

**HARVARD PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
January 29th, 2024
APPROVED APRIL 22, 2024**

Chair Richard Cabelus called the open meeting to order remotely at 7:00pm, pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023, which has suspended the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings at publicly accessible locations and allowing all public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Members Present: Richard Cabelus, John McCormack, Doug Thornton, Stacia Donahue, Richard Abt (associate member)

Others Present:

Frank O'Connor (Town Planner), Taskina Tareen, Jon Trementozi, Kevin Chong, Matthew Littell, Brian Creamer, Erin McBee

Ayer Road Vision update for UTILE

The Planning Board started their meeting by having Taskina Tareen share her screen to start the presentation. Taskina Tareen and her team addressed the Board with the new materials and findings they had ready at this time. Currently, the Project is more than halfway through phase two. There are also currently three test sites: 204 Ayer Road, 285 Ayer Road, and 325 Ayer Road. Taskina Tareen and her team planned on addressing the Board together by dividing the discussions into five specific areas:

Development Feasibility, Assumptions, and Parameters

Jon Trementozi addressed the Planning Board on this topic, starting with the team's scoring system for the strengths of each type of land use. These uses were scored from strongest to least strong in the following order: residential, medical offices, industrial/manufacturing, office, and retail/restaurant.

Development Test-fit Materials (for 3 sites)

Kevin Chong shared three scenarios for a potential residential use of this land. These scenarios included: neither water nor sewer and relied on wells, an extension of the water main down Ayer Road, or both sewer main and water main extended down Ayer Road. Kevin Chong and Matthew Littell then showed some potential graphics of what the intended residential lot could look like for each parcel when using these three scenarios.

Potential Costs and Revenues Generated for each Scenario

Jon Trementozi shared the analysis of the results and the potential total values of each site if they were to move forward with these plans with one of the given water related scenarios previously presented.

Town Fiscal Impact Analysis

Jon Trementozi then shared the net fiscal impact that is expected for the next 20 years and the takeaways that they had from this. The largest, most dense scenarios are the most fiscally positive due to the expected families this would draw in over this time period. They also noted that both residential use and commercial use were not very different according to their analysis

Traffic and Transportation Impact

Brian Creamer shared the findings for the possible changes that would take place regarding traffic and transportation in the Town of Harvard. While there would be an increase in traffic for two of the areas,

there could also be either neutral or decreases in traffic/transportation for the rest of the possible scenarios for each lot. One noted change that would have an impact would come from the additions of new pedestrian crossways.

Before wrapping up their presentation, Taskina Tareen then shared the UTILE Team's next steps which include the February 13th 2024 community workshop.

Planning Board Discussion:

- Richard Cabelus started the discussion by summarizing these findings and saying it looks like the best course of action for the Town of Harvard would be to create residential lots with this plan while also providing commercial use to maximize the lots potential.
- Stacia Donahue added that her takeaway focused on the necessity of town water and sewer being used in the plans.
- John McCormack asked for the reasoning behind the UTILE group choosing these three specific parcels.

Matthew Littell answered this by emphasizing the environmental constraints as well and the difficulty of specific lots when it comes to feasibility of developing on these lots.

- John McCormack also asked about the feasibility scores and questioned if the different categories should've been weighted differently due to the different level of importance for each category considered.

Jon Tremontozzi clarified that the team did not want to make this scoring system scaled, so instead, created an overall list of potential concerns and factors that the residents of the town would be concerned about when it comes to the reasons for or against the potential land uses.

- John McCormack would also like a sensitivity analyses used for the Land Residual Analysis for the potential land values.

Jon Tremontozzi agrees with this and clarified that there are many different variables already with the current amount of scenarios being covered, but assured that this can happen as the group's plans start moving into a specific direction concerning their future phases.

- Erin McBee commented that the analysis is very helpful and the purpose of the presentation was a good start for the Town's future plans while working with the UTILE group.
- Stacia Donahue added that if it is possible, the Board should work to be more favorable to the agricultural and farmland areas of the town. Stacia Donahue cited the close proximity of these new residential lots to the agricultural parts of the town while commenting this.
- Richard Cabelus added his hopes for some commercial spots for restaurants, bed and breakfasts while also mentioning the potential for medical offices. Richard Cabelus also noted the changes happening in other towns and cities close by and how Harvard could adapt to these changes in their own fitting ways.
- Stacia Donahue asked if there is a cost increase from going from a Stretch Code to a Specialized Stretch Code.

Matthew Littell clarified that the cost of this is different depending on the type of project.

Adjournment:

Motion: Stacia Donahue made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:36pm.

Seconded by John McCormack

Voted yes by: John McCormack, Doug Thornton, Stacia Donahue, Richard Cabelus

Passed unanimously

