

TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
April 12, 2011

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7:08 p.m. Meeting called to order.

Attendance: Sami Baghdady, Chair, Michael Battista (arrived at 8:05), Jenny Fallon, Karl Haglund, Andres Rojas, Charles Clark, Associate Member; Jay Szklut and Jeffrey Wheeler, Staff.

Absent: None

Minutes of March 8, 2011 and March 22, 2011 were approved as presented.

Committee Updates

Economic Development Advisory Committee – Mr. Rojas reported that the committee has had several meetings and is examining several commercially zoned areas to identify potential sources of increased tax revenue.

Capital Budget Committee – Ms. Fallon reported the Committee has completed its work for the annual Town Meeting and has recommended several capital purchases.

7:12 p.m. Deliberations – Belmont Manor Nursing Home

Mr. Baghdady noted that parking is tight at the facility but the proposed addition does not make the existing conditions any worse. He asked that the final plans delineate the size of the parking spaces and that the parking spaces be numbered. Additionally, he suggested conditions prohibiting lighting on neighboring properties and addressing rooftop screening.

Mr. Rojas felt that the plans presented are an improvement over existing conditions including parking and storm water/drainage issues.

Moved by Ms. Fallon to grant site plan approval.

Seconded by Mr. Rojas

Motion passed unanimously (Baghdady, Rojas and Fallon voting)

7:20 p.m. Discussion – South Pleasant Street Forum II

Board members agreed that the turnout at the forum was good with some different individuals participating including property and business owners. Mr. Wheeler reported that 54 people had signed-in.

Mr. Baghdady offered the following observations. There was a general sentiment that South Pleasant Street should be broken up into two or three zones and that the Shaw's site should be considered part of Waverley Square.

Mr. Rojas comments on the overall good interaction with the audience.

Ms. Fallon felt that there was a general feeling that there could be more flexibility in the area across from the Town Yards.

Mr. Clark agreed with the general sentiment that Shaws and the King properties belong to a Waverley Square district.

Board members also agreed that it was good for them to speak up and interact with the audience and that they should continue to do so.

A third forum is tentatively planned for later in the spring.

7:48 p.m. Discussion – Developing a Streetscape Plan

Mr. Baghdady raised the broader issue that that a streetscape plan which primarily deals with public property is not strictly within the domain of the Planning Board. Additionally, in order to get a broader community involvement including other Town Departments, Committees and Commissions the Board of Selectmen would need to be involved.

An additional consideration in development of a streetscape plan is the responsibilities of business owners towards establishment and maintenance of the streetscape.

Staff was directed to draft a communication from the Planning Board to the Board of Selectmen urging them to initiate a streetscape planning effort by the planning department with the involvement of the Planning Board, Public Works, and others.

8:05 p.m. Town Planners' Report

Mr. Szklut informed the Board that the Transportation Advisory Committee is meeting on Thursday night to finalize their recommendations on a Belmont Center Design. TAC favors a greenspace to the Bank and an Island at the entrance to Claflin Street from Channing Road.

Mr. Szklut also reported that the firm of Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates has been selected to develop a parking management plan for the Center. Contracts are in the process of being finalized and an anticipated start date of May 2nd has been set.

8:12 p.m. Deliberations – Proposed Tree Preservation and Stretch Energy Code By-laws

Mr. Rojas noted that there remain serious concerns with the proposed tree bylaw. He reported that the Shade Tree Committee remains opposed to the By-law. He explained that there was disagreement over whether the Building Commissioner or the Tree Warden would be responsible for enforcement of the By-law. Furthermore, he expressed reservations with the intrusion on property rights of the proposed By-law.

Ms. Fallon noted her support of the By-law.

Mr. Batista remained concerned that the By-law relies too heavily on mandates to achieve its goals.

Mr. Haglund wanted further clarification on whether the proposed By-law would apply to additions. Mr. Baghdady stated that the wording of the By-law was ambiguous in this regard.

Following several minutes of further discussion, Mr. Baghdady called for a vote of the Board. The Board voted three (Mr. Battista, Mr. Rojas, and Mr. Baghdady) to 2 in opposition to the proposed By-law.

Mr. Baghdady briefly summarizes some recent material received by the Planning Board relative to the Stretch Energy Code.

Mr. Clark was skeptical about how much value a property would increase by compliance with the proposed Code.

Mr. Haglund expressed uncertainty as to what is or is not a trigger for application of the Stretch Code.

Board members also commented on the fact that the Commonwealth will be adopting the new base Energy Code which incorporates many of the requirements of the Stretch Code next year, and questioned whether the Town needs to act now. Additionally, many individuals and contractors are already building in compliance with the proposed Code. Why, therefore, should there be a need to adopt this By-law now?

The Board also noted that many older homes in Belmont would be exempt. The By-law would not accomplish what its proponents claim. Many builders and developers go beyond the existing base Code because of rebates and incentives. Why not encourage that approach through education rather than mandating tougher codes.

Ms. Fallon commented that the concerns expressed with regulating private property ignores the role of the Planning Board. The Board is a regulatory body. There are significant benefits to the homeowner and the community and we really owe it to the community to support this By-law. She noted that most of our neighboring communities have adopted the Stretch Code.

Mr. Rojas reported that he had spoken with the Town's Building Commissioner, who believes the Stretch Code will be adopted by the State within a couple of years. Why should Belmont adopt the Stretch Code now? We are in the midst of an economic downturn and this would make it more costly on the homeowner.

Mr. Baghdady noted that there are valid philosophical reasons to either adopt or oppose the proposed Stretch Energy Code By-law. However, based on his research, when the provisions of the current Stretch Code are incorporated into the base Energy Code, Massachusetts will be adopting an even more restrictive Stretch Code. If the Town adopts the current Stretch Code, it will also be automatically adopting more restrictive versions of the Stretch Code as they are enacted by the Commonwealth in the future. This will add further cost to proposed development within the Town, and uncertainty that developers will have to comply with a Stretch Code that mandates more energy efficiency than the current Code being proposed for adoption.

On a vote of three to two, the Board voted to oppose passage of the proposed Stretch Energy Code By-law. (Mr. Baghdady, Mr. Rojas, Mr. Battista in the majority.)

9:05 p.m. Discussion – Transfer of White Street Extension Parcels

Mr. Wheeler provided an overview of the parcels in question.

Ms. Fallon noted that the potential of a connecting the parcels over the tracks is significant and the Planning Board should discuss these warrant articles. She opposed a sale of the parcels at this time, to allow the Board to complete its planning process and understand the implications of selling the parcels.

Mr. Baghdady agreed that there needs to be a connection between South Pleasant Street and Waverly Square, but did not agree that the Board should take a position on the articles. He was concerned that it would be inappropriate for the Board to get involved in the politics associated with the disposition of Town property – that is a matter for the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting to deliberate. Connectivity is important, but connections could be incorporated into conditions of a future project. Also, White Street may not be the best place for a connection.

