

**REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD
For the Period July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010**

Membership

On March 2, 2010 Neal Glick was elected to a five-year term. On March 22, 2010 at a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen, Rose Mary Donahue was appointed as Associate Member to complete the Project of Significant Impact review for the CVS project located at 990 Worcester Street. On June 1, 2010 the Planning Board accepted with regret the resignation of Christopher Chan. On June 14, 2010, at a joint meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen Rose Mary Donahue was appointed as a full member to fill this vacancy until the next election. On June 29, 2010 the Board reelected Donald S. McCauley as Chairman, Stephanie Wasser as Vice Chairman and Jeanne Conroy as Secretary.

The Associate Member position was left vacant as of June 14, 2010. The Planning Board Associate Member is authorized to vote as a full member of the Board on special permit cases if for any reason one of the elected members cannot participate.

2009 November Special Town Meeting

Retaining Walls – Article 5

By a voice vote, the Special Town Meeting voted to establish a three-tiered approach for regulating retaining walls over 4 feet in height. The Planning Board heard concerns raised by residents with regard to safety, height, runoff, material, landscaping, visual impact, and location of large retaining walls. Zoning language was proposed in 2007, and it failed at Town Meeting for being too rigid. The Planning Board took a new approach to regulating retaining walls by creating a tiered approach.

The tiered review begins with walls over 4 feet in height and as the walls increase in height, the extent of review also increases. All retaining walls greater than 4 feet in height require a building permit and a 10 foot setback from front, side, and rear property lines. For walls greater than 7 feet in height, an applicant must complete design review with the Design Review Board prior to applying for a building permit. The final tier of review requires all retaining walls over 15 feet in height or retaining walls unable to meet the 10 foot setback requirement to complete design review, and then seek a Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, prior to the issuance of a building permit.

The new provisions encourage terracing of retaining walls. Retaining walls that are less than 4 feet in height and are separated by a distance twice the lower wall height are considered separate walls and are exempt from review.

Since the provisions were enacted, the Design Review Board has reviewed 1 retaining wall within the side yard setback that was 8 feet in height at 27 Washington Street. All other retaining walls constructed in Town since Town Meeting have complied with the new regulations.

Annual Town Meeting

Signs – Article 30

Review of sign applications is one of the Planning Departments primary functions. Many local business owners and residents had become frustrated with trying to understand the language and process for sign approval. As a result, the Town noticed an increase in illegal signage. To better serve the business community and to improve communication, the Planning Board presented a new Sign Bylaw to Town Meeting. The new provisions were well received by the Chamber of Commerce, residents, and business owners, and were approved by a voice vote at Town Meeting.

The new Sign Bylaw identifies, in a step by step manner, when a permit is needed, the required submittal materials, and the timing for review. The new bylaw codifies historical practices that have evolved over time. Examples of historical practices include allowing a one square foot window sign to identify hours of operation or credit cards accepted. Additionally signs for churches or schools in residential districts previously were limited to one square foot without the option of a special permit; the new provisions include set dimensional allowance for institutional use signage.

A major change in the new bylaw is the expansion of definitions. The definitions help to eliminate discrepancies in the various interpretations of property owners, business owners, the Design Review Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Building Department. The specificity of the definitions helps provide users with the ability to clearly identify allowed and prohibit procedures, signage and sign construction standards.

Large House Review – Article 31

Large House Review was approved by Special Town Meeting in November of 2007. After working with the provisions for more than two years, the Planning Board returned to Town Meeting to amend the process and several provisions to address calculation of size, the review process and the approval process of Large House Review. The amendments, which passed by a voice vote, include changes to calculation of Total Living Area plus Garage (TLAG), the Standards and Criteria of Review, and the Appeal process.

