

Town of Carlisle Planning Board
MBTA Communities Subcommittee
Minutes of 6/25/24 1:00PM / Minutes Prepared by: Julie Mercier, Town Planner
Hybrid Meeting Format: Parlin Room, 66 Westford Street, Carlisle MA & Zoom

Voting Members Present (all in-person, none on zoom):

- Kate Reid, Select Board
- Adelaide Grady, Planning Board
- Christina Christodouloupoulos, Environmental Sustainability Committee
- Christine Johnson-Battista, Affordable Housing Trust
- Tony Mariano, Board of Health
- Helen Jackson Young, Conservation Commission (arrived at 1:57 PM)

Voting Members Absent:

Non-Voting Members Present:

- Julie Mercier, Town Planner

Other Attendees:

Carren Panico, Carlisle Mosquito

Chair Grady called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM.

Minutes of 6/11/24

The Subcommittee reviewed the minutes. Mr. Mariano made one clarification. Ms. Reid made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Johnson-Battista seconded. The minutes were approved 5-0-0.

Ms. Mercier screen shared the initial MBTA Communities Survey responses. The Subcommittee discussed them at length. There were 65 responses at the beginning of the meeting, and 68 by the end of the meeting. The survey has only been out for a week, so the response rate is encouraging. Ms. Mercier noted that it was put up on social media earlier today and will publish in the Mosquito on Friday. She mentioned that she is awaiting a quote for a town-wide postcard mailing.

Mr. Mariano mentioned the importance of getting the message out that the MBTA Communities zoning mandate is not about affordability or transit. Chair Grady added that education about the environmental benefits of denser housing, with shared walls and lower building emissions, is also important.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos mentioned that she shared an update with the Environmental Sustainability Committee, and they gave her feedback, as follows: they are supportive of shared walls and lower building emissions, reduced land disturbance, trying into existing infrastructure, and connected and meaningful open space that supports wildlife habitats

and corridors. She also brought up the idea of a combined approach with a neighboring community to zone an area spanning the town boundary – which would allow a bigger complex of multiple buildings and shared infrastructure – and could result in compliance for both communities. Members expressed varying opinions about challenges and opportunities with such an approach. Ms. Mercier said she would see if the Billerica planner might be interested in exploring the idea.

Ms. Mercier screen-shared some very preliminary zoning ideas she worked on over the past couple of days. Most of the Subcommittee members had not had a chance to look at the draft. Chair Grady asked about specifying a minimum number of units per lot that would be reflective of the calculated 15 unit/acre requirement. She noted the importance of adding language such as “calculated” and “technical” in front of the gross density term.

Ms. Reid commented that this zoning may want to think about lot dimensional requirements differently than the rest of the bylaw. Ms. Mercier agreed and noted that it would be helpful to have some diagrams that demonstrate the concept. She stated that Bohler might be able to sketch something.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos opined that the language on open space contiguity offers too much wiggle room and should be tightened. She also commented that the language seems to refer to undeveloped lots the way it’s currently written.

Chair Grady noted that some real examples on 9 or 10 acre lots would be helpful. She also asked for an engineering or legal opinion regarding whether subdividing land gets around the need for a Public Water Supply. Ms. Mercier said she will ask Bohler. Ms. Reid suggested asking Bohler to start with the Reichenbach property, and the property on South Street across from Benfield.

Ms. Reid mentioned 4-acre flag lots. Ms. Mercier pointed out that they would have to be subdivided into 2-acre lots to fit with the approach under consideration. Chair Grady commented that perhaps the Subcommittee should look at a multiple ADU approach to achieve more units on a 4-acre flag lot.

Chair Grady asked Ms. Panico if she had any questions or comments. Ms. Panico asked for a copy of the preliminary draft of ideas. Ms. Mercier offered to post it to the website and email it to her.

No one else from the public was present.

Ms. Reid made a motion that the next Subcommittee meeting will be on Tuesday, July 9th at 1:00 PM. Ms. Christodouloupoulos seconded. The Subcommittee agreed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 PM.

These Minutes were approved on 7/9/24.

Materials Reviewed at the Meeting:

- Agenda for 6/11/24
- Initial Survey results
- Preliminary ideas for Multi-Family Conservation Cluster zoning bylaw