Mr. Clark commented that the White Street extension is part of an assemblage and could be used as leverage by the Town. There is a possibility it could have greater value after a rezoning. Why rush to sell it now?

Mr. Battista noted that the discussion of covering the tracks opens up the possibility of many other locations for a crossing.

Mr. Haglund believed Mr. Clark's point on increased value is important. The value of the parcel will be greater when a project is brought forward under a changed zoning.

Mr. Baghdady asked for any comments from the audience.

Jennifer Page responded that it is appropriate for the Planning Board to get involved and to voice their opinion. Town Meeting will be looking to the Planning Board for input. Community connectedness is a critical issue in the community and we should not throw away opportunities without due consideration. This is a planning issue.

The Board agreed to draft a letter to the Board of Selectmen outlining the issues that should be considered prior to final disposition of the property, but to take no position on the articles which give control of the disposition to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Baghdady offered to draft the letter.

9:45 p.m. Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall

List of Documents presented:

- Communications from Proponents of Tree Preservation bylaw.
- Communications from Proponents of Stretch Energy Code bylaw.
- Communication from Mr. Baghdady re: Stretch Energy Code
- Communication from Mr. Battista re: Stretch Energy Code
- White Steet extension parcels – consideration for sale
- Comments from South Pleasant Street Forum II

Szklut, Jay

From: roger.belmont@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2011 8:30 PM
To: Szklut, Jay
Cc: Sami Baghdady
Subject: Re: Energy Committee Warrant articles
Attachments: Belmont_Tree_Bylaw_FAQs--04-07-11.pdf

Thanks, Jay. If I might address the Tree By-law for just a moment. I watched a Belmont Media Center replay of the Warrant Committee meeting where the Tree Bylaw was discussed. I was appalled at the amount of mis-information that was being stated as "fact" about the Tree By-Law by members of the Warrant Committee who had not taken one minute of their time to contact me to talk about the Tree By-Law.

Having Co-chaired the Ad Hoc Committee on Town Meeting Communications for the past eight or nine months, I was somewhat baffled by the seeming willingness of the Warrant Committee to accept this statements by a WC member, which were wrong in almost all of their particulars, without ever even asking the proponent of the by-law to come and participate in the discussion.

In an effort to "walk the walk" of what we have been talking about in the Ad Hoc Committee, we have prepared a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about the Tree By-Law. That FAQ is attached.

In addition to this FAQ, one of the "issues" raised by opponents of the Tree Bylaw is the administrative burden of adopting such a by-law. Unlike some opponents of the by-law, who raise the "administrative burden" as a red herring when their REAL opposition is that they simply do not believe in ANY regulation (an argument that would be strange to be propounded by, let alone adopted by, the Planning Board, which is a regulatory agency at heart), the Tree By-law has been subjected to a "time and resources" test. Using experience with the successful implementation of a similar by-law, an objective, factual review of the administrative impacts in Belmnot documents that, due in large part to the fact that it creates a tiny work burden with which to begin, the Tree Bylaw more than pays for itself. There is ABSOLUTELY NO adverse fiscal or administrative impact on the Town from adoption of the Tree Bylaw.

Now, there may well be some folks who will oppose the Tree Bylaw on ideological grounds, but those folks should not be allowed to "mask' their oppositon by referring to administrative costs and burdens that simply do not exist.

roger

p.s. I sent information on the Stretch Code in a separate e-mail.

"It's nice for the poor to make ends meet. It's even nicer to make them overlap a bit."

Roger D. Colton
Fisher, Sheehan & Colton

4/12/2011

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----- Original Message -----

From: "Jay Szklut" <jszklut@belmont-ma.gov>
To: "roger belmont" <roger.belmont@comcast.net>
Cc: sami@baghdadylaw.com
Sent: Friday, April 8, 2011 9:07:27 AM
Subject: Energy Committee Warrant articles

Roger,

I wanted to remind you that the Planning Board will continue their deliberations on the Stretch Code and Tree Preservation articles at their meeting on Tuesday. At their last meeting, the Board had requested some additional information on the stretch code. In particular, the Board was unclear when the stretch code would actually come into play, i.e. did renovations or repairs such as a boiler replacement kick in the stretch code? It would be helpful to the Board if you are prepared to address those questions.

Thanks.

Jay Szklut

Town of Belmont
Planning & Economic Development Manager
617-993-2660

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
BELMONT TREE PRESERVATION AND REPLACEMENT BY-LAW

* * * * *

Q1. Why is the Energy Committee proposing a Tree Preservation and Replacement By-Law? In 2009, Town Meeting approved a resolution calling for an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050. Accordingly, the Energy Committee has two interests in the Tree By-Law: (1) trees help buildings conserve energy, thus reducing emissions associated with energy production; and (2) trees serve as “carbon sinks” removing pollutants from the air. The By-law further shows how, in addition to being good environmental policy, an energy efficiency initiative can be good for the Town’s finances, good for the Town’s business community, and good for the Town’s neighborhoods.

Q2. What does Belmont’s Climate Action Plan say about tree preservation and replacement? “The crucial role of trees in efforts both to mitigate and to adapt to climate change cannot be overstated. By sequestering carbon, they reduce the amount of CO2 sent into the atmosphere, and therefore contribute immediately to carbon reduction.” *Belmont Climate Action Plan*, at 69 (September 2009).

Q3. What does the Massachusetts state Clean Energy Plan say about tree preservation and replacement? “Retaining trees when new homes are built, and planting new ones around existing housing, can be a low-cost means of saving energy and reducing GHG [Green House Gas] emissions. . . Because trees generally take 15 years to reach their full shade potential, this policy would need to begin soon to have much impact by 2020.” *Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Action Plan*, at 32 – 34 (December 2010).

Q4. What does the Tree By-Law do? The Belmont Tree By-Law provides that if a person removes a tree with a diameter of at least

8 inches during the construction of a new residential or commercial building, or tearing down a home and replacing it with a new one, or making an addition to a commercial building, the person must replace that tree in-kind. It says simply that you must replace what you remove during construction.

Q5. What do you mean by “replace in-kind”? A person must replace the same number of inches of tree that he or she removes. If, for example, a person removes a tree that is 12-inches in diameter, he or she must plant 12 inches of new trees. That could involve planting four three inch trees, six two-inch trees, or some combination. The person may, as described below, also make an in-lieu payment instead of actually planting trees.

Q6. Does the Tree By-Law apply if I am building an addition to my home? No. For residential properties, the Tree By-Law applies only if you are building a new home or if you are tearing down a home and replacing it.

Q7. Does the Tree By-Law apply if I am not constructing a building at all? No. If you want to remove a tree that does not involve the construction of a building, the By-Law does not apply.

Q8. What happens if the tree I want to remove is dead or diseased or infested with insects? The By-Law has an exception for trees that are dead or diseased or on a state-maintained list of trees documenting insect infestation (e.g., Asian Longhorn Beetle).

Q9. Couldn’t someone avoid the By-Law simply by cutting their trees down before they begin construction? No. A builder must certify under oath that no trees have been taken down within twelve months prior to filing for a building permit. If, of course, a builder files

false statements under oath, there is little the Town can do, although the enforcement mechanisms are substantial.

