

Approved 8/9/2021

Town of Chelmsford, MA  
Joint Meeting of the Select Board and Planning Board  
May 13, 2021  
Virtual Meeting

**Members Present from the Select Board**

Virginia Crocker Timmins, Chair  
Kenneth Lefebvre, Vice Chair  
Mark Carota, Clerk  
George Dixon, Board Member  
Patricia Wojtas, Board Member

**Members Present from the Planning Board**

Tim Shanahan, Chair  
Mike Raisbeck, Vice Chair  
Nancy Araway, Clerk  
Henry Parlee, Board Member  
Paul McDougall, Board Member  
Deirdre Connolly, Board Member  
Mike Walsh, Board Member  
Erica Clifford, Associate Planning Board Member

**Also Present:**

Paul Cohen, Town Manager

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Timmins called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and read aloud the following announcement:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020, Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, General Law, Chapter 30A, §18, and subsequent orders imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by a member of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Town's website, at [www.chelmsfordma.gov](http://www.chelmsfordma.gov). For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch the meeting may do so by accessing the Chelmsford Telemedia website at [www.chelmsfordtv.org](http://www.chelmsfordtv.org). No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real-time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the Town's website. In order to minimize distraction and undue influence on the Board's deliberations, it is our practice to disable the Zoom chat function. If you have joined the Zoom meeting and will be speaking during an appropriate agenda item, please unmute your microphone and turn your camera on during that segment only. The Zoom raise hand function is also available for the Zoom participants' selection.

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Road, Chelmsford, MA. The meeting was recorded by Chelmsford Telemedia.

**2. PRESENTATION FROM TRAMMELL CROW RESIDENTIAL REGARDING REDEVELOPMENT OF FORMER UMASS LOWELL WEST CAMPUS AT 255 PRINCETON STREET**

Andy Huntoon, Managing Director at Trammell Crow Residential stated they had been working on the site for a couple of months and had some exciting ideas they wanted to share with the Select Board. David Hedison, Executive Director of the Chelmsford Housing Authority & CHOICE (Choice Housing Opportunities for Intergenerational and Community Endeavors), addressed the Board and said they were entering the project in partnership with the Stratford Capital Group. He said the Stratford Capital Group was a national development firm focused on affordable housing and the Chelmsford Housing Authority had a successful relationship with them in the past.

Mr. Huntoon shared examples of other developments (40-B) and expressed the importance of having a lot of community space including clubhouses, fitness centers, wi-fi areas, and lounges. He added the units themselves had stone countertops, faux hardwood flooring with ample lighting.

Mr. Hedison shared a slide that depicted a 58-unit (1, 2, & 3bedrooms) building which provided opportunities for a range of households, as an example of what would be developed here.

Mr. Hedison said for the 116 units they were able to secure approximately \$2.3 million in Community Preservation funds and were also able to bring in well over \$18 million of private funding from the state and federal government. He said the 116 unit development was currently fully occupied and was a bit different from what was being proposed at the UMