire, and DPW) had dialogue about areas in town which may be a possible location. Some of the areas noted were in the South area of Town near Woonsocket.

Comments from public:

- Mr. Moore was in the audience and would like to offer up his land at 1114 South Main Street for possible MBTA land. This is 6 acres.

Approval of Minutes:

February 22, 2024:

On a motion made by William O'Connell, seconded by Liz Berthelette, the minutes from February 22, 2024, were accepted.

Next Meeting:

- March 28, 2024

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Sutherland
Recording Secretary
Approved 3.28.24

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