Q10. What if someone doesn't have room to plant replacement trees on his or her own property? A person has three options to comply with the By-Law: (1) to replant trees on his or her own property; (2) to replant trees on another person's private property (with that person's permission); or (3) to make a payment to the Town in-lieu of planting a replacement tree to allow the Town to plant a tree.

Q11. Will the Tree By-Law be costly for the Town to administer? No. The Tree By-Law has been subjected to a "time and resources" analysis based on experience with similar tree by-laws. The By-Law has been found to be budget neutral. Due in part to its minimal cost with which to begin, the By-Law returns more in fees and increased tax revenue (based on increased property values) than it costs to administer.

Q12. Will the Town start sending inspectors out to count trees or to measure how large they are? No. It is neither effective nor cost-effective for a town to seek to enforce at that level of detail. Instead, the processes included in the Belmont By-Law are sufficient to ensure reasonable compliance.

Q13. Why should persons be forced to replace trees they remove during construction? The Tree By-Law provides that a person must replace what they remove when they add value to their property through new construction. Someone should not be allowed to add value to their property by imposing adverse impacts on the rest of the community.

Q14. Does a person derive any benefit from replacing a tree on-site? Yes. Replacing trees that have been removed in the process of constructing a new building is

expected in most cases to more than return the cost of the replacement tree(s) in two ways: (1) properties with trees are more valuable than properties without trees; and (2) properties with trees stay on the market for less time than properties without trees. A person is likely to earn the cost of replacement trees back through either of these factors.

Q15. Wouldn't an education program be more effective in preserving and replacing trees? No. Experience counsels that three things are needed to have a successful "education program": (1) staff to deliver the education program; (2) a budget to develop and deliver the education program; and (3) a mechanism for identifying potential builders so that an education program can be delivered. Belmont has none of the three factors that would allow an education program to be effective.

Q16. Have other Town Committees endorsed the Tree By-Law? Yes. The Tree By-Law has generated broad-based support because of the multiple benefits it delivers to Belmont. Town Committees endorsing the By-Law include Sustainable Belmont, the Belmont Vision Implementation Committee, the Belmont Conservation Commission and the Belmont Historic District Commission.

Q17. Have other Massachusetts communities adopted tree preservation and replacement by-laws? Yes. The Belmont by-law is not unique. Other Massachusetts communities adopting similar tree preservation policies by bylaw or regulation include Lexington, Newton, Cambridge, Granby, Lawrence, Amesbury and Ludlow. Guidance for the Belmont by-law was also obtained from the American Planning Association's *Model Tree Conservation Ordinances*, the California Department of Forestry's *Guidelines for Developing and Evaluating Tree Ordinances*, and North Carolina State University's *Protecting and Retaining Trees: A Guide for Municipalities and Counties in North Carolina*.

Szklut, Jay

From: roger.belmont@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, April 08, 2011 8:15 PM
To: Sami Baghdady
Cc: Szklut, Jay
Subject: Re: Energy Committee Warrant articles

1. Does the Stretch Code apply to renovations? Yes. But in a very limited way. The Stretch Code would apply to anything that requires a building permit. So, contrary to what was suggested at the PB the last time the PB discussed this, if someone's furnace was broken and needed to be replaced, the Stretch Code would NOT apply. The reasoning for this was explained by Marc Breslow in his Belmont Media Center broadcast, during which I specifically posed that question. I also specifically posed the question about the impacts on renovations. Marc, who is the Director of Transportation and Buildings Policy for EOEEA (Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs), said that, unlike the PERFORMANCE-based requirement of the Stretch Code for new construction, the Stretch Code imposes a very limited requirement on renovations. One should view the BMC broadcast to see EXACTLY what he said, however. The "minimum threshold" is "more than 5,000 square feet."

2. Does the Stretch Code apply to municipal building? Yes and no when applied to Belmont. Municipal buildings are considered "commercial" for purposes of the Stretch Code. Accordingly, all new municipal buildings that begin construction before 2013 would be subject to the Stretch Code. Municipal buildings that begin construction in 2013 or later will be subject to the then-current energy efficiency code. Since Belmont does not have any municipal buildings scheduled to begin construction before 2013, while the answer "in theory" is "yes," the answer in reality is "no."

3. Something you did not ask about (but which the PB talked about last time). Would the Stretch Code have an adverse impact on new economic development in Town? No. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in collaboration with BOMA (the Building Operators and Managers Association International) have developed a calculator that shows, amongst other things, the positive net financial impact to new development attributable to meeting Energy Star standards (which are, effectively, the Stretch Code standards). That EPA/BOMA calculator can be found at the following URL:

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?
c=comm_real_estate.building_upgrade_value_calculator](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=comm_real_estate.building_upgrade_value_calculator)

The calculator, when exercised, shows that, contrary to some of the off-the-cuff comments made by members of the Planning Board, adoption of the Stretch Code simply will NOT have an adverse impact on economic development in Belmont. I would think that the Planning Board would want to make decisions based on objective information rather than the off-the-cuff comments that have been made by some PB members. The calculator is important in that it is not simply a product of the EPA, but is a product of the EPA AND BOMA, an industry group.

roger

4/12/2011

Stretch Appendix to the Building Energy Code in Massachusetts

Question and Answer (Q&A) – February 2011

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General Questions

1. What is the 'stretch' code?

The 'stretch code' is an optional appendix to the Massachusetts building energy code that allows cities and towns to choose a more energy-efficient option. This option increases the efficiency requirements in any municipality that adopts it, for all new residential and many new commercial buildings, as well as for those residential additions and renovations that would normally trigger building code requirements.

2. How is the stretch code different from the existing 'base' energy code?

The stretch code appendix offers a streamlined and cost effective route to achieving approximately 20% better energy efficiency in new residential and commercial buildings than is required by the base energy code. This is largely achieved by moving to a performance-based code, where developers are required to design buildings so as to reduce energy use by a given percentage below base code, rather than being required to install specific efficiency measures. Developers have flexibility to choose cost effective and appropriately designed solutions. New residential construction must use the performance-based approach, but residential renovations and most commercial buildings may instead opt to follow a 'prescriptive' route that specifies a set of minimum energy efficiency requirements for different building materials and systems. In the commercial case these add up to approximately a 20% improvement over the base code. Many of these changes have been endorsed by the federal Department of Energy and are likely to be incorpo-

rated into the commercial chapter of the next International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) in 2012.

3. Why did the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) create this option?

There have been mounting calls for additional stringency in the building energy code, linked to the desire to reduce energy costs, cut dependence on imported fuels, and address concerns about climate change and national security.

Several towns and cities asked for the ability to adopt their own stronger energy code, and/or proposed legislative changes to allow municipalities to strengthen their building code and zoning options.

In response to this, the BBRS, along with the state's energy and environmental agencies, collaborated with regional and national code experts to develop one 'stretch' code that is consistent across the state, in order to meet demands for a stricter code without having multiple standards in different cities and towns.

