

Wellesley Land Use Meeting

February 7, 2015

9:00 am – Wellesley Police Station – Kingsbury Room

Introduction and Process

- Conversations and emails with the Chairman of the TGSC;
- Conversations with Executive Director Hans Larsen
- Review of interviews conducted by TGSC with Boards and staff;
- Follow-up interviews with the major Department Heads in the land use functions in Wellesley, and with key volunteers;
- Attending the TGSC meeting of 12-17-14 and Land Use Function Group meetings;
- Review of the Wellesley Organization Chart and the charge to the TGSC (2014 Annual Town Meeting).

What We Heard From You

Strengths

- Strong and robust group of committed volunteers
- Committed and engaged professional employees
- Ability to get some big things done
- Recent efforts at coordination through the creation of a staff Land Use Committee
- Successful utilization of the “Town Development Review Team” (TDRT) process for larger projects

What We Heard From You

Weaknesses in Organizational Structure

- “Balkanized”
- Nobody is in charge
- Lack of strategic planning
- Uncoordinated
- Lack of accountability
- Poor feedback among parties as to related decisions from other Boards
- Decision making is sometimes by default rather than intention

What We Heard From You

Opportunities in Human Resources

- create a consistent high quality of customer services
- create flexibility and efficiencies of staffing
- foster a culture of collaboration
- improve communications

What We Heard From You

Opportunities in Technology

- create a consistent high quality presence of the Land Use Division on the Town Web site
- establish employee friendly and user friendly permits coordination software system which would improve information sharing, permit tracking, and efficiency
- make use of the existing records management system, providing for the elimination of significant amounts of paper records resulting in increased amounts of space devoted to other higher priority purposes, and facilitating the sharing of documents

What We Heard From You

Other Opportunities

- improve office layout and provide for more shared space and efficiencies of space utilization
- provide a mechanism and process for a collaborative review and recodification of the Zoning bylaws and regulations
- Improve the communication between those who propose bylaws and regulations and those who are expected to administer and enforce them to ensure the greatest chance of success of implementation

Have we missed anything?

Definitions

For purposes of this discussion we will be using the following terms

- CAO = Chief Administrative Officer – Executive Director or other title
- Land Use Division = a new structure within Wellesley Town government that encompassing all of the land use permitting functions
- Division Director = Director of the Land Use Division
- Functional Area = the Departments within the Land Use Division including Planning, ZBA, Building Department, Code Enforcement Officer, and Wetlands.

Recommendations

- Establish a Land Use Division (current working title) consisting of:
 - Planning, Wetlands, ZBA, Building Department, Design Review Board, Historical Commission, Historic District Commission, Fair Housing, Housing Development Corporation, Neighborhood Conservation District(s)
- Hire a Division Director appointed by the CAO, who would have administrative responsibility for the Division, as well as responsibility for one of the functional areas of the Division