In efforts to establish a town wide baseline for house size in 2007, the Planning Board initially used Total Living Area (TLA) calculations generated by the Board of Assessor's to establish thresholds for each zoning district. The Assessor's methodology was difficult for both applicants and the Building Department to administer. The revised calculation methodology uses the horizontal area of the above grade floors, a more appropriate and definable metric, to calculate TLAG. TLAG continues to exempt portions of basements and 600 square feet of garage space, but no longer exempts unfinished attics.

To mitigate the number of homes greatly in excess of established thresholds due to the square footage of unfinished attics, the Board added attics, finished or unfinished, into the calculations for Large House Review. Portions of attics where the height from floor to interior roofline is greater than 7 feet, and on sloped rooflines where the floor to interior roofline height is greater than 5 feet, now count towards TLAG.

Two exemptions were created. The first exemption allows unfinished attics that cannot be converted into livable space, as determined by the Building Inspector, to be exempt from TLAG. A second exemption was created which allows all existing unfinished attics to be finished if there are no exterior alterations to the existing structure.

To improve the application process the new amendments allow for minor revisions and amendments to be approved by the Planning Director. A large number of minor revisions or major changes to the approved plans still require Planning Board approval.

Several procedural amendments were added including creation of a separate standard for review of drainage, and the power to deny projects. The Planning Board receives a recommendation from the Town's Engineering Department on the proposed drainage for every LHR application. The establishment of drainage as separate criteria for review codified the current practice. The Planning Board also added language to clarify ambiguity as to whether the Board had a right to deny a LHR application. The amendment authorized the Planning Board to approve, approve with conditions or plan modifications, or deny projects. Any appeals of the Planning Board can be brought to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Finally, to prevent having to return to Town Meeting to alter the size, form, contents, style, and number of copies of plans included in applications, the Submittal Material section of LHR has been removed from the Zoning Bylaw and placed in the Rules and Regulations governing Large House Review.

Building Height- Article 32

Town Meeting by a voice vote approved revisions to the calculation of building height. The previous provision calculated heights of buildings from the average finished grade. This allowed the topography of many lots to be altered with fill to meet the height requirements of residential and commercial buildings. The Planning Board began to see "Dirt Skirts" or the mounding of dirt along the foundations of buildings throughout town. The new amendment requires the height of new structures and additions to be measured from the preconstruction or natural grade of the lot prior to any site work. If an existing structure is to be demolished, the height would be measured from the grade determined prior to issuance of a demolition permit.

Cluster Zoning Initiative – Article 21 Motion 4

The Planning Board requested and received \$10,000 from the Community

Preservation Committee to study Cluster Subdivision Regulations. The proposed study will analyze both subdivision design options and assess what elements could be successful in Wellesley with the current developable land constraints and the multitude of environmentally sensitive areas in Town. The study will also investigate what types of incentives are available to encourage subdivision design to promote open space as well as affordable housing. With the potential for a density bonus, the preservation of open space, and the creation of a mix of housing styles, the Planning Board believes Cluster Development lends itself directly to Wellesley's efforts toward sustainable design and affordable housing.

The study is anticipated to commence in the fall of 2010.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation

In 2007, the Planning Board completed the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan. Since the completion of the Plan, the Board has been working towards implementing goals, objectives and projects recommended. In the past year, the Board has worked on several tasks outlined including recodifying the Zoning Bylaw, studying the St. James the Great parcel, working with the Board of Selectmen on a transit study for intra-town bus service, and acquiring funds to investigate cluster development zoning.

A copy of the Comprehensive Plan can be found online at www.wellesleyma.gov .

Zoning Recodification

The Planning Board hired Community Opportunities Group, Inc. (COG) in September 2008 to reorganize the Zoning Bylaw. The Planning Board has reviewed a number of technical memorandums on different approaches to restructuring the Zoning Bylaw without significantly altering the zoning provisions. The recodification effort has been challenging. Based upon the findings to date, the Planning Board is now considering several substantive changes which have become necessary to create a user-friendly version of the Zoning Bylaw.

