

Town of Carlisle Planning Board

MBTA Communities

Subcommittee

Minutes of 12/4/24 11:00 AM / Minutes Prepared by: Noelle Beland, Planning, Zoning & Land Use Assistant

Online Meeting Format: Zoom

Voting Members Present:

- Adelaide Grady, Planning Board
- Christina Christodoulopoulos, Environmental Sustainability Committee
- Christine Johnson-Battista, Affordable Housing Trust
- Justin Harrison, Carlisle citizen
- Kate Reid, Select Board
- Tony Mariano, Board of

Health Voting Members Absent:

- Helen Jackson Young, Conservation

Commission Staff Present:

- Julie Mercier, Town Planner
- Noelle Beland, Planning, Zoning and Land Use Assistant
- Ryan McLane, Town Administrator
- Jon Metivier, Building

Commissioner Members of The Public

- Amelia Fournier, 745 East Street
- Carol, Ostrowski, 85 Patch Meadow Lane
- Carren Panico, Carlisle Mosquito
- Kathleen Redman, 84 Patch Meadow Lane
- Kristyn Babcock, 75 East Meadow Lane
- Laura Harrison, 847 North Road
- Lauren & James Catacchio, 85 Old East Road
- Lauren Fitzgerald, 116 Bingham Road
- Linda Fabrizio, 58 Patch Meadow Lane
- Maeve Lobo, 49 Old Quarry Drive
- Mark Redman, 84 Patch Meadow Road
- Martha Blue, 29 Buttrick
- Valarie Thaddeaus, 779 North Road

Chair Grady called the meeting to order at 11:01AM.

Minutes

The Subcommittee discussed the minutes from the 11/12/24 and 11/14/24 meetings. They made several edits and corrections. Ms. Reid made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/12/24 as amended. Mr. Mariano seconded the motion, and it was approved 6-0-0 by roll call vote. Ms. Reid made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/14/24 as amended. Mr. Mariano seconded the motion, and it was approved 6-0-0 by roll call vote.

Mr. Harrison and Ms. Christodoulopoulos both confirmed that they had consulted with the State Ethics Commission lawyer of the day and were advised to fill out the conflict-of-interest disclosure form to potentially insulate them from any issues. Mr. Harrison also noted that the exemption is not available to elected parties, but rather to appointed ones. The Subcommittee agreed to proceed with caution and await the Planning Board's decision on the exemption request. The Subcommittee discussed the implications of their financial interests on their decision-making process. Mr. Harrison and Chair Grady clarified that the Town Counsel's opinion stated that the exemption was only available to appointed municipal employees, not elected members of the Planning Board.

Chair Grady commented that she spoke with Town Counsel and her understanding is that provided the recommendations are just recommendations, and that the general areas under consideration are based on an identification of constraints, there should not be a financial conflict given that they are a Subcommittee and not the official decision-making body.

Chair Grady suggested that the Subcommittee's recommendations should be abstract and not specific to certain areas to avoid financial conflicts. The Subcommittee decided to present a report on their work to the Planning Board, rather than a recommendation. Chair Grady noted that the Planning Board will have a public process and things will likely change during that process. She suggested that they work through the strategy document and make it more abstract. Ms. Christodoulopoulos said she will abstain from voting on it but will continue to support the Planning Board going forward. Mr. Harrison said he will also abstain and commented that the report should just document what the Subcommittee has done.

Chair Grady agreed a report would be fine. Ms. Reid agreed and suggested the Subcommittee make a recommendation to the Planning Board that they be dissolved after submitting their report. Mr. Mariano agreed and suggested that Subcommittee members could continue to support the Planning Board as individuals as the Board moves forward. He commented that the Subcommittee has come to a consensus and has done their job as a group. Ms. Johnson-Battista agreed. Ms. Christodoulopoulos pointed out there are environmental considerations that have not been included in the report. The group agreed that this will be highlighted in the report, along with other issues that have not yet been considered by the Subcommittee.

