

MBTA Communities

Public Comment, Questions & Answers in Planning Board Meetings

THIS IS A WORKING DOCUMENT THAT THE PLANNING BOARD WILL CONTINUE TO UPDATE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS.

Planning Board Meeting 1/13/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Ken Mostello of 30 Kimball Road asked what the considerations for alternative plans are. Chair Smith answered, saying that it needed to be discussed at the next meeting.

→ Planning Board is still considering multiple different approaches at their twice-monthly meetings.

Mr. Modeen asked if the Planning Board had thought about using media tools, like Google chat spaces, to allow more public comments. Chair Smith explained that it is hard for the Planning Board to respond to comments online but could look into what some other towns have done, and could put out another survey, or an additional open house.

→ Planning Board will consider survey, open house, method for addressing questions. See [schedule](#).

Cindy Craft of 75 Patch Meadow Lane asked how the proposed zoning will apply to porkchop lots. Chair Smith replied, saying the Planning Board does not have an answer right now and still must work down areas in which the zoning will be implemented.

→ Planning Board will consider impacts to pork chop lots if areas are chosen that include pork chop lots.

Marge Berube of 784 North Road asked what the second-best way for citizens to submit public comments was. Chair Smith said that all of the comments are welcome during open meetings and encouraged people to attend. She explained the feedback and comments have been categorized and will be discussed in upcoming meetings. She also discussed creating a potential FAQ page. Ms. Mercier said she could send an email to her directly.

→ Submit comments in public meetings or via email to Town Planner: jmercier@carlislema.gov

Marge Berube of 784 North Road asked if the 500-year floodplain was a new overlay. Ms. Mercier answered her saying it was already existing and established by FEMA. This was only a suggestion for the Planning Board, but they have not taken it up at this time.

→ FEMA floodplain mapping has existed for decades. The Flood Overlay District was first added to the Carlisle Zoning Bylaw on May 6, 1975.

Mr. Modeen asked if this additional restriction is put in could it negate the 5% zoning increase of 95 units. Ms. Mercier explained that the 500-year floodplain already covers already existing wetlands in town which are already regulated areas. Therefore, this would not change the amount of protected land in town.

→ State took existing wetland and floodplain maps into consideration when they calculated excluded areas for each parcel in their compliance model.

Jerry Ostrowski of 85 Patch Meadow Lane asked about porkchop lots and water resources, how this will affect private roads, and about discrepancies of wetland determination and has not received answers to these questions. He asked how these questions would be answered since the subcommittee had been dissolved. Mr. Guild suggested the Planning Board provide responses to the compiled questions in a form that is available to the public. Chair Smith asked how the Planning board can answer those without violating Open Meeting Law and clarified that subcommittee was dissolved because the Planning Board is taking over MBTA Communities. The group discussed that answers would be posted after they were discussed in open meetings.

→ Planning Board will consider impacts to pork chop lots and private roads if areas are chosen that include pork chop lots and private roads. Impacts to water resources and wetlands are generally harder to determine without site-specific testing and delineation, which typically are conducted and paid for by a property owner or developer.

Ms. Craft asked if all units could be made into one-bedroom units. Ms. Mercier responded, saying no, they must be built to support families and therefore, could not all be one-bedroom units. Chair Smith added that the Planning Board cannot dictate the number of bedrooms per unit.

→It appears I misspoke here, so I apologize. The correct answer is that the Town must zone for housing for families and cannot put limits on the number or size of bedrooms in each unit. However, it is possible that a developer could build exclusively 1-bedroom units.

Elizabeth Senkler of 523 Curve Street asked what economic cost in taxes would be. Mr. Modeen said he took it upon himself to create a financial model in a detailed schedule that looked at town demographics intended for user tools that could be used as a basis for an economic study.

→Planning Board will work with Finance Committee on a fiscal impact analysis. See [inputs](#).

Planning Board Meeting 1/27/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

John Horcher of 288 Stearns thanked the Planning Board for their work and inquired about the financial implications of non-compliance with the MBTA Communities Act, asking if that option was still being considered, and whether the town could hold a vote regarding the financial costs versus the benefits of compliance. The planning board acknowledged the significance of understanding these financial implications and indicated that this was an essential factor in their discussions and in finalizing their strategy. Ms. Mercier was tasked with compiling a comprehensive list of these implications on the town's website for easier public access.