At the end of the fiscal year, the draft is nearly ready for review by interested parties. The Planning Board intends to make the draft available for public viewing in the near future.

State Street Study

The Planning Board hired Larry Koff and Associates to conduct a study of the State Street Area which includes the commercial properties stretching from the Police Station on Washington Street to the Star Market on Washington Street. The four way intersection of Washington Street/ State Street/ Kingsbury Street was the primary focus for the area. A steering committee was formed which included business owners, interested residents, representatives from the Natural Resource Commission, Department of Public Works, Planning Board, Planning staff, and the Schools. Three alternative plans were prepared, with a preferred alternative being identified. A series of action items were outlined, and through the course of

meetings and a public forum priorities for development were identified. The study was completed in September of 2009.

Since the completion of the study, the Star Market property owners began discussions with the Board of Selectmen over a long term lease of the Cochituate Aqueduct which runs through the property. In negotiations with the Town, the property owners presented several conceptual plans that incorporated a number of elements discussed in the State Street Master Plan. It is anticipated review of the proposed exterior building and site modifications would begin in the fall of 2010.

St. James Alternative Land Use Study

The Planning Board hired Concord Square Planning and Development, Inc. to conduct an Alternative Land Use Study of the St. James the Great property located at 900 Worcester Street. The St. James the Great site was closed by the Archdiocese of Boston in 2004. Former Parishioners have been holding vigil since the church closure 6 years ago. The Planning Board has looked at potential redevelopment of the site in connection with past studies including the Comprehensive Plan, the Wellesley West Gateway Study, and Wellesley Walks- A Comprehensive Pedestrian Program.

The significance of the site in terms of lot size, location, and potential redevelopment has been a key finding in each of the previous studies. Based on these past findings, the Planning Board undertook a separate study of the site to analyze development potential. The Planning Board was aware of the sensitive nature of beginning a land use study of the St. James parcel, but felt it was necessary to ensure adequate provisions were in place to best serve the town, should the Archdiocese of Boston sell the property.

The study of the site generated three conceptual land use plans for redevelopment that were chosen largely from a public forum held on February 11, 2010. The three land use alternatives include recreational, residential, and retail/office mixed use. The proposed recreational use was the preferred scenario from residents in attendance and included a synthetic field, a swimming pool and an ice rink.

The study highlighted three very different land use scenarios. The Recreational Complex scenario appeared to have the highest interest from the Town residents present, but identified the potential for significant public costs and traffic impacts. The residential scenario was found to have the lowest traffic impacts, but was likely to result in a higher need for public services than the other options studied. The office/retail scenario was found to produce the greatest traffic impacts, but could provide economic benefits to the Town.

St. James Committee

The St. James Alternative Land Use Study was completed in May. The completed study generated interest from the Board of Selectmen and Recreation Commission. The possibility of constructing a long sought after Town Recreational Complex on the site brought together an extended Town Development Review Team (TDRT). In

June, representatives from the Planning Board and Planning staff were asked to join the TDRT to begin analyzing acquisition of the parcel by the Town. At the close of the fiscal year, the Acquisition Group had acquired funds from the Community Preservation Committee and had hired an appraisal company, (Colliers, Meredith and Grew) and Gale Engineering to investigate the value of the property, and the potential for the land use described in the Planning Board study of the site.

It is anticipated the feasibility study and appraisal would be completed by the end of October, 2010.

Intra-Town Transit Study

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town actively participate in regional transportation planning and explore the possibility of a shared-use shuttle bus system. To continue the Comprehensive Plan implementation, the Board of Selectmen began exploring the possibilities of intra-town transit. The Board of Selectmen hired Central Transportation Planning staff to conduct a study on the potential for transit service within the Town and nearby major destinations, including MBTA transit stations.

The Selectmen's office requested the Planning staff join the study committee. The Planning staff has been part of the committee since May 2010 and is working to assist CTPS on data collection, review of previous studies, and determination of potential transit services.

