



CONCORD SQUARE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT, INC.



Final Report

St. James the Great Alternative Land Use Study

Prepared for the Wellesley Planning Board
May 27, 2010



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Concord Square Planning & Development has completed three site plans for potential reuse of the property currently occupied by the St. James the Great Church on Route 9 in Wellesley, near the Natick town line. The three site plans reflect land uses that were chosen largely based on the input of the public forum held on February 11, 2010. Each takes into consideration the best use of the site for the given land use, given the site constraints and the various zoning regulations that are likely to be applied to redevelopment of the site. In two cases, existing zoning districts are utilized, and in the third a new district is recommended. This memo describes the site conditions, each of the three site plans, what needs to be done to allow implementation of each plan, and a brief discussion of financial considerations for each plan.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Wellesley has been following the situation at the St. James the Great Church for the past several years as the parishioners appealed the Archdiocese of Boston's decision to close the church. Without disrespect, and with the participation of several members of the parish, the Planning Board embarked on an effort to work with the community to determine what land uses would make the most sense for the site in the event the church closure was upheld through all the appeals processes. It should be noted that at the end of this project, on May 13, 2010, it was reported that the Vatican had upheld the decision for the closure.

Wellesley's planning efforts have recognized some of the opportunities and challenges of this site, most notably regarding appropriate land use opportunities and challenges of traffic conditions on Route 9 in this area. The following sections include excerpts from current plans and, in italics, what effect the plan had on Concord Square's work (if any).

From the Wellesley Comprehensive Plan Update (Goody Clancy, 2006):

- ◆ There is an opportunity in this area for economic development which incorporates housing opportunities with business growth. A key recommendation of the plan is to "Encourage the creation of townhouses, condos, and multi-family housing types in commercial areas in order to create a mixed-use, mixed-income environment for residents who will support local businesses." *Concord Square reviewed the sketch concept plan for the St. James site which was presented in the Comprehensive Plan, and determined based on our site analysis that it was unrealistic for the site. Instead, discussions took place regarding mixed use development at the meetings with the Planning Board and at the public forum. The final outcome of the study process did not include a mixed use scenario.*
- ◆ Land use recommendation: "Create an overlay district with design standards for multi-family, non-residential, and mixed uses from Natick Line to Russell Road." This would encourage improved site design and function as properties are redeveloped. *While the results of the study did not include a mixed use concept, Concord Square is recommending for the residential concept a new overlay zoning district for this and other sites where redevelopment with moderate to high density residential would make sense.*
- ◆ Improve traffic safety and correct high hazard locations. *Concord Square recognizes that any redevelopment of this site will require approval of the MassDOT Highway Division.*
- ◆ There is a desire for the restoration and preservation of natural areas, water resources, biodiversity, and wildlife habitats. *Concord Square strongly recommends the steep slope and undisturbed wetland buffer remain intact in any redevelopment concept, as well as restoration of the natural conditions of the floodplain to the extent possible.*
- ◆ Another key recommendation is to continue to restore and manage ponds to avoid eutrophication,

including Morses Pond. *Concord Square recommends that any redevelopment of this site should incorporate as many low impact design techniques designed to treat stormwater runoff as possible, especially if the site is developed for uses with a high percentage of impervious surfaces.*

- ◆ There is a desire to enhance community understanding of the value of cultural resources, and a desire to promote preservation of historic buildings, sites, and landscapes. *Concord Square believes that if the site is to be redeveloped with residential use, that the existing church and rectory buildings could be renovated into unique housing units which would add to the quality of the overall development.*
- ◆ Finally, another key recommendation of the plan is to continue to improve the trails system by looking at ways to connect major open spaces and provide linkages to regional trails and open spaces. *Concord Square has included a potential connection to the Crosstown Trail in each of the concepts presented in this report. Should the Town opt to move forward for redevelopment of the site into a recreational complex, the site should be promoted as an access point to this important recreational resource.*

From the West Gateway Plan (MetroWest Growth Management Committee, 2008):

- ◆ When the church property is redeveloped a pedestrian crossing of Route 9 should be part of any design. *Concord Square recognizes this point but given the conceptual nature of the project, did not suggest any specific design or location for an improved pedestrian crossing.*
- ◆ Any large new development along Route 9 should be designed with room for a bus pullover and a shelter. *Given the 30 foot buffer (see discussion further on in report) Concord Square has provided in each of the three concepts, it was felt the details of design of a bus pull-off were premature.*
- ◆ There were 31 crashes in the area around Lexington Rd. and across at St. James Church. Almost all of these (24 of 31) were rear-end collisions involving 2 or more vehicles traveling westbound. Given the conditions during these accidents, it is believed these were congestion-related accidents. *Concord Square acknowledges the need for MassDOT Highway Division approval of any redevelopment at this site.*
- ◆ Any development must be revenue positive. *While two of the concepts prepared for this study would be revenue positive, the third—a recreational complex—would likely not be. However, it is believed that the intrinsic value of such a facility to the townspeople could outweigh the lack of revenues.*
- ◆ A principal goal guiding the redevelopment of the study area should be to sustain and encourage a vital business center that provides needed goods, services, jobs and increased tax revenues in a manner that is compatible with Wellesley's historic development pattern, and establishes pedestrian accessibility and circulation throughout the study area.

From the Affordable Housing Market Study for Wellesley and Surrounding Communities (LDS Consulting Group, LLC, 2009):

- ◆ There is a need for smaller homes in Wellesley that could benefit both new homeowners and older households earning 80% -120% of area median income annually.
- ◆ Approximately 34% of Wellesley households ages 65-74 and 46% of households age 75 and older are rent burdened, paying at least 30% of their income toward rent, according to the 2000 Census. A smaller proportion of the town's younger households that are renters, 24% of those age 25-34 and 25% of those ages 35-44, are rent burdened.
- ◆ The total population of Wellesley is projected to grow by 1,480 people to 28,238, an increase of 6%, from 2000 to 2030. The 55-84 year old population is projected to increase the most, 76%, growing by 4,358 people to 10,074. The 85+ population is expected to increase by 180 people to 716, which is a 34% increase. In contrast, the 0-19 and 35-54 year old populations are expected to decline by 22% and 28% respectively.
- ◆ There is unmet demand for 770 units of multi-family affordable rental housing in Wellesley today and 726 units in 2013.
- ◆ There is unmet demand for 676 units of elderly affordable rental housing in Wellesley today and 2,554 units in 2013.

