

Meeting Minutes Report

The purpose of the monthly meeting was to review the agenda items previously released by e-Mail. Non-attending members are encouraged to please notify either Co-chair as soon as possible to allow time to prepare the agenda for discussion. The items discussed were as follows:

Date & Time: January 12, 7:00PM

Absent:

Present: Michael Smith, Co-chair Historic District Commission

Paul Bell, Co-chair HDC Richard Cheek

Lydia Ogilby, HDC Emerita *HDC Emeritus*

Richard Pichette, HDC member Joe Cornish

Nancy Richards, HDC member Arleyn Levee

Lisa Harrington, HDC member

Allan Vanderley, HDC member

Earl Duval, Duval Klasnick & Pastel, Attorney [Verizon consultant]

Kathryn Emmitt, EBI Consulting [Verizon architectural historian]

Chuck Webberly, Structure Consulting Group [Verizon consultant]

Jeff Barbadora, Structure Consulting Group *Distribution:*

Clarissa Rowe, Town of Arlington Board of Selectmen All members

Stephen Makowka, Arlington Historic District Commission Chairman
Office of the Town

By: Lauren Meier/aev HDC member Administrator

Item: Description:

Action:

1. BHDC-GUIDELINES

Guidelines are complete pending Pleasant Street map. Lauren Meier will research printing costs for fifty versus one-hundred copies for February's meeting. There is still a desire to do a "one-page" or brochure [type] summary for larger distribution.

L.M.

2. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2.1 Public Workshop No.2-Commercial Development panel: [Mr] Mike [Smith] will attend [the] Thursday [night meeting, scheduled for] January-14[th].

2.2 [Zoning]: Information distributed so far indicates a need for consensus on zoning [regulations issues] related to height and setbacks.

2.3 [Tools; The] Town does not appear to have the [planning] tools needed (e.g., visual tools for computer simulation or physical models) to do the actual changes to the Bylaw and demonstrate the benefits of these [types of] changes, e.g., illustrate how the proposed developments would look. [It was felt by the Commission that] funding should be provided to the Office of Community Development-OCD for these tools, or the Town should hire a consultant.

M.S.

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2.4 [Development Incentivising: In a] discussion [by the Commission] of the fact [felt by the Commission, it was felt] that the Town cannot and should not try to build its way out of its fiscal problems with [incentivising] new development.

2.5 Parking: suggestions [for improvement] really do matter – e.g., [it is preconception that] diagonal parking and or parking structures could enhance opportunities in business districts.

2.6 [Vision-21 Recommendations: It is felt that the] Comprehensive Plan needs to work with [the] Vision-21 recommendations related to commercial development.

2.7 [Next Steps: the] Action recommended [is to] set up a meeting with [Mr] Jay [Szkut] and [the Office of Community Development]-OCD to discuss issues related to redevelopment benefits and drawbacks.

HDC

3. VERIZON TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER

3.1 Public Hearing regarding [the] proposed Verizon Wireless Cellular Tower [at the] Route-2 and Pleasant Street Intersection:

A. [Ms] Clarissa Rowe, Arlington Selectman reported that the Arlington Board of Selectmen is unanimously opposed to the proposed cell tower. It is located at the entrance to both [the Town of] Belmont and Arlington, an historic byway and entrance to Arlington's Pleasant Street Historic District. It is their opinion that the tower will be blight on the landscape. Clarissa presented a letter from the Arlington Board of Selectmen (see below).

B. [Mr] Earl Duval, Verizon's attorney, gave a brief presentation describing the project:

1. December-2007: [The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management]-DCAM and Mass' Highway issued a request for proposal-RFP for a telecommunication facility at this location for the purpose of [revenue] income generation and solving a gap in wireless [service] coverage.

2. [The Division of Capital Asset Management]-DCAM accepted Verizon's proposal.

3. Site Plan Review: Application is pending with the [Town of] Belmont Board of Appeals and the [Town of Belmont] Planning Board.

4. [The Massachusetts' Historical Commission]-MHC requested written comments from the Town of Belmont, and [Town of] Arlington Historic District Commissions for review and comment, but since they have not yet met, official comment is pending (see below).

C. Plans and Photo[graphic] Simulation were distributed:

1. Elevation: [A] self supporting [onehundred-foot] 100' monopole tower as specified by DCAM and Mass' Highway [will provide six] 6 service providers, [the] pole provides [up to a twelve] 12 panel array. TMobile and MetroPC will each use [six] 6 antennae. [Three] 3 additional spots will be available; [in addition] Mass' Highway is also installing [other] equipment and camera.

2. Land: [Five thousand] 5, 000-s.f. will be fenced (approximately 60' x 40') with the perimeter surrounded by a [six-foot high] 6' chain-link fence and Arborvitae. [A] single-story shed will house equipment for providers and underground utilities.

3. Sheet No.Z-6 shows access off [Route-2] exit No.59 [where] one (1) service vehicle will need to access the site once or twice per month.

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D. Discussion:

1. Photo[graphic] simulations are Verizon's interpretation of the area to be affected.

2. TMobile is also requesting a monopole on South Pleasant Street near the Subaru dealership. There was some discussion about the duplication of service and potential for multiple poles on Pleasant Street.