It is anticipated the transit study would be completed by January of 2011.

Projects of Significant Impact

The Project of Significant Impact (PSI) bylaw mandates an assessment of the development impact on the town's infrastructure. Under this provision, any new project, exceeding 10,000 square feet of floor area and building renovation exceeding 15,000 square feet for a change of use, requires approval of the Planning Board. The Planning Board is authorized to approve a project if it deems that there are adequate municipal services available. If the services are not adequate an applicant may propose off-site improvements (e.g. street and sidewalk improvements, new storm water drainage systems) to correct the inadequacy and/or to insure that the development does not overburden the roads and other municipal facilities. The cost of necessary mitigation is borne by the applicant.

The Planning Board reviewed and approved 3 PSI projects and made 2 determinations on approved PSI projects as to whether the proposed changes resulted in a material intensification in use and continue to meet the minimum service standards established in connection with the existing PSI Special Permits during the reporting period as follows:

CVS, 984, 990 and 990R Worcester Street

The project involves the redevelopment of the former Kehoe Chrysler site, a 2.07 acre (90,275 square foot) site at 984, 990 and 990R Worcester Street. Redevelopment includes the demolition of three (3) existing buildings and the construction of a 12,900 square foot one-story building with a double drive-thru, as well as associated parking and site improvements.

A definitive submission was made on August 7, 2009. The public hearing was opened on September 30, 2009 and continued on November 9, 2009, December 14, 2009, January 20, 2010, February 22, 2010, and March 22, 2010. After comments were concluded on March 22, 2009, the Planning Board closed the Public Hearing. After deliberation the Planning Board voted 4-1 with Mr. Chan objecting, on April 7, 2009 to conditionally approve the project including a series of mitigation elements.

27 Washington Street (Former Grossman's)

On May 28, 2008 the Planning Board voted to conditionally approve a proposed project, including a series of mitigation elements, at 27 Washington Street. The PSI was issued on June 16, 2008. The proposed project consisted of three buildings. The front (commercial) two-story building on Washington Street was to have retail on the first floor and office above. Two apartment buildings would be located on the rear of the site behind the commercial building and would contain 141 apartment units of which 30 are to be affordable. The bulk of the parking for the apartments was to be underground.

On January 26, 2010 the property owners proposed an alteration of the project from a multi-family residential component with office/retail in the front of the site, to a residential component consisting of independent living and assisted living rental units with office/retail in the front of the site. The new proposal retained the two-story retail/office building comprising 33,000 square feet on Washington Street. The altered residential component of the project includes a combined independent living and assisted living rental community containing 138 units within a single structure comprised of three and four story building elements. Twenty-nine (29) of the 138 units will be assisted/affordable under Wellesley's Inclusionary Zoning bylaw. The proposed residential building will contain 149,607 square feet of floor area.

The Planning Board reviewed proposed changes in the use from multi-family residential to a residential component consisting of independent living and assisted living rental units to determine if the project still met the minimum service standards of the Zoning Bylaw for water, sewer, storm drainage, electric, traffic and pedestrian safety, fire alarm system and refuse disposal system as specified in the Project of Significant Impact Special Permit Decision dated June 16, 2008. The Planning Board conducted the determination on February 3 and February 22, 2010. The Planning Board voted on February 22, 2010 to acknowledge that the change in the residential use of the project does not result in a material intensification in use and continues to meet the minimum service standards under the existing PSI Special Permit Decision dated June 16, 2008.

Senior Center – 496 Washington Street (Former American Legion Site)

The Permanent Building Committee submitted a definitive submission on January 15, 2010 for review of a new Senior Center to be located at 496 Washington Street. The project involves construction of a new Wellesley Senior Center with a proposed gross floor area of 14,173 square feet. The project includes associated off-street parking to accommodate 34 parking spaces and site modifications.

