

**The Banta Davis Task Force**  
Minutes  
Meeting of April 12, 2012

**Present:** John D. Williams, Board of Selectmen (BOS); Richard Amodei, Recreation Commission; Chair; W. Randall Brown, Carlisle Housing Authority; Grant Challenger, Vice-Chair, Community Representative; Greg D. Peterson, Chair and Trustee, Affordable Housing Trust; Jonathan Stevens, Planning Board; Mary Storrs, Carlisle Public Schools.

**Guests:** Joseph March, P.E., Stamski and McNary, Inc.; Mary Zoll; Cynthia Sorn, Carlisle Mosquito; Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator.

1. **Meeting Called to Order** at 7:36 am.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Jonathan Stevens made a motion to approve as amended and Mary Storrs seconded the motion. All in favor.
3. **Old Business**

**Banta-Davis Site Evaluation – Engineering Consulting Services.** Joseph March, of Stamski and McNary, Inc., began with a progress meeting report on the work the firm has accomplished since the previous meeting. His report focused on the April 6th meeting with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) he had attended with Greg Peterson as well as the presentation of a second proposed Banta Davis housing concept plan.

Mr. March and Mr. Peterson had met with MassDEP for the purpose of receiving MassDEP guidance on the proposed affordable housing tie-in to the Town’s Carlisle Public Schools (CPS) wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) . Mr. March distributed Stamski & McNary’s preliminary estimates of wastewater use and capacity for school and library uses, which were provided to MassDEP. Upon research, he noted that the random 5,000 gallon-per-day (gpd) spikes, which had been discussed at the past meeting, had been attributed to broken sanitary fixtures in the soon- to- be-demolished Spalding School Building.

In preparation for the meeting, MassDEP had requested that the current CPS summer usage figures be removed in the tabulation of annual daily average WWTF usage data. This MassDEP requirement had had a minimal effect on overall daily average usage WWTF figures. Mr. Peterson said that he was not surprised that the summer wastewater usage averages were close to the year-round average figures, as the WWTF required a film of bacteria to be kept moist on a rotating metal contactor drum year round, no doubt requiring the operator to “turn on the tap” in the summertime when usage was low. Mr. March said that he hoped to receive a draft guidance letter from MassDEP shortly, as to what current usage estimates would be acceptable.

Discussion followed on the MassDEP meeting. John Williams asked, assuming that the current usage estimate is acceptable, what does this mean for proposed housing on the site? Mr. March responded that, if 8,568 gpd capacity is available, this would translate into 77 bedrooms for proposed housing at the MassDEP standard requirement of 110 gallons per day per bedroom. Mr. Peterson added that MassDEP had been impressed with the CPS data and the fact that the WWTF already has an equalization tank in place.

Mary Storrs asked whether the new school building would further reduce water usage and possibly increase the WWTF potential for housing development. Mr. March reviewed the current MassDEP calculations used to determine school water usage, which projected 860 students and 125 staff totaling 985 people, at 10 gallons per person per day. He noted that these calculations include daily athletic facility showers, which are not currently taking place. He went on to say that a lower school WWTF usage calculation might possibly be developed due to improved water efficiency design and that MassDEP would be particularly interested in the next two years of WWTF usage data. He cautioned that if daily student shower water usage was removed for purposes of MassDEP water-usage calculations, the agency might require a restriction on use of showers. Mr. Peterson responded that actual school occupancy is 2/3 of the figure used in the current MassDEP calculation of CPS water usage and WWTF treatment capacity, and actual flow is one quarter of the projected flow using the MassDEP formula. This is the required practice for designing school buildings.

Mr. March then presented a second concept plan, which proposed distributing the housing into buildings with 11-12 units each, which would be located two areas: behind the Little League Field and beyond the WWTF. The buildings would be three stories each, with parking sited in front of and behind the buildings. For conceptual site plan purposes, the presentation proposed 60 units, with 17 two-bedroom units and 43 1-bedroom units. In addition, the plan included sixteen parking spaces for ball-field parking.

