

## **MetroWest Growth Management Committee Wellesley Town Report**

Formed in 1985, MetroWest Growth Management Committee (MWGMC) includes leaders from Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Marlborough, Natick, Southborough, Wayland, Weston and Wellesley. The organization helps local elected officials and planning staff meet growth management challenges by facilitating inter-local collaborative planning and problem solving to enhance the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the MetroWest region. In addition, MWGMC is the oldest of the eight subregions of the regional planning agency, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

One selectman and one planning board member represent each member community. Wayland's representatives to the Committee are Selectman Harriett Warshaw and Planning Board Member Donald McCauley. MWGMC is funded by member assessments, grants and contracts. MWGMC maintains an office in Natick and employs a staff of two to deliver core services to member communities.

**Technical Assistance** – In FY07, the Technical Assistance to our member communities continued to expand.

***Stormwater*** - MWGMC developed Stormwater regulations to implement the Stormwater Bylaw developed last year. The regulations are available on our website ([www.metrowestgrowth.org](http://www.metrowestgrowth.org)).

***Housing*** – MWGMC along with MAPC is working with the Town of Wellesley to develop a vision and recommendations for the Wellesley West Gateway area. The study area extends along Route 9 from just east of the Weston Road exit to Oak Street in Natick. MWGMC developed rules and regulations for Wayland's Inclusion of Affordable Housing bylaw. MWGMC provided significant technical assistance to the Town of Ashland by developing a Housing Plan, Inclusionary Bylaw, and Planned Production Strategy.

**Legislative Breakfasts** - We continued our practice of holding two legislative breakfasts in FY07. Our legislative breakfasts provide an opportunity for municipal leaders and legislators to discuss issues of local, regional, and state importance that may have an impact on MetroWest. Each municipal leader is invited to explore strategies to accomplish mutual shared goals. Legislators are invited to speak about issues on which they'd like local feedback or assistance.

**Planners Roundtable** – Our monthly Planners' Roundtables for local planners and planning board members provide staff and officials with technical information and training on planning and growth issues. It also provides planners with the opportunity to share expertise, experience, and questions with their colleagues.

**Regional Impact Review (RIR)** - One of the core services MetroWest Growth Management provides to its members is the Regional Impact Review (RIR). Regional Impact Reviews provide local leaders an opportunity to comment on the impacts of proposed commercial, industrial, and residential development projects, and provides administrative services to citizen advisory boards. This allows for regional development impacts to be considered early in the development project. Regional Impact Reviews were conducted for the Wellesley Travel Inn, EMC expansion and the Wayland Town Center project.

**NYANZA** –MWGMC voted to establish a Nyanza Task Force to develop strategies to further study and mitigate the plume that has affected the Sudbury River in the past and may continue to adversely impact this valuable environmental resource in the future. MWGMC is in the process of obtaining grants from multiple sources to:

1. Assist with data analysis to help determine whether the plume needs to be addressed as a public health hazard that may impact the Sudbury River and potentially affecting all of the communities through which the river passes;
2. Communicate the progress and results of the studies;
3. Develop strategies to further mitigate the human health risk, as needed;
4. Establish an educational awareness campaign through the development of pamphlets that provide factual information, and the distribution of the pamphlets and other literature to the citizens of Ashland, Framingham and other communities in the affected MetroWest region.

### **MetroWest Matters**

MWGMC held a very successful event, **MetroWest Matters**, at The MathWorks in Natick. The event was co-sponsored by The MathWorks, the MetroWest Daily News, MAPC, Leadership MetroWest, the MA Smart Growth Alliance, the Marlborough Transportation Committee, and the entire MetroWest legislative delegation. We are deeply grateful to our co-sponsors, and I wish to thank them again for their support and assistance with this event. A special thanks is extended to Rick Holmes of the MetroWest Daily News. Rick served as the facilitator for the event and helped the attendees to develop a "To Do" List for MetroWest.

The event focused on the fact that MetroWest is a dense, diverse, congested, and highly successful hub of economic activity. This economic activity generates jobs, demands for housing, pressure to develop open space and lots of traffic.

### **Economic Development**

MWGMC and the Mass. Office of Business Development (MOBD) hosted a special training workshop at the Memorial Building in Framingham for area planning boards and other permit granting authorities on Chapter 43D, Expedited Permitting. The workshop was requested by planning board members from two municipalities. Greg Bialecki, the State's first permitting ombudsman, informed the 35 attendees about this new economic development tool. Because 43D applies to all permit granting, from project submission to building permit, we hope to follow this workshop with another workshop tailored for municipal staff involved in issuing permits such as building commissioners, public safety inspection personnel, DPW for water & sewer connection permits, etc.

The **MetroWest Transportation Task Force** focuses on analyzing and advocating for MWGMC communities on transportation matters. Chaired by John Stasik, the Transportation Task Force advocates for improved transportation services to the region, and strategies to influence transportation planning and decision-making by the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization.

### **RTA Efforts**

The newly formed MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) was one of the major successes of FY07. For the first six months of FY07, the 495/MetroWest Alliance for Transit Services was busy assisting its member communities in becoming aware of the new opportunity available to them because of the amendment to MGL Ch. 161B in June 2006. The Framingham Board of Selectmen voted to establish a new regional transit authority (RTA) on December 19, 2006. The new MWRTA is the 15th regional transportation authority in Massachusetts and paves the way for local control of the LIFT bus system, the Natick Neighborhood Bus, and other public transit options in the area. Now, the MWRTA members include Framingham, Ashland, Natick, Wayland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Weston, Sherborn and Sudbury.

The newly created MWRTA board hired Ed Carr of Natick, former Director of Transit for the MA Executive Office of Transportation as its Administrator. Ed began work on June 4th and is temporarily housed at the MWGMC office in Natick.