→Planner tasked with following & documenting the implications of non-compliance. See [chart](#).

Ms. Christodouloupoulos of 46 Hemlock Hill Road asked how much land would be eligible for conservation clusters, and if that meets zoning requirements, could the town set a cap on what can be built. Ms. Mercier said they will look into it.

→To answer the conservation cluster part of this, I need to understand the question in more detail. The State is not generally in favor of unit caps in by-right zoning.

Amelia Fournier of 745 East Street asked if the Planning Board would consider Assurance Technology.

→The Planning Board has subsequently discussed – and may continue to discuss – the Assurance Technology property at 84 South Street.

Sharron Hart of 766 North Road gave thanks to Planning Board. She encouraged an early open house with multiple strategies. She also expressed encouragement of finding a compliant strategy.

→Planning Board is considering hosting an open house in spring or early summer.

Ken Mostello of 30 Kimball Road said the low to moderate density approach is a radical departure of what Carlisle looks like today. He stated this idea significantly differs and creates lots of changes to neighborhoods at the benefit of minimizing concentration in any one area. The alternative of doing more high-density approach is not all that controversial and may be a workable solution.

→Planning Board is considering multiple different approaches, including high-density approaches with 31/32 or 95 units on a site. See [matrix](#).

Ray Modeen of 48 Berry Corner Road asked who determines whether the town proposes a feasible option. Ms. Grady responded, saying the purpose of the presentation was to show that what has been considered 'infeasible' could actually be done. He also asked if we could develop well requirements that are so extreme it would diminish the profit margin for a developer at the interest of protecting the Carlisle water table. Ms. Grady responded, saying the board will talk to Town Counsel about to the extent to which they can address water and septic standards in zoning.

→Planning Board considering zoning in terms of what might feasibly happen in order to inform zoning that results in desired outcomes. Town Planner will consult Town Counsel about whether zoning can address septic and well standards. Board of Health is currently updating local well regulations.

Madeleine Blake said that Carlisle has a very substantive, powerful water testing water balance calculation already in our development standards. She asked how that can be translated into the MBTA Community requirements which require rules to be black and white and quantifiable. She stated the town's current standard is not that but gives very broad discretion to order all kinds of testing.

→Town Planner will investigate this.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos commented that a flip side to a large structure built all at once impacts traffic, school enrollment etc. A low-density strategy spreads out impacts over time.

→ **Planning Board considering impacts of all approaches under consideration.**

Marge Berube stated it could be less punitive to look at Assurance Technology. This could avoid tear downs and has few abutters. Ms. Grady said the intent in the zoning language would be to minimize tear downs. Also, the Board of Health will be updating their regulations for well standards soon.

→ **The Planning Board has subsequently discussed – and may continue to discuss – the Assurance Technology property at 84 South Street. The intent of the zoning will be to minimize teardowns.**

Ms. Fournier asked Ms. Grady to expand what that meant by that. Ms. Grady said they will need to talk about that in a different meeting, because it's a much bigger question to answer. But the Planning Board cannot prevent a tear down but could minimize or encourage reuse of existing structures.

→ **Planning Board will work with Historical Commission and find other example bylaws to craft language to minimize teardowns in general, and as relates to historic properties.**

Cindy Craft of 75 Patch Meadow Lane asked if the lower density strategy had been discussed with EOHLC. Ms. Grady responded, affirming that the board has been communicating with EOHLC, and they have been encouraging the approach.

→ **Now that HLC is focused on Adjacent Small Towns (Carlisle's MBTA Communities designation), Town Planner communicates with HLC multiple times a month. HLC has expressed support for all of Carlisle's approaches, though they cannot issue any sort of determination without zoning language and a site map.**

Ms. Blake commented that it was reflected in the minutes that the Planning Board discussed with EOHLC that it was okay to exclude nitrogen sensitive land from the gross density calculation. She then asked if the board also explained to them that there's a stipulation to the strategy of excluding land to make that legally non-buildable by zoning limitations. Ms. Grady said that was not what the board is doing, and they have not shown the EOHLC actual zoning language yet.

