

**TO:** Planning Board  
**FROM:** Sue Brown  
**SUBJECT:** Planners Report, Project Updates  
**DATE:** July 12, 2021

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### **Housing Opportunity – MAHT sites and DPW**

- MAHT and MHA hosted a June 29 Public Workshop to present the Study’s findings, solicit input and answer questions. Draft notes are at the end of this report.

### **LCD Overlay District Vision, Regulations and Application**

- MAPC submitted Scenarios Summary as deliverable of Task 6. It is on the PB SharePoint Site.
- The deliverable of the final Task 7 is zoning regulations and design guidelines for the preferred scenario.

### **Open Space and Recreation Plan Update**

- MAPC is awaiting conditional approval and comment from DCS on the draft plan.
- Next steps include meeting with OSRC to discuss any needed revisions for the final plan and requesting letters of support from the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board.
- With final changes and letters of support the Final Plan will be submitted to DCS for final approval.

### **Western Woods Preservation**

- The Forest Stewardship Plan needs FY 2022 funding approval by DCR.
- A Baseline Report is being prepared for the Christian Hill property. This is a requirement of the Conservation Restriction assumed to be accepted soon by MECT.

### **Wastewater Treatment Feasibility Study**

- The Report has been submitted and is on the PB SharePoint site.
- The Study did not identify a viable alternative to the WWTF at this time, however it outlined a number of potential future alternatives.

### **Local Rapid Recovery Grant**

Top project ideas identified by businesses and steering committee will be written up as “Project Sheets” and then prioritized to identify top three recommendations for implementation.

- Wayfinding
- Placemaking
- Lighting
- Public restrooms
- Business liaison/economic development position
- Shared marketing/branding
- Events – especially off season

### **Regional Project Grant to support Cape Ann Businesses**

The Regional Pilot Project is:

- Offering direct support to businesses primarily via trainings
- Developing an online platform where businesses can update hours, location, contact, promotions etc.
- Producing a comprehensive marketing campaign to promote Cape Ann and its diversity of businesses and highlight Main Streets and Downtowns

To stay up to date visit: <https://capeannchamber.com/regional-pilot-grant/>

### **Planning Grants**

- Awaiting response from MAPC on request for Downtown Parking Study or Downtown Strategic Plan

### **MAHT and MHA June 29 Draft Public Workshop Notes**

John Feuerbach opened the meeting at 6:35 and introduced the MHA and MAHT. After a brief description of the purpose of the meeting and a reminder that the Boards had been discussing the project since 2018, Gretchen Wood explained that the MHA properties were deteriorating and needed renovations.

John gave brief descriptions of the three MHA properties and the Pleasant Street DPW site. He also described the role of the state government in the MHA properties. He then introduced Bev Gallo of Peregrine Consulting who had undertaken a feasibility study of the sites.

Bev provided a more detailed explanation of the concept, pointing out that the state demonstration grant program required a one-for-one match of existing with new housing units. She also reiterated the point that development of the DPW site on Pleasant Street was a critical component as it would provide cash flow to support repairs and ongoing operations of the public housing units.

A number of questions were asked:

- Where did the requirement to match existing with new units come from? *Bev explained the state grant requirements, but that these may change.*
- What were the incomes of current public housing units? *Gretchen said that tenants paid 30% of their income as rent, but incomes were very low. The new units at the MHA sites would be considered affordable, probably to people with incomes at 60% of AMI.*

- Was the DPW site critical to the project? *Bev stated that additional market rate units were required as an economic engine for the project, and that the site was a good example of how town-owned land could be incorporated into the project to prove local support.*
- Who owns the public housing properties? *The MHA owns the land and buildings. However, the state DCHD imposes many restrictions on how the properties may be used.*
- Were other sites closer to downtown considered? *Yes- but there currently are no identified available options.*
- Would neighbors to the proposed projects have a chance to comment? *Yes, as plans evolve, neighborhood input is welcomed.*
- Was the Chapter 40A program considered as a possible option? Would downtown sites be considered? *Bev said that it was not exactly relevant to the project, but could be a part of the solution. If sites other than DPW were made available, the project could be reconfigured as required.*
- What was the status of moving the DPW yard and where would it be located? *Town Administrator, Greg Federspiel said that the most likely action was that DPW would move to the compost site on School Street but the "Burn" site on Pine Street was another option for that facility.*
- What is happening with the Powder House Lane project? *John pointed out that this was not the topic of this meeting but gave some background on the project.*
- Would units created by this project be included in the SHI? *The affordable units would be counted.*
- When would the project begin? *It would take at least a year to get started- probably longer.*

The meeting ended at 8 PM