

# Annual Report of The West Boylston Planning Board Fiscal Year 2009

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The Planning Board consists of five (5) members, who are elected for five (5) year terms. In the period from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009, the Board held seventeen (17) regular meetings, three (3) public hearings and six (6) continued public hearings. The Board did not meet in executive session during this year.

## Subdivision Control

The Planning Board signed two (2) plans for dividing lots that we certified as ANR (Subdivision Approval Not Required) plans.

One Preliminary Subdivision Plan was filed for a subdivision on Fairbanks Street. This plan proposed to divide the land into nine (9) lots for the construction of eight (8) new single family homes and shows approximately twenty-two (22) acres of Open Space to be preserved under a Forestry Management Plan. Though a public hearing is not required by law for a Preliminary Plan, the board asked the applicant to notify abutters so that they could attend the open meeting and express any concerns. The board approved the Preliminary Plan on November 12, 2008 and signed the approval on December 10, 2008. A Definitive Subdivision Plan must be filed and approved before any subdivision or land or construction takes place.

The roadways in the previously-approved Century Farm subdivision, Olde Century Farm Road and Garside Drive, were accepted by Town Meeting on October 20, 2008.

The Worcester Corporate Center subdivision approval, which was originally issued in October of 1990, was once again extended. The approval is now valid until February 1, 2012.

## Site Plan Review

While new construction slowed during this fiscal year, the Planning Board continued to work on Site Plan Reviews, which is required under Section 3.6 of the town's zoning for many commercial, industrial, and multifamily building projects. In addition to Site Plan Review, a Special Permit from the Planning Board is required for specific uses.

Four (4) new Site Plan Review Applications were received in this fiscal year. Two (2) of these new applications included requests for Special Permits for a Wireless Communications Facility, both of which were for co-locations on existing towers. Verizon was approved for a co-location on the Beaman Street tower on February 25, 2009. Omnipoint received their approval for a co-location on the Lawrence Street tower on October 8, 2008. Metro/PCS was also approved for a co-location on the Lawrence Street tower in September 2008, completing the application process that was begun in the last fiscal year.

The third new Site Plan Review application concerns the expansion and re-configuration of the parking lot at Wachusett Plaza (currently anchored by Salter College) on West Boylston Street. The Public Hearing for this application was opened on May 13, 2009 and the Site Plan was approved on June 24, 2009.

The American Red Cross Chapter Headquarters on Century Drive submitted a Site Plan Review Application late in the fiscal year to expand their parking lot. The Public Hearing on this amendment to an approved plan was scheduled for July 2009.

The Oakdale Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center project in Oakdale and Ernie's Car Wash on Route 12 were completed this year. Both projects submitted their As-Built Plans and Certificates of Completion were issued.

The Site Plan Approval for Honey Dew Donuts on West Boylston Street was extended at the request of the applicant until March 10, 2010. The applicant later appeared before the board requesting that the Site Plan be used for a Dairy Queen or other fast-food restaurant. The board agreed that the Site Plan was still valid as long as the nature of the proposed business did not change. The Gerardo's Business Center on West Boylston Street was also granted an extension to their Site Plan Approval until October 2009 when construction must begin to keep the approval valid.

While As-Built Plans were received for the Gates Brook condominium project in March of 2007, the requested corrections at this site have not been made and the project is incomplete.

## Zoning Bylaws

No changes to the Zoning Bylaws were proposed during this fiscal year. However, several changes were discussed by the Board during the year. Some of the topics of discussion were: a wind turbine bylaw, changes to the sign bylaw, a change to expand the number of habitable buildings per lot under certain circumstances, limited site plan review and cluster zoning. Many of these proposals are still under discussion. Public Hearings are required before any proposed changes can be brought to Town Meeting.

## Other Activities

In an effort to clarify and streamline the procedures for having roadways accepted by Town Meeting, the Planning Board drafted the *West Boylston Street Acceptance Procedures* and sent them to the Board of Selectmen for their approval. Since both the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board have responsibilities in this area, the procedures must be adopted by both boards.

Expedited Permitting as defined in M.G.L. Chapter 43D was a topic of discussion at several Planning Board meetings. The board reviewed the history of permitting by the Planning Board and prepared statistics for the Economic Development Task Force to use. Our records indicate that over 60% of the Site Plan Reviews between 2002 and 2009 were approved within 60 days of the opening of the public hearing. The board also attended a Board of Selectmen's meeting where representatives from the Commonwealth were present to discuss the requirements of the program.

The board met with members of the West Boylston Water District to discuss locating wind turbines on Water District land. Brad White from the Municipal Light Plant joined the board for a discussion of a solar-field to be located on MLP land on Shrewsbury Street.

We continued to work with the Town-Wide Planning Committee (TWPC) to implement the Master Plan. Board members also served on the Housing Partnership, the Economic Development Task Force, Open Space Implementation Committee, the Transportation Committee, Bylaws Committee, Earth Removal Board and Community Preservation Committee.

## Finances

The Planning Board continued to serve the town with no funding from the town budget during Fiscal Year 2008.

## Board Members

John Baker left the board in April after his term expired. The Town benefited from his extensive professional experience in site development and the board expresses our thanks for his experience, knowledge and forthright demeanor. Patrick McKeon joined the board upon his election in April.

During this year, Ms. Halpin served as Chair and represented the Board on the Bylaws Committee and the Housing Partnership. Mr. Salate was elected Vice-Chair, served on the Community Preservation Committee and represented the town at the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Paré was elected as Clerk and representative to the Town Wide Planning Committee. Mr. Vignaly was elected Treasurer and represented the Board on Open Space

Implementation Committee. Mr. Baker was the Board's representative to the Earth Removal Board and the Economic Development Task Force.

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence E. Salate, Chair

Patricia A. Halpin

Patrick J. McKeon, III

Karen Fenerty Paré

Vincent P. Vignaly