→ **In summer 2024, initial verbal feedback from HLC on excluding nitrogen loading land to enable the low-density strategy was positive, and at that time, HLC also indicated that the Town would not be required to restrict the land in any way (though we can if we want to). Town Planner is still awaiting a determination in writing on whether nitrogen loading land can qualify as excluded land.**

Ms. Blake reiterated that she was referring to the proposed zoning where they would only be able to build on 7,120 square feet, where the units would be limited to 2 per acre. There would be a lot size limitation where you can only do it on 2 acre size lots., not on 4 or 8 acres. Ms. Grady confirmed the board had reviewed those details.

→ **The low-density approach considers a lot size of 2-acres, with a 'development area' of 7,120 square feet (or 8.2% of a lot).**

Planning Board Meeting 2/10/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Ray Modeen of 48 Berry Corner Road asked why the nitrogen sensitivity does not apply to all of the strategies. Ms. Grady responded that MBTA regulations do not require the exclusion of nitrogen sensitive land.

→ **The MBTA Communities Regulations do not expressly list nitrogen loading land or nitrogen sensitive areas as excluded land, so it is not required to be excluded for all approaches. The low-density approach relies on it being excluded and we are awaiting a determination from HLC.**

Ms. Fournier asked if there was a way to ensure development is concentrated even if it is less than 31 units.

→ **The zoning can specify a 'development area' on a site. There may be additional parameters to ensure smaller projects are more tightly clustered. Town Planner to consider while drafting zoning.**

Lee Means of 94 East Meadow Lane asked if there was a price associated with each strategy. She also stated that many people in town think this is low-income housing.

→The MBTA Communities Guidelines released in 2022 did not originally contain any provisions for affordable housing, but during the review and comment period (which was lengthy back then), they were amended to include provisions for affordable housing, and we could allow up to 10% of units in a multi-family project be affordable (more if we want to undertake an economic feasibility analysis). To learn more, check out the [Mass.gov MBTA Communities webpage](#).

The Town may want to consider zoning for ‘missing middle’ housing, which refers to both a housing type (scale between single-family and high-rise) and a price point (100% Area Median Income, monthly rent ~ \$3,700) and is a strategy of the 2023 Housing Production Plan.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos raised a question about the priority of the strategy for MBTA compliance, whether it was to maximize the number of units or to find something that would pass town meeting. Ms. Grady responded, saying this adds a risk of unintended consequences to the list of considerations.

→Planning Board working on an approaches matrix that considers a variety of factors for each approach including housing feasibility and Town Meeting feasibility.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos also raised concerns about potential spot zoning and traffic impacts, suggesting that a more dispersed approach might be more appealing to the community.

→Town Planner will consult Town Counsel on spot zoning question.

Ms. Blake questioned the requirement for contiguous land in multifamily zoning districts, which Ms. Mercier confirmed was not applicable to their situation.

→The contiguity requirement for Carlisle is this: every area we zone must be a minimum of 5 acres, and contiguity can mean lots that are kitty-corner, across the street from each other, etc. See this [Fact Sheet](#).

Ms. Berube said the 95 units seem like a soft number. Chair Smith clarified that the 95-unit requirement is a hard number set by the State based on the 2020 census.

→Carlisle must zone for 5% of the Town’s 2020 housing stock, which equates to 95 units.

Debbie Bentley of 128 Heald Road commented that developments take a long time to complete so nothing would change overnight. She noted that Benfield took 9 years to complete.

→Planning Board is considering likely pace of development and build-out potential for each approach.

Linda Fabrizio of 58 Patch Meadow Lane asked if it was possible to rezone the whole town and set up a cap of 95 units. Ms. Mercier responded to her, saying there was not an answer yet for if the town is allowed to set a cap.

→This idea was considered by the former Subcommittee, but we have yet to receive a definitive answer from HLC. However, HLC has not responded favorably to other towns that have proposed unit caps because in effect it would rescind development rights to a by-right use for some properties, while other ‘first come first served’ properties would benefit. Town Planner will continue to investigate.

Mr. Modeen asked if it was possible to zone over churches, suggesting St. Irene’s. Chair Smith confirmed this was a possibility.