Chair Grady asked to make a statement for the record. She stated that at a previous meeting she was very open about her property's location on Indian Hill Road and a comment she made about it not being included was in the context of geological and soil conditions. She emphasized that her comments were not self-serving and were made in the context of a broader discussion about zoning overlays. Ms. Reid confirmed this was her understanding and pointed out that no votes were taken at that meeting, and the Subcommittee was looking at broad swaths of Town when that area was discussed. Ms. Johnson-Battista also recalled the discussion noting that Chair Grady's property was not in an orange area of good geology, the discussions were general, they were not voting, and at the time they all laughed and moved on. Mr. Harrison stated that financial interest can go both ways. Chair Grady replied that she is aware of this, it's not the point, and she is asking for feedback from Subcommittee members who were present for the discussion. Mr. Mariano said

he is not sure how to comment on something that happened so long ago, but it was clear in his mind that initial considerations were about USGS and DEP wetlands mappings, nothing beyond that. The initial decisions were regarding geological conditions, not personal interests. He stated that every member has property in Carlisle and his memory is that they took a geological approach and were not considering their own personal interests.

Memo to Planning Board

The Subcommittee moved on to discuss the draft memo to the Planning Board, with Chair Grady screen sharing a document with her suggested edits, inclusive of edits from Mr. Harrison. Ms. Reid suggested including the exact language of the Subcommittee's charge. The Subcommittee agreed to incorporate this language and discussed the formatting and content of a report. They agreed on the need for the report to include a summary of the Subcommittee's work, a proposed strategy, and a review of aspects not fully considered yet, such as environmental considerations and BioMap.

Chair Grady added a statement as requested by Ms. Christodoulopoulos. They also discussed the Subcommittee's role, the need to avoid making "recommendations" and instead to give the Planning Board an "update". Mr. Harrison said he will not be voting on something that is a recommendation. He also noted that feedback from residents and stakeholders was not discussed by the group as a whole.

The Subcommittee discussed the criteria that were considered, which started with a review of potential challenges and considerations for siting septic systems, particularly in areas with glacial till and shallow ledges. They agreed to avoid undisturbed areas and floodplains, and to consider the impact on water quantity and well issues. They decided to include a caveat that water quantity and potential well issues cannot be known for every location, but they have excluded at least one area with known water availability issues.

The Subcommittee also discussed the importance of direct vehicle access and avoiding traffic issues. The Subcommittee discussed the intent of the overlay district, which would allow for the reuse of existing structures and new construction, and the importance of clustering to ensure more meaningful open spaces. They agreed to use the term "natural areas" to avoid confusion with the term "open spaces." Ms. Mercier pointed out that certain considerations may be better suited for Planning Board regulations than zoning. The Subcommittee discussed the zoning language and how the Planning Board regulations can ensure compliance. They acknowledged that each individual project would still be subject to various reviews, including the Board of Health and Conservation Commission, in addition to Site Plan Review by the Planning Board.

The Subcommittee went over the primary strategy. The Subcommittee agreed to reference the actual Master Plan and Housing Plan recommendations as an appendix. They also discussed the need to consider hydrogeologic conditions to the extent possible and the potential for incremental change. They went back and forth on the notion that impacts of this proposal would be spread throughout Town and thus minimized, with Mr. Harrison disagreeing that impacts are minimal to neighboring property owners.

Next Steps

The Subcommittee discussed the need to elaborate on alternative strategies in their memo. Mr. Harrison suggested postponing delivery of the document for a month due to the late breaking serious conflict of interest issue. It was suggested that the Subcommittee meet again before Monday night to finalize the piece on alternative strategies. They agreed to meet and submit the final piece under separate cover.

Ms. Reid made a motion to submit the report to the Planning Board for 12/9/24 as edited in the meeting on 12/4/24. Ms. Johnson-Battista seconded the motion, and it was approved 4-0-2 (Christodouloupoulos and Harrison abstained) by roll call vote. The Subcommittee agreed to hold a short meeting on Monday to finalize the alternative strategies document.

Next meeting was set for 12/9/24 at 9:30 AM online on Zoom.

Ms. Reid made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mariano seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

These minutes were approved on 12/17/24.

Materials Reviewed at the Meeting

- 12/4 Agenda
- 11/12 and 11/14 Minutes
- Draft Memo