- ◆ The greatest demand is for affordable rental housing for families and seniors in Wellesley and surrounding communities.
- ◆ *All of these points led Concord Square to believe that a moderate density residential development would provide housing that would fill a need in Wellesley.*

From Wellesley Walks—A Comprehensive Pedestrian Program (Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, 2009):

- ◆ Improve streetscapes
- ◆ Increase landscaping along sidewalks
- ◆ Install better pedestrian scale lighting
- ◆ Improve the pedestrian crossing on Route 9
- ◆ Design the pedestrian entrances to the site to encourage pedestrian use
- ◆ Provide bicycle facilities—clearly delineated bikeways, bike parking facilities, etc.
- ◆ Provide a connection to public trails—in this case the Crosstown Trail
- ◆ Mix land uses to encourage increased pedestrian activity
- ◆ *Concord Square has included a connection to the Crosstown Trail in all concepts, and encourages appropriate landscaping and/or buffering on Route 9 to create a well landscaped and pleasant environment along Route 9 by the site.*

From the Comprehensive Plan for the Management of Morses Pond:

- ◆ In order to reduce non-point source pollutants from entering Morses Pond, encourage the use of low impact development techniques in the stormwater management system in the redevelopment of properties in the watershed.
- ◆ Conduct demonstration projects of low impact development stormwater management techniques as part of an educational program to inform residents of the benefits of such techniques to the water quality of the pond.
- ◆ Support private low impact development projects with technical advice, design support, and monitoring support.
- ◆ *Concord Square has provided for the use of low impact development techniques in all concept plans, with the understanding that the actual choices, design of, and location of such facilities will not be determined until the site is under design for a specific use for redevelopment. Concord Square recommends that as much of the stormwater management system as possible should be designed with low impact development techniques.*

At the outset of this project, Town officials organized and conducted a walking tour of the property (held on December 14, 2009). The tour was attended by Angus Jennings AICP and Caroline Havey LEED AP from Concord Square; Planning Director Meghan Jop, AICP; Assistant Planning Director Michael Zehner, LEED Green Associate; and Planner Ethan Parsons. From this site visit, Concord Square gained a sense of the site conditions and their relationship to the surrounding area, both from a transportation and landscape perspective. Issues noted included:

- ◆ Proximity of the site to the Crosstown Trail, desirability of connection to the trail.
- ◆ There is good forested screening between the developable area of the site and the homes to the west and south; that vegetation should remain.
- ◆ The existing trees along Route 9 should be preserved, although there is also a need for an earthen berm to mitigate the noise on the state highway.
- ◆ There was a significant amount of water puddling in the parking lot; stormwater drainage is by sheet flow and it is obviously inadequate.
- ◆ The pedestrian crossing is inadequate due to the inoperable signal activation button.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The site is 7.85 acres and lies between Morses Pond and Route 9, bordered to the west by Dale Street and to the east by the Wayne Office Park. The site is currently occupied by a 17,622 square foot church (2 levels), a 4,231 square foot rectory (2.5 stories), and a 2.51 acre parking lot. See Figures 1 and 2. There are three access points to Route 9: one at the eastern boundary, one in the center of the site, and one to Dale Street at the western boundary. Route 9 in this area is a four lane divided road, and currently provides access from the westbound lanes at the center access point only; the other two entrances are only accessible from the eastbound lane (see Figure 3). There is no traffic signal at the central access point, and anecdotal indication is that it can be very difficult to cross the two lanes of eastbound traffic to enter the site. Redevelopment of this site will require approval from the MassDOT Highway Division, and there is substantial potential for improvements to be required to be made to Route 9 to facilitate safe ingress and egress.



Figure 1: Aerial view of the site, 2008 (Source: MassGIS)

Figure 2: Photos of the exterior and interior of the church building, 2009 (Sources: CSP&D and Town staff).

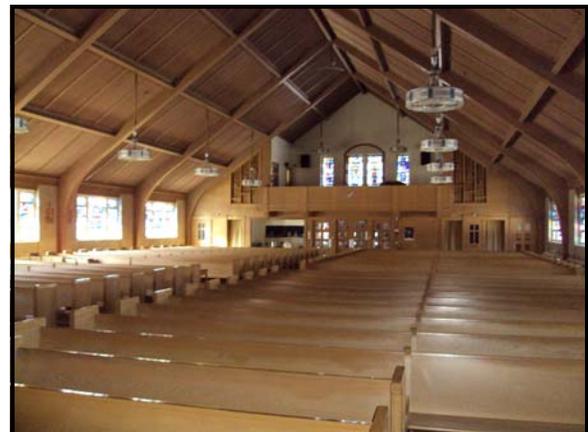
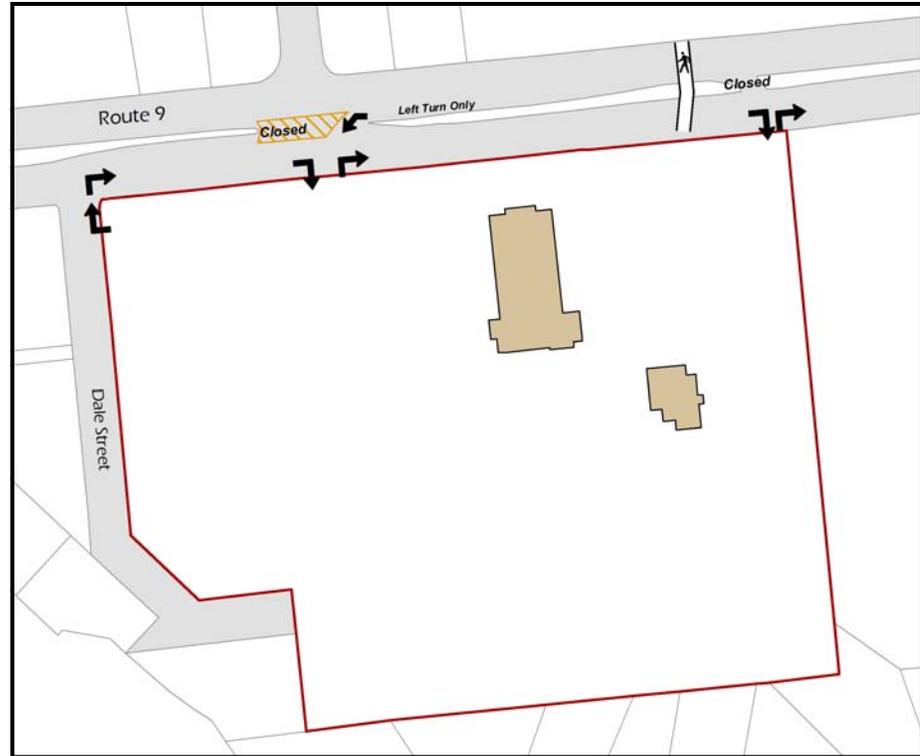


Figure 3: Access points from the existing roadway system.



