

HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD  
and  
LAND USE STUDY COMMITTEE

Monday, September 18, 2006 7:30 PM  
Hopkinton Town Hall

MINUTES

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PRESENT:

PLANNING BOARD: Mark Abate, Chairman, R.J. Dourney, Vice Chairman, Evan Ballantyne,  
Jaime Goncalves, Joe Markey, Claire Wright

LAND USE STUDY COMMITTEE: Finley Perry, Chairman, Andy Branz, Stewart Cowart,  
Mavis O'Leary, Rebecca Robak, Eric Sonnett

Sasaki Associates: Fred Merrill, James Miner, Andy McClurg  
Elaine C. Lazarus, Planning Director

Mary Pratt  
Lynn Branscomb  
Chuck Joseph

Brian Gassett  
Roger Mezitt  
John Knowles

Justin Wiley  
Robert Falcione  
Muriel Kramer

**1. East Hopkinton Master Plan**

After introductions, Mr. Merrill stated the purpose of the meeting is to share the physical planning information they have gathered and they hope to receive feedback regarding a sense of goals, aspirations, etc. for the East Hopkinton area. He stated that people should think big and dream, not necessarily thinking about reality at this point. He stated that at an October meeting they will have an economic assessment report available.

Mr. Miner stated that the maps they have prepared show the opportunities and constraints of the study area. He began with a regional view, noting that Hopkinton is at the center of the "Arc of Innovation" area along Rt. 495. He reviewed the town's regional setting, topography, transportation network and existing pattern of development. Photos of the study area were shown, including scenic views. It was noted that the study area is about 4,000 acres, and about 1,674 acres of this area is considered useable, deducting site constraints such as wetlands and steep slopes. It was noted that there were a few large land owners in addition to Weston Nurseries, and much of the land in the study area is already developed, both land considered useable and constrained. It was noted that it is difficult to situate large buildings on steep slopes, for example, but more possible for single family homes. Mr. Miner noted that most of the area is not served by the municipal sewer system and the future expansion of the municipal system is not planned for this area. Therefore, there would need to be solutions for sewage disposal within the study area. Mr. Miner noted that some of the area is served by the municipal water system, but the water system is near capacity at the present time. Mr. Miner noted that under the current

conventional zoning requirements, there is a net possibility of 1,300 new houses in the study area.

Mr. Abate stated he is concerned that the whole town is not being looked at in this way. Mrs. Pratt noted that the MetroFuture initiative currently underway by MAPC could help with the regional context and buildout information. Mr. Perry stated that sometimes people look at these types of planning efforts from the perspective of how to prevent something, and it is difficult to approach it from a standpoint that recognizes some of it will be developed. He stated it is important to channel the development so 50% or more of the area can be preserved, and the Town has an opportunity here to do that. He stated this is a different approach than is typical in public sector planning. He stated that all of Hopkinton plus the surrounding towns will be affected by what is done here. Mr. Sonnett noted that the impact of development of this area on the infrastructure of the entire Town is important.

Mr. Goncalves asked if there are alternatives other than residential development such as institutions, conference center, educational facilities, etc. Mr. Merrill noted that the market study being done will look at that. Mr. Sonnett noted that people should think about more than Weston Nurseries, as it is within the larger East Hopkinton context. Mr. Abate stated the group needs the town's vision, then the course of direction can be identified.

Mr. Merrill suggested seeing what the Master Plan goals are, then seeing if they can be met in this area.

Mr. Dourney left the meeting at this time.

Ms. Wright stated most residents know that the Town needs to increase the commercial/non-residential revenue in order to solve financial problems. She stated that some are looking at this part of Town to do that.

The public forum to be held was discussed. Mr. Merrill noted that they could hear concerns at an initial forum, and then come back to a second with a response. Mr. Perry stated there needs to be a cross-section of residents at the forum. Mr. Merrill suggested contacting established groups and making sure that they send representatives. Options were discussed, including an open forum or by invitation to a cross section of the community. Mr. Branz suggested having a few extreme scenarios at the forum with their impacts quantified to see how people feel about them. He stated he would like people to make reality based decisions. Ms. Wright stated that because of the number of visioning type forums that have been held over the last few years, she thinks people are ready to sit down, make decisions and move forward.

Mr. Abate left the meeting at this time.

The attendance and setup of the public forum was discussed further. Mr. Merrill stated they could start a forum by presenting what has been done, then dramatize and force the choices. He noted that there are really three quadrants to the study area, each of which will be handled differently based on their current land use and available land areas.

It was decided that the two boards would meet next on October 11, 2006.

Adjourned: 9:20 PM

Elaine C. Lazarus, Planning Director

Approved: September 25, 2006