

TOWN OF BELMONT

PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

March 5, 2020

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: April 13, 2020

TIME: 2:19 PM

Present: Steve Pinkerton, Chair; Matt Lowrie, Thayer Donham, Ed Starzec; Karl Haglund

Absent: Renee Guo

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Planner

1. Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM

2. Recap Joint Traffic Meeting

Mr. Pinkerton noted that a joint meeting with the Select Board discussed traffic issues at the McLean property. He noted that comments were well received, there were a lot of moving parts, and a lot of work that needed to be done. He added that traffic issues fall under the Select Board purview. He added that the PB will make sure that the traffic management agreement will be enforced at the time of Design and Site Plan Review.

3. Continued Zoning Amendment Public Hearing:

McLean Zone 3 Overly District Zoning By-Law Amendment

Kevin Maguire, housing developer, gave his input on continuing care and noted that the business model around continuing care is complex. He noted that everybody seems to have a unique business model and their model will influence the overlay depending on the needs. He added that the question was “What is the model that will support the operations”? Coming in for a special permit for a specific model is generally how these things get built and staff parking was a very large part of the consideration.

Stan Rome, resident, noted that Belmont would be the right community to support a CCRC and wondered if it could be smaller. He added that he was looking for this type of place for himself.

Jack Dawley, Northland Residential, noted that McLean did go out with an RFP and he responded to both of them and that responses were not based on the CCRC. He spoke about the licensing requirements for senior living. He noted that there was a scale issue here for the capital market benchmarks somewhere between 90-120 units and between 4-5 acres in size.

Tomi Olsen, Council on Aging, noted that her goal was to have senior accommodations so seniors can stay in Belmont. One thing she would like to clear up was the amount of tax revenue that they are going to get as a Town contrasted with amount the Town was going to

pay for services. She noted that it was sad that Town governments have to move so slowly and do not know what the other offers have been for this property. She wondered how can the Town get more revenue and pay less in services.

Mr. Pinkerton stated that the Town has commissioned a study of revenue and demographics and the results will be available in April.

Betsy Lipson, Housing Trust, noted that they can't talk about revenue if they do not know what McLean was paying annually. She said that nonprofits can't have executive salaries that patients cannot afford. She said to look around the country for best practices, there were universities and hospitals that have put in rotaries and widened roads and contributed to the schools.

Mr. Pinkerton moved onto the energy design guideline and site plan review discussion. Co-chairs of the Energy Committee submitted five bullet points to go into the energy efficiency sections of the guidelines.

Martin Bitner, Co-chair Energy Committee, summarized the five energy efficiency bullet points: Heating and Cooling, Water Heating, Cooking, Electric Vehicles and Solar. The recommendations from the Energy Committee were an option for the By-Law.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that the concern was that you could not specify something that exceeded state code. Mr. Pinkerton and Mr. Lowrie noted that the language would need to be tweaked to make it "encouraged or recommended" as these are guidelines. Mr. Pinkerton noted that at the time of Design and Site Plan Review, the Energy Committee members can have an input as to how energy efficiency could best be accomplished. Ms. Donham mentioned that the LEED could be "certifiable" as opposed to a requirement.

Roger Wrubel, Town Meeting Member, Precinct 5, clarified that "EV ready" meant running the 50-amp power at the time of construction to have the capacity but not the actual charging station itself.

Brian Saper, Precinct 6, asked the PB to describe the enforcement mechanism of LEED certifiable and Silver LEED status.

Mr. Pinkerton noted that it would be enforced at the time of Design and Site Plan Review and the issuance of the Building Permit.

Tracy Marque, Precinct 5, noted that there was a recommendation in Roger Colton's memo to charge the developer to hire a consultant to verify the LEED compliant paperwork and this was the most affordable way to achieve this. She noted that laws permit this to occur. She also noted that she believes a system that was regulated by someone other than the Town will

be a great way to ensure that the development will meet the energy requirements and have a sustainable approach.

Roger Wrubel, Precinct 5, commented on solar. He discussed the best way to site the houses for solar and he would like to have this included in the Site Plan Review. He would like to see a landscape maintenance plan that was ecologically friendly.

Carol Williams, Precinct 3, lives at the stables at the McLean Hospital development, the landscaping will be the decision of whoever they hire to do the landscaping. Once it was privately owned, they can landscape it in any way they want.

Jack Dawley, noted that he has had great conversations with others regarding energy and he met with New Ecology Inc. They modeled LEED line items, opportunities and moved points back and forth, looked at the electrification issue, passive house, he noted that he was getting good council and coaching and it needed more baking to narrow and refine what was achievable.

Judith Ananian Sarno, Precinct 3, asked the PB to confirm that energy efficiency and sustainability wouldn't matter to the composition of this development.

Jack Dawley, noted that the sustainability is not blind to the market. It comes in on the affordability side, there is some data that would say the heating today, could end up costing a low-income tenant more money to heat their home.

Tracy Marquee, wants to continue conversations as to what was feasible. They have recommended gold level LEED.

Marty Bitner, explained that heating costs and affordability interplay between the energy intensity to heat it and the building envelope. He described the passive house affordable housing project on Concord Avenue and explained that they [the Concord Ave. project] do not believe that they are leading their tenants into a financial monkey hole.

Jean Mooney, Precinct 6, noted that she had many comments and redlines and that she would provide a copy for the PB as they were not substantive changes. She asked for clarification - if I own a unit and want to rent it, does it have to be rented to an age qualified person. Mr. Pinkerton noted that yes, the owner would have to rent to a person who is 55 plus. He also noted that this will be in the condo documents. She also asked about whether she could rent if she were in an affordable unit. Mr. Dawley noted that Regulatory agreement will include the rules for the affordable units as an owner is not able to rent their unit. She asked if elevators were required in Subdistrict B. Mr. Pinkerton noted that this was included under building code. She stated that power should go underground and this should be included in the Site Plan Review. Mr. Pinkerton noted that it would be included. She asked if there will

there be any fees to use the pools or gyms. Mr. Pinkerton noted that this still needs to be addressed. She asked about street versus roads terminology. Mr. Wheeler noted that the private roads will be privately maintained. She suggested to make a note regarding native species under the landscape guidelines section.

Judy Singler, Council on Aging, noted that most of the people she interacts with were asking for houses that were smaller. She asked for clarification regarding sizes of the units. Mr. Dawley described the size of the proposed units.

Judith Arnanian Sarno, stated that she will not be in support of this project as there was no information on how this will affect our school and Town services. She was concerned with the impact of a development of this size on the Town. She added that the demographic study will not be ready with enough time to review for Town Meeting.

Stan Rome, asked the PB to describe the retaining walls and fence requirements as he was concerned about screening. He also noted that scooters are not practical on this project but a bike path would be good idea.

Lisa Oteri, Precinct 3, noted that she was worried about impact on schools. Mr. Pinkerton noted that it was best to wait until the April 6, 2020 discussion.

Vincent Stanton, 32 Royal Road, noted that a count of children living in the existing zones 1a, 1b and 2 would give a sense of how many children may live in the future development. Mr. Wheeler noted that three years ago there were three school aged children living between zones 1a, 1b and 2. Mr. Stanton asked for clarification on building height. Mr. Pinkerton reviewed the revised language and the table for Mr. Stanton. He asked the PB to consider McLean's architecture and include this in the design guidelines. He noted that it would be good to include deciduous trees in landscaping plans since they could meet the height of the buildings at maturity. Mr. Pinkerton noted that this will be added to Site Plan Review. He would like to see bicycle parking added at the bottom of the hill so people can take the shuttle bus up the hill. Mitigating traffic impact and to have the shuttle bus, a survey of zones 1a, 1b and 2 might be able to provide helpful information for a future shuttle service. He also asked the PB to look at the extent of biotech development.

Elizabeth Schmidt, Lexington Street, noted that she was unhappy with what this plan has become. She is concerned about the schools and the traffic. She would like to see this be age limited without the care component. Mr. Pinkerton noted that this was an opportunity to work with a developer who was willing to work with the Town.

Rachel Heller, Co-chair, Belmont Housing Trust, explained how this development would support the need for more housing stock and affordable housing. She noted that she met with Kevin Maguire and he helped them to think about how they could make this a win for

municipal finance, moving forward on housing needs and making this work for a developer who can actually make this happen. She noted that we cannot make land use decisions based on a protected class, families with children are a protected class.

Judith Arnanian Sarno, asked for clarification on the “housing production by-law”. Ms. Heller explained that it was a mistake and it was not a by-law but a tool.

Mr. Dawley, mentioned that he had participated in two public meetings for a proposal that was not accepted. At the request of people in the Town, he read the Housing Production Plan and the Town of Belmont’s Comprehensive Plan and they spoke about limited housing opportunities and lack of diversity. He was asked by people of the Town to shape his project around these documents.

MOTION to continue until March 10, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Starzec. Motion passed.

4. Updates on Cases and Planning Board Projects, and committee reports

a. Neighborhood Determination:

i. 72 Payson Road – GR – Subdivide and Build Two Single-Family House

The PB asked to have a few minor changes made to the neighborhood determination.

ii. 30 Newcastle Road

The Board agreed that the determination was acceptable.

5. Minutes Review and Approval

MOTION to approve meeting minutes (with minor edit) for February 18, 2020 was made by Mr. Pinkerton and seconded by Mr. Starzec. Motion passed.

6. Adjourn 9:25 PM