Given the traffic conditions on Route 9, Concord Square set aside a 30 foot buffer area along the Route 9 frontage for substantial landscaping and potentially a berm. To the west and south of the site lie single family residential neighborhoods; the one to the south is at the top of a 30 foot hill. The site has a number of development constraints, as illustrated in Figure 4 and summarized in Table 1.

Constraint	Acres
Steep Slopes (up to 70%)	.28
Wetland	.29
Wetland Buffer	1.24
Route 9 Buffer	.46
Subtotal	2.27
Floodplain	1.87
Overlap Area	- .17
Total	3.97
Site	7.85
Percent of Site	50.6%

Table 1: Development Constraints

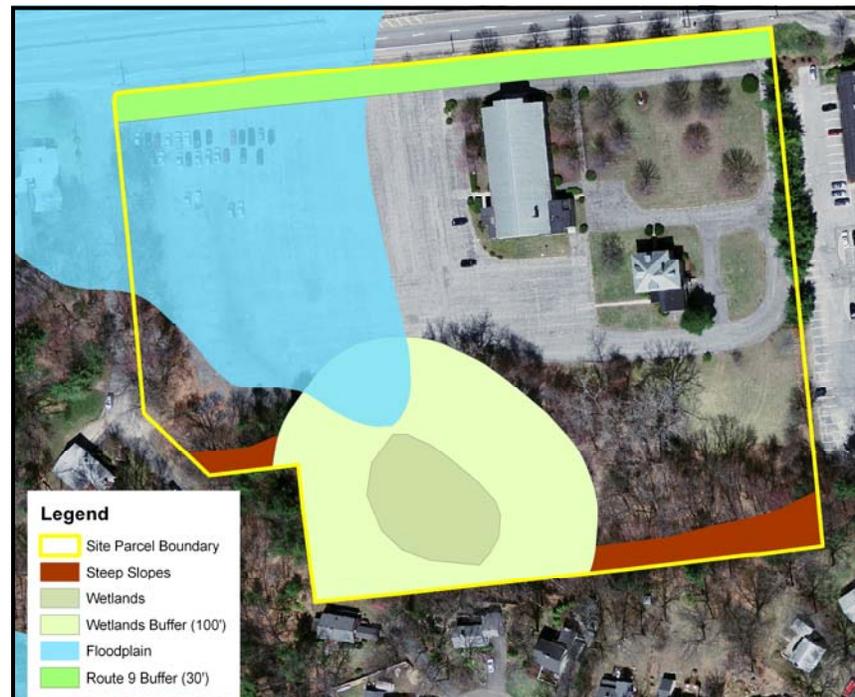


Figure 4: Development constraints (Sources: MassGIS, Wellesley, CSP&D).



Figure 5: Area of existing wetland buffer encroachment
 (Sources: MassGIS, Wellesley).

The wetland lies at the foot of the hill and a portion of the wetland buffer is encroached by the existing paved parking lot. The western portion of the site is within the 1% Annual Chance flood zone (a.k.a. 100 year flood zone), and is almost entirely covered with the existing parking lot. The steep slopes, wetlands, wetland buffer, and Route 9 buffer, all of which are considered undevelopable, total 2.27 acres. The floodplain has significant restrictions but is not as restricted as these other areas. There is a .17 acre area where the wetland buffer and floodplain overlap. With a total of 3.97 acres undevelopable or significantly constrained, a total of 50.6% of the site has development constraints.

While the wetland buffer is considered to be undevelopable, there is potential for approval by the Wetlands Protection Committee to encroach on this buffer, particularly in the area where the existing pavement already encroaches (see Figure 5). As mentioned above, the floodplain area has limited development potential - structures are prohibited but existing parking can be retained and open recreational fields can be located within the floodplain, as long as their construction does not alter the flow of flood waters or the storage capacity of the site for flood water. Concord Square’s three conceptual site plans maintain the “no development” principle for all structures within the entire 3.97 acre restricted area, and limit any encroachment with parking lots (into the flood zone) or fields (into the flood zone and wetland buffer) to the greatest extent possible with the goal of creating sensible developments that maximize the potential of the site while minimizing impacts to these environmentally sensitive areas.

The land value of this site as currently zoned has been estimated at 3.5 million dollars. This is based on a 12 lot subdivision with 9 market rate lots at \$450,000 each plus 3 affordable lots with a value of zero (in compliance with the Town’s Inclusionary Zoning provision). Site work and utility construction costs are estimated at \$45,000 per house, or \$540,000 for the subdivision. As designed by Concord Square and shown in the sketch plan prepared for this project (Figure 6), the subdivision retains the existing curb cuts to Route 9, but would require a waiver from



Figure 6: Sketch of potential subdivision, maximizing the site in compliance with current zoning regulations. Yellow areas are the building envelopes.

the Planning Board for width of right-of-way (from 54 to 40 feet). Concord Square believes this is achievable given the modest size of the development. This sketch plan does not include a potential lot with frontage on Dale Street, given the requirement for upgrading the private road to subdivision standards in order to create that lot.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Concord Square was tasked with preparing three conceptual land use plans for redevelopment of this site. To accomplish this goal, we first reviewed the various plans summarized in the background section of this report. With that knowledge in hand, several sketch plans were prepared illustrating various land uses, and a meeting was held with the Planning Board to discuss those ideas. Following that meeting a public forum was held to gather input from the public (described below). Armed with that input, Concord Square developed drafts of the conceptual plans presented in this report. A second public forum was held to receive comments on those drafts, and then the final concept plans were prepared.