4. What are some of the expected benefits to a municipality of a more stringent energy code?

The stretch code allows municipalities to take meaningful action on energy use and climate change; it will yield significant cost savings for local residents and businesses, and will increase design and construction firm competitiveness in the growing green building marketplace.

5. What is the anticipated cost of the stretch code?

Construction costs are estimated to rise approximately \$3,000 for a typical single family home, and by 1% to 3% of total costs for commercial buildings. However, after energy cost savings on heating and electricity are included these higher performance standards save money. In addition, the state's electric and gas utilities provide financial incentives that further reduce the upfront costs of high performance buildings.

For example, a residential home purchased with a 30-year mortgage would typically result in net savings to the homeowner in the first year due to energy bill savings that are larger than the increase in mortgage payments from construction and financing costs. Case studies of commercial buildings utilizing the improvements on which the commercial code changes are based have shown paybacks of 1 to 2 years, when standard incentives from electric utilities are included on the benefits side.

6. Where can I find and read more about the stretch code appendix?

The stretch code appendix language is freely available on the Massachusetts BBRS website,¹ Along with a 2-page summary² of the code and other explanatory documents. In addition the stretch code appendix 780CMR 115.aa can be found with the rest of the Massachusetts energy code in the state bookstore. As the commercial stretch code in particular amends the base energy code, they are best read together. The base energy code is now the International Energy Conservation Code, 2009 edition (IECC 2009) currently available for free from the ICC website³ due to a sponsorship by the Department of Energy, and also available for sale from other online book stores.

¹ Stretch code language:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/8th_edition/115_appendices.pdf

² Stretch code 2-page summary:

http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/dps/inf/stretch_code_overview_jun05_09.pdf

³ The IECC 2009 code book is available for free download or purchase from the ICC website at:

<http://www.iccsafe.org/store/pages/doeregistration.aspx>

<http://www.iccsafe.org/e/prodshow.html?prodid=3800S09&stateInfo=fEadjxjbnWjcdbai1729J5>

Scope

7. What building types does the stretch code apply to?

The stretch code applies to both residential and commercial buildings:

a) Residential buildings from single family homes up to and including buildings 3 stories or less of any size. It applies to new construction, additions, and major renovations. Historic buildings are exempt from both the stretch code and the base code.

b) New commercial buildings over 5,000 square feet in size, including multi-family residential buildings over 3 stories., Supermarkets, laboratories, and warehouses are exempt if they are below 40,000 square feet. Other building types with unusual energy usage profiles can also apply for a waiver from the stretch code from the BBRS.

8. Does the stretch code apply to major renovation projects as well as new construction?

For commercial buildings: no, for residential buildings: yes. The stretch code has less stringent energy performance requirements for renovations than for new buildings. In addition, those doing additions and renovations have the option of using a simple 'prescriptive' path to code compliance. The prescriptive path specifies a set of minimum energy efficiency requirements for different building materials and systems, instead of requiring energy performance modeling and testing. This flexibility is available due to the greater design constraints involved in working with an existing building. Due to the wide variety in types and conditions of commercial buildings, at this time there are no widely-accepted standards for renovating such buildings, so only new commercial buildings are covered by the stretch code requirements.

9. Does the stretch code apply to minor additions to existing buildings?

Additions to existing buildings that are large enough to require code compliance are treated in the same way as new construction for commercial buildings, and in the same way as renovations in residential buildings. In both cases those doing additions can follow the performance approach to code compliance or a simplified prescriptive path. For residential additions, the prescriptive path is very similar to the base energy code but

also requires the use of a checklist to ensure quality installation of insulation and air sealing, use of Energy Star windows, doors and skylights as appropriate, and tighter duct sealing for new heating and cooling systems.

10. What happens to buildings not covered by the stretch code?

Building types that do not fall under the stretch code scope, such as small commercial buildings under 5,000 sq. ft., will follow the existing base energy code requirements, which changed in July, 2010 to the IECC 2009 code with minor Massachusetts amendments.

11. What categories do multi-family residential buildings fall into?

Residential multi-family buildings that are above 100,000 square feet and at least four stories tall have to follow the same performance path (20% better than the ASHRAE standard 90.1-2007) as other commercial buildings larger than 100,000 square feet. Residential buildings below 100,000 square feet and at least four stories tall are classified with commercial buildings between 5,000 and 100,000 square feet. Multi-family homes with one to three stories of any size fall under the residential stretch code standards. In the rare case of a multi-family building of three stories or less that is larger than 100,000 square feet, the developer may elect to be treated either as a residential or as a commercial building.

12. Does the stretch code apply to historic buildings?

Both the stretch code and the base energy code exempt historic buildings listed in state or national registers, or designated as a historic property under local or state designation law or survey, or with an opinion or certification that the property is eligible to be listed.

Standards

13. What standards are the stretch code appendix based on?

The residential stretch code is based on the pre-existing 'Energy Star for Homes'⁴ program developed by the federal EPA and Department of Ener-

⁴ The Massachusetts New Homes with Energy Star program website is: <http://www.energystarhomes.com/>

gy, and customized for Massachusetts. This Energy star program is in turn built upon the Home Energy Rating System (HERS) which is developed and administered by the national Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET).⁵

The Commercial stretch code for buildings from 5,000 square feet to 100,000 square feet is based on the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC 2009), which is now the base energy code for Massachusetts, with further improvements derived from the New Buildings Institute (NBI) Core Performance program for commercial buildings (recently revised and published as the Core energy code).⁶ Above 100,000 square feet commercial buildings are required to show a percentage reduction below ASHRAE 90.1-2007 energy standards.⁷ This performance approach is also an option for smaller commercial buildings.

14. What training and materials are available on these standards?

In addition to the websites referenced in the prior question, training on the IECC 2009 base energy code and an introduction to the stretch code appendix was offered to all municipal code officials (at no cost), as well as to interested building professionals (at a discounted cost), throughout 2010. Training on the stretch code and building best practices will be continuing through 2011 with more focus on reaching design and construction professionals. In addition, the Massachusetts Energy Star Homes program provides training covering HERS and other requirements of the residential stretch code, given the large overlap with the Energy Star Homes program. The major Massachusetts electric and gas utilities also offer occasional training on the New Buildings Institute (NBI) Core Performance program and their customized incentive programs for commercial buildings.

⁵ The RESNET website is: <http://www.natresnet.org/>

⁶ The Core energy code is available online at: <http://www.newbuildings.org/codes.htm>

⁷ The ASHRAE 90.1-2007 standard is readable online in a Java enabled browser at: http://openpub.realread.com/rserver/browser?title=/ASHRAE_1/ashrae_90_1_2007_IP_1280

Process

15. How would a town or city adopt the stretch energy code?

Towns and cities in Massachusetts may choose to remain on the base energy code or to adopt the stretch code as their mandatory energy code requirement. A city or town can adopt the stretch appendix by a vote of their appropriate elected officials: typically the town meeting in a town; or in a city the mayor and the city council or aldermen. Interested municipalities are encouraged to hold a public hearing to get input on and raise awareness about their intention to adopt the stretch code. As of January 1st 2011, 64 municipalities had adopted the stretch code.

