

**Meeting of the Planning Board  
Thursday, May 18, 2023  
MBTA Communities Public Forum**

The 27th gathering of the Milton Planning Board for FY2023 convened at 7:00 p.m. in the activity room of the Council on Aging.

**Present:** Planning Board Members Cheryl Tougias (Secretary), Sean Fahy, Maggie Oldfield and Jim Davis; Director of Planning and Community Development Tim Czerwienski, Assistant Town Planner Josh Eckart-Lee and Sr. Administrative Clerk Julia Getman.

**Absent:** Meredith Hall (Chair).

1. Mr. Czerwienski gave a presentation addressing state legislation requiring communities with mass transit services to provide at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right, and that meets other criteria set forth in the statute. He explained how failure to comply will result in a loss of eligibility for certain funding programs for the community. The presentation began with a moment of silence honoring Alexander Whiteside, who had recently passed away.

The requirements of the MBTA zoning were discussed. Mr. Czerwienski said that the consulting firm of Utile was providing technical assistance and had developed a compliance model to gather information on how to meet the zoning requirements. Residence C, A and B parcels within a ½ mile of the trolley line had been tested, as well as the East Milton business district, which is in the process of being rezoned and will not be considered as a transit district. He said that a district of at least 50 acres, with an average density of 15 units per acre was required, with the potential for 5-acre contiguous subdistricts beyond the half mile radius.

The impacts of the zoning, including those to the Town's physical character, were addressed. Setback and height requirements, minimal lot sizes and unit capacity, parking needs, affordable unit counts and distributing density throughout the town were discussed. Options for compliance under the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) guidelines and incorporating existing multi-family housing into the unit count were discussed. It was noted that a fiscal analysis to assess impacts on the town's infrastructure and services will be conducted and that monthly public informational sessions will be held.

Question and Comment Period

Planning Board Member Sean Fahy thanked the Planning Department for its work on the zoning. He discussed the extensive amount of work involved in meeting the zoning mandate and said that the choice to opt out would be decided by members of Town Meeting. He encouraged residents to attend meetings and pay attention to the zoning process in order to produce an "informed" decision and noted that non-compliance comes with penalties.

Mr. Czerwienski discussed the three main grant programs that would be denied to the town with non-compliance: MassWorks, which distributes "tens of millions of dollars yearly" in local capital grant funds for infrastructure projects; Housing Choice, which achieves certain housing production targets; and the Local Capital Projects Fund, which provides subsidies for public housing authorities.

Ms. Tougias said that the town's Master Plan includes a Housing Production Plan which has identified a need for diversity of housing stock and that the MBTA zoning could meet some of that need.

Mr. Czerwienski discussed the high demand for housing in Milton, comprised primarily of single-family homes with no options for young adults beginning careers or seniors trying to downsize. He said that 88 Wharf, with 73 units, produces the highest tax revenue in Milton.

Several audience members believed that non-compliance was not an option. The benefits of how the zoning may affect Milton residents and how to achieve the state's required 10% of affordable units for the town as a whole were considered.

Mr. Czerwienski said that the deadline to pass the zoning in order to be in compliance with the mandate was December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. He said that a special town meeting was being considered to address the zoning and that grant funding for a consultant to help draft the zoning was being applied for.

The presentation ended at 9:05 p.m.



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Cheryl Tougias, Secretary