Concord Square's preparation of conceptual land use concepts took into account, generally, factors such as:

- ◆ This site is a key “gateway” location, and as such a visual signal that passersby are entering Wellesley to distinguish this site from western portions of Route 9 was desired.
- ◆ The uses and design should be consistent with Town planning objectives such as those outlined in the background section of this report.
- ◆ The site design should provide for connections to and enhancement of the pedestrian networks and public open spaces.
- ◆ Redevelopment of the site should incorporate stormwater best management practices and low impact development principles.
- ◆ The site design should ensure protection of sensitive natural resources—the wetland and steep slope areas on-site as well as Morses Pond and the well fields fed by the pond.

Public Forum

Concord Square held the first public forum on February 11, 2010 at the Town Hall; approximately two dozen people were in attendance. A slide presentation was given to provide the background on the study and to discuss the site conditions, as a foundation for the exercises planned for the evening. The first exercise was a “red dot” preference survey, where each attendee was given three red dot stickers and then instructed to place the red dots on any one, two, or three posters depicting ten different land uses which could be developed on this site. The ten poster choices were:

- ◆ Reuse of existing buildings
- ◆ Single family residential
- ◆ Moderate density, townhouse residential
- ◆ High density multi-family residential
- ◆ Mixed residential (variety of the above types)
- ◆ Senior housing
- ◆ Retail/Office mix
- ◆ Retail/Residential mix
- ◆ Recreational fields
- ◆ Indoor recreational facilities



The results of this preference survey were overwhelmingly in favor of recreational uses, to such an extent that few votes were made for the remaining eight land uses (two each for reuse of existing buildings, single family residential, senior housing, and retail/residential mix).

The second exercise involved the participants using base maps and cut-outs of various land use elements (buildings for different uses, recreational fields, and parking lots sized to accommodate the specific uses) to create their own development design. Each table had one assignment with certain elements for a particular land use or mix: retail/office, recreation, recreation/residential, low density residential, and high density residential. The groups had the choice to either reuse the existing buildings, which were shown on the base maps, or to demolish them. The groups also had the choice to retain some or all of the existing parking lot or to eliminate it. Instructions were given to keep all development out of the wetland, the wetland buffer, the steep slope area, and the Route 9 buffer. Participants were also instructed to keep all buildings out of the floodplain area, and to minimize pavement or other impervious surfaces within the floodplain area. The results are shown below in Figure 7.

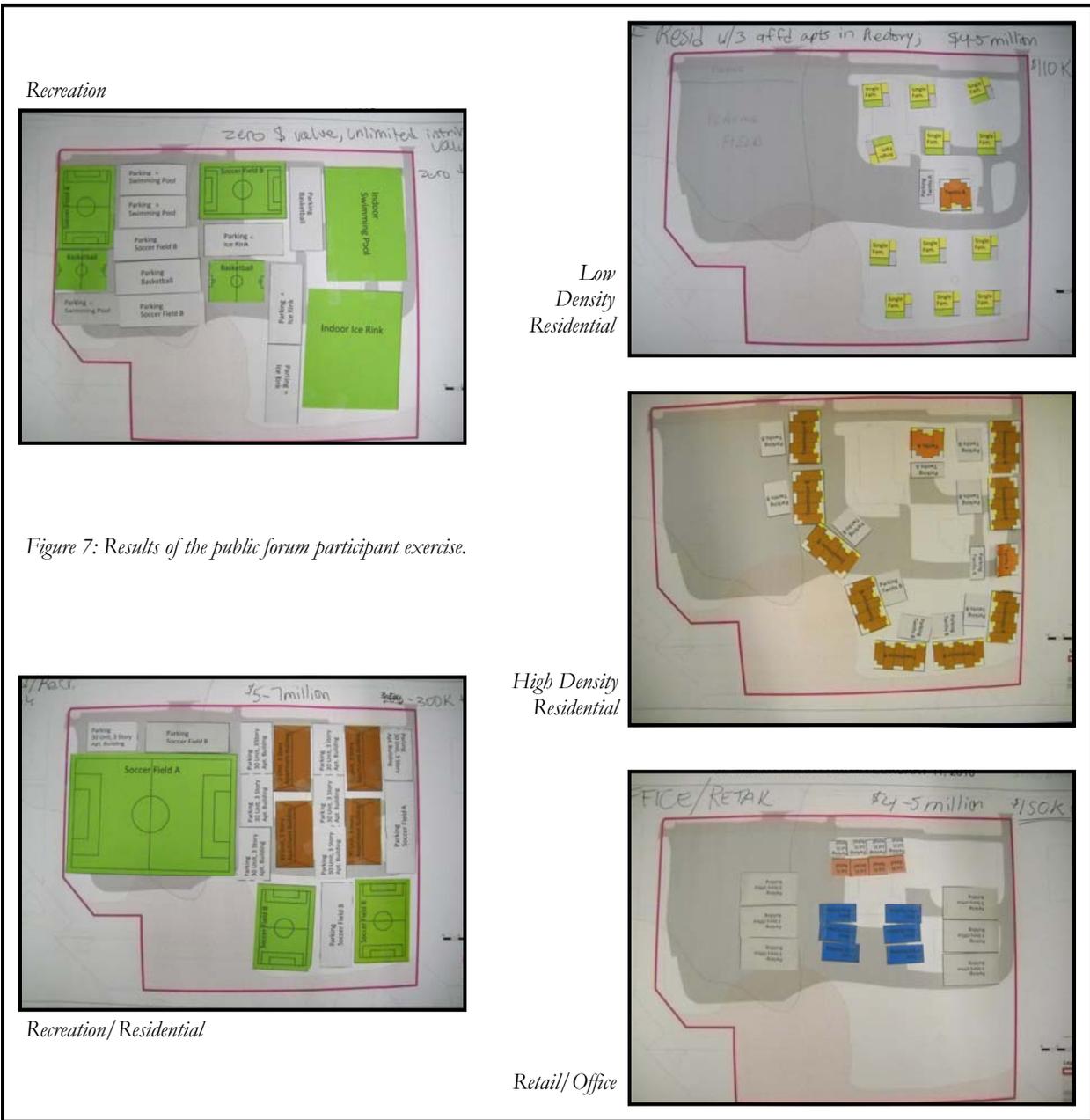
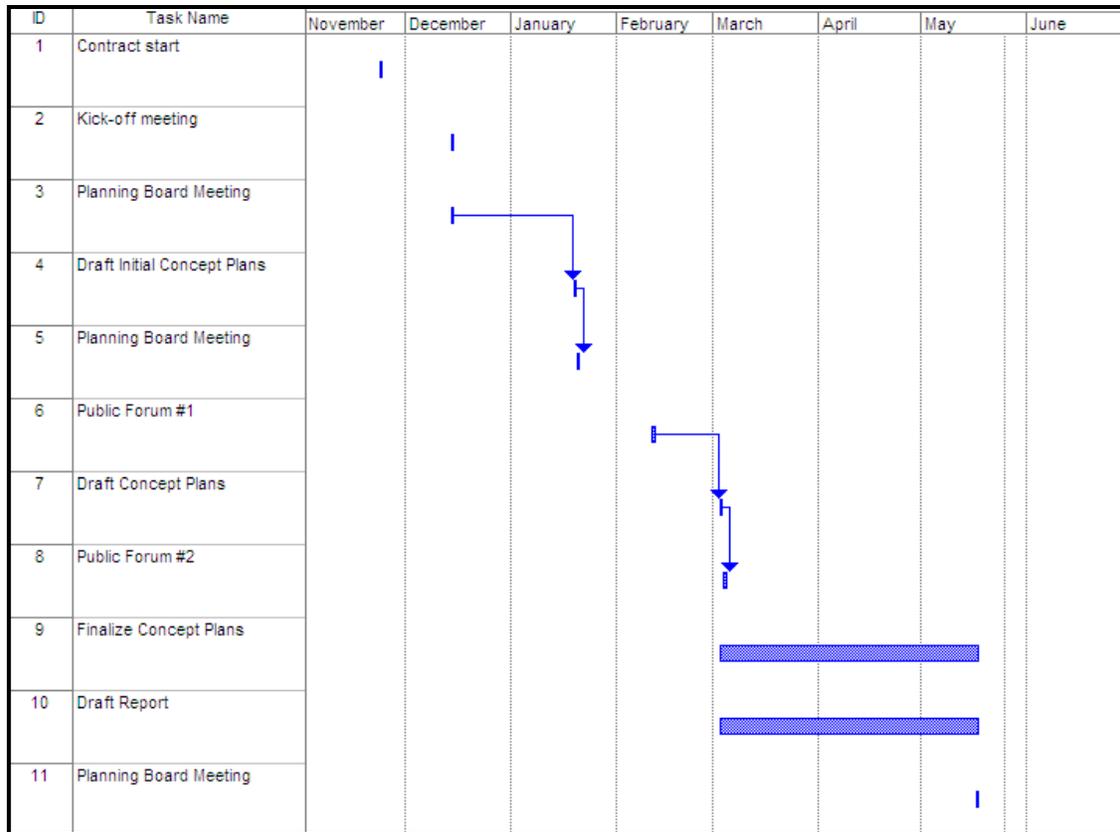


