

September 21, 2016

Board of Selectmen
Wayland, MA 01778

To Board of Selectmen:

In accordance with the mission and mandate of the Wayland Housing Partnership (WHP) to advise you on affordable housing development proposals, on September 13, 2016 we met with Steven Zieff, the developer of the proposed Brookside Development (Mahoney's site) on Route 20. All members of our committee were in attendance at this regularly scheduled meeting: Mary Antes, Joanne Barnett, Kathy Boundy, Rachel Bratt, Chris Di Bona, Pat Harlan, Stephanie May, Marty Nichols, and Armine Roat. Also attending was, Jennifer Steel, WHP representative to Municipal Affordable Housing Trust; and about 18 Wayland residents. [Please note that as of September 14, 2016, Marty Nichols, who was appointed to WHP as a representative of the Wayland Housing Authority (WHA), has resigned from the Housing Partnership. I have asked the WHA to consider appointing Jennifer Steel in Marty's place.)

In keeping with the WHP's mandate to promote affordable housing, and consistent with the Wayland Housing Production Plan's goals to provide: (1) a range of housing opportunities to households at a full range of income levels; (2) more than the minimum number of affordable housing units required; and (3) housing units that are affordable to households at lower than 80% of area median income (AMI), the members of the WHP recommend that the proposed Brookside Development be modified to include:

1. **More affordable units.** While the developer indicated that his proposed plan will provide the minimum number of affordable units (i.e., 25%, as required by Chapter 40B), WHP feels that given Wayland's well-documented needs, development of this property offers an opportunity for the Town to negotiate a greater number of affordable units.
2. **More deeply affordable units.** Some of the affordable units ought to be designated for households earning less than 80% of AMI. Again, our understanding is that the developer plans to seek renters of the affordable units who earn the maximum allowed, 80% of AMI, not households with lower incomes.
3. **More multiple-bedroom units among the affordable units.** The developer indicated that only 2 of the 6 projected 3 bedroom (BR) units would be rented at an affordable level. In order for this development to be truly aimed at providing family housing, more 3 BR units should be offered, including more affordable 3-BR units. Units with 2 BRs could only be occupied by one or two adults, plus a maximum of 2 same-sex children. Units with more than 2 BRs would provide more opportunities for families.

In addition, WHP members concur that:

4. The developer should set aside dedicated and high quality indoor and outdoor community/recreational space that will be supportive to family living.

5. The development should not be age-restricted.
6. The developer should set aside adequate funds to cover future monitoring costs of the development, to assure compliance with affordability requirements. Further, the monitoring agent should be local, such as the Wayland Housing Authority.
7. The developer's proposal for building rental units, rather than condominiums, is appropriate.

In support of the above points, we reference several relevant passages from Section II, "Affordable Housing Goals" of the recently BOS-approved (August 2016) Housing Production Plan (emphasis added):

"The Board of Selectmen is committed to making substantial headway in ***providing opportunities for people of low- and moderate-income to live in Wayland*** and meeting the Town's and Commonwealth's goal of 10% affordable housing..."

"The goals of Wayland's housing plan are to: ***Meet local housing needs along the full range of incomes to promote diversity and stability of individuals and families...***

"To the greatest extent possible, at least fifty percent (50%) of the units that are developed on publicly-owned parcels should be ***affordable to households earning at or below 80% of AMI***—the affordable units – and at least another 10% affordable to those earning up to 120% of AMI – moderate-income "workforce" units – depending on project feasibility. ***Rental projects will also target some households earning at or below 60% of AMI and lower***, depending upon available subsidies..."

"The Town will continue to work with private developers to fine-tune proposals to maximize their responsiveness to community interests and ***increase affordability to the greatest extent feasible.***"

Thus, the Town's most up-to-date written statement on Affordable Housing Goals is clear about wanting developers to go further than providing the bare minimum number of affordable units and only targeting households at 80% of AMI. With the Brookside Development poised to become the first 40B development to come before the Town since our Housing Production Plan was officially adopted, it is critical that we set the precedent of holding the developer to Wayland's vision, which is a standard beyond the minimum required under Chapter 40B.

There was quite a bit of discussion at our meeting with Mr. Zieff about the possible challenges presented by the development of this multi-acre parcel, which is in close proximity to Pine Brook and has historically operated under agricultural exemptions. We note that the proposed plan limits development for housing to only a portion of the section of the parcel between Boston Post Road and the brook, with none in the acreage south of the brook.

The WHP urges the Town to use its considerable leverage and to act upon the recommendations of our committee as the review process for this proposal continues.

We appreciate your consideration of our recommendations, which are consistent with Massachusetts law and the goals of Wayland's Housing Production Plan. Should you have any concerns or questions, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the above more fully.

Sincerely,

Rachel G. Bratt, Chair Wayland Housing Partnership
On behalf of the full committee