→HLC specifically left churches off their list of excluded institutions so that it is possible to zone over them.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos asked if you have a larger parcel, can the zoning be limited to the 15 acres of an 18-acre site. Ms. Mercier said the compliance model does not account for it, but it may be a possibility.

→Town Planner has recently confirmed that it is possible to zone over a portion of a parcel, and inputs into the State’s compliance model must be adjusted accordingly.

Planning Board Meeting 2/24/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Ken Mostello of 30 Kimball Road said he had shared his own analysis with Mr. Catacchio. He acknowledged this is dynamic when planning and to use new construction and who is moving into town as metrics. Looking at current student occupancy. Incoming families want schools. He goes on to say that developing on undisturbed land could be more

beneficial economically, where the MFCC strategy removed properties from the tax base.

→Planning Board prepared an initial set of highest-build fiscal impact metrics for Finance Committee and will continue to think through the impacts of each approach as approaches evolve and sites are selected.

Christina Christodouloupoulos of 46 Hemlock Hill Road expressed that increasing costs due to environmental degradation and climate change are hard to quantify. Protecting land helps with flooding fire mitigation, and the reuse of existing buildings conserves embedded carbon.

→Planning Board working on an approaches matrix that includes quantitative and qualitative analyses and considerations. Not all impacts and benefits are quantifiable or easy to capture.

James Catacchio of the Finance Committee asked who the Fin Com should contact to connect with over environmental concerns. Ms. Christodouloupoulos said he could reach out to the Environmental Sustainability Committee.

→Planning Board and Town Planner appreciate the coordination.

Amelia Fournier of 745 East Street suggested the Board look at creating zoning overlays on existing high-density areas, like Kay's Walk, that already have families living there. She also suggested exploring conservation clusters where large lots of land are conserved.

→Planning Board will take these ideas under consideration.

Information on Kay's Walk:

- 18 units / 41.86 acres total development tract area = 0.43 units/acre
- 18 units / 7.77 developed acres = 2.32 units/acre

Mr. Mostello said there was not a need to spend a lot of time for financial analysis of noncompliance due to the ruling by the SJC. He opined this would not be a productive use of time because the Town would lose against the state.

→Town Planner will continue to gather information about non-compliance as it becomes available.

Laura Harrison of 847 North Road questioned the likelihood of a full build out of 95 units. Chair Smith explained that it is dependent of the site where it gets built, as explained in the matrix.

→Likelihood of full build-out for any of the approaches partly depends on the sites selected.

Brigitte Senkler of 523 Curve Street described Carlisle as an oasis quiet neighborhood. She goes on to say this is why people moved to Carlisle in the first place. She said she does not want Carlisle to end up as developed as the surrounding towns. She also regarded that it seemed this mandate was designed for water and sewer towns.

→The MBTA Communities Regulations include language addressing towns without infrastructure.

Caleb Cochran of the Carlisle Mosquito asked if there would be different demographic assumptions for each strategy. Chair Smith said that they might be fairly similar.

→Planning Board prepared an initial set of highest-build fiscal impact metrics for Finance Committee and will continue to think through the impacts of each approach as approaches evolve and sites are selected.

Marge Berube of 784 North Road said the idea of looking at new properties is significantly different than what's already in town. The newer homes have 5-7 bedrooms where most of the older homes are much more conservative in size.

→Planning Board considering zoning that would incentive reusing existing structures and put limits on overall building square footage to encourage 'missing middle' housing units.

Ms. Senkler asked if it was possible to identify parcels that are not good to prevent development from happening. Ms. Christodouloupoulos explained the MBTA Subcommittee had thought about unintended consequences and tried to look strategically where it would be least impactful. Tony Mariano of 1134 North Road explained that the Subcommittee had picked parcels that specifically could be used for new developments. He said it would be disingenuous to pick parcels that would not work. Mr. Guild said the regulations do not say we need to choose a viable strategy. He said it seems people want a viable strategy, but it is hard to know before it comes time to vote.

→The Planning Board is currently considering multiple different approaches at their twice-monthly meetings and may discuss sites for each approach soon.

Linda Fabrizio of 58 Patch Meadow Road asked if the board found out it was possible to set a cap on the amount of units developed. Ms. Mercier answered, saying they have not.