Figure 7: Results of the public forum participant exercise.

With regard to finding a buyer for the property, the Archdiocese has an option to market the St. James property for development using the provisions of Chapter 40B. Under Chapter 40B, and pursuant to extensive 40B Guidelines, the developer can propose a housing development with significantly higher density than has been assumed in the concepts developed in this report, and the local zoning controls would be largely overridden.

Given the extensive open space that would be available on the site because of the flood plain, it is conceivable that such a proposal might be for 25 to 30 units per acre, or 93 to 110 housing units (based on 3.7 developable acres). The 40B regulations stipulate that the development can pay a price for the land that is no higher than the market value of the land under the current zoning, or, based on the calculations elsewhere in this report, \$3.5m to \$4.0m. Thus the land cost for the development would be on the order of \$30,000 to \$38,000 per unit. For a well-located site in Wellesley these would be considered reasonable figures from the developer’s point of view, thus making a 40B development potentially attractive. Although Chapter 40B has a profit limitation, thus preventing windfall profits, relatively low land costs make it easier for a developer to have a pro-forma showing overall economic feasibility, thereby reducing risk and making financing more readily available.

On March 4, 2010, Concord Square held a second public forum to present the draft concept plans and to gather public input, especially regarding design issues. Ideas regarding implementation of these concepts were also presented. The draft concepts were well received and few suggestions were made regarding the designs. After this meeting, the report was drafted and distributed to the Planning Board for comments. On May 17, 2010, Concord Square attended a Planning Board meeting and gave a final presentation on the study and report, and received comments from the Board as well as the public. A timeline for this project is shown below.



CONCEPTS

This section presents the three land use concepts developed for the St. James site. These three uses were chosen by Concord Square as:

- ◆ The most representative of the opinions expressed at the public meetings;
- ◆ The most realistic given the environmental constraints of the site, the surrounding land uses, the goals of the various planning initiatives of the Town, and the realities of market conditions and financing; and
- ◆ The best balance to provide a reasonable variety of uses for future use of the site.

Conceptual Land Use Plan 1: Recreation

The land use that received the overwhelming majority of support from the participants at the February 11th public forum was recreation. Both the outdoor (playing fields) and indoor (ice rink, pool, basketball) uses were highly desired. Thus, Concord Square has prepared a site plan showing maximum use of the property for recreational uses (Figure 10, pull out on next page). While the assumption is being made that this complex would be publicly owned and operated, it could also be a private endeavor, or a public-private partnership. The site plan itself is disconnected from this issue.

Based on input received at the public forum, Concord Square chose to include a full size soccer field, an ice rink, and a swimming pool. A small playground area is also included, geared toward the younger children of families with participants in the soccer, ice skating, and swimming activities. A trail connection to the Crosstown Trail is also included. The layout Concord Square has designed preserves the undevelopable areas with the exception of a slight encroachment into the wetland buffer along the southern side of the soccer field, in the area where the existing parking lot encroaches this buffer. All existing parking and buildings would be removed for this scenario, and the existing access points to Route 9 would be closed and a new one opened. A driveway access to the adjacent parking lot at the Wayne Office Park was included, in the event that parking lot can be utilized for parking either on a daily or special event (i.e. competitions) basis. It should not be assumed that such access would be constructed, nor the parking lot used, without a formal written agreement between the owners of the two properties for shared access and parking rights. The parking lot was purposely located in the center of the site, to encourage all users of all facilities to use the parking lot and not Dale Street or the adjacent office park.

