

BEDFORD PLANNING BOARD
Zoom Remote Meeting
Minutes
June 13, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Todd Crowley, Clerk; Amy Lloyd, Jacinda Barbehenn and Steven Hagan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Gittins, Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Tony Fields, Planning Director; Catherine Perry, Assistant Planner

OTHERS PRESENT: David _____

Clerk Todd Crowley acted as Chair in the absence of Chris Gittins.

Chair Crowley called the remote meeting to order at 7:00 pm, called the Roll of Board Members in attendance and cited the Remote Meeting Guidelines.

Ms. Perry stated that the meeting is being recorded.

Chair Crowley summarized the agenda.

DEVELOPMENT SESSION

**Public Hearing: 229, 251A and 251F old Billerica Road – PRD Special Permit
(continuation)**

Planning Director Tony Fields reported that the applicant has requested to continue without testimony to the next meeting.

MOTION: Proposed by Member Lloyd and seconded by Member Barbehenn, to continue the public hearing to the Board’s scheduled meeting on June 27, 2023

VOTE: By Roll Call:

Amy Lloyd	Aye
Todd Crowley	Aye
Steven Hagan	Aye
Jacinda Barbehenn	Aye

BUSINESS SESSION

MBTA Communities multifamily zoning

Assistant Planner Perry outlined the contents of her memo describing her latest exploration, which tests the application of the Compliance Model to some sites on Middlesex Turnpike. The area examined is the Woburn Sportsmen's Club property, currently zoned Residence R, together with three properties that adjoin it to the north – Middlesex Point office building, Village at Bedford Woods residential condominium and Continental Leasing office building at 175 Middlesex Turnpike – currently zoned Industrial B. Two GIS maps depict the areas classed as Excluded and Sensitive. The former gives a useful sense of how much land would be considered developable, which is the majority at 50.65 acres out of 62.4. The additional Sensitive land in this case is believed to be Wellhead Zone II which doesn't preclude development.

Ms. Perry expressed a caution about the Village at Bedford Woods; because it is a Ch. 40B development with 25% affordable units, and the MBTA zoning rules only allow a lower percentage to be required, it is possible that its designation might jeopardize the status of its affordable units. Ms. Perry also noted that in the past, some people have raised concerns about losing prime industrial sites to residential use, so that issue will need to be weighed in discussions.

Member Lloyd suggested adding a small triangular piece of land between Continental Leasing and the town boundary, which is part of a lot that has a building in Billerica, but may not be actively used. Ms. Perry thought it probably would not qualify, as the Compliance Model calls for whole Assessor's parcels, but it may be worth trying to check.

Board members reiterated their previous differing opinions in relation to the Woburn Sportsmen's Club property. They thanked Ms. Perry for this analysis.

Ms. Perry stressed that her aim at this point is to develop an understanding of how various options might work out, to inform discussion. She said that she is thinking of taking a look next at residential portions of The Great Road, adjacent to the mixed-use business portions, where denser housing might strengthen businesses and not displace them, as discussed. She noted that most of the lots are small. Member Barbehenn supported testing those areas.

Ms. Perry reported that she has drafted some introductory text for the proposed dedicated webpage for this work and could get it established soon. Additional materials can be added.

Member Barbehenn mentioned she has been reviewing Newton's work, in the form of a lengthy report.

Member Hagan asked about the sizes of Lexington's MBTA-related zoning districts, noting that one on Hartwell Avenue appears to be the largest.

Member Crowley asked if we are considering commercial locations and if overlay approaches are acceptable. Ms. Perry confirmed that as long as multifamily housing-only developments are allowed as an option, other uses can still be allowed. Director Fields noted that we first looked at our mixed-use business areas but we have to allow housing-only developments. He is following Newton's progress, since they had similar anxieties about displacement of businesses. How to incentivize mixed use is a question.

Member Barbehenn noted that we may need to discuss tax base issues and goals in relation to land use goals, and suggested asking Jeff King (Housing and Economic Development Director) to analyze property tax issues. Mr. Fields observed that our vacancy levels are generally low. We could discuss analysis with both Mr. King and the Assessing Director.

Member Lloyd reported that she looked at GIS information for the residential properties along Great Road between the Shawsheen and Marketplace subdistricts. Only a limited number of them conform to the current minimum lot area, and some are historic homes.

Planning Board Priorities and Goals for FY24

Chair Crowley asked about the status of the Specialized Energy Code work item. It was reported that the Select Board is prepared to lead that work.

The Chair asked if members are now agreed on the top priority work items. Others confirmed. Member Hagan reported that the need to start on a new Comprehensive Plan was raised at a public meeting for the Town Manager search.

Liaison Reports

Member Hagan noted that the ConCom will look at the 1 Railroad Avenue development tomorrow, due to the site having wetlands at the rear. This project is scheduled to come to the Planning Board on July 11. Member Crowley asked if it will need to go to the ZBA; Mr. Fields was not aware of such a need.

Member Crowley noted that BAC and TAC will meet tomorrow.

