

Walsh Property Community Planning Committee (WPCPC)
Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2023 | 6:00 p.m.



Members Present

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

Members Absent

Jane Lea, Violet Rein

Also Present

Darrin Tangeman, Stephanie Rein, Consultants (Carole Ridley, Allie Koch, Sharon Rooney), Mark Gebhardt +1 (Christie); Amy Wolff, Beth C, Brian Boyle, Caller 01, Damion Clements, Daniel Mierlak, Geoffrey Doherty, Lindsey White, Chelsea A Loughran, Lucy Clark Mara Glatzel, Anne Greenbaum, Susan Areson, Truro Local Comprehensive Plan Committee (LCPC); Ron Fichtner, Sophie Mann-Shafir.

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 January 4, 2023. Motion to approve meeting minutes as written by Co-Chair Wisotzky, seconded by Member Wynne. Unanimously approved.

Tonight's agenda was reviewed.

Public Comment

Christie Griffin: Resident of Short Lots Lane and Quail Ridge neighborhood. There's a housing crisis in Truro, however, it's not a crisis for vacation home seekers or tourists; there needs to be a distinction between the two. Vacancies within Town programs and departments prove this. Town needs to attract and keep quality candidates. How will we ensure "affordable" units will remain affordable and accessible? This crisis is a community crisis. Great opportunity to make Truro a better place. There has been an increasingly contentious us-versus-them attitude. Encourages WPCPC to remain open to new ideas and perspectives.

Geoffrey Doherty: Property owner, abutter, part time resident. Recognizes access via Short Lots Lane was discussed. Can the Town use a Private Road for access? Co-chair Gaechter provided concise response: it was reported by Town Staff on 1/4/23 that Town Counsel will not authorize access from private roads abutting the property.

Amy Wolff: Truro resident, North Pamet Road. Asked if "tiny home" were an option being considered for the site. This could give business to local carpenters or trades people. The property could provide hookups, which could remove financial burden/costs for new construction. This is a creative way to add more housing. Discussed intergenerational and co-housing options. Encourages the WPCPC to look at creative ideas outside of the box. This is an opportunity for community building. Habitat for humanity could operate well here.

Truro Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC)

Chelsea Loughran introduced herself as the current Chair of the Truro Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC). Committee's charge is to assist and coordinate with the Rec Director (RD) and make recommendations to engage citizens of all ages in Truro. RAC strives to support RD in efforts to broaden scope of the rec department to serve all ages, identify and advocate for passive and active recreation opportunities, capital projects, and programs. Additionally, RAC seeks to make recommendations to the RD for programs and special events, along with breakdowns of strategy and costs. Lastly, RAC seeks to complete an annual review of

program fee structures for non-revolving fund programs, hold public hearings, and recommend non revolving fund programs to the Select Board.

The RAC fully supports WPCPC decision to include housing on the Walsh site. Issues that the RAC are grappling with include the following: pending decision of a new DPW building; if the DPW stays in the same location a new well will be needed, eliminating Snow's field. This would eliminate the entire recreational space in Truro. The RAC has discussed the intersection of lack of staffing and funding for after school care with rec opportunities. Finally, RAC is considering ways in which a portion of the Walsh site could be used (active/passive) for recreational uses. The RAC is operating as if Snow's field will be taken off the table. Snow's Field is the primary outdoor field/recreational space for Truro athletics and recreation (+/-5 acres, field, parking area, field house). There's a challenge to meet after school care needs of the TCS community. Challenges such as recent cuts to Truro's after school program, after school activities meet 1x/week, and parent transportation of kids from TCS to Snow's Field are difficult. With additional field/recreation space at TCS, after school sports and recreation activities could be more widely offered as an after-care option. A portion of the Walsh site could include passive (walking/hiking, sitting/green space) and active (splash pad, skateboard park, tennis courts, etc.) to support the needs of the greater community. Due to the challenges in Town with respect to after school care, we are not maximizing the use of the Snow's Field because kids are struggling to get there, based on schedules, and other factors. If recreational space could be sited on the Walsh property, a lot of relief would be provided. RAC reflected on the need for a swimming pool, as young children don't know how to swim.