The soccer field is a full size field measuring 70 yards wide (210 feet) by 100 yards long (300 feet). There is approximately 20 feet around the perimeter of the field for “off field game activities” such as linesman, coaching, and team benches. Concord Square recognizes that this space is tight, but this was the maximum attainable given the other requirements for the site (buildings and parking). On the Route 9 side of the field, there is a six foot high retaining wall and berm, which will provide buffering from the roadway as well as a sloped area for spectator seating (no bleachers or other formal seating arrangements are anticipated for this field). The retaining wall is terraced on the Route 9 side and would be landscaped to not only increase the buffering capacity of the berm, but also to create a pleasant streetscape. The top of the berm/retaining wall would also be landscaped with small trees and shrubs, preferably of species that will grow to a height of at least 15 feet and including a mixture of evergreens (for buffering) and deciduous trees (for texture and interest). The side facing the field would be open lawn to serve as the spectator seating area. Figure 11 shows a cross section of this berm and retaining wall.

The building housing the ice rink is 130 feet by 215 feet, sits 10 feet from the property line abutting the Wayne Office Park, and is set back 32 feet from Route 9 (edge of the right-of-way). The main entrance to the building is located on the west side of the building, facing the parking lot. A garage entrance for

Wellsley Recreation Plan



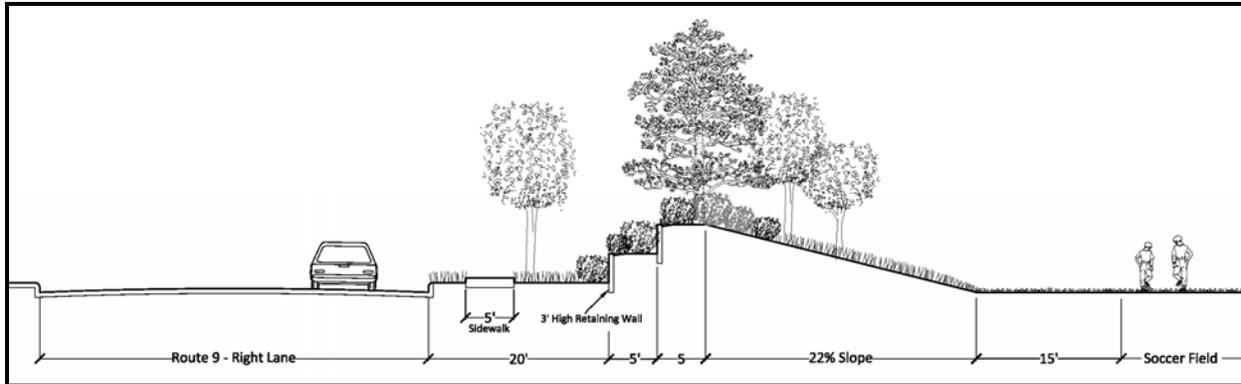


Figure 11: Cross section showing landscaped retaining wall and berm at soccer field.

the ice resurfacing machinery is located on the south side of the building, and an area designated for storage of the ice scrapings is provided off the parking lot. The ice rink itself is 85 by 200 feet, which is a full size hockey rink size. There is a walkway along the outside of the entire rink, and 40 feet along the one side of the rink for upper level spectator seating and ground level facilities such as locker rooms, concession stands, and restrooms. Again, given the goal of maximizing the number of facilities on this site, the dimensions of the building are smaller than ideal for a facility devoted solely to ice rink sports. The third facility shown on this plan is an indoor swimming pool. This building is 110 feet by 205 feet, and is 10 feet from the side lot line at the base of the hill. The pool itself is a standard “long course” of 50 meters (164 feet) long, and has six lanes that are about eight feet wide, for a total pool width of about 50 feet. Additional space is provided for locker rooms, rest rooms, and spectator seating. This building would not exceed 25 feet in height, thus would fall below the crest of the adjacent hill.

Concord Square obtained parking ratio information from a variety of sources on the internet, although such information is scarce. The assumption was made that all three of these facilities could be in use at the same time, although not all with tournaments or other competitions at the same time. The Wellesley Zoning Bylaw only requires one space per 1,000 square feet of floor area for space for recreational buildings, which we felt was too low – it resulted in only 51 spaces for the two indoor uses. Based on our research, Concord Square determined that parking needs would be closer to 30 spaces for the soccer field and 80 each for the swimming pool and the skating rink (for figure skating competition; hockey games would be around 40). Without knowing the actual users of the facilities (i.e. what programs) it is impossible to determine the exact number of parking spaces needed for the complex. The site plan shows 190 parking spaces. In addition, if an agreement can be made within the Wayne Office Park for shared parking during non-business hours, any additional parking can be accommodated on that adjacent site. As mentioned previously, an access drive has been included in this plan to allow people to access that site without driving back out onto Route 9.

Traffic impacts for this type of development are difficult to obtain; using “multi-purpose recreational facility” as the most closely matching land use, the average daily trip count would be about 700, with a PM peak count of 45. However, for an ice rink alone, the PM peak is estimated to be 66 trips, so one must use this information with caution. Insufficient research has been done on trip generation of swimming pools to be included in the ITE manual; thus a more accurate traffic impact cannot be obtained for this study. If such a recreational complex is proposed, a traffic impact study should be conducted.

The proposed use of this site as shown in this plan would require rezoning of the parcel to a Business District, where side setbacks are not required. While the use itself would be permitted by special permit under the existing Single Residence district (Section II, paragraph A8 i), and the dimensional require-

ments of paragraph A3 (for educational purposes, which is a bit of a stretch but most closely resembles the type of use) could be adhered to, the site is too small to accommodate all three of the facilities included in this plan and still comply with those setback requirements. Thus, it is recommended that, if all of these facilities are to be located at this site, the property be rezoned to the Business district, where there are no side setbacks. A special permit would be required for development of this site plan from both a use and impervious surface standpoint, given the fact the site is entirely within the Water Supply Protection District (see Section XIVE - D of the Zoning Bylaw).

The other implementation issue for this site plan is the funding of the project, if done either as a public project or in a public-private partnership. A difficult hurdle will be the acquisition of the site, given the assumed value of \$3.5 million. However, as was clearly expressed at the public forum, use of this property for a public recreational complex would have great value in non-monetary terms as compared with the loss of tax revenue or the cost to acquire the land. Should the site be proposed for all private recreational facilities, the intrinsic value to the public could be reduced.