The Planning Board scheduled a public hearing for March 8, 2010. The Board of Selectmen extended the opening of the public hearing (property owner) pending the completion of Town Meeting. At the completion of Town Meeting the public hearing date had not been set, and the Planning Board is awaiting new or revised submittal materials.

978 Worcester Street (Wellesley Motor Inn)

The project involves the redevelopment of a 2.35 acre site at 978 Worcester Street. The project involves construction of a 36,000 square foot building at the rear of the lot for 36 residential condominiums and a 24,000 square foot two-story commercial building with retail on the first floor and office space on the second floor at the front of the site. There was no restaurant proposed.

A definitive submission was made on July 18, 2007. After deliberation the Planning Board voted on August 18, 2008 to conditionally approve the project including a series of mitigation elements.

On May 14, 2010, the applicant proposed to change 5,400 square feet in the commercial building from general retail to a restaurant use. The Planning Board reviewed the proposed change in use on May 17, 2010 and based on the decision for PSI-08-01 determined that the change in use was an intensification use. The applicant was asked to demonstrate the impact of the change in use on the municipal systems continues to meet the minimum service standards.

The Planning Board opened the public hearing on June 14, 2010, continued it to June 28 and concluded it on June 28, 2010 after public comments were concluded. The deliberation carried into July (fiscal year 2011). The Planning Board voted to approve the change in use, finding it did not result in a material intensification in use and that the project continues to meet the minimum service standards under the existing PSI Special Permit Decision dated August 18, 2008.

Municipal Light Plant – Administration Building

The Planning Board issued the Permanent Building Committee a Project of Significant Impact Special Permit on May 9, 2006, PSI-06-02, for the construction of a 16,209 square foot garage connected to the existing DPW Highway Building; a new 18,000 square foot two-story building; and a 23,970 square foot MLP building to be located on the site of the existing MLP garage, which is to be removed. A building permit for the project was granted on January 3, 2008.

This year, a new Administration Building was proposed to be added onto the previously approved garage. The project involves construction of a new 7,800 square foot administration building to be located adjacent to the recently completed garage and warehouse building and connected to the existing substation. The Project of Significant Impact review was triggered as a result of the project being proposed within three years of the building permit for the subject project issued January 3, 2008.

The Permanent Building Committee made a definitive submission on May 12, 2010. Mr. McCauley recused himself from review of the PSI project. The Planning Board opened the public hearing on June 14, 2010 and continued to June 28, 2010, closing the hearing after comments were concluded on June 28, 2010. After deliberation the Planning Board voted on June 28, 2010, to conditionally approve the project 4-0.

Inclusionary Zoning

On a motion jointly developed between the Housing Development Corporation and the Planning Board the 2005 Annual Town Meeting adopted Inclusionary zoning as a requirement for Projects of Significant Impact in commercial districts. This requirement was extended to residential subdivisions at the 2006 Annual Town Meeting. These projects are required to provide a ratio of affordable housing units based on the size of the proposed development.

The Planning Board administers the Inclusionary Zoning program with oversight by the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation. The Planning Board opened a public hearing on September 30, 2009 to review a Special Permit request for a payment in lieu in conjunction with the proposed CVS to be located at 990 Worcester Street. The Planning Board voted unanimously on September 30, 2009 to grant a Special Permit for a payment in lieu of \$113,000 to satisfy the required 0.258 fractional unit required.

Review of Unaccepted Streets

The Zoning Bylaw authorizes the Planning Board to determine whether an unaccepted street is adequate prior to the issuance of building permits for new houses on such streets. There are 105 unaccepted streets in Wellesley comprising approximately 12 miles of roadway. A number of inadequate ways have been upgraded at no cost to the Town since this provision was adopted.

During the course of the year the Planning Board received two applications from applicants proposing to build new or expand existing houses whereupon the above described review was triggered. The Board reviewed proposals for Kimlo Road, Charles Street, and Davis Road. The Planning Board determined a Charles Street property seeking to create a new lot with frontage on Davis Road a paper street required review under Subdivision Control. The Kimlo Road property was continued due to required alterations to the lot lines, and the property owner did not return to the Planning Board for continued review during the fiscal year.