→ **Though it is possible to put a cap on the # of units on a lot, we have yet to receive a definitive answer from HLC on whether we can have an overall unit cap in zoning. However, HLC has not responded favorably to other towns that have proposed unit caps because in effect it would rescind development rights to a by-right use for some properties, while other 'first come first served' properties would benefit. Town Planner will continue to investigate.**

Ms. Fournier said it would be beneficial to do a survey for what towns people want.

→ **Planning Board is considering conducting another survey this year.**

Cindy Craft of 75 Patch Meadow Lane asked if the property owners permission required to implement conservation restriction areas.

→ **Yes, a property owner must agree to put their land in a Conservation Restriction.**

Debby Bentley of 128 Heald Road commented that Kerry Kissinger and John Ballantine created a modeled scenario of a build out of town. She said Carlisle must do its part in implementing missing middle housing and that current zoning encourages sprawl.

→ **Town Planner will find and review this build-out analysis.**

Ms. Fournier asked if developers have to own all parcels for them to be developed

→ **Yes, typically a developer either needs to own the property or demonstrate site control (agreement with the property owner) to put forward a development proposal. Property owners are required to sign permit applications.**

Ms. Berube said that water is a universal concern. She acknowledged that information regarding ground water can be hard to obtain, but water shortages will affect everyone in town.

→ **Planning Board has listed water and septic safety and sustainability as a top priority for site selection for each approach. Board of Health is currently updating their local well regulations.**

Ms. Craft said she knows many people in town who are completely against the MBTA Communities Act and will likely vote no to any strategy. She asked the board to consider proposing strategies that would most likely pass at town meeting. Mr. Adams acknowledged her request and stressed the importance of providing negative implications for voting no to a proposal. Ms. Craft said that residents are so unhappy they will just vote no anyways. She also said that rezoning residents' homes is viewed as a negative impact and that choosing open parcels would more likely pass at town meeting.

→ **Planning Board is currently considering multiple different approaches at their twice-monthly meetings and may discuss sites for each approach soon.**

Planning Board Meeting 3/10/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Ben Herter of Historical Commission commented that historically most structures were built in the town center and then density drops as you go further out. He noted that the Benfield design references character of other structures in Town.

→ **Planning Board will take historical development pattern and local vernacular into consideration.**

Amelia Fournier of 745 East Street asked if design guidelines would be enforceable.

→ **Design Guidelines can be incorporated into MBTA Communities zoning bylaw which would give them greater enforceability and more "teeth".**

Mr. Herter suggested that the MBTA Communities bylaw could work in conjunction with a demolition delay bylaw, and that perhaps a joint hearing between the Planning Board and Historical Commission would be warranted to work through design guidelines.

→ **Planning Board will take this under consideration.**

Mr. Herter asked whether the Board is considering proximity to certain types of roads when siting MBTA Communities zoning districts. Chair Smith responded that it is one of the criteria the Planning Board is considering.

→Planning Board considering proximity to main roads.

Christina Christodouloupoulos of 46 Hemlock Hill Road asked if the zoning language could require the exterior of a building to be preserved and referenced the Assurance Technology building.

→Town Planner will work with Historical Commission and HLC to craft zoning for this.

Ben Herter and Annette Lee of Historical Commission expressed desire to see the Assurance Technology building preserved.

→Planning Board will take this under consideration.

Ms. Fournier asked if there are imminent concerns that the Assurance Technology building won't be preserved. Ms. Grady noted that changing the use to residential will trigger energy code compliance. Mr. Adams pointed out that the energy code gives greater leeway to historic buildings.

→While there are not imminent concerns the building will be torn down, considerations need to be made regarding the building if the zoning changes for the property.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos mentioned that the property at 75 West Street has an approved development and will be developed in some manner. She suggested that the Planning Board consider 3 sites to spread out development over time: (1) 75 West Street, which will be developed soon; (2) Assurance Technology, which would be medium-term; (3) Rocky Point, which would be further out.

→Planning Board will take this under consideration.

Planning Board Meeting 3/24/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Christina Christodouloupoulos of the Environmental Sustainability Committee expressed strong concerns over the environmental impacts associated with the higher-density option, particularly emphasizing the impacts to abutters regarding water resources and availability.