Conceptual Land Use Plan 2: Residential

Given the comments and discussion on various uses at the public forum, residential use of the site was chosen as the second site plan for this study. Concord Square examined a number of alternatives for residential use on this site, ranging from single family detached homes to multi-family buildings. After listening to the comments at the public forum held February 11, we concluded that a moderate number of units in a pleasant and relatively uncrowded setting would provide a housing product more acceptable to the Town and more sought after by potential buyers – and would produce a land value in excess of a single family subdivision which is permitted as-of-right under the current zoning. The site plan prepared for this study is shown in Figure 12 and shows a total of 40 housing units (8 single family and 32 multi-family or townhouse units).

Concord Square recommends reusing the existing buildings on the site; we believe the church building (Figure 13) can be converted into 14 housing units – 6 on the lower floor and 8 on the upper (sanctuary) floor – and the rectory can be converted into two units. The windows on the lower level of the church may need to be enlarged to create good quality living spaces and to comply with the state building code. The sanctuary floor has roughly 35 to 40 feet of height and can easily accommodate 2½ stories with the addition of dormers in the upper two stories, and with the square footage it would be cost effective to create 8 units in this space. The rectory has roughly 3,700 square feet of living space, and could easily be converted into two housing units (Figure 14). There is also an attached two car garage with two rooms in 521 square feet above, which could be incorporated into the living space of one of the units, or used as a home office or studio space separate from the main living area.



Figure 13: Church building.



Figure 14: Rectory building.

Wellesley Residential Plan



All other units on the site would be new construction, and all are townhouse or single family detached units. Concord Square has designed the site with an 18 foot wide loop roadway with a 5 foot sidewalk on one side. While this is an unconventional road layout which clearly does not meet the subdivision standards, it is the best way to maximize development on the site given the desired type of units. Along with the units in the church and rectory, the site plan has a total of 40 housing units. Under Wellesley's inclusionary zoning, 8 of these would be affordable.

In total, there are 8 single family homes on the site; 7 within the main area of development and one fee simple lot on Dale Street. This lot meets the zoning requirements for the current Single Residence 10 district, but would require waivers from the subdivision standards for improvements to Dale Street, which is a private (unaccepted) road. The townhouse buildings consist of 4 duplex buildings (8 units) and two quadplex buildings (8 units) for a total of 16 units. There are a total of 90 parking spaces shown on this site plan:

- 16 spaces in two car garages for the single family homes
- 18 spaces in single car garages for the townhouse units (including converted rectory)
- 31 spaces in parking lots for townhouse resident and guest parking
- 25 spaces in the large parking lot for the units in the converted church building
- Average of 2.3 spaces per unit for the whole development
- 1.8 spaces per unit for the multi-family in the church building
- 2.7 spaces per unit for the townhouse units (including converted rectory).
- The street design is a narrow low impact development type street, and does not accommodate on-street parking.

Traffic impacts from this potential development would be 292 average daily trips, with 28 PM peak hour trips. This is six-tenths of one percent (0.6%) of the Route 9 volume in 2005 (48,900). All exiting trips would be required to travel east on Route 9; persons desiring to go west would need to turn around at Weston Road, involving several turning movements to make the loop around and back onto Route 9 West. It would be in the best interest of the residents for the site to be designed to retain the left turn lane on Route 9 West into the site. It is likely that this would entail some improvements. MassDOT Highway Division approval would be required for development of this concept plan.

This plan does not conform to the current zoning designation of Single Residence 10. Concord Square has reviewed the other existing zoning districts in Wellesley and has found that none are suitable for the site plan created. The Residential Incentive Overlay has some provisions that would work for this site, but other provisions that are not relevant or appropriate. It may be possible to modify the RIO to broaden its applicability and eliminate or clarify some of the problematic language. The alternative would be to create a new overlay zone to allow development of a plan such as shown in Figure 10. The key provisions of this district would be:

- Maximum density of 6 du/a, based on all land area (do not discount the undevelopable portions); this would allow 47 units on this 7.85 acre site;
- Allowed uses would be single family detached, duplex, townhouse, and multi-family housing;
- Minimum parcel (or tract) size would be 2 acres;
- Minimum open space of 30% of total site, 50% of which would be enhanced;
- Minimum building setbacks would be 30' for the front and 20' for the side and rear, unless the abutting district is SR 30 or 40 in which case the side and rear setbacks would be 30';
- Maximum building height would be 3 stories, 36';
- Structures to be redeveloped, if any, would be eligible for waivers to the above provisions, at the discretion of the Planning Board;
- Approval would be by special permit.

Table 2:
 Residential Development Unit
 Prices and Proceeds

Description	Number of Units	Unit Size	Sale Price Per s.f.	Sale Price Per Unit	Total Sale Proceeds
Single Family	2	1,400	\$429	\$600,600	\$1,201,200
Single Family	5	2,508	\$330	\$827,640	\$4,138,200
Single Family - Affordable	1	1,400	\$132	\$184,800	\$184,800
Multi-family (church upper level)	6	2,000	\$330	\$660,000	\$3,960,000
Multi-family (church lower level)	4	1,000	\$396	\$396,000	\$1,584,000
MF - Affordable (church upper level)	2	2,000	\$83	\$165,000	\$330,000
MF - Affordable (church lower level)	2	1,000	\$149	\$148,500	\$297,000
Townhouse - Rectory conversion	2	1,737	\$330	\$573,230	\$1,146,460
Townhouse	13	1,880	\$363	\$682,440	\$8,871,720
Townhouse - Affordable	<u>3</u>	<u>1,880</u>	\$99	\$186,120	<u>\$558,360</u>
	40	556,793			\$22,271,740
				Less Costs of Sale @ 5%	-\$1,113,587
				Total Revenues	\$21,158,153

This development as designed would require a special permit under the Water Supply Protection district (see Section XIVE - D of the Zoning Bylaw), as well as a special permit under the Floodplain Protection District (for construction of the portion of the road which lies in the floodplain, see Section XIVB - E).

A financial analysis of this development shows total potential revenues of \$21 million. The analysis is shown in Table 2. It should be noted that this analysis assumes a variety of unit types and sizes, and sale prices that may prove to be higher or lower than what may actually be possible. In addition, it is quite difficult to obtain financing for the construction of new condominiums in the current housing and financial markets, and therefore there is some doubt about overall financial feasibility. However, with time, this is likely to change as and to the extent that housing and financial markets improve.

