

**Wellesley Advisory Committee
Juliani Room, Town Hall
February 24, 2016, 7:00 PM**

Present:

Thomas Frisardi, Chair, Chad Harris, Thomas Fitzgibbons, Mary Crown, Michael Mastrianni, Michael Hluchyj, Scott Tarbox, Mark Kaplan, John Hartnett, Sara Raveret, Alena Poirier, Mason Smith, Kathleen Woodward, Ria Stolle

Tom Frisardi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

7:00 Citizen's Speak

Sam Gaudie spoke about concerns regarding the HHU consolidation proposal. She feels there hasn't been enough representation for those opposed to the plan, and there has not been enough research on the impact of consolidation. She pointed out that research shows that smaller schools are more favorable for students. Approximately 1,500 residents have signed a petition objecting to the proposal.

7:05 Unified Planning Group Presentation of Scope and Process Draft

Michael Zehner, Deb Carpenter, Marjorie Freiman, Ellen Gibbs, and Meghan Jop addressed the Advisory Committee.

There is a need to update the Planning Board's Comprehensive Plan (2007-2017), which guides decisions regarding long-term public and private physical development of the Town, including land use and conservation. It has been decided to combine this with the Board of Selectmen's Town-Wide Strategic Plan, which will set town-wide priorities to guide strategic decision-making and resource allocation. The combined plans will be referred to as the "Unified Plan." A report on the Unified Plan will be presented to Town Meeting each year, and the Unified Plan will be updated at least every five years.

The scope of the Plan will include the Town's financial health, programs and services, facilities, economic development, land use, sustainability and conservation, transportation, housing, recreation, cultural and historic resources, and government functioning.

The document will be an umbrella document; it will align closely with the Five Year Capital Plan, and it will inform budget planning, policy setting, departmental priorities, program delivery, etc. It will also help organize strategic planning by individual boards: boards' individual strategic plans currently don't refer to other strategic plans.

There will be significant overlap in the initial stage of gathering and soliciting input; this is an opportunity to engage as much as possible with other stakeholder groups.

There will be public opportunities for input:

- Broad community and stakeholder input
- Accountability and action steps and deliverables
- The Town Manager/Executive Director will present an annual report at Town Meeting

The working group has been working on the scope since early fall: they have visited with boards and departments to solicit feedback and input, which will be incorporated into the final document.

The Total budget is \$150,000. An appropriation of \$30,000 was requested in the FY16 Capital Budget; the Community Preservation Committee approved \$60,000 for FY17; and the FY17 Capital Budget request is \$60,000. An RFP will be released in July to engage a consultant and appoint a steering committee.

There was a question from Advisory whether an appropriation will be needed next year: the Working Group does not anticipate needing an appropriation next year.

There was a question from Advisory on whether the five year time frame is the appropriate frequency for assessment: the intention is to look at the working document on a yearly basis, within the context of the Five Year Plan.

There was a question on how a consultant would handle different groups' advocacy of issues: the consultant will act as a facilitator to help groups prioritize issues and establish timelines.

A Steering Committee will be formed over the summer and will consist of 35 to 40 people; there will be a public invitation to participate on smaller subcommittees.

Feedback from boards has been positive: boards recognize the need to prioritize capital projects. Data and demographics are integral to the process. This is a rolling five-year plan; the plan will be updated every year. The Executive Director would carry out the plan if the Town doesn't move to a Town Manager form of government.

Advisory questioned why just one consultant is being hired. There will be a singular contract with a consulting group, but multiple consultants will look at specific areas.

7:45 Natural Resources Commission (NRC), Proposed Plastic Bag Bylaw

NRC Director Brandon Schmitt and NRC Board Members Raina McManus and Lise Olney addressed the committee.

The NRC plans to propose a bylaw amendment under Article 33 of the Warrant for the 2016 Annual Town Meeting. The ban will help to address litter on NRC land and in the Town of Wellesley. The NRC plastics subcommittee was formed a year ago to deal with issues of waste management in Wellesley. The Wellesley RDF no longer recycles plastic bags.

The NRC has contacted other towns and reached out to local businesses to discuss this proposal. Eighteen other communities in MA already regulate plastic bags. Most Wellesley businesses didn't think a ban would affect them, or they didn't have an opinion. There is support from the Wellesley community.

The bylaw would ban single-use, plastic checkout bags only. Stores under 3500 sq. ft. will have a year to comply. The ban will be enforced by the Board of Health (BOH); the BOH does not expect to increase staff as a result of this bylaw amendment.

Advisory questioned whether there would be restrictions on paper bags: the focus has been on supermarket plastic checkout bags.

Roche Bros in Wellesley would be the first store in the chain to face a ban. Natick passed a ban in principal, but the final act hasn't been passed. State legislation is proposed but unlikely to pass soon. The more communities that pass a ban, the more likely the state will someday pass a ban, too.

There was a question from Advisory on universal language: that would probably happen with state legislation. Early adopters have had to redefine language.