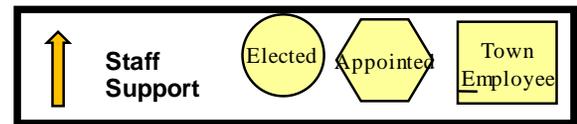
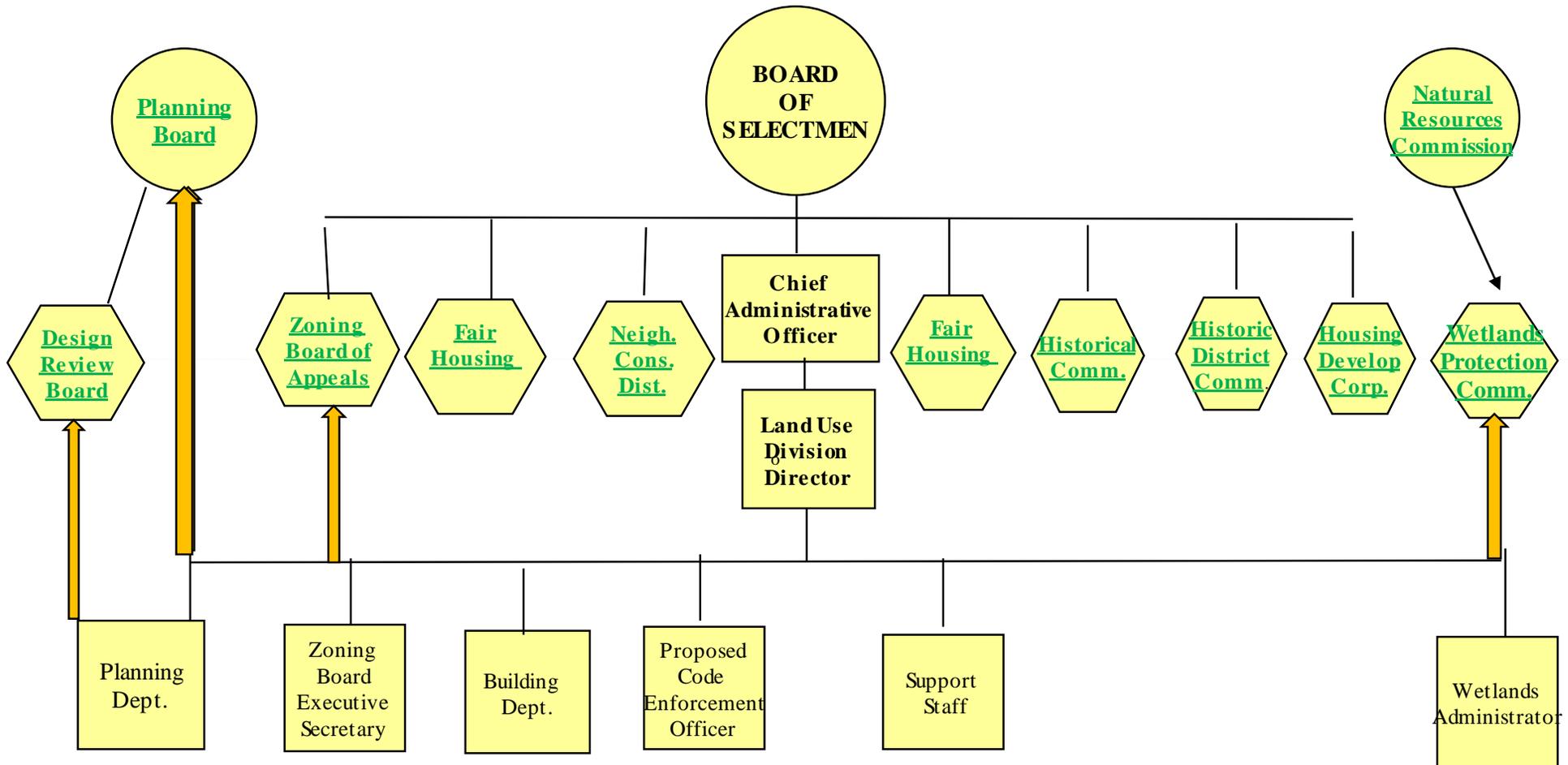
Recommendations (2)

- The Division Director is responsible for
 - strategic planning for the Division
 - coordinating of all aspects of the Division including sharing of staff, and organizing the Department for maximum effectiveness and efficiency
 - administration of all personnel (including training) matters within the Division in accordance with Town policies
 - developing and administering budgets for the Division in consultation with heads of functional areas and appropriate Boards
 - coordinating of technology within the Division

Recommendations (3)

- The heads of the functional areas would be hired by the CAO, in consultation with the Division Director and applicable board(s)
- All other staff would be appointed by the CAO in consultation with the Division Director, working with the heads of the functional areas

DRAFT - LAND USE DIVISION



Detailed Recommendations

Under the Division Director's leadership the Division will

- establish a plan for improving the office space
- establish a process for a comprehensive review of the Zoning Bylaw and regulations. This process needs to include community stakeholders including staff and board members from Planning, ZBA, Building Department and others as appropriate
- determine a mechanism to coordinate the update of the comprehensive plan with the development of a community strategic plan

Detailed Recommendations

- develop coordination of staff and cross training among the functional areas
- establish a single point of contact for applicants
- establish easy to understand checklists, FAQ's, flow charts, and other materials. Simplify applications to the extent permitted by statute or regulation
- review alternatives for and implement permits coordination software
- continue frequent (monthly) meetings to share information among all areas within and outside of the Division (Land Use Meetings)

Detailed Recommendations

- utilize Development Review Team for review of all development other than the very simplest applications
- institute periodic (quarterly) meetings of the chairs of the Boards within the Land Use Division with the Director to share information and improve coordination
- hire a knowledgeable firm to review the staffing needs of the Building Department
- Hire or re-assign a “code enforcement officer” who would handle the tree bylaw, assisting in zoning enforcement, and address other areas of inspection/enforcement