16. How soon after a town or city adopts it would the stretch code take effect?

In order to provide consistency among communities, once adopted the stretch code can only go into effect on January 1st or July 1st, and there must be at least six months between adoption and when the stretch code becomes mandatory. For example: if Town A voted to adopt in November 2010, then on July 1st 2011 the stretch code would become mandatory. During the interim period the stretch code would be an option for builders to use.

Enforcement/Requirements

17. How is the stretch code implemented and enforced?

Implementation and enforcement of the code is similar to existing code, where the developer is responsible for submitting documentation of compliance to the building inspector for review, and the building inspector conducts a plan and site review.

18. What is the role of a building code official and a HERS rater for residential projects?

Residential buildings meeting the stretch code through a HERS rating and EPA thermal bypass or thermal enclosure checklist require independent certification by a HERS rater. The rater will produce a report detailing the energy systems in the building and will provide a HERS index score, together with proof of whether the home qualifies for any federal tax credits. Submission of the HERS report, together with a completed Energy

Star Thermal checklist, are the steps required to demonstrate compliance with the energy portions of the code, and must be submitted to the local building inspector prior to receiving a certificate of occupancy. In this way the local inspector retains their oversight role but the additional energy requirements do not place a significant additional burden on their time.

19. What happens in 2012/13 when the base energy code changes?

Sometime in 2011 the next IECC base energy code (IECC 2012) will be published and the Green Communities Act requires that Massachusetts adopt it within one year i.e. in 2012. During that one year transition period the BBRs will consider adoption of an updated 2012 stretch code to maintain a gap between the base and the stretch energy requirements. Once a new stretch energy code is available the old stretch appendix will be rescinded by the BBRs. However, municipalities will remain stretch code or base code communities through the code change from 2009 to 2012 unless they elect to change their status. For example municipalities who have previously adopted the stretch code will automatically become stretch code 2012 municipalities, unless they choose to rescind their stretch code adoption

Residential Building Questions

R1. How do I meet the residential stretch code for new homes?

For new residential homes including multi-family homes of 3 stories or less, builders essentially follow the 2006 Energy Star for Homes program requirements in Massachusetts, and must show that each unit meets or is below a maximum HERS index score. For new homes greater than 3,000 ft² in size the maximum HERS score is 65 (similar but not identical to Energy Star tier 2), for smaller homes less than 3,000 ft² the maximum HERS score is 70. In addition the homes must be inspected using the Energy Star Thermal Bypass or Thermal Enclosure Checklist and as with the new base energy code likely require duct testing. These inspections ensure that the home is well air-sealed, while the HERS rating ensures that the home is designed to be well insulated with efficient heating, cooling and lighting – all measures that save energy and reduce utility bills.

R2. What is a HERS rating?

HERS stands for 'Home Energy Rating System,' and is a national standard that uses information on the design of the energy systems in a home to calculate, via computer modeling, the average energy needs of that home and give it a rating score. The HERS Index was developed by the non-profit Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) for the mortgage industry, and is utilized by the Federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the LEED for Homes program. On the HERS 2006 index scale smaller numbers are better, with 0 representing a net zero energy home, and 100 representing a home built to meet the national model energy code in 2006 (the IECC 2004 with 2005 amendments). A HERS rating of 65 means that the home uses about 35% less energy than the same size home built to the 2004/2005 IECC code requirements. The Residential Stretch code is based on the nationally successful 'Energy Star for Homes' program requirements, which utilize HERS ratings.

R3. Do I have to get a HERS rating?

New homes built under the stretch code must get a HERS rating. Renovations and additions to homes have the option of the HERS rating or a 'prescriptive' approach, whereby specific efficiency measures are required, but no computer modeling is done. The HERS performance-based approach provides an excellent way to ensure that homes are not only well designed but also well built. As part of the HERS rating the home will be tested for air leakage, and under both the base and the stretch code homes with heating and cooling ducts may also have those tested for leakage. Combined with the EPA thermal checklist the HERS rater, builder and building inspector can have confidence that the completed homes really are energy efficient.

R4. How do I meet the residential stretch code when making renovations to existing homes?

Existing homes being renovated or expanded have two choices when it comes to stretch code compliance. The performance option is based on a HERS rating, while the prescriptive option uses the base IECC 2009 energy code, but in addition requires quality assurance with either the Energy Star Thermal Bypass or the new Thermal Enclosure checklist and the use of Energy Star win-

dows doors and skylights where replacements are made. If the prescriptive option is chosen, then you only need to meet code for the systems that are being replaced. This means that adding a new efficient boiler does not require changing the windows, and adding wall and attic insulation does not require modifying the basement - although it may often make sense to combine measures where that is cost-effective.

Choosing to follow the HERS rating approach used by new construction often makes sense when doing a whole house renovation. While using the same HERS approach as new homes, existing homes have an easier standard to meet. The maximum allowable HERS score is 80 for home renovations greater than 2,000 ft² and 85 for renovated homes less than 2,000 ft².

R5. If I'm doing a small remodeling project, like a kitchen or a bathroom renovation, will I have to meet the stretch energy code?

If a small renovation involved replacing a couple of windows and opening part of a wall cavity, then those new windows and wall cavity would have to be brought up to the stretch code, just as the plumbing in the kitchen or bathroom being remodeled would have to comply with the plumbing code. However, improving a kitchen or bathroom would not trigger required changes to the rest of the home such as attic insulation or a new heating system. Only the systems being modified have to be brought up to code. Despite not being required, your contractor, utility company and code official may suggest cost-effective changes (often with tax and rebate incentives to reduce your energy bills) that you may want to consider doing at the same time.

R6. How do I find a HERS rater?

HERS raters work with the residential builder/developer/design team, and should be included in the team from the outset. An updated list of HERS provider companies is available on the Energy Star Homes website. The Energy Star for Homes program staff can also help you to contact a HERS rater in your region.

R7. What training and certification do HERS raters undergo?

HERS raters are typically experienced building professionals, who in addition take a week- or

two week-long intensive training course in residential energy efficiency. After completing the training, learning how to use HERS rating software, and passing a test,⁸ new raters must also complete at least 5 ratings with an experienced HERS rater before being able to independently award ratings. In addition to this initial training and certification, HERS raters must be affiliated with a company that is certified as a HERS provider, and is responsible for ongoing code education and quality assurance oversight of the HERS rater's work. The HERS providers also carry liability insurance and allow builders to request a review from a second HERS rater in the rare case of disputes.

R8. What testing equipment is required to meet the residential stretch code?

HERS ratings require testing of the air leakage rate of residential units. In addition, for homes that have forced air heating and central air conditioning systems that have ductwork running outside of the heated portion of a house, a duct leakage test is needed. These tests help calculate how much energy is needed to heat and cool a home, and help builders to identify possible problems before a home is completed, when there is still time to fix them cost-effectively.