Scenic Roads

There are six roads in Wellesley that have been designated by vote of Town Meeting as Scenic Roads under the State Scenic Roads Act: Benvenue Street, Cartwright Road, Cheney Drive, Pond Road, Squirrel Road, and Waterway/Brookway. This Act grants the Planning Board approval authority, at a public hearing, to review the proposed removal of trees, stone walls or portions of stone walls along any designated Scenic Road.

During the course of the year the Planning Board did not receive any applications for alterations to any of the scenic roads requiring review.

Review of Zoning Board of Appeal Petitions

The Zoning Bylaw authorizes the Planning Board to review and recommend action on all petitions before the Zoning Board of Appeal. Recommendations are made on cases based on planning principles, legal requirements, fairness, maintaining the integrity of the Zoning Bylaw and Map, and what it believes to be in the best interest of the Town. The Board submitted comments recommending approval, conditional approval or denial of 69 petitions during the year. Of the 69 recommendations, the Planning Board recommended denial of 15 petitions of which 9 were granted by the ZBA.

Subdivision Control

The Planning Board continued its administration of two active subdivisions which are in various stages of development: Polaris Circle (7 lots) and #15 - 27 Pembroke Road (3 lots). No new subdivision plans were approved during the year.

The Planning Board reviewed and endorsed four plans as "Approval Not Required" (ANR) under the Subdivision Control Law.

Street Construction Bonds

The Planning Board requires surety bonds for work to be done by private contractors in conjunction with new subdivision streets and for work to improve unaccepted streets to minimum standards. The Board is currently holding \$222,724 in street construction surety bonds.

Project Review and Submission Fees

All building projects involving an exterior change are reviewed including single family houses exceeding the Large House Review thresholds and all exterior changes within Historic Districts. All expenses of these boards and reviews are funded from the Planning Department budget.

The Planning Department collects project submission fees. The fees offset the cost of review of impact reports, plans and other materials. The Planning Department received \$43,797.50 in submission fees in FY10 which were submitted to the Town Treasurer for deposit into the Town's general fund. The fees for the Municipal Light Building and

the Senior Center were waived, significantly lowering the fees the Planning Department would have collected had these projects been proposed by private developers. The Municipal Light Plant submission fee would have been \$20,000.00 and the Senior Center submission fee would have been \$22,503.80.

Large House Review

The Planning Board reviewed 7 Large House Review applications. Four of the applications were for new houses: 100 Pilgrim Road, 72 Pleasant Street, 8 Highgate Road, and 33 Wachusett Road. Three of the applications were for additions: 21 Parker Road, 37 Jackson Road, and 15 Oxford Road. The reviews, along with 2 modification requests on past approvals and 2 waiver requests, took significant time and occupied space on 16 of the Board's 28 regular meetings.

The 100 Pilgrim Road Large House Review application was initially denied. On remand from the ZBA, the Planning Board worked closely with the applicant and the abutters to alter the design of the home, landscape, and setbacks. The Planning Board after further review approved the modified design as meeting the standards of Large House Review. The Planning Board believes 100 Pilgrim is an example that demonstrates how the Large House Review process can work towards improving proposed projects.

Rockland Street Bridge

Six bridges over the MBTA Commuter Rail have been rebuilt in recent years. Rockland Street Bridge is an original structure dating to 1921 and is in poor condition. The allowable weight limit has been reduced by Mass Highway to three tons (less than some SUV's.) Frank S. DeMasi, the Town's representative to and Vice-Chair of the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee has worked with other Town officials, Representative Alice Peisch and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in encouraging that this needed bridge reconstruction project is designed and bid as soon as possible.

