

Senior Planner Lara Kritzer was appointed to serve on the Battle Road Scenic Byway Working Group, comprised of representatives from Arlington, Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord, the National Park Service, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. Much of the recent discussion has centered on several potential “loops” and extensions to the existing Byway route, with routes in Concord recommended to extend the Byway from its current end point at the Buttrick Mansion to the Barrett Farm and to consider two potential loops in Concord - the first would lead visitors along Virginia Rd. to sites such as the Thoreau Birth House and Hanger 24, and a second would begin in Lincoln and run past Walden Pond into Concord Center. Public hearings on the Byway were held in December to introduce the project and obtain more information from Concord residents.

Senior Planner Julie Vaughan attended the monthly Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Regional Pedestrian Transportation Plan meetings to provide input into the draft Plan. Goals include improving the quality of the pedestrian environment, implementing “complete streets” where possible, providing equitable means for all forms of alternative transportation, promoting walking and establishing a system to handle community-wide inventories and tracking. High priority will be given to areas with existing transit, schools, and commercial and civic centers.

As part of a Bicycle Parking Program, MAPC promoted installation of bike racks in its member communities, agreeing to reimburse MAPC communities for the purchase of the bike racks provided they were located on publically controlled land and met specific design criteria; Concord was allotted \$4,500 toward this effort. An application was approved in September and the installation of 23 bike racks was completed by November in order to receive the funds. Senior Planner Julie Vaughan inventoried existing bike racks in Town, created a data layer in GIS and obtained GPS positions for and photographs of the bike racks throughout Town.

PLANNING BOARD

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The Planning Board’s authority is contained in MGL CH. 41 “Improved Methods of Municipal Planning” and MGL CH. 40A “The Zoning Act.” Additional responsibilities are found in the Town Bylaws and the Town Charter.

The Board held twenty-three public meetings and five public hearings. The hearings were for the following: zoning amendments to be considered by Annual Town Meeting; a nine-lot Definitive Subdivision of land located at 110 Commerford Rd., 41X, 51X, 58X, 61X, and 53A Annursnac Hill Rd.; a Special Permit Application for a Common Driveway to serve two lots at 140 & 14B Commerford Rd.; and two West Concord Interim Planning Overlay District Special Permit applications, one for 1135 Main St. (the former Dee bus site) and one for 1200 Main St.

Residential development

Ten “Approval Not Required” plans were submitted to the Board. Five of these plans approved changes of lot lines that did not create additional building lots. The remaining five plans created 10 additional building lots.

The Planning Board disapproved a 9-lot Definitive Subdivision for 110 Commerford Rd. That decision was appealed by the applicant, Concord Wold, LLC to Land Court. The Board disapproved a Preliminary Subdivision plan filed by the same applicant for a 15-lot subdivision on land off 110 Commerford Rd.

Two affirmative recommendations were made to the Zoning Board of Appeals for Planned Residential Developments. One was on an application for an 11-unit Planned Residential Development at 201 Independence Rd., using land associated with an adjacent parcel at 525 Lexington Rd. and incorporating portions of Gowings Swamp. The other affirmative recommendation was on an application by the Concord Housing Development Corporation for an 8-unit 100% affordable Planned Residential Development at 1245 Elm St.

A Planned Residential Development at 506 Old Bedford Rd. is still under review by the Planning Board for a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals. An application for a 13-unit Planned Residential Development, Concord River Walk, at 1631 and 1641 Main St. is under review by the Planning Board for a recommendation to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

There were three affirmative recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals for special permits to allow work within the Flood Plain Conservancy Districts, at 106 Elm St., 35 River St., and 37 Harrington Ave.

The Board made a recommendation to the Building Commissioner, regarding a Grandfathered Lot Review for Parcel 2000-15-1 on Commerford Rd. that the lot may be subject to MGL. CH. 40A, Section 6 because the parcel appeared not to have been held in common ownership with an abutting property at the time of the adverse zoning change.

Comprehensive permits

A 22-unit Comprehensive Permit (Chapter 40B) project, filed in 2007, for 506 Old Bedford Rd. has not yet been reviewed by the Planning Board for a recommendation to the Board of Appeals because the Applicant is currently proceeding with a Planned Residential Development application as an alternative design for the property.

Commercial, institutional and other development

Twenty-one site plan reviews were filed with the Board. Eighteen plans received affirmative recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Three plans received affirmative recommendations to the Building Commissioner: Nashoba Brooks School at 200 Strawberry Hill Rd., the Thoreau Farm and Birth House at 341 Virginia Rd., and Chang An's Restaurant at 10 Concord Crossing.

Wireless Communication Facility applications

Five of the aforementioned site plans submitted were for Wireless Communication Facilities. All five applications received affirmative recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The locations for these were: 40Y (a/k/a 400) Annurnsnac Hill Rd., 509 Bedford St., 133 Old Road to Nine Acre Corner (ORNAC), and 200 Baker Ave.

Zoning amendments and Town Meeting actions

The Planning Board sponsored six articles, five of which passed. These were to: delete Zoning Bylaw Section 7.1 Nonconforming Uses and replace it with a new Section 7.1, Nonconforming Uses and Structures; adopt a new temporary zoning district and add a new Section 7.9 West Concord Interim Planning Overlay District (WC-IPOD) to the Zoning Bylaw; amend Zoning Bylaw Section 7.7 and add a new subsection 11.8 Site Plan Review to Section 11. Administration and Enforcement; amend Zoning Bylaw Section 8 Residential Compound to allow land or conservation restrictions to be held by a land trust in addition to the Town and to add the words "Planning Board"; and to delete subsections 7.3.2, 7.3.3, 7.3.4, and 7.3.5 from Section 7.3 Wetlands Conservancy District and add a new subsection 7.3.2 to the Zoning Bylaw.

No motion was made on an article proposed to delete existing Zoning Bylaw Section 10, Planned Residential Development, and replace it with a new Section 10, Flexible Development, an alternative pattern of residential development to the PRD.

Other Actions

Work sessions were held at several of the Board's meetings in anticipation of submitting zoning bylaw amendment warrant articles for the 2010 Annual Town Meeting.

Members of the Planning Board served on the following regional committees: MAGIC (Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination); HATS (Hanscom Area TownS); DRI (Development of Regional Impact). Board members also participate on Town Committees such as the West Concord Task Force and the Community Preservation Committee.