

**River Road Study Committee
Zoning Subcommittee
March 28, 2016**



MEETING NOTES

Committee Members

Select Chair Ben Franco
Dick Benka
Alan Christ
Chris Dempsey
Steve Heikin
Brian Hochleutner
Yvette Johnson
Ken Lewis
Wendy Machmuller
Hugh Mattison
Tom Nally
Marilyn Newman
Mariah Nobrega
Charles Osborne
Linda Pehlke
Bill Reyelt
Daniel Weingart

Subcommittee Members Present: Ben Franco, Dick Benka, Steve Heikin, Yvette Johnson, Hugh Mattison, Marilyn Newman, Linda Olson Pehlke, Bill Reyelt, Mariah Nobrega and Daniel Weingart

Staff: Andy Martineau

Guests: Betsy Dewitt

Materials: Agenda, draft minutes, Massing PowerPoint, 40R PowerPoint and supplemental handouts

Committee members met from 8:15 to 9:30 am

1. Review and Approve Minutes

- Minutes from February 16 were approved as amended.

2. Review Preliminary Massing Concepts Developed by the Architecture Subcommittee

- Andy Martineau gave an overview of two preliminary massing concepts developed following input from the full committee, architecture subcommittee and finance subcommittee. The massing images showed several views from different angles, including Washington St, Brookline Ave, and River Road.
- The architecture subcommittee developed several guiding principles for the site including, porosity, taller first floor heights, first floor setbacks, and preservation/enhancement of the town easement as a public space. They also attempted to step the building massing down towards the LMA in an effort to minimize shadow impacts on Village Way.
- Both the finance and architecture subcommittees agreed that a 10-12K floor plate is a desirable minimum threshold in order to have an efficient floor plate for the uses being proposed by the Committee.
- Parking is challenging on the site because it would have to be structured and therefore is very inefficient given the narrow lot widths.

Questions/Comments:

- The next presentation should include pedestrian level views of the massing
- Design guidelines will be very important for this district given its proximity to the Muddy River, Emerald Necklace and because it is a gateway to the town
- The hotel should be setback more from Washington Street and Brookline Ave

River Road Study Committee

Zoning Subcommittee

March 28, 2016

- Staff is working with the Claremont team on the setback issues the Committee has conveyed at previous meetings
- Shadow impacts need to be analyzed and displayed
- Side yard setbacks are challenging here
- Could there be opportunities for shared parking space between buildings?
- There should be more green amenities incorporated into the district
- Entering and exiting vehicles from the hotel parking could be challenging for pedestrians
- The columns shown on the lower level of the massing are not desirable and could limit open sidewalk space

3. Presentation and Discussion of Proposed Uses

- Andy Martineau stated that a few committee members have inquired about the feasibility of creating a 40R district as it could be a way to offset some of the costs of residential development on the site. Andy stated that there are some important nuances to 40R that need to be understood.
- Bill Reyelt, provided an overview of the State's 40R smart growth zoning program which is intended to incentivize increased density through mixed use developments in transit-rich areas with an emphasis on creating more housing, including affordable housing. The program has been in existence for several years and has produced a number of projects across the state. Municipalities are eligible for incentive payments based on the creation of a 40R district and density bonuses for additional residential units produced in excess of what could be built under a municipality's baseline zoning. The dollar amount varies based on the size of the district and the number of residential units built. One of the goals of 40R is to also streamline the permitting/approval process, so special permits cannot be required and you cannot incorporate other requirements like age restrictions. The key to a successful 40R district besides location is the creation of specific, all-inclusive design guidelines and a more robust site plan review process.

Questions/Comments:

- What is the minimum density requirement?
- 20 units per acre
- Does the housing created via a 40R have to be in the 40R district?
- All residential units must be on site
- Are the 40R and 40S payments ongoing or one-time payments?
- The 40R payments are one time. 40S payments are ongoing, but are based on a formula and funding from an annual appropriation from the state
- 40R is something that the town should consider for future development sites that are larger than the one the RRSC is exploring
- The town will likely consider 40R as a tool following the completion of the Housing Production Plan and Strategic Asset Plan

Next Steps:

- Andy to work with architects to revise massing concepts and to create pedestrian-level views of the massing.

River Road Study Committee
Zoning Subcommittee
March 28, 2016

- Andy to review shadow impacts and begin discussing more specific design guidelines with the architecture subcommittee.
- Andy to follow up with Claremont on their progress of refining the hotel design to incorporate larger setbacks where possible.
- The full Committee needs to consider additional refinements to the massing schemes so they can advance specific scenarios to the third party financial consultant that the town is in the process of hiring to evaluate.