

**Town of Carlisle Planning Board
MBTA Communities Subcommittee**

**Minutes of 7/30/24 1:00PM / Minutes Prepared by: Julie Mercier, Town Planner
Hybrid Meeting Format: Heald Room, 66 Westford Street, Carlisle MA & Zoom**

Voting Members Present:

- Kate Reid, Select Board
- Adelaide Grady, Planning Board
- Christina Christodoulopoulos, Environmental Sustainability Committee
- Christine Johnson-Battista, Affordable Housing Trust
- Tony Mariano, Board of Health
- Helen Jackson Young, Conservation Commission

Non-Voting Members Present:

- Julie Mercier, Town Planner

Other Attendees:

Beverly Young, 623 Heald Road

Chair Grady called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

She went over the agenda and mentioned that she and Ms. Mercier have a call with staff the EOHLIC later that day regarding Carlisle's multi-family conservation cluster approach.

Minutes of 7/9/24

The Subcommittee reviewed the minutes and made a few amendments. Ms. Reid made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Christodoulopoulos seconded. The minutes were approved 6-0-0 by roll call vote.

Survey Update

Ms. Mercier screen shared the MBTA Communities Survey responses. She noted that the survey has been out for 5-6 weeks and there are over 150 responses. The Subcommittee briefly reviewed the responses and agreed to keep the survey open through the summer, and into September to allow for publication in the school newsletter. Ms. Mercier agreed to aggregate the open-ended responses for the next meeting. Ms. Reid offered to assist.

Outreach Plan

The Subcommittee discussed the plan for upcoming outreach. Chair Grady will be providing an update on progress to the Planning Board on August 12th and to the Select Board on August 13th. She offered to provide an update to the Board of Health in early October. The Subcommittee agreed to have a community open house on Wednesday, October 16th, with a brief presentation at Town Meeting on November 12th, and then a follow-up open house/forum before Thanksgiving. The Subcommittee may also release a refined survey during late fall and winter.

Technical Assistance Update

Ms. Grady and Ms. Mercier have a call later in the day with staff from EOHLC. The goal is to make sure the state understands Carlisle’s multi-family conservation cluster approach, and to get feedback, and have some specific questions answered. Chair Grady and Ms. Mercier will provide an update at the Subcommittee’s next meeting.

Universe of Strategies / Neighborhood Analysis

Ms. Mercier screen-shared two spreadsheets she’s compiling. The first is an outline of the ‘Universe of Strategies’ under consideration. Chair Grady suggested that a utilities column be added.

The second is an analysis of neighborhoods by Tax Map across several parameters. She noted that the neighborhood analysis is missing the rich information that only people who live in Carlisle can really understand and provide. She asked the Subcommittee to help. Chair Grady suggested that the Subcommittee should do a mapping exercise, using a physical map or MyMaps in Google, with the goal of first identifying broad swaths of potential, and then drilling down into details using GIS layers. Ms. Mercier offered to prepare this for the next meeting.

Mr. Mariano commented that the Subcommittee needs to narrow down the strategies at some point soon, with a leading strategy “Plan A” and a secondary strategy “Plan B”. Other members of the Subcommittee agreed but noted that they don’t feel ready to narrow things down yet.

Ms. Christodoulopoulos noted that the process for the Town to purchase land is lengthy and complicated, and asked whether another entity or group of individuals could purchase land and hold it for the Town. Ms. Reid suggested that the Housing Trust could do it, but it was pointed out that the Housing Trust is still subject to public procurement laws. Ms. Johnson-Battista said she learned at a housing training that the Housing Trust could set up an LLC to handle land purchase. Ms. Grady said she thinks Lexington has an arrangement like that. Ms. Reid and Ms. Johnson-Battista said they will discuss it with the Housing Trust tonight.

Chair Grady outlined the developer process for determining land costs. She noted that the current cost of a wastewater treatment plant to serve 200+ units is ~\$5 million – which doesn’t scale down proportionally – and is a direct hit to funds available for land purchase and thus drives down land costs, sometimes to a point that a seller walks away.

Ms. Mercier noted that she still needs to reach out to surrounding towns to find out about the availability of infrastructure near the Carlisle town line, and to find out the feasibility of a possible future connection for a multi-family development.

Ms. Christodoulopoulos asked about the excess septic capacity at Benfield and whether it might be possible to leverage it in some way. Chair Grady noted that her understanding is

the excess capacity is based on the differential between the design flow and actual flow. She asked Mr. Mariano how the Board of Health would handle a situation in which Benfield wanted to add more units – would they be able to utilize the excess septic capacity, or would they have to expand the system. Chair Grady agreed to ask the Board of Health this question directly.

Chair Grady asked Mr. Young if he had any questions. He did not.

No one else from the public was present.

Ms. Reid made a motion that the next Subcommittee meeting will be on Tuesday, August 6th at 3:00 PM. Ms. Christodoulopoulos seconded. The Subcommittee agreed unanimously via roll call vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:08 PM.

These Minutes were approved on 8/6/24.

Materials Reviewed at the Meeting:

- Agenda for 7/30/24
- Preliminary survey responses
- DRAFT ‘Universe of Strategies’ and ‘Neighborhood Analysis’ spreadsheets