

Walsh Property Community Planning Committee (WPCPC)
Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2022 | 6:00 p.m.



Members Present

Co-Chairs Paul Wisotzky and Fred Gaechter; Members Morgan Clark, Eileen Breslin, Raphael Richter, Jane Lea, Russ Braun, Betty Gallo, Steve Wynne, Jeffrey Fischer, Christine Markowski, Todd Schwebel

Members Absent

Kenneth Oxtoby; Craig Milan is resigning; Violet Rein

Also Present

Sophie __; Brian Boyle; Mark Gebhardt; Denise Nover; Anne Greenbaum; Allie Koch, Sharon Rooney, Gordon Leedy (Tighe & Bond); Carole Ridley

Welcome, Roll Call and Agenda Review

Co-chair Wisotzky read the remote meeting access instructions.

Co-chair Gaechter read the roll call and committee members present identified themselves.

Co-chair Gaechter led discussion of the minutes of October 26, 2022. Member Fischer requested minutes be revised to reflect finalization of planning principles that the committee will be operating under. Motion to approve meeting minutes as revised by Member Fischer, seconded by Member Gallo. Unanimously approved. Tonight's agenda was reviewed.

Public Comment

No additional public comment.

Posting for Vacancies

Alternates and others in the community may apply for open positions.

Master Planning Discussion

Member Gaechter dedicated a moment to reflect on the meaning of meeting consensus. A consensus can be declared when all members can accept the general document or idea (at a point in time when members generally agree on a certain iteration) with the understanding that there will be progress and future work to refine the document, idea, etc. Voting is the default if a group doesn't meet consensus. In the case of WPCPC planning principles, co-chairs and members have declared consensus on the general principles that will be used and refined moving forward.

Ms. Ridley provided a brief overview of the last meeting and general agreement to move forward with discussions for Area A & B. There is potential to provide additional acreage to the Truro school should they require future modifications. Questions to keep in mind for today's discussion include: 1. What do you envision on site? 2. What kinds of uses do you want to see in (re)developed areas? 3. What questions still need to be answered to determine site planning scenarios? The conversation can start with the big picture idea, and refinement of design scenarios can be fine-tuned based on water and wastewater availability/connections, community preferences, etc. Ms. Rooney shared four conceptual plans with the committee. She noted that each concept includes an approximately 7-acre area for potential school renovations or additions, and areas for recreation.

- Concept 1) Consists solely of single-family units, ¼-acre lots, 1.5 story buildings, 1800sf with one car garage. A total of 57 units. Includes possible school-shared access point and Walsh Way access.
- Concept 2) Higher density with range of residential uses. Total of 28 live-work units, two story uses 2400sf in size, and 80 attached single family dwellings. Total 108 units. Includes dashed line for potential emergency access via Short Lots Lane.
- Concept 3) 78 Garden Apartments, 3-stories, average 850sf, town houses 2-story (94 total) and single fam (210 total potential residential units).
- Concept 4) front of site/redevelopment area 26-27,000 sf or commercial area, 81 townhouses, and 42 attached single fam units for a total of 123 residential units.

Ms. Rooney noted that in all design concepts, units and access/egress can be mixed and matched. Ms. Ridley noted that ownership styles can differ, too (rentals, management companies, privately owned subdivisions) and can be configured in a number of ways. Mr. Leedy noted that the last 3 concepts show a large development area to the SE of the site with significant topographic change that would require subsurface investigation to determine if it could be altered for development. He also noted a brief conversation with Scott Horsley who has completed an analysis of the site and identified a potential for ~200 units on the site using an advanced wastewater treatment system without overloading nitrogen standards for the resource area.

Concept Review & Feedback

Member Wynne inquired on wastewater treatment – would the site support 200 units with a traditional system, or 400 units with IA? Response: Scott H. estimated 200 units is the higher limit. An advanced system to limit nitrogen loading would be proposed. There are several alternatives or advanced treatment systems/septic disposal systems that could be utilized. Future discussions with Scott should include a discussion of limitations of WW generation on site, as well as residential vs. commercial water/wastewater use.