Citizen Inquiries

The Planning Department Office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The staff assists citizens with questions concerning zoning requirements, setbacks, the process of project approval and scheduling of meetings with the Planning Board, Design Review Board, Historic District Commission, and the Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District Commission. Frequently people are referred to the Planning Department by other Town Departments. It is estimated that the Planning Department handles approximately 100 such inquiries per week with approximately 25 % of these involving in-office visits.

Regional Liaison

Former Planning Board member Frank S. DeMasi is Wellesley's representative to the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC), the Metropolitan Planning

Organization (MPO), and the MBTA Advisory Board. He also serves as the Town's representative to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

Chairman Donald McCauley is the Planning Board representative to the Metro West Growth Management Committee. The Town's membership in MWGMC is vital to keep informed on state legislation and programs affecting our community and to participate collectively with neighboring communities in promoting our interests and needs before State agencies.

Planning Board members and staff periodically attend seminars and workshops conducted in the area concerning legislation and programs relative to town and regional planning.

Other Liaison Assignments

Chairman Don McCauley coordinates planning activities and projects with the Board of Selectmen and other town boards. Member Chris Chan served on the Green Ribbon Committee. Member Rose Mary Donahue served on the Community Preservation Committee.

Town Development Review Team (TDRT)

The Town Development Review Team (TDRT) which consists of elected liaison board members, senior staff officials and Town Counsel, periodically met to discuss major Town developments. The purpose of these meetings is in large part informational so that all departments and boards involved in the review, approval or permitting will be able to conveniently consult with one another and with the applicant concerning proposed projects and that the same information will be shared by all.

Kimlo Road

After a mudslide and construction accident occurred on Kimlo Road while constructing a massive retaining wall, a TDRT was established to review safety of the site. The Planning Director participated in the TDRT to ensure the site was quickly stabilized, reengineered, and held to rigid safety inspections.

Senior Center

The Planning Director participated in the Senior Center TDRT reviewing options for expansion of the proposed lot, proposed architectural drawings, proposed landscaping, and issues surrounding available parking for the site in relation to zoning.

Web Site

The Planning Board maintains a web site at the following address: wellesleyma.gov. This web site includes updated information on the regular activities and special projects of the Planning Department.

Meetings

During FY-10 (July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010) the Planning Board held 28 regular meetings, 15 public hearings, 2 special meetings, 2 joint meetings with the Board of Selectmen, and 2 public zoning hearings.

Planning Staff

The Planning staff consists of a part-time secretary/technical assistant, a planner, an assistant director and a director. The Design Review Board, Historic District Commission, Housing Development Corporation, Denton Road Neighborhood Conservation District, and Fair Housing Committee receive professional and staff assistance from the Planning staff. The Planning staff also supports on an as needed basis the work of the Community Preservation Committee and Historical Commission.

This year, Assistant Director Michael Zehner, became both AICP certified and LEED accredited as a Green Associate. The two accreditations represent comprehensive knowledge in the fields of planning, sustainability, and sustainable design practices.

Future Initiatives

In the upcoming fiscal year, the Planning Board and staff will continue to work on implementing the Comprehensive Plan, including a five year update which will begin in 2011-2012. A study will be conducted on the Planning Department fees, and the staff will continue to improve the rules and regulations, and guidelines governing existing regulations.

The Planning Board will be working on completing the Cluster Development Study, Intra-Town Transit Study, and Recodification.

In addition to initiatives underway, the Planning Board will be working on new provisions including for tree preservation including enhancements to existing zoning regulations including commercial landscape requirements and site preparation. The Planning Board is also considering a new Town Bylaw to protect trees of a certain size within setback areas.

Future zoning initiatives may also include revisions to the following:

- Off-Street Parking
- Project of Significant Impact Modifications
- Site Plan Review Modifications
- Grading
- Building Size

The Planning Board continues to work cooperatively with the Board of Selectmen, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Department, and residents to try and address issues concerning development and land management.