

Cohasset Advisory Committee – Joint Meeting
Thursday, April 8, 2021
Virtual Meeting Zoom Video
7:04 pm

Pursuant to MGL c 30A Section 20(b), following Governor Baker's declaration of state of emergency in the Commonwealth arising from COVID-19 Pandemic, the Committee will meet virtually utilizing technology. **All votes will be taken by a Roll Call Vote.**

This meeting was recorded

Documents Received: Zoning Articles Presentation

Meeting was called to order at 7:04

Advisory Committee Members in attendance: Meg Wheeler, Mary McGoldrick, Helene Lieb, Lee Jenkins, Jean Healey, Fran Collins, Jeanne Astino, Rob Hillman

Guests: Tom Callahan, Woody Chittick, Lauren Lind, Katie Dugan, Peter Pescatore, Michelle Leary, Don Piatt, Mark Cameron, Jon Lemieux, Carolyn Coffey, Phil Lehr, Steven Kirby.

Zoning Warrant Articles:

Articles 20-24 and 28:

Presented by Lauren Lind on these articles.

Article 20: Floodplain & Watershed Protection District Amendment. Updated maps and model flood plain bylaw. None of this is controversial. Failure to adopt this Article will result in the removal from the Flood Insurance program.

Article 21: Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic Installations Overlay District Amendment: Allows solar arrays on the Crocker Lane landfill

Article 22: Allow Whitney Spur trail to be reclassified.

Article 23: Fast-food restaurant definition amendment to add word “principal” to definition of Fast-food restaurant. Snack shack at Sandy Beach is example.

Article 24: Special Permits in the VB District Amendment: PB would become the SPGA for all uses in the VB District

Article 28: Board of Public Health Zoning Bylaw Amendment.

Katie Dugan of the Zoning Bylaw Working Group opened a meeting, Woody Chittick, Peter Pescatore, Tom Callahan attending for the ZBWG Group.

Katie Dugan described the implementation of the Master Plan and top priorities of the plan. Elm Street Corridor, Sewer Planning, Affordable Housing, and Zoning. The ZBWG implements the Zoning aspect of the Master Plan and she described working group goals, including six-month, 12–18-month goals and longer-term goals. She presented on Articles 26-28.

Article 26: Use variance – showed proposed and new language. Proposed article is to provide judgment and flexibility with current and potential uses that are unmentioned and undefined by the zoning bylaws. The zoning bylaws prohibits use, but if unmentioned cannot do a variance right now.

Woody Chittick presented the veterinarian practice example in the Village Business District. Had to go to Town Meeting and the AG, and \$40K of legal fees and two years later, they got through. He presented other examples of uses not mentioned and allowed. He said they gave variances every 2-3 years.

Planning Board and ZBA voted unanimously on Article 26.

Article 27: Land Alteration Amendment. Kati Dugan provided statement on ZBWG approach to this amendment. ZBWG provided phrased approach, with ledge removal in the second phrase, starting with land alteration as it is an immediate peril. The existing stormwater bylaw only deals with certain aspects. Researched history of clear cutting. Done benchmarking on other communities. Needs further study on the right type of ledge removal. A flaw in one section of the bylaw would invalidate the entire bylaw.

Walked through the language of Article 27, which replaces existing Article 11 which governs earth removal.

Section 11.2:

- Addressing clearly defined problems – undeveloped raw land and developed land being subdivided into multiple parcels.
- Looking to address a subset of parcels where the issues are.
- Choose tree size to be measurable and consistent with scenic roads bylaw. Disturbed earth is already a process used by the town and engineering firms.
- Exempted certain lots like small lots.
- Discussed property classification codes (2,800 open spaces lots are prohibited).
- Described requirements for undeveloped lots. Choose 70% to be harmonious with the water resource district, which is 2/3 of
- Described requirements for developed loans that are subdivided or reconfigured into multiple lots
- Described exemptions

11.3 is the existing earth removal language. Prohibits owner from turning their property into a quarry. Limited cubic yard of material.

11.4 Application, review and decision relating to land alteration. And notification process for when a permit is submitted.

Peter Pescatore/Tom Callahan discussed rules and regulations to implement the new bylaws.

Questions about blasting, severability.

Article 28: Sunset the Senior Multifamily Residential Overlay District. Zero applications over the last nineteen years, and the language cannot sunset as intended.

Lee Jenkins moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting to approve Articles 20-24 in the form presented in the current warrant. Second Fran Collins. All members present voted aye.

Mary McGoldrick moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting to approve Article 28 in the form presented in the current warrant. Second Helene Lieb. All members present voted aye.

Jeanne Astino moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting to approve Article 25 (use variance) in the form presented in the current warrant. Meg Wheeler seconded. All members present voted aye.

Helene Lieb moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting to approve Article 26 (land alteration) in the form presented in the current warrant. Second Mary McGoldrick. All members present voted aye.

Jean Healey Dippold moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 27 (senior overlay) in the form presented in the current warrant. Helene Lieb seconded. All members present voted aye.

Helene Lieb left at 8:27pm

Article 16 – Town Hall Article

Schematics

Phil Lehr of the Town Hall Committee opened. Mark Cameron presented on the schematics of the Cohasset Town Hall. Evaluating existing programming to put together schematics. Presented site plan. Had make stairs to go the basement, so needed two forms of egress.

