

Town of Cohasset
Zoning Bylaw Working Group - Master Plan Implementation Committee
May 19, 2021 – Virtual Meeting via Zoom

A meeting of the Zoning Bylaw Working Group was held at 12:00 pm on May 19, 2021 virtually on Zoom.

In attendance were:

Katie Dugan, MPIC representative
Cassie Malatesta, MPIC representative
Tom Callahan, Planning Board representative
Woody Chittick, Zoning Board of Appeals representative
Peter Pescatore, Open Space & Recreation representative
Paul Colleary, Planning Board representative
Jack Creighton, Cohasset Select Board representative
Jen Oram, Assistant Director of Permits & Inspections

Absent:

John Hallin, Building Commissioner & Zoning Officer

The meeting was called to order at 12:07 pm.

Minutes

The working group approved the Zoning Bylaw Working Group minutes from April 26, 2021.

Updates

Annual Town Meeting

The working group quickly discussed preparations for ATM on Monday, May 24th. Katie Dugan will follow up with Chris Senior to confirm final logistics. The working group agreed to submit presentation slides from update to the Select Board as the documents for projection at ATM. Jack Creighton will follow up with chair of the Advisory Committee to confirm remarks being made on Article 26 – Land Alteration.

Pre-Grant Application

Katie Dugan gave a brief overview of the pre-grant application submitted by the Town on April 1st as part of the One Stop for Growth grant program. The committee discussed the grant application for recodification of the zoning bylaws.

- **Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Recodification** - The Zoning Bylaws were first adopted circa 1955 & underwent major rewrites in 1969, 1978 & 1984. In between and since the major rewrites, there have been piecemeal revisions/new sections introduced throughout the years. Some of the bylaws are outdated/are inconsistent with current best practices relative to smart community growth & planning. In addition, the fragmentary nature of the updates over the years have resulted in inconsistencies across sections of the bylaws. The Town has identified opportunities and challenges related to existing bylaws and has tasked a Zoning Bylaw Working Group of the Master Plan Implementation Committee to further explore priority zoning issues. The working

group has identified the following two paths: 1) continue to revise and “operate on an old patient” by targeting both clean-up of identified issue items while also adopting new updates to be consistent with the Town’s our future development goals or 2) undertake a major recodification to start anew. The Town recognizes that to be successful in such a major undertaking will require consultant expertise to vet and help professionalize the work of the Zoning Bylaw Working Group.

The committee discussed the pros and cons of involving a consultant in the redraft of the zoning bylaws. Tom Callahan and Jack Creighton both expressed concerns that the Town retain ultimate control over the changes made to the zoning bylaws. Katie Dugan advocated that third-party consulting resource would provide much needed external validation of the efforts of the working group but also expertise and assistance in public forums needed to generate community buy-in to the zoning changes. The group agreed that proceeding forward with grant application and hiring of consultant should proceed. The total cost of the project will need to be assessed and potentially additional funding will be required at STM in the fall.

Affordable Housing Steering Committee

Katie Dugan and Woody Chittick will be meeting with the Affordable Housing Steering Committee (AHSC) on Tuesday, May 25th to review the draft ADU recommendations. The hope is this conversation will provide initial thoughts and feedback regarding changes to the Accessory Dwelling Bylaw but also offer an opportunity for the Zoning Bylaw Working Group to introduce itself to the AHSC.

Draft Planning Board Update

The working group reviewed a draft of an update to the Planning Board regarding residential zoning recommendations. The presentation includes sections on ZBWG goals, observations on residential benchmarking, data analysis of Cohasset’s RA, RB and RC districts, preliminary recommendations related to residential zoning, discussion of proposed comprehensive redraft & reorganization of the zoning bylaws, and next steps to be taken by the working group and the Planning Board.

Katie Dugan will revise the presentation based on comments from the working group and asked Woody Chittick to provide final editing and proofing the week of May 24th. The final presentation will be distributed to the Planning Board and Zoning Bylaw Working Group no later Friday, May 28th so the committees have a chance to review in advance of the meeting.

The presentation to the Planning board was scheduled for Wednesday, May 26th. However, given the busy agenda with several public hearings the working group is recommending that the discussion with the Planning Board be moved to a separate meeting on Wednesday, June 2nd. Katie Dugan will confirm the change in scheduled meeting date with Lauren Lind and chair of the Planning Board. She will post as a joint meeting between the two committees.

Administrative

The working group agreed that the next regular committee meeting will be on Wednesday, June 9th at 2:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Documents

ADU Recommendations_Final Edits_05.14.21

Cohasset Pre Grant Application NOI_Draft_03.20.21

Wellesley Rules & Regulation re: Adequate Ways

ZBWG Bylaw Changes_Notes as of May 2021

Articles 25, 26, 27_ATM PDF

ZBWG Update to the PB_Draft_05.26.21