→Planning Board has incorporated impacts to water resources into the approaches matrix.

Melissa Webster of the Conservation Commission asked if the Town was obligated to provide piped water to a new development. Ms. Grady responded that there is nothing obligating the Town to provide infrastructure, but some approaches result in less control over how a developer meets infrastructure needs.

→Town is not obligated to provide water or sewer infrastructure for developments that occur pursuant to MBTA Communities developments.

Chief Sorrows addressed safety concerns regarding fire protection and water supply for larger developments by noting that there are multiple public water supply wells in town that require more testing. He highlighted the need for cisterns as a water supply source in areas anticipated to have multifamily housing. He commented that there is no upper limit to the number of users of a public water supply well.

→Planning Board will explore ways to incorporate fire protection measures into zoning or regulations.

Tony Mariano of the Board of Health noted that the Interim Wellhead Protection Area radius around a Public Water Supply well comes with hefty restrictions. He noted that getting yield and placing Public Water Supply wells to allow for other aspects of development is an interesting puzzle for which the devil is in the details.

→Planning Board will continue to investigate requirements for and limitations due to septic and well for each approach. Planning Board has a joint meeting scheduled with Board of Health on April 14th.

George Shepard of the Conservation Commission asked about the Planning Board's potential to deny something that meets the law. He asked what is allowed to go into zoning and commented that he is not sure how much support the wetlands bylaw can provide.

→Planning Board cannot deny a project proposed pursuant to by-right multi-family zoning compliant with MBTA Communities if the project meets the requirements in zoning.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos opined that there is a gap between the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction and protection for the natural environment, and the only tool available is zoning.

→Planning Board will continue to work with various stakeholders to craft zoning that meets local needs.

Susan Provenzano of the Conservation Commission commented that 6.3 acres would be heavily developed but would also be the most environmentally friendly option with the least amount of abutters. She expressed that her main concern is with mid-scale developments.

→Planning Board included different categories for consideration – such as 'environmental (water/wastewater),' 'ecological (surface water/habitat),' 'abutters,' and 'impact to abutters' – in the approaches matrix.

Richard 'Mac' Hisey of the Environmental Sustainability Committee emphasized that any potential site selection should be critically evaluated against the Town's Master Plan goals, which reflect overwhelming community support for preserving open spaces and agricultural heritage. He noted the Habitat for All strategy used by Acton, and suggested Carlisle take a similar approach. He articulated how open spaces are not merely passive amenities but active components of Carlisle's identity and environmental fabric, essential for ecological health and for providing a respite that residents value highly.

→Planning Board included 'alignment with master plan' and 'master plan site considerations' in the approaches matrix.

Mr. Shepard noted a 2022 case regarding Mansfield's Site Plan Review bylaw and asked about potential limitations on what can be reviewed under Site Plan Review for MBTA Communities.

→Town Planner has discussed this case with Town Counsel and HLC. M.G.L. Ch. 40A s. 3A (MBTA Communities) is not subject to the Site Plan Review jurisdictional limitations of Ch. 40A s. 3 (Dover Amendment).

Ms. Christodouloupoulos presented a chart of coordinated feedback from the ESC and LSC. She noted that the ESC's analysis focused on the potential strain that higher-density developments could place on the local aquifer, noting that an uptick in household chemicals and increased impervious surfaces could detrimentally affect water quality. To mitigate these risks, the ESC underscored the potential benefits of lower-density approaches, which in their view would play a vital role in maintaining environmental sustainability by preserving the quality and availability of natural resources.

→Planning Board incorporated much of this feedback into approaches matrix.

Chief Sorrows pointed out recent trends in construction that reduce the effectiveness of response times and emphasized the need for future-proofing town infrastructure to protect against these trends. He also talked about the potential use of sprinklers in new developments, or requiring cisterns for multi-family projects of 3 units or more.

→Town Planner investigating ways to include fire protection measures in zoning or regulations.

Amelia Fournier commented that she was surprised the Conservation Commission was not more interested in a higher density approach, as it would be a concentrated impact on the environment.