R9. Are there enough HERS raters and testing equipment available, and what do they cost?

In 2008 over 15% of all new homes in Massachusetts were built through the Energy Star for Homes program, in 2009 that climbed to 34%, without any noticeable shortages. The majority of these homes used HERS raters and testing equipment to achieve a HERS rating. The growing interest in HERS ratings has led to more building professionals going through HERS training and certification and expanded sales of blower door and duct testing equipment. The Massachusetts Energy Star Homes website now lists several new HERS provider companies,⁹ and many more builders as Energy Star Homes partners. There is already in place an active market for HERS raters

⁸ More information on the HERS rater test is available here:

<http://www.resnet.us/rater/tests/rater.htm>

http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showStateResults&s_code=MA

and testing equipment, and we don't anticipate demand for HERS raters exceeding the supply.

Costs for HERS ratings currently range from around \$600 to \$1,500 per unit in Massachusetts, and they are also subsidized by the utility-sponsored Energy Star for Homes program. The price variation may reflect differing levels of technical assistance to the builder depending on their needs and preferences.

R10. How much more does it cost to build to the stretch code, and how does this compare to the energy savings?

For new construction additional first costs are estimated at around \$3,000 for a 2,700 square foot single family home, including the cost of a HERS rater. This is reduced to about \$1,700 after receipt of \$1,300 in utility rebates, which translates into around \$125 a year when rolled into a 30-year mortgage at 6% interest. But these investments reduce energy bills by about \$500/year, resulting in net annual savings to the homeowner of about \$400. For a larger 4,400 ft² home the additional costs are higher but so are the energy savings, resulting in a net annual savings of \$1,100. This is an excellent value for the home buyer and a marketing opportunity for builders who are looking for another way to differentiate new homes from existing ones.

In the case of renovating a 3-unit urban triple-decker, the minimum additional construction costs for all three units combined relative to meeting the new base energy code is only around \$1,400, while the annual energy savings are over \$130 per year, yielding small but immediate net cash savings to the unit owners. Larger annual savings could be achieved by more aggressive energy efficiency improvements, but the stretch code requirements for renovations are modest.¹⁰

R11. What financial savings/rebates are there from building to the stretch code?

The stretch code is designed to allow builders to maximize use of the Energy Star Homes program

¹⁰ Separate documents are available that summarize the detailed cost-benefit analysis that has been undertaken to help set the appropriate level of energy efficiency for the stretch code. These calculations do not include substantial financial incentives available both from utilities in Massachusetts and through federal tax credits (see next question).

with its full range of training, support and financial incentives. A new home with a HERS rating of 65 or less currently qualifies for \$1,250 from the Energy Star utility sponsors, and additional rebates are available for installing high efficiency heating and cooling equipment, appliances and lighting. The utility companies also provide \$650 to partially or fully cover the cost of hiring a HERS rater to work with the builder.

For existing home renovations there are tax credits for the homeowner as well as the same utility incentives on efficient equipment, appliances, and windows. There are also major incentives available to add insulation and reduce air leakage in existing homes, through the MassSave program sponsored by the gas and electric utility companies.¹¹

R12. How is the MA stretch code different from the existing Energy Star for Homes program?

The Energy Star for Homes program is a voluntary program for home builders. In Massachusetts it is currently administered by ICF International on behalf of the major electric utilities in the state, and has over two hundred builders enrolled.¹² The program accounted for 15% of all new homes in Massachusetts in 2008 and 34% in 2009. There are currently 3 tiers to the Energy Star program. The stretch code essentially makes the 2006-2010 Energy Star program requirements mandatory in any adopting municipality, and sets a specific minimum HERS index rating of 65 or 70 based on size for new homes, and less strict requirements for renovations.

R13. Do I have to use the Energy Star program?

The Energy Star Homes program is strongly recommended, but not required. It is also going through a transition from Energy Star v2.0 to Energy Star v2.5 and ultimately v3.0. Residential builders in stretch code communities will be required to get a HERS rating for new homes and the utility funded programs can help offset the cost of this rating. In the case of renovation or

additions to existing buildings builders may instead utilize the prescriptive option – using only Energy Star qualified new windows, doors and skylights and carefully sealing ducts that are outside the heated space if installing new heating systems. In both cases builders must also complete the Energy Star Thermal Bypass or Thermal Enclosure Checklist. In order to simplify qualification for the rebates, training and technical assistance that are offered we recommend that builders participate in the Energy Star Homes program, but it is not mandatory.

R14. How does the building official in my town/city check whether I met the stretch energy code?

For several years, under both the 7th edition and the 8th edition base energy code in Massachusetts it has been possible to show code compliance by achieving a HERS rating and/or Energy Star Homes certification, and submitting a copy of the HERS report and Energy Star paperwork to the local building code official to demonstrate this. The stretch code expands the use of this existing code compliance option to all residential construction. Building code officials have been receiving free training on the new base energy code and the stretch code. An updated 2011 training¹³ is also open and available to interested building professionals for a small fee to cover costs.

R15. How does the stretch code work with LEED for Homes?

LEED for Homes is a voluntary residential green building program that includes a significant energy efficiency component. The mandatory energy and atmosphere requirements of the LEED for Homes program are the minimum Energy Star Home requirements of a HERS 85 rating and a completed Thermal Checklist. Homes can then gain additional points for achieving a lower HERS score. Because LEED for Homes and the stretch code share the same HERS and Energy Star underpinnings they are fully compatible.

R16: When following the prescriptive path for residential additions or renovations can the builder or architect complete the thermal checklist?

¹¹ <http://www.masssave.com/residential/>

¹² http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showAreaResults&s_code=MA&msa_id=all

¹³ The MA building energy code training home page is at: <http://www.cetonline.org/Events/events.php?id=124>

Yes. They do have to sign to say that the relevant measures were checked in the field. A HERS rater is needed only if a HERS rating is needed or to go through the Energy Star Homes program (primarily for new construction and gut retrofits).

Commercial Building Questions

C1. What building types are covered by the commercial stretch code?

New buildings, and new additions to existing buildings covered by the commercial energy code, that are greater than 5,000 ft² in size are covered by the stretch code appendix. New commercial buildings smaller than 5,000 square feet, as well as renovation to existing commercial buildings are exempt from the stretch code and remain covered by the base energy code.

C2. What is required for large new commercial buildings above 100,000 square feet?

The designed energy use in large commercial buildings is required to be at least 20% below the use expected based on the energy modeling standards contained in ASHRAE 90.1 2007,¹⁴ which is the latest version of the national model code for commercial buildings. This is determined by computer modeling of the building energy use, taking into account factors such as air sealing, insulation, efficiency of the cooling and heating systems, and lighting design. Builders have the flexibility to choose the set of energy efficiency features they prefer, as long as modeling shows that overall these features yield the required 20% reduction relative to the base ASHRAE 90.1-2007.

C3. What is required for new commercial buildings between 5,000 and 100,000 square feet?