Mr. Peterson responded that, as this will be family housing, the addition of 3-bedroom units would likely bring the overall unit number to 49 - 50 units. He also observed that the proposed buildings would be 30 to 36 feet high at the roof peaks. Mr. Peterson asked how far would the proposed housing be from the abutters. Mr. March responded that it would be 100 feet from the lot line, and from all abutters excepting the Mosely property line, which is 64 feet away. Mr. Peterson asked whether it would be possible to move the conceptual plan housing 100 feet from the Mosely property. Mr. March said yes.

Discussion followed on the conceptual plan presentation. Grant Challenger asked whether this proposed development would require a traffic light at the intersection of the driveway from the property and Route 225, what road improvement would be needed, and whether a cistern would be required. He asked whether it would be the Task Force's job to look into this as well. Richard Amodei answered that the current road is 18 feet wide, and expressed concern that it would not work, with games going on and people driving back and forth. Mr. Peterson asked Mr. Amodei if he thought the ball field would need to be moved to the back. Mr. Williams reminded the Task Force that any Banta-Davis access-road analysis would need to go through a planning process with all the Town boards and committees. Mr. Peterson also added that speed can be lowered to 20 miles per hour, but that the main issue is whether housing is feasible on this site. This is the question which the Board of Selectmen asked the Task Force to consider and on which it was asked to make a recommendation.

Mr. Amodei expressed concern that, based upon past Town history, the RecCom might lose a playing field under the proposed proposed conceptual plan, and that this would be difficult to replace. He added that new ball fields cost \$300,000. Mr. Williams proposed that the Task Force make as part of its recommendation that all current fields be maintained, and that, if needed, the front field be relocated to the top of the site. He went on to say that, in contrast to this strategy, if Banta Davis is not developed, and the Town pursues smaller affordable housing developments on scattered sites, it will cost the Town \$9 to \$10 million in to meet Chapter 40B safe-harbor requirements.

Mr. Peterson responded that he did not like wasting taxpayer's money, and would not vote for a plan which puts playing fields at risk. He said that he was a believer in creative design and noted that there was considerable unused space on the Little League playing field first base line. He also said that he supported RecCom's concern and remembered advertisements in the Carlisle Mosquito which criticized the suggestion of playing fields at the Benfield site as "Fenway Park on South Street."

Mr. Williams raised the question that, as the Task Force approaches making a decision on the Task Force's charge, i.e., whether housing is feasible on the Banta Davis site, we all need to remember that the Banta Davis site was proposed for housing in the Town's 2010 Housing Production Plan (HPP). The reason that this site is now important to the Town is that it would take over 600 units of privately developed Chapter 40B housing to meet the Town's Chapter 40B HPP goals. Mr. Peterson asked Elizabeth Barnett, Housing Coordinator, to update the Task Force on the number of Chapter 40B housing units currently being proposed for Boxborough. She answered that the Town of Boxborough had recently received an application for a Chapter 40B development which would total 96 homeownership units, of which fewer than 25 units would count toward the Town's Chapter 40B credit. Mrs. Barnett also shared that she learned at a recent Minuteman Area Group for Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) meeting that new Chapter 40B developments were being permitted for Hudson (175-unit development), Littleton and Sudbury.

Mr. Stevens asked whether there was any way that part of the cemetery visitor's parking lot along the road might be moved. Mr. March estimated that there was potentially room to accommodate this.

### **New Business**

**Next Meeting.** In preparation for the final meeting of the Task Force, Mr. Williams reviewed the work the Task Force had completed:

1. Review by Town Counsel of a summary of Legal Documents and Town Meeting votes; and preparation of a clear opinion from Town Counsel that there are no Article 97 issues, and that the RecCom had not been given control of the property;
2. Preparation of a preliminary engineering site schematic plan.

He said the Task Force's final decision was to determine whether housing was feasible or not feasible on the site. Mr. Peterson added that it will be important that the Task Force make a clear statement on retaining the three ball fields, and on the safety of the access road. Mr. Stevens clarified that the Task Force's mission is not to recommend building housing, but rather to determine whether or not it is feasible. Mr. Williams agreed with this clarification.

**Banta-Davis Legal Opinion.** A motion was made by W. Randall Brown to make the latest version of the Banta-Davis Legal Opinion public information. It was seconded by Greg Peterson. All in favor.

**Next meeting is scheduled** for April 26, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

**The meeting was adjourned** at 8:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth DeMille Barnett