→Planning Board is weighing different impacts for each approach.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos opined that the first option is the most environmentally friendly because the impervious surfaces and structures are already existing. Mr. Adams added that this option would spread out impacts over a larger area as well.

→Planning Board is weighing different impacts for each approach.

Cindy Craft commented that the option of 95 units on 6 acres is disingenuous because it would never meet Title 5 requirements. She also said a wastewater treatment plant is unrealistic because it is too expensive to build, and that more than 25 people requires a Public Water Supply. Ms. Grady responded return on investment makes it a realistic option, and is something that is done often by developers. She noted that a site would need to accommodate an Interim Wellhead Protection Area as well as a WWTP.

→Planning Board will discuss septic and well considerations with Board of Health on April 14th.

Brian Cruise of 71 Rodgers Road asked the Planning Board to have Town Council investigate whether development pursuant to a multi-family overlay over base single-family zoning would be eligible for a Protected Use ADU. He believes it would be.

→Town Planner investigated this and Town Council agrees with Mr. Cruise that a multi-family overlay district over single-family zoning will not negate the right to a Protected Use ADU.

Ms. Christodouloupoulos opined that full build-out with the lower density option is unlikely because it relies on multiple property owners. She said the denser options are more likely to be built out because they are on fewer properties.

→Planning Board is considering likelihood of build-out for each approach.

Planning Board Meeting 4/14/25 (from approved minutes; summary response in red)

Tony Mariano of the Board of Health elucidated the requirements and approvals for alternative septic systems under Title 5, emphasizing that while the Board approves certain alternative systems, it remains vigilant about monitoring and potential maintenance challenges associated with these systems. Patrick Collins of the Board of Health added that their experience with such systems reveals that while alternative systems can function well, they demand significant upkeep and could incur substantial operational costs, which could deter some property owners.

Mr. Collins discussed the Board of Health's limited capacity to regulate private well usage explicitly and predict impacts on neighboring properties, pointing out the variability in subsurface conditions that characterizes Carlisle. This variability complicates efforts to standardize regulations that might anticipate or mitigate impacts on local wells and water availability.

→ Town staff, the Board of Health, and Planning Board will continue to work on answering questions regarding water and wastewater systems – design, siting, costs, feasibility, etc. – for each approach. In addition, the Planning Board may use consultant funds – if approved by Town Meeting – to hire a septic design subject matter expert.

Amelia Fournier asked if there is a way to talk about possibly using some of this money to push the boundaries against the State. For example, speaking with a consultant who would advise us on wiggle room with compliance to the law, or to push back on some of the pieces of the law that aren't conducive to Carlisle. Chair Smith replied that Ms. Mercier attends office hours with state compliance to ask questions. Ms. Mercier said she is usually one of the only people on these calls and asks detailed questions. Mr. Herschelman asked Amelia if she was referring to hiring a land use lawyer. He said there may be other options they can come up with for compliance that the Board had not thought of yet. Chair Smith mentioned that our Town Counsel works for us. Ms. Grady asked if she wanted someone who knew the loopholes of the law and how to exploit them. Mr. Herschelman opined it is not exploiting loopholes, but rather a better understanding of how to align what is best for Carlisle with the State's goals as well. Ms. Fournier then suggested that Carlisle's current town Counsel is not the best match and there are other options out there.

Justin Harrison commented that the Town of Dover has hired an MBTA compliance Consultant to assist with this process. Ms. Mercier said she will look into what Dover has done so far. She also asked the Board if they wanted to add language about obtaining an MBTA Compliance Consultant, to which they replied, yes.

→Town Planner investigated this. The Town of Dover is using Horsley Witten Group as their 'compliance consultant', funded through the MassHousing Partnership (MHP). The Town of Carlisle has received \$40,000 of funding from MHP for technical assistance with compliance from Bohler Engineering.

Lee Means of 94 East Meadow Lane asked if this passes, is there a process to write into the proposal to disclose what you decided what to spend the money on. Ms. Grady responded that all meetings are open to the public. Mr. Herschelman suggested adding language, saying the approval for the final use of the funding would be published on an agenda to be discussed and debated, and then voted on by the Planning Board.

→Planning Board added language to the 1-page document about the funding request to state that selection of a consultant will be done in an open public meeting.

DRAFT