

TO: Planning Board
FROM: Sue Brown
SUBJECT: Planners Report, Project Updates
DATE: January 11, 2021

Housing Opportunity - MAHT sites and DPW

- Consultant is reaching out to potential non-profit developers to understand their needs for and likelihood of partnering on this type of project.
- Next step is a meeting between DHCD and MAHT, MHA, Town Staff and Consultant Team to discuss path forward

40R Smart Growth Overlay District Vision, Regulations and Application

- Consultant submitted Parcel Analysis and revised draft Design Standards
- Consultant to present to the PB on Jan 11 and the Public on Jan 12
- I have sent notice and invitation to Town Boards and Committees and LCD landowners, and have coordinated with Tiffany to promote through social media.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update

- Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee have offered recommendations for consideration - using recommendations from existing plan as the base.

Western Woods Preservation

- No further update.

ADA Project Funding Grant

- Awaiting Decision from Mass Office on Disability.

Wastewater Treatment Feasibility Study

- The cost of infrastructure to connect to SESD seems to be prohibitive.

Housing Production Plan Update

- HPP has been updated based on Board Comments.
- BOS and PB approval is required before submitting to the state for approval.

Local Initiative Project (Friendly 40B) Application

- Next BOS workshop scheduled for January 14th.
- Peer Review (Fiscal Impacts and Transportation) results expected this week.
- Negotiation with the Applicant expected to begin with a week.

Local Rapid Recover Grant

I worked with the Essex Town Planner to submit a Grant that if received will match the Towns of Manchester and Essex with a consultant to identify opportunities for helping local businesses recover from the impacts of the Pandemic and become more resilient in the face of such challenges.

Building Consensus about the Future of the LCD (no change from Dec)

The Limited Commercial District is the focus of the Town's attention due to the LCD Smart Growth Feasibility Study, the proposed LIP apartment complex, and the LCD Zoning Review that the Board recently voted to delay. And before all of this, the Master Plan identified the Limited Commercial District as the area with the highest potential to increase Town revenue through planned development. The Master Plan also noted the need to make any development environmentally friendly stressing the need for Low Impact Development (LID) and to allow for development that fits the needs of the town.

Recognizing that the Town is looking to the LCD for multiple opportunities and understanding that several large landowners have plans they would like to advance in collaboration with the Town and PB, **I suggest engaging a consultant to lead the Town in an exercise to build consensus on the future of the LCD .** The exercise could begin with the concepts offered by the Master Plan and refine the concept into a clear set of principles that would be the baseline for future changes.

I have spoken with one local Consultant that provides this type of service to understand how consensus building might unfold and the price for the service (\$7 to \$10K) If the Board is interested in pursuing the idea I would be happy to invite her to speak to the Board.

I also welcome other ideas or approaches for building consensus about the future of the LCD.