Member Markowski raised concerns for 200 additional units representing ¼ of town living on the Walsh property and raised traffic and density questions. Is there an opportunity for housing for the elderly? This project shouldn't change the character of Truro. There are 2,000 year-round residents, this would be for year-round housing, and an increase by 200 – 400 people is significant.

Co-chair Gaechter reminded WPCPC of options for mixture of housing. Ms. Ridley reminded that not all housing units would be developed at once, they can be phased. Mr. Leedy noted a master developer may design and install an access road and/or infrastructure from the get-go, and other developers may design and install the units. Three developers could work here at the same time on different types of houses. This plan can be configured with loop roads or cul-de-sacs with clusters of homes around them.

Some members were surprised at the low density in Concept 1. Wouldn't two access roads from Route 6 make sense if there was residential and commercial development? Mr. Leedy noted that the concepts are intended to illustrate different access options. Town might have access on Short Lots Lane, however, it's steep and narrow. Might only be good for emergency access. Subdivision standards call for max cul-de-sac length of 1000ft. The loop roads would provide multiple ways around the site. Other Members agreed with access issues, as access is an issue throughout town; even emergency access is inadequate. From a planning standpoint, flatter topography near Route 6 is more accessible. Members inquired on financials (sale housing, rental housing, cost per unit). Further discussions are TBD. Ms. Ridley noted future outreach to developers on is planned. Members inquired about public health, water supply, etc. Children and elders need to be taken care of, and intergenerational conversations should be maximized. 3-story garden apartments or 24-unit buildings proposed are the highest density concept. Mr. Leedy noted higher density is more affordable.

Member Gallo noted status of the HPP – 260+ units needed by 2035, but there was no discussion on putting all these on one property. Area B requires further evaluation to determine water supply needs.

Density Discussion

There was agreement by some members that higher density is needed on the Walsh site to support severe lack of housing, however, a definition of desired “density” is needed moving forward. What does “density” mean? Some members expressed comfort with higher density development for workforce housing/affordable housing; however, concerns remain with road access, getting out on Route 6 and potential impact of 3-story options. Member Richter reminded folks that WPCPC is an advisory committee, and housing has been at the forefront of community’s mind, especially with updated HPP determining over 200 units are needed. The WPCPC is to be responsive to the community and bring ideas back to the people to respond to. Generally, members were pleased with the option to mix and match units to meet various population types if preferred, with different ownership options. Members discussed concerns with traffic, and pedestrian/foot traffic involving the school.

Other ideas raised for a community building/area on site included features such as pocket parks, communal BBQ pits, a shared/communal kitchen, artist studio, community building, or shaded areas that could be built into loop street areas. Carving out spaces for recreation and community gathering are important. Co-Chair Gaechter noted that the HPP will provide insight on specific needs, and master planning should build to address needs, not to arbitrary numbers.

Future Discussions – Funding, Grants, and Power of the Community Voices

Mr. Leedy noted ongoing research into ownership opportunities and tax credit options available to finance a portion of development. The master planning team is getting their bearings on financials, while the WPCPC determines who should be accommodated on site. Member Gallo provided insight that \$800,000 went into Clover Leaf, calculated to be approximately \$20,000 per unit. \$1 Million came from the state, with funds to follow.

Areas of Agreement/Consensus

Generally, there is agreement to use Area A as primary development area for now, pending discussions for Area B and resolution of water supply needs.

Public Outreach

Member Markowski suggests a partnership with the Library for upcoming outreach event (4-5:30 pm) so kids can be involved, a dinner is too much to prepare in such a short amount of time. Meeting with Friends of the Library this week to discuss a cookie exchange & beverages at school. Members Clark and Fischer offered help. Hoping to have big maps to draw on, similar to LCP event.

Public Comment

Anne Greenbaum – very excited about the upcoming outreach event. Agrees that determination of density is TBD. The event is a great opportunity to have some visuals to show folks what a town house, 3-story, single family, etc. looks like, and provide a colorful, easy way to engage people and get feedback on possible concepts. The LCPC envisioning outreach was completed in 2-3 weeks, so this upcoming event can be marketed quickly, too.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn meeting as written by Member Gaechter, by Member Wynne, seconded by Member Markowski. All in favor. Adjourned at 8:04pm.