Truro Local Comprehensive Plan Committee (LCPC)

Ms. Rooney introduced Mara Glatzel, Chair of LCPC. Ms. Glatzel noted that the prior LCP was developed in 2005 and needs to be updated to reflect current issues and needs. LCPC has been working for several years but is now on a quicker deadline to prepare the plan. Ms. Glatzel called the LCPC meeting to order due to a quorum of LCPC members present. She discussed the draft vision statement prepared by the LCPC and asked for any comments. LCPC wants to ensure community conversations are respectful and constructive as the LCP development continues. Members commended LCPC for their work to date; the Truro Vision Statement is a great draft. Co-chair Wisotzky inquired whether the statement reflects a priority order and/or if goals will be sorted in some type of chronological order. The goal structure has been outlined by the CCC, and they will create goals in such a way that follows the CCC template. Ms. Rooney noted there is flexibility within the goals, objectives, and content of the plan itself. The Town can choose to order the plan as they see fit, so long as it meets the overall criteria for certification by the CCC. Co-chair called attention to the fact that the LCP planning aligns well with the Draft Housing Production Plan. A motion to adjourn LCPC meeting by LCPC member Richter, seconded by Ms. Greenbaum. All in favor.

Housing & Density Discussion

Ms. Ridley provided an overview of housing needs discussion. Informal survey to WPCPC members indicated 72% of respondents (11) indicated support for 60% to 100%+ of HPP need being met in Area A. With respect to households making above 120% of AMI, 61% (13) supported 50-150 units. 8% (1) reported they would prefer 0 units, 31% (4) had other ideas not identified. In regard to density, the majority (8/13 respondents) supported density range from 6-12+ units per acre. (2) responded 1-3 units/acre, (1) responded 3-6 units/acre, (2) responded other. The response to the questions affirms that majority of committee members are closely aligned with the housing proposal discussed at the last meeting for 60% of HPP need plus 100 market rate units. Members inquired on when we will converse with the abutting neighbors to discuss these ideas. Ms. Ridley clarified once the WPCPC draft master plan is developed, this will be brought to the community for extensive community and abutter feedback. There is an opportunity for early draft feedback to be incorporated into the plan. In order to come to consensus and advance the master plan work, it is critical to

make some decisions regarding the amount of housing in Area A. Ms. Rooney added that a traffic analysis cannot be completed without knowing the number of units. Co-chair Wisotzky noted that the WPCPC needs to have clarity on the numbers of units that will go on site so that the experts can review and return to the committee with solutions. He encouraged the group to come to consensus so that they can ask the consultants and experts to develop solutions.

Member Wynne discouraged the approach to aim for the highest number of units knowing that it will be reduced. Member Gallo indicated that it's reasonable to aim for the highest number because that's what needed. Member Gallo inquired on the ability to have a majority vote should consensus not be met. Co-chair Gaechter noted that if a consensus cannot be reached the WPCPC will default to a vote. A discussion ensued regarding a possible range of housing types and density. Member Clark made a motion to move forward with at least 60% of HPP need and 100 units of market rate units. Member Oxtoby seconded the motion. Discussion on the motion included whether a range of number of units should be considered, and traffic concerns.

Ms. Ridley provided committee members with a range of possible units per acre so that other, lower numbers of units such as 1-3, 3-6 units per acre could be considered and evaluated. Comparisons to Clover Leaf were discussed (4 acres, 39 units – 10 units per acre). Members discussed that we put all this money and all this time into this project so shooting for the lower range/end is not enough. After discussion, Co-chair Gaechter stated that the committee was unable to meet consensus, so requested a vote on the motion. Motion is for a proposal to meet 60% of the need specified in HPP (152 units) that would be in line with the HPP plus 100 units of market rate housing for a density of +/-9 units per acre in Area A. All in favor: Members Braun, Clark, Gallo, Oxtoby, and Schwebel, and Co-Chairs Gaechter and Wisotzky. Opposed: Members Breslin, Markowski, and Wynne. Passes 7 – 3.

Next Steps

Postpone discussion of recreational ideas brought up today and visual survey content at the next meeting as well as nonresidential uses (shared community spaces), and phasing.

Public Comment

Mark Gebhardt: Asked for more detail on neighborhood impacts from a higher density project? (Traffic, impact on abutting properties, tree coverage, setbacks)

Daniel Mierlak: Part time resident in Quail Ridge neighborhood. Inquired if WPCPC has taken field trip to a 9 unit/acre area. If the mandate is to solve the housing problem in the community, why shouldn't all units be affordable housing units? Why are the extra 100 market rate housing units included?

Ellen O'Connell: There are solutions to every problem, but solutions may be undesirable. The taxpayers will be paying for this project. How will taxed be impacted? Does master plan address all aspects (traffic, water, sewer, schools)? Will there be restrictions for Truro residency? Are there limits to living in Truro but working in Orleans?

Geoff Doherty: Seems like a network problem. There will be thresholds (via agencies, regulations, etc.) the sooner we get the outside resources involved, the better.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn meeting as written by Member Gaechter, by Member Schwebel, seconded by Member Fischer. All in favor. Adjourned at 8:15 pm.