Member Lloyd reported she was unable to attend MAGIC last Tuesday but Ms. Perry attended. Ms. Perry reported that Georgia Barlow is now MAPC's MAGIC coordinator, no longer sharing the role with Sasha Parodi. The meeting's main topic was regional trails. A Creative Placemaking Strategy for regional trails is being developed, with demonstration projects in Acton and Holliston in the fall and a workshop for MAGIC and MetroWest members. Work is under way on the Bruce Freeman and Mass Central trails in Sudbury, with ribbon-cutting

scheduled for next year. The official opening of the BFRT bridge over Route 2 is coming up on June 30. A draft MAGIC work plan for FY24 has been produced. It includes an FAQ sheet on energy codes, to be completed by the end of this year.

Member Lloyd noted she may not be able to attend the next Planning Board meeting.

Staff updates/ development update

Director Fields reported that there will be a public hearing soon at the state house on Bedford’s request to use online media for advertising. Print newspaper coverage is now patchy across the state and a state-wide bill has been drawn up, which may or may not see action.

Planning staff will be conducting further interviews for the Admin Assistant position this week. Members expressed concern about the duration of the vacancy.

A development update chart was included in Board packets. Member Barbehenn asked about the application at 60 Great Road. Ms. Perry explained that it is for a special permit for ‘horizontal mixed use’ under the Great Road zoning, to construct a two-family dwelling on the same lot as the existing office building. The site has been staked to show the lot line and the corners of the proposed dwelling. A public hearing is being advertised.

Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of its May 23 meeting.

MOTION: Proposed by Member Hagan and seconded by Member Lloyd, to approve the minutes of May 23, 2023 as written

VOTE: By Roll Call:

Amy Lloyd	Aye
Todd Crowley	Aye
Steven Hagan	Aye
Jacinda Barbehenn	Aye

Adjournment

MOTION: Proposed by Member Hagan, seconded by Member Lloyd, to adjourn, at 9:05 pm

VOTE: By Roll Call:

Planning Board Minutes
061323

Amy Lloyd	Aye
Todd Crowley	Aye
Steven Hagan	Aye
Jacinda Barbehenn	Aye

Minutes prepared by Catherine Perry

Approved June 27, 2023

DOCUMENT LIST

Agenda

Memo from Planning Director Tony Fields to Planning Board, dated June 9, 2023 with respect to matters to be taken up at the June 13, 2023 Planning Board Meeting.

Letter from Planning Director Fields to Attorney Pam Brown dated June 5, 2023 Re: Bilca LLC – Old Billerica Road PRD outstanding matters, attaching MOU between Town and owners of former Ceppi property

Letter from Town Manager on behalf of Select Board to Michael and Jenny Ceppi dated May 25, 2021 advising them of the Select Board vote on the conditional non-exercise of its Right of First Refusal

Minutes of Select Board Meeting (Regular Session) May 24, 2021

Memo from Assistant Planner Catherine Perry to Planning Board dated June 9, 2023, subject: MBTA Communities zoning – progress update, attaching:

- Spreadsheet of data relating to four properties on north/east side of Middlesex Turnpike
- GIS maps produced by Bedford Public Works showing Excluded and Sensitive land on these properties, per DHCD Compliance Model.

Development Update chart, 6-8-23

Letter from Shawn Hanegan on behalf of Select Board to Secretary Augustus, Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities dated June 5, 2023 Re: Support for LIP proposal by Brian De Vellis on Carlisle Road

Draft Minutes of Planning Board meeting held on May 23, 2023

Planning Board Minutes
061323

Opinion article by Renu Bostwick in *Bedford Citizen*, dated May 19, 2023, “Mothers Out Front Advocate for Housing Choices; Support Carlisle Road Project”

Article by Erin Tiernan posted on *MASSterList*, June 1, 2023, “Building up: New Housing Secretary Ed Augustus”

Article by Andrew Brinker in *Boston Globe* dated June 5, 2023 “To meet new state housing law, Newton aims to make its villages a little taller”

Article by Ira A. Jackson in *Boston Globe* dated May 31, 2023 “Massachusetts needs a housing moon shot”

Article by Yasmin Amer, *WBUR* dated June 5, 2023 “Massachusetts hasn’t embraced factory-made housing. Some say it’s time”

Article by Andrew Brinker in *Boston Globe* dated June 7, 2023 “Local funds meant to support housing are sometimes used to block it, report finds”

Article by Lois Duffort in *VT Digger* dated June 5, 2023 “Phil Scott signs HOME bill, legalizing duplexes statewide and tweaking Act 250”

Article by Lisa Kashinsky in *Politico* dated June 8, 2023 “Senate builds housing play into tax plan”

Letter to Editor by Corinne Doud in *Bedford Citizen* dated May 18, 2023 “Concerns about New Hangars at Hanscom North Airfield”

Article by David Abel in *Boston Globe* dated May 20, 2023 “Plan to expand hangar space for private jets at Hanscom sparks concerns about a surge in climate pollution”

Article by Sabine von Mering, *WBUR* dated June 5, 2023 “Private jets are a climate disaster: Hanscom shouldn’t allow more”

Article by Peter Currier in *Lowell Sun* dated June 8, 2023 “Maura Healey announces \$2 million grant for creation of marine research lab”