There was a question on how disputes would be handled: the Director of Public Health would handle disputes. It was also pointed out that the Selectmen are charged with enforcing all bylaws. Fines would most likely go to the general fund.

There was a question on hygiene and sanitation issues associated with reusable bags: there has been misinformation going viral and being used by opposing groups.

8:15 Continued Discussion of FY17 Budget with Permanent Building Committee

Matt King, Director, and Kathy Mullaney, Project Administrator, presented changes to the budget.

- FY17 request to fill Kathy's position
- FY17 request for an assistant position
- Expenses have remained stable

Changes:

- \$13,440 for a proposed overlap of Kathy's retirement and a new assistant.
- \$61,560 for an on-call consultant

The on-call consultant would not be on staff but used on an as-needed basis for specific projects. The unspent funds would go back to the Town. The consultant would eventually be replaced by a full-time position. This allows the PBC to meet immediate perceived needs while planning for long-term needs.

Workload consists of reference reviews and contract reviews; assisting in establishing tangibles, retaining architects, assessing market level rates, determining feasibility, vetting schematic designs, technical expertise in concept drawings, providing guidance for projects that exceed closing dates, etc. There needs to be a resource within the department who can handle the volume of requests.

The committee typically spends 3 ½ hours in meeting time per week; PBC members also go to site meetings, sometimes in Boston. The charter is very broad and the role of the PBC is more of a trustee role; FMD has some overlap, but is in essence a client. FMD's focus is on maintenance.

There was a question from Advisory on a long-term plan rather than adding staff to address immediate needs. There was also a question on why the increase in FMD staff creates additional workload for PBC. The volume of work has increased significantly as projects have become multifaceted. Asks for construction have increased timelines significantly.

There was a question on consultant fees as a project line item and why feasibility studies aren't linked to a specific project. There is a value in having PBC involved in the feasibility role.

There was a question whether the bylaw could be changed to increase the size of the committee. The committee has asked for an associate member. The additional role needs to be an active daytime position

who can meet with developers as needed. Having a consultant will lead to a better understanding of what a full-time role would entail.

Advisory asked whether the PBC feels a need to ramp up staff in order to match the manpower of FMD. The PBC is handling content that it hasn't handled before; much better projects are coming out of the increased FMD work.

There was a question on whether the PBC should be doing less with feasibility and asking FMD to do more. There was also a question on whether adding an associate member will add relief, and would the consolidation or collaboration of departments interfere with their mission. That process will take time: project life spans can be five years. A consultant would meet the immediate need, allow for better definition of the role, and allow for more consistency. It would be part of the process of bringing the departments together and creating a more balanced work process.

Matt pointed out that when Kathy retires, the PBC will lose her project management skills. The new position will not have the same technical skills.

There was a question on clarifying the need for a consultant instead of a full-time employee. The goal is to eventually have the role become a full-time employee. Reestablishing the scope of OPMs is a step toward resolving immediate needs and possibly a step toward hiring a full-time employee. The consultant will also provide assistance with technical issues.

9:34 Discussion and Vote on Recommended Action at Annual Town Meeting

Article 3: Consent agenda:

It largely repeats previous years' consent agendas and includes Articles 4, 11, 14, 15, and 43.

Article 11:

The numbers are the same as last year except for the street opening fund, which is the only increase.

Water and Sewer:

Only minor changes are anticipated from this point.

Sara Raveret recommended favorable action on Article 3; Mason Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed 13-0.

Articles 10 and 12: New Revolving Funds

- Rent for garden plots on Weston Road will go to watering costs
- Creates a stabilization fund (Balers, Compactors)

Advisory is waiting for more information before voting

Article 7: Advisory Reserve:

- 250,000 for snow and ice
- 75,000 for TGSC legal. There was a question on the amount for TGSC.

Article 9: Spec Purpose Stabilization Fund – Police/Fire

Sara Raveret recommended favorable action on Article 9; Mason Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed 13-0.

Article 13: The Electric Program (MLP)

Sara Raveret recommended favorable action on Article 13; Mary Crown seconded the motion. The motion passed 13-0.

Article 16: Water Sewer:

Advisory still has questions.

10:16 NRC Plastic Bag Ban Discussion

There were questions on what paper bags would or would not be allowed under the ban. There was a question whether “retail” includes restaurants.

Section 3B: Inclusion of “paper” may confuse the issue at Town Meeting. There may need to be a two-step process for the ban to pass at Town Meeting.

10:30 Approval of Minutes

Sara Raveret recommended approval of 2/6 minutes. The motion passed 13-0.

Sara Raveret recommended approval of 2/10 minutes. The motion passed 13-0.

10:31 Tom Frisardi adjourned the meeting.

Future Advisory Committee meetings:

- Wednesday, March 2, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, Juliani Room, discussion of FY17 Town budget, Advisory Report for Annual Town Meeting
- Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, Juliani Room, discussion of FY17 Town budget, Advisory Report for Annual Town Meeting

Other upcoming events:

- Thursday, March 10, Advisory Report goes to the printer
- Monday, March 28, start date for Annual Town Meeting