There was a question about the basement level and how to get that functional. Not a big cost savings and reduced head count in Town Hall. Did not seem very effective. The basement full occupancy with offices did not seem to be a good idea. Deleting square footage that was not costly square footage – it is cheaper square footage. The efficiency wasn't there, saved a couple of hundred thousand. Did not save where those people would go. Seemed like a wash after you priced it out. Architecturally it took away from the design.

Program study is what drives the building. Current issue is what is lacking is meeting space that we don't have. Bathrooms, flow and flexibility, and updated systems and insulation.

Ran through eliminating square footage, not a big cost savings there. Seemed follow.

Jon with Verteux, the project manager for the town.

What is would cost to renovate the existing building and bring it up to code – Jason F. and Carolyn Coffey looked at cost estimates from past work and projected the renovation cost of the Annex/Renovation of the existing cost would be \$9,675,000. \$3.5 million more to build a new building.

Helene Lieb rejoined the meeting.

Financing Plan:

Don Piatt/Chris Senior presented on the financing, starting with an assumption that the town hall would cost a total of \$13.5 million. Plan then is:

- CPC Funding = \$ 4 million. Assumes CPC will provide \$4 million (the majority of which would be a loan from future CPC funds)
- Remainder then would be \$9.5 million, start date – Spring 2022.
- Project Paydowns (over 3 years)
 - Green Energy - \$500k
 - Free Cash - \$1 million
 - Proposal to repurchase previously-approved capital items and attempt to seek MBSA, CARES Act and/or American Recovery program money for: \$750k air handlers for the school and \$50K wood shop air filtration. They don't have the exact guidance for us, waiting for information.
 - Remainder would be \$7.2 million (assuming they get the above \$2.3 million), which means debt service - \$7.2 million. If 25 years at \$404K, if 30 years at \$464K.

Discussion about the above followed, including:

- Without debt exclusion, would be at Special Town Meeting and doing entire borrowing authorization. Not going to the ballot.

- Still need to work with the financial advisors, certain requirements to prevent borrowing up front.
- The 750K would be wrapped into this project.
- \$19 million over 30 years.
- \$400 to \$450 seemed to be reasonable.
- We may get a premium on the bond and would go to the project cost.
- Question as to how to pay for that \$450k each year in the Town's operational budget:
 - Take some money from new growth, such as \$50K to build into the debt service budget.
 - Different way of funding OPEB,
 - maybe fund with total free cash,
 - maybe additional revenues.
 - Will be a juggling act but still think it's a reasonable way.

Advisory Committee made comments - including concerns or support for the financing proposal, need to renovate.

Mary McGoldrick moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 16 in the form presented in the current warrant. Mary Wheeler seconded. Meg Wheeler – aye, Mary McGoldrick - aye, Helene Lieb- aye, Lee Jenkins – nay, Jean Healey Dippold-nay, Jeanne Astino – aye, Fran Collins - aye

Article 3: Water Rate Restructuring

Open votes left – water and sewer, open issues on a couple of others. There is the budget. Sewer – average is \$21 a quarter.

Rate increase doesn't represent a big delta.

Helene Lieb moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 3 (Water Rate Restructuring) in the form presented in the current warrant. Seconded by Jean Healey Dippold. All members present voted aye.

Article 4: Sewer Rate Restructuring

Rate increase doesn't represent a big delta. Haven't had an increase in awhile, so now we are paying a large increase (10%) and is just enough and doesn't cover projected capital costs. Discussion about recommendation statement.

Mary McGoldrick moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 4 (Sewer Rate Restructuring) in the form presented in the current warrant. Seconded by Lee Jenkins. All members present voted aye.

Article 7: Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal 2021

Appropriation is for Transfer PEG Access Funds to Cohasset 143TV and Adjusted Debt Payments (for last Town Hall project, Bound Brook).

Mary McGoldrick moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 7 (Supplemental Appropriations) in the form presented in the current warrant. Seconded by Lee Jenkins. All members present voted aye.

Article 7: Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal 2021

Appropriation is for Adjusted Debt Payments (for last Town Hall project, Bound Brook) for Capital Stabilization to the General Fund. We owe \$127K, plus an additional \$200K for prior town hall planning.

Helene Lieb moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 7 (Supplemental Appropriations as to Ad) in the form presented in the current warrant. Seconded by Mary McGoldrick. All members present voted aye.

Article 11: Allocations of Funds for One Time Cost

\$40K appropriation is for Field/Tennis Court study and design. Question about whether salaried personnel can do this work. Possibly, but they don't have time. Note that field space is really need.

Mary McGoldrick moved for Advisory Committee to recommend to Town Meeting that it approve Article 11 (in revised form) in the form presented in the current warrant. Seconded by Helene Lieb. All members present voted aye, except for Lee Jenkins who voted for all, except the tennis and field court study.

Other Business:

Discussion about upcoming meetings, request to get school committee documents and backup by Friday.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Lee Jenkins, Second by Helene Lieb, All members present voted aye.

Adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

/s/ Jean M. Healey Dippold