Table 3 shows the pro-forma for this hypothetical development. Construction costs (including the costs for site work and utilities) are assumed to be \$165 per square foot. Soft costs (architectural and engineering design services, legal costs, and interest, taxes, insurance, and utilities during construction) are assumed to be 17% of the construction costs. In order to attract equity capital and financing, it is necessary to have a pro-forma margin (overhead, contingency funds, and profit) of approximately 18% of the net revenues. Based on these assumptions, the total cost to develop this hypothetical project would be \$17.8 million. The residual amount, \$3.4 million, is the amount available to pay for the land. This is approximately the same as the estimated land value of the single family subdivision discussed earlier in this report and thus is likely to be in the range of acceptability to the seller of the land.

Net Revenues (from Table 2)	\$21,158,153
Construction Costs @ \$165 per s.f.	\$11,928,530
Soft Costs @ 17%	\$2,027,850
Overhead, contingency, profit @ 18%	\$3,808,467
Total Costs:	\$17,764,847
Residual Land Value:	\$3,393,305
Land Value per Market Rate Unit:	\$106,041

Table 3: Pro-forma for Residential Development

Conceptual Land Use Plan 3: Retail/Office

While this use was not well received at the public forum on February 11th, it was felt by the staff and the Planning Board members in attendance that such a use should be included, partly to provide a balance of uses for the overall study. While there are many ways to design a site with office and retail uses, Concord Square's goal was to maximize development on the site in compliance with the provisions of the Business zoning district, and provide an aesthetically pleasing streetscape along Route 9. Concord Square's design is shown in Figure 15.

Given that the current parking standards are the same for both retail and office uses, Concord Square felt it best to assume flexibility in the ultimate use of the buildings. Our design has one single story building located at the front of the property which would be best suited for retail use, and three buildings with three stories each. The first floor of these buildings could be used for either retail or office and the two upper floors would be for office space. There is a total of 94,021 square feet of building space, which is 8,563 square feet less than the maximum permitted and amounts to a Floor Area Ratio of .28. A total of 300 parking spaces are required for this space, and are provided on this plan.

A portion of the existing parking lot which lies within the flood zone would be removed, including a strip along the edge of Dale Street where additional landscaping would help to buffer the adjacent residential neighborhood. The majority of the existing parking area to be removed (in the northwest corner of the site) could be planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers in a small park-like setting which could serve as an example of "gateway" landscaping. The remaining frontage on Route 9, in front of both the parking lot and the retail building, would be landscaped with trees and shrubs in such a way as to present a pleasing streetscape yet not completely hide the buildings.

Traffic impacts from this development would likely be in the range of 1,000 to 1,700 average trips per day, with PM peak hour trips between 140 and 185, depending on what percentage of the development was built as retail space. Trip counts could be significantly higher if the office space were to be utilized for medical or dental offices, and if some of the retail space were utilized as restaurant. If the entire development were general office uses, the trip count would be around 1,000, which is 2% of the Route 9 traffic volume of 48,900 (2005). The main point here is that traffic impact would be much greater for office/retail development on this site than for residential, as presented in the concept plans developed for this study. Obviously, detailed traffic impact studies would be required at the time of site plan review for any major development of the site.

As was stated earlier, this plan was designed to be in compliance with the existing Business district, requiring a rezoning of the site to the Business district. Concord Square is concerned about the potential for building more parking than is needed; most parking standards call for one space per 400 to 450 square feet GFA for offices, while Wellesley's current standard is one space per 312.5 square feet. As with the previous two site plans, this development would also require a special permit under the Water Supply Protection district (see Section XIVE - D of the Zoning Bylaw) as well as Mass DOT Highway Division approval for the revised curb cuts on Route 9.

Concord Square produced a financial analysis of a hypothetical office development with the square footage of the buildings in the site plan shown in Figure 11. It was believed that the difference between this analysis and a more complex one involving some combination of retail and office would not be significantly different, therefore retail was left out for simplicity's sake. Table 4 on the next page shows the pro-forma for this scenario; the net operating income could be around \$1.5 million. With assumed construction costs at \$110 per square foot, soft costs at 15% of the construction costs, and the devel-

Wellesley Retail/Office Plan



opers overhead and profit at 16%, the total cost of the project would be about \$14 million. Assuming a cap at 9% applied to the net operating income, the total value of the project would be \$17.3 million, leaving a land value of just over \$3 million. This is somewhat less than the value determined for the by-right single family subdivision, but could be in the potential range of acceptability to the seller. However, it should be noted that the assumptions used for this office scenario are potentially less realistic than those used for the residential scenario, and should receive additional scrutiny. In addition, the current market for new office space is weak, given high vacancy in buildings all along Route 128, so the overall development feasibility of this office/retail scenario is likely to be lower than the feasibility of the residential scenario.

Gross Building Space (sq. ft.)	94,021
Leasable Space (85%)	79,918
Annual Lease, per sq. ft.	\$35.00
Annual Revenues	\$2,797,125
Less Vacancy @ 10%	-\$279,712
Annual Collections	\$2,517,412
Operating Costs @ \$12/sq. ft.	-\$959,014
Net Operating Income:	\$1,558,398
Construction @ \$110 per s.f.	\$10,342,310
Soft Costs @ 15%	\$1,551,347
Developer OH & Profit @ 16%	\$2,265,458
	\$14,159,115
Value at Cap Rate of 9%:	\$17,315,534
Residual Land Value:	\$3,156,419

Table 4: Pro-forma for office development

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, three site plans were produced for three very different land use scenarios. The recreational complex scenario may have the highest intrinsic value to the Town, but will have significant public costs as well. Traffic impacts from this development would be significantly higher than for residential development, but would also be significantly lower than that from an office or office/retail development. The residential scenario would have the lowest traffic impact, but would likely result in higher need for public services than the other options studied. The office/retail scenario would produce the greatest traffic impacts but would provide greater economic benefits to the Town than the other options. At the end of the day, the future development of this site will depend on who is interested in purchasing it, for what price, and what sale price the seller will agree to. This report, however, provides the Town as well as other interested parties with some ideas and basic information on potential uses of the site.