Builders of such buildings have two choices. First, they can use the same modeling approach as buildings larger than 100,000 ft², and show that the expected energy use is at least 20% below the code requirements of ASHRAE 90.1 2007. Alternatively, they can choose a set of 'prescriptive' requirements for particular efficiency measures, based on the new base energy code for commer-

cial buildings (IECC 2009 Ch.5), supplemented by enhancements taken from the Core Energy Code developed by the New Buildings Institute (NBI).¹⁵ The Core Energy Code and its precursor the Core Performance Guide are nationally-recognized standards already in use by Massachusetts gas and electric utility companies as the basis for providing financial incentives to commercial building developers.

C4. What is required of small new commercial buildings, below 5,000 square feet?

Such buildings are exempt from the Stretch Code requirements.

C5. How are commercial renovations handled by the stretch code?

Commercial renovations are exempt from the Stretch Code requirements.

C6. How are new commercial buildings with special energy needs handled?

Supermarkets, laboratories, and warehouses **above 40,000** ft² must meet the performance modeling requirements of the stretch code that apply to regular commercial buildings greater than 100,000 square feet. Because these buildings often have large and unusual energy loads developers are likely to model their energy usage as a standard design practice, so meeting the standard of 20% below ASHRAE 90.1-2007 via energy modeling should not require a new compliance approach.

Supermarkets, laboratories, and warehouses **below 40,000** ft² are exempt from the stretch code requirements, but must still meet the base energy code. Other specialty buildings can apply to the Mass. BBRS for waivers based on evidence that they have unusual energy loads, and that they are not typically built using energy modeling.

C7. How do the benefits and costs from the commercial stretch code standards compare to the baseline code?

Case studies of specific buildings by Massachusetts utility companies National Grid and NSTAR

¹⁴ Specifically: ASHRAE Standard 90.1-2007 Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings, Appendix G.

¹⁵ For more information please see the New Buildings Institute press release available here: <http://www.newbuildings.org/downloads/press/MAAdoptStretchCode.pdf>

show that the savings in reduced energy costs far exceed the greater initial construction costs. If the costs are included in a mortgage, then owners would see immediate cash-flow savings. Moreover, the utilities offer generous incentives that make the efficiency improvements even more profitable. For example, on one mid-sized office building in Leominster, Mass, the additional cost was \$101,000, while the annual energy savings were \$27,600, for a three year payback. But the utility energy efficiency program provided a rebate of \$66,600, reducing the initial cost to \$34,000. As a result, the energy savings pay for the extra costs in just over one year. More generally, we anticipate that any additional upfront costs incurred in construction should be recovered from energy savings with a payback after rebates of less than three years.

- a) More efficient heating and cooling equipment – widely available and with utility rebates that offset much of the incremental cost.
- b) More efficient lighting – also widely available and eligible for significant utility rebates.
- c) Providing at least 3% of the onsite electric load from onsite renewable generation – which qualifies for both large federal tax incentives and significant state renewable energy incentives administered by the Department of Energy Resources¹⁶ and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center¹⁷ (MA CEC).

C8. How does the stretch code work with LEED buildings?

The commercial stretch code has two code compliance pathways. Both of these qualify for LEED new construction points, and require no additional work because of the stretch code. If pursuing the performance approach, then achieving the stretch code standard of 20% below ASHRAE 90.1-2007 uses the same baseline and modeling as the 2009 LEED program and qualifies for 5 out of 19 LEED energy and atmosphere points. Many LEED buildings will go significantly beyond these energy efficiency requirements, in order to obtain additional LEED points. Similarly, meeting the stretch code through the Core Performance-based prescriptive approach qualifies for LEED points.

C9. Does the stretch code require 3% renewable electricity or solar panels?

There is an option under the prescriptive path of the stretch code to meet one of the requirements of the code with onsite renewable electricity generation. However, this is not a requirement for all buildings, it is merely one of three options under the prescriptive approach, and builders may also choose to meet the commercial stretch code requirements using the 20% better than ASHRAE 90.1-2007 modeling approach. The three options which appear in section 507 of the prescriptive code option for buildings between 5,000 and 100,000 square feet are:

¹⁶<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeeterminal&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Energy%2c+Utilities+%26+Clean+Technologies&L2=Renewable+Energy&L3=Solar&L4=RPS+Solar+Carve->

[Out&sid=Eoeea&b=terminalcontent&f=doer_renewables_solar_about-the-rps&csid=Eoeea](http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eoeeterminal&L=5&L0=Home&L1=Energy%2c+Utilities+%26+Clean+Technologies&L2=Renewable+Energy&L3=Solar&L4=RPS+Solar+Carve-Out&sid=Eoeea&b=terminalcontent&f=doer_renewables_solar_about-the-rps&csid=Eoeea)

¹⁷ <http://www.masscec.com/index.cfm?pid=11159>

Szklut, Jay

From: Michael Battista [rrbattista@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, April 11, 2011 5:17 PM
To: Szklut, Jay; andy@rojas1.com; andyrojas996@gmail.com; Firenze, Angelo; charles.clark@grubb-ellis.com; Fallon, Jennifer; karl.haglund@state.ma.us; wrestler3@verizon.net; Sami Baghdady
Cc: Wheeler, Jeffrey
Subject: Re: Energy Committee Warrant articles

Hi Jay.

For clarification, there is no "minimum threshold" for residential renovations. It applies to additions of any size according to the training materials handout compiled on 4-12-10 by the Center for Ecological Technology (CET)

<http://www.lee.ma.us/Town%20Meeting/FY11/Stretch%20Code%20for%20Residential%20Additions,%20Alterations%20Renovations%20and%20Repairs.pdf>

Furthermore, the Home Builder's Association of Massachusetts (HBAM) disagrees with BOMA & the EPA regarding the negative impact on Massachusetts Towns. It argues that, "The Stretch Energy Code will negatively impact job growth, decrease Massachusetts' ability to effectively compete with other regions of the nation for business and further burden the economic stability of Massachusetts. "

<http://hbama.com/archives/831>

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-----Original Message-----

From: Szklut, Jay <jszklut@belmont-ma.gov>
To: Andy Rojas <andy@rojas1.com>; Andres Rojas <andyrojas996@gmail.com>; Angelo Firenze <angelo@angelifirenze.com>; Charles Clark <charles.clark@grubb-ellis.com>; jemfallon <jemfallon@comcast.net>; karl.haglund <karl.haglund@state.ma.us>; Michael Battista <rrbattista@aol.com>; Sami Baghdady <wrestler3@verizon.net>; sami <sami@baghdadylaw.com>
Cc: Wheeler, Jeffrey <jwheeler@belmont-ma.gov>
Sent: Mon, Apr 11, 2011 10:00 am
Subject: FW: Energy Committee Warrant articles

Jay Szklut

4/12/2011

Following is a sketch of issues connected to the two parcels comprising the "White St. extension" which the Planning Board may feel should be communicated as the context for consideration of transferring rights to these properties:

- Belmont values its "small town" feel. Connectedness and walkability among neighborhoods, natural resources, transit and commercial areas are important to the Town.
- Investments in our extensive network of sidewalks, street trees which provide shade and pedestrian protection, and traffic calming measures to create safe street crossing opportunities are all assets which indicate value and support for walkability.
- The fact that Belmont is physically divided by the railroad tracks is a challenge to our connectedness.
- There are only three crossings of the rail right-of-way for vehicles; at Brighton St., the underpass at Concord Ave. and Leonard St., and at Trapelo Rd. at Waverley Square.
- The Comprehensive Planning process identified adding or improving pedestrian and bicycle connections across the rail right-of-way as important goals for the Town, including: a potential tunnel under the tracks at the end of Alexander Ave.; improvements to the lighting, visibility and aesthetics of the pedestrian tunnel at Belmont Center and the Clark St. bridge; and a potential White St. pedestrian and bicycle bridge, making use of the Town's ownership of the White St. extension.
- A cross-rail bridge at White St. would provide connection from the residential neighborhoods surrounding Waverley Square and off of Waverley St. to Pleasant St. and the community open space at McLean.
- It would also be an important connection for businesses and potential new developments on Pleasant St. to business and train and bus amenities in Waverley Square.
- An important part of controlling increases in traffic as Pleasant St. and the McLean properties develop will be easy, convenient access to the public transit in Waverley Square. Currently the closest public access between Pleasant St. and Waverley Square is the intersection of Pleasant St. and Trapelo Rd. to the south of the square.
- A bridge at White St. could also provide a connection for a community bike path running toward the Waltham border.
- A bridge crossing the railroad for pedestrians and bicycles is an important consideration for the vision and planning for this area of Belmont. Any such

crossing obviously has to lead to public way access on both sides of the tracks, which makes Town ownership of these two properties valuable.

- This is a unique time to focus on the potential for creating this connection at the end of White St. because of the real possibilities for significant new development along Pleasant St. and abutting White St. and Trapelo Rd. in Waverley Square. The Town's ownership of the parcels comprising the White St. extension may provide the opportunity to negotiate with developers in these areas for private investment to help create a bridge connection.
- There is a significant public interest in preserving this potential opportunity to provide a connection between South Pleasant St. and Waverley Square.
- The Board of Selectmen, the potential developers and anyone else interested should be aware of this public interest in connectivity which would benefit all parties.

Feedback
Planning Board Forum on South Pleasant Street
Forum II - March 29, 2011

Only 4 people submitted evaluations.

1. Overall, how would you rate tonight's Public Forum?

<u>1. Not Useful</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3. Average</u>	<u>4.</u>	<u>5. Very Worthwhile</u>
n/a	n/a	1	2	1

2. What was the most helpful part of this Forum for you?

- Hearing how the wrap-up from last time really did get the jist of what people said
- Open discussion for commercial and residential owners
- The overview of what might be done on South Pleasant Street
- Discussion and points of view from many stakeholders (including the Board)

3. What was the least helpful part of this Forum?

- The audience's comments on the roles of the Planning Board and Zoning Board
- Too much discussion mentioning what happened last time and discussion on why to listen to the Town residents
- Constant moving around of images – distracting

4. Any comments or suggestions for next steps?

- Write some by-laws; we need more actions in this direction
- Cut some sections using a topo map – pull down 3D views from Bing maps and blow up and tack to walls
- If it takes time to get it right – so be it, rather than rush it through and wrong

SOUTH PLEASANT STREET FORUM II
AUDIENCE NOTES – March 29, 2011

MICHAEL'S NOTES

BOUNDARIES

- Higher buildings at Town Yards
- Zoning Changes – height
- Shaws is Waverley Square! Along with car wash and BP gas station
- Incorporate Waverley triangle with Shaws, car wash and BP gas station
- Utilize air rights between Waverley triangle and car wash
- Height at Water Department yard ok
- Larger triangle is going to be a terminus for bus and railroad to feed McLean development – need to guard against destroying that opportunity
- Address of Shaws should dictate where Shaws belongs – if on Trapelo Road then Waverley, if on Pleasant Street then that district
- Increase zoning to maximize tax revenue
- Do we want to create barriers between Waverley and Pleasant Street or encourage connections and foot traffic?
- Bus stop half way down district
- Is there a chance to keep former car dealership as historic renovation?
- Address larger triangle with zoning change

ALLOWED USE GROUPS

- Suggestion that in the Center of Pleasant Street district have no restrictions. What would objections be to height – 8 stories, etc.?
- Excessive height would create a barrier to neighborhoods
- If residential use is considered then economic impact study must be done

- Keep commercial for tax base
- Don't mandate mixed use but leave it up to the developer
- At what height does a project become viable
- Height will be determined by parking
- Fifty foot high snow piles could not be viewed from side streets
- What is the maximum tax revenue?
- Don't let this drag!

JENNY'S NOTES

BOUNDARIES

- Higher across from Town Yards – wider properties in that section
- 2 or 3 different zones
- Shaws = Waverley Square
- Waverley zoning should continue up Trapelo
- Air rights development from triangle to car wash site?
- Zoning sets a long term pattern
- Height in middle properties – no shadow or sight line problems
- Transportation terminus feeder for McLean development – busy space – valuable properties
- Connections to trains and buses need to be planned – development could make barriers to connections to transit
- Possibility of bus terminal somewhere in triangle
- Need to enhance revenue for the Town

- What kind of connections should be maintained?
- No current visual connection currently to car dealership property
- Bus service to Pleasant Street to support new development
- Should there be thought to preserving the existing car dealership building?
- Waverley zoning should be addressed at the same time – give developers clarity
- Suggestion – Zone 1: Shaws and triangle to Waverley Landscape
Zone 2: Waverley Landscape to Flett
Zone 3: Flett north

ALLOWED USE GROUPS

- Middle section – no use restrictions? No height? What would downside be? Good idea? Help to tax base. Fit with higher development at McLean
- Would change character of Pleasant Street?
- Now essentially a ‘pass through’ – concern about more cars
- Viewscape concern with more height – would make Pleasant Street a barrier
- If residential component included need economic analysis of tax base/service use effect
- Keep this area commercial
- Allow mixed use as a developer’s choice
- Zoning incentives?
- What is the mission or role of the Planning Board? How can the Planning Board lead in a way that moves in directions in the best interests of the Town?
- Pay attention to all interests – 50 year opportunity to set vision
- Planning Board should have interests of whole Town in view especially tax base questions and implications
- What needs to change to incent new commercial development?

- Most developers want as much height as possible, most neighbors want as little height as possible – where is the right compromise?
- Height will be limited by parking requirements
- What do the property owners want and/or expect? Open the zoning and see what comes
- Taxes and purchase price require significant development but must be aesthetically pleasing and acceptable to the Town
- Need to have clarity about what the Town will allow and wants
- Difficult conversation because no context – question how commercial does the Town want to be – 6%, 20%, etc? How much of the tax base should be commercial? A decision would help this process and have significant implications for the outcome.