

## HOPKINTON PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, February 1, 2007 7:00 PM  
High School Auditorium

### MINUTES

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#### PRESENT:

PLANNING BOARD: Sandy K. Altamura, John H. Coolidge (also a member of the Land Use Study Committee), Jaime Goncalves, Joe Markey, Claire Wright  
LAND USE STUDY COMMITTEE: Finley Perry, Chairman, Stuart Cowart, Liisa Jackson, Muriel Kramer, Mavis O'Leary, Eric Sonnett

#### **1. East Hopkinton Master Plan**

Mr. Goncalves stated that the purpose of the presentation this evening is to provide information and ideas and to obtain public input about the future of East Hopkinton.

Finley Perry, Chairman, Land Use Study Committee (LUSC), described the history of the LUSC which was formed to deal with the potential sale of Weston Nurseries two years ago. He described the work of the Committee over this time, including going through a process of finding a potential development partner for the Town and working with Community Opportunities Group, Inc. to develop a financial model. He noted that about a year ago the Committee decided that the Town needed to plan for this area of Hopkinton no matter what happens to Weston Nurseries or who owns it, so the hiring of Sasaki Associates by the Planning Board for this study is the result.

Trish Perry, Chairman, Civic Engagement Committee, stated that a series of smaller meetings will follow over the next few months, which will give residents a chance to discuss the issues further and give feedback. She stated a large forum will be held on March 31, 2007 to pull it all together.

Fred Merrill, James Miner and Elizabeth Sargent of Sasaki Associates, Inc. made the presentation to those in attendance:

1. Purpose and goals – The goal of the East Hopkinton Master Plan was presented.
2. Previous planning initiatives – A review of previous planning studies and visioning events, including Voices for Vision and the 2006 MAPC study were reviewed.
3. Context and analysis – A review of information gathered about the study area was reviewed.
4. Stakeholder interviews – Information received during interviews with local organizations and large land owners was presented.
5. Land use scenarios – Ideas/scenarios for the study area were discussed: 1) Lose Green – No change in zoning; buildout with single family homes. The model showed net annual negative revenue projections for the future. 2) Buy Green – Purchase most of the undeveloped land in the study area. 3) Grow Green – Development over time in a way

that meets the Town's goals: Three scenarios with varying amounts of commercial, research & development and residential uses were described. Annual revenues from each scenario would be neutral or positive.

6. Zoning Overlay Districts – Some zoning tools possible to achieve the Grow Green ideas were reviewed.

A question and answer period followed:

Question: Does the financial model which calculates the net revenues for each scenario include school costs?

Answer: School spending is included, but not the capital costs of building new schools.

Question: Has an investment model been prepared? What is the value of Weston Nurseries in the future to a developer?

Answer: The future value is unknown.

Question: How much land would be needed to protect the Ashland well? What is the impact of the Water Resources Protection Overlay District in this area?

Answer: Most of the study area is in the Concord watershed and all water flows in the northerly direction toward the Sudbury River area. Low impact development techniques would have to be used to ensure that the water quality and aquifer recharge is preserved.

Question to Boulder Capital LLC: The Ch. 61A notice to the Town will give it 120 days to respond. Will you propose zoning changes for the May annual town meeting during this period?

Answer from Roy McDowell, Boulder Capital LLC: We have fought to keep the Town's Ch. 61A rights in this process. Weston Nurseries is a community resource and we will work with the Town during this time. We like a kind of scenario for the land that is something like the Grown Green ideas. If the Town does not re-zone the property as we propose, we will look at a by-right scenario.

Question: If the Town buys the property, would it flip it to a developer?

Answer: No, although the Town could sell off some parcels over time.

Question to Boulder Capital: Would Boulder work with a land trust like Trust for Public Land?

Answer from Mr. McDowell: We would consider anything. We think the projected numbers of students in the Grow Green scenarios is too high.

A statement was made advocating use of alternate energies, such as wind and solar, to achieve an energy zero development.

A statement was made that while the Grow Green scenarios show some commercial development, they don't solve the tax base problem of the entire Town.

Question: Not much commercial development is shown. What about a mall or a Town power plant?

Answer: The amount of commercial development shown is what the consultants believe is marketable, as well as recognizing the limits of Rt. 135 and Rt. 85.

Question: Have traffic studies been done to evaluate the alternatives? If not, will they?

Answer: Traffic studies are not part of this planning process. Studies would be done by a developer and submitted to the Town for review if a development is proposed.

Question: When will the LUSC make a recommendation as to whether the Town should exercise its 61A rights?

Answer: The LUSC may or may not make a recommendation. It will definitely present all of the options and information to the Board of Selectmen, which is charged with making a decision.

Question: Can the Town exercise its rights on certain parcels within Weston Nurseries or only on the whole thing?

Answer: The Town can pick specific parcels, but that would be the end of the deal with Boulder Capital. Weston Nurseries would be left without a buyer.

Question: Has the Town considered working with a partner or a land trust?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What is the maximum number of houses that Boulder Capital will build?

Answer from Mr. McDowell: Whatever is allowed by the Town. Boulder has no preconceived notions regarding numbers of units.

Adjourned: 9:15 PM

Elaine C. Lazarus, Planning Director

Approved: February 12, 2007