3. Coverage area for [the] proposed pole is relatively small, approximately [one] 1 mile radius.

4. Future antennae at [a] lower height [on the pole] do not work for Verizon.

5. Clarification: Verizon responded to the specifications in the Mass' Highway request for proposal-RFP.

6. [The proposed] location is not ideal because it is [located] between two [different town] historic districts.

7. [There was] no correlation between [the] photo-simulation locations and historic properties identified by MHC.

8. [It] would have been helpful to have known [for review when] the balloons were up to evaluate [their] visibility from [various] historic [district] properties in the Town of Belmont.

9. [The assumptions of the design was questioned:] can something be done to improve the aesthetic appearance of the building? There was some discussion using a vernacular / agrarian aesthetic that could improve the design of the shed

building.

10. Problems highlighted by [the] Commission discussion [included: that the] tower is an eyesore visible from a wide area in Belmont and Arlington. While there was some discussion about architectural improvements to the shed, the final consensus was that it will always be a “shack at the entrance to Belmont”.

11. Mike Smith read the letter from the Arlington Board of Selectmen voicing their objection to the permit.

12. [Mr] Steve Makowka, Chair of the Arlington Historic District Commission-AHDC noted that the AHDC have not yet met to review the proposal but the location is within [five-hundred feet] 500’ of the Pleasant Street Historic District and a major entrance to both the historic District and the town [of Arlington].

13. [It was] questioned [if] Verizon has considered other locations. Verizon has multiple towers in use in the adjacent area [but this] tower fills in a small gap in service.

14. Concluding discussion:

a. Design alternatives are needed to address location, technology, and aesthetics.

b. The idea [of proposing a tower for review in response to a request-for-proposal-RFP without proper representation or protocol] is [a] flawed [procedure because the] proponent (e.g., Mass’Highway) is not [presently represented] in the room.

15. [Next Steps]: To follow-up [Mr] Paul [Bell] and [Ms] Lisa [Harrington] will attend the [next Town of Belmont] Planning Board meeting.

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4. LIAISON REPORTS

4.1 Sustainable Belmont: Mike Smith had nothing to report.

4.2 Barn at Rock Meadow: Mike Smith and Richard Pichette will take another look at the barn.

4.3 Demolition Activities: Mike Smith reported no activity.

4.4 Demolition Review Bylaw: Allan Vanderley is working on sustainability language [and] he has worked on the narrative [which] is being reviewed by Rick Pichette. Changes are minor so that it should be ready soon for distribution to the [B]HDC-Belmont Historic District Commission [membership for review]. [Allan reported the] Massachusetts Historical Commission-MHC recommends [the] need [for] a strategic plan marketing both the idea and [the] details of the proposed Bylaw. Recommendations include;

A. General Bylaw [regulation article legislation classification] not a Zoning Bylaw [regulation article legislation classification].

B. Carefully consideration [should be given to the] naming of the Bylaw.

C. [Next Steps: The BHDC will] need to work with [other Town committees including but not limited to] the Warrant Committee, [Bylaw Committee,] etc., to determine issues and questions such as the pros and cons in the form of [including but not limited to] “Frequently Asked Questions”.

4.5 Town Hall Operational Improvements: Allan [Vanderley] is preparing a memo for review by the HDC-Chairs prior to distribution to Mr Looney. Key issues are:

A. Energy Efficiency:

1. Sustainability issues related to energy use.

2. [A previous town-wide Town of Belmont energy service company]-ESCO plan [was] not done for the Town Hall. [The Town of Belmont] CAP-[Climate Action Plan] recommends an energy audit and [proposes] improvements what will pay for themselves in [their] energy savings.

B. Accessible grade at the rear [entry] access door needs [water management] improvements related to roof runoff.

- C. [The existing] landscaped area near the rear entrance [has been brought up by the building's] Town employees [and they] would like to use it as a[n outdoor] sitting area.
- D. Driving plaza paving: [After an initial alliance team meeting the task-group is] waiting for [the] consultant's opinion [report] related to drainage issues, which causes freezing and thawing [heaving hazards].
- E. [East] Roof-dormer issues: [Exposed trim work is] susceptible to weathering and need[s] to be reviewed.
- F. [Next Steps: Priorities] need to be identified for [proposed] overall improvement.

M.S.

R.P.

A.V.

HDC

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5. CUSHING VILLAGE

Mike Smith attended the recent [project development] meeting and [he] continues to advocate for the preservation of the historic S.S. Pierce Building.

6. RECORDS: No discussion of Historical Society [issues].

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7. NEW DISTRICTS

7.1 Adding future new historic districts would require:

- A. Completion of MHC-Massachusetts Historical Commission Form-E for all buildings.
- B. Written history of the neighborhood.
- C. Presentation to [the] Town Meeting

HDC

8. MEETING MINUTES: Meeting Minute Reports for the months of October, November, and December were approved for record.

9. OPEN MEETING LAWS: No discussion [of Open Meeting Law Forms].

10. OTHER BUSINESS

[The] Community Preservation Action-CPA meeting was attended by Allan [Vanderley] and Lydia [Ogilby]. Lisa [Harrington] and Peter [Gunness will] continue as HDC representatives on the CPA-Committee.

11. NEXT MEETING.....Tuesday, February 9, 2010.

12. Meeting adjourned at 9:45PM, Meeting Report submitted and approved for record.

L.M..

END OF REPORT