

Town of Carlisle Planning Board
MBTA Communities Subcommittee
Minutes of 8/20/24 11:00AM / 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
- Christine Johnson-Battista, Affordable Housing Trust
- Christina Christodoulopoulos, Environmental Sustainability Committee
- Tony Mariano, Board of Health
- Helen Jackson Young, Conservation Commission (arrived at 11:28AM)

Non-Voting Members Present:

- Julie Mercier, Town Planner

Other Attendees:

Chris Chiapella & Margo Frost-Stuart, 128 Log Hill Road
Carren Panico, *The Carlisle Mosquito*

Chair Grady called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.
She went over the agenda.

Minutes of 8/6/24

The Subcommittee reviewed the minutes. Ms. Christodoulopoulos made a correction. Ms. Reid made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Johnson-Battista seconded. The minutes were approved 5-0-0 by roll call vote.

Excluded Land and Public Water Supplies

The Board had a discussion of “excluded land” as it’s defined in the MBTA Communities guidelines, and as it applies to the calculation of gross density in Carlisle.

The Board also discussed “excluded land” in terms of the Zone I, Zone II, and Interim Wellhead Protection Areas around public water supply wells. Ms. Mercier pointed out that the different radii often go onto neighboring properties.

Mr. Mariano expressed that the definition of “excluded land” in essence takes advantage of what he’s long considered a “mistake” in Title 5, where an acre is not the same square footage as a survey acre.

Chair Grady responded that the Subcommittee’s multi-family conservation cluster strategy is interpreting the guidelines more genuinely than other towns that are just allocating a portion of a lot as “conservation land” to exclude it. She explained this in two ways: (1) the remaining land may not be enough to actually site a septic and well, and (2) there is no actual restriction on what can get built, just less land to do it – so it could result

in a high rise. She commented that Carlisle’s approach would actually limit what could get built to Title 5 and allow room for the septic and well to support the development.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos noted that other town documents mention protecting the public water supply as a Town goal, and that increased density near public water supplies in this instance may not be the best option.

Mr. Mariano asked what it all means in terms of the spirit and intent of the State law because the State wants more housing. He commented that the Subcommittee’s approach fits better in the Carlisle context and will help alleviate any concerns about traffic that a large-scale development would generate.

Survey Update

The Subcommittee agreed to look at the aggregated survey data after the survey closes.

Mapping Exercise

Ms. Mercier screen-shared a GIS map showing all site constraints layered. She had print outs of aerial maps and USGS maps prepared for each of the 12 areas of interest identified by the Subcommittee at the prior meeting.

Ms. Mercier asked the Subcommittee if they had reviewed the maps and felt they could rule any areas out.

Mr. Mariano immediately identified that the Hemlock Hill area should be ruled out because of all the ledge, topography, and downgradient wetlands. He noted that he worries about the setbacks to wetlands more than impacts to water quality, but that every place in town drains to a sensitive area, so systems just need to be designed correctly.

The Subcommittee discussed the East Street/Hemlock Hill/Laurelwood/Oak Knoll area and decided to just limit it to the “triangle” of parcels comprising East Meadow Lane and bounded by Carroll Drive, which appear to have good surficial geology and very limited wetland areas.

The Subcommittee looked at the East Riding Drive/Carriage Way/Brook Street/Timothy Lane area. Chair Grady commented that this area has old, narrow roads, flooding problems, and cul-de-sacs with limited opportunity; she is not sure the community would view it favorably. Ms. Reid disagreed and noted one parcel that used to be a nursing home, another parcel that has a by-right two-family use already, and the Frizzell property which is under construction currently. Ms. Reid pointed out that Carriage Way is a recent development with larger homes, and that Timothy Lane is older with smaller homes. Mr. Mariano commented that Peter Hans Road and Craigie Circle are notorious for flooding. Ms. Young opined that the large property north of East Riding Drive should be included. The Subcommittee refined the area to include parcels east of Carriage Way along both sides of

East Riding Drive, down along the northern side of Pages Brook Road, and inclusive of parcels along Brook Street.

Given the time, the Subcommittee decided to continue this mapping exercise at their next meeting.

Public Comment

Chris Chiapella, 128 Log Hill Road, noted that he filled out the survey, which he thought was excellent, and said he – and his wife Margo – attended to hear what was being discussed. He said he is working to understand how the MBTA Communities law applies to Carlisle, and what approach might be tenable, practicable and appropriate for the community. He thanked the Subcommittee for their work and commented that large-scale development on the edges of Town does not seem appropriate. He asked for a recap of the multi-family conservation cluster approach. Chair Grady gave an overview of the approach. Mr. Mariano added that the mandate is about zoning, ultimately.

Carren Panico of the Carlisle Mosquito noted that she has a lot of questions and will follow up at another time.

No one else from the public was present.

The Subcommittee set their next meeting for Tuesday, August 27th at 9:00 AM.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.

These Minutes were approved on 8/27/24.

Materials Reviewed at the Meeting:

- Agenda for 8/20/24
- Minutes of 8/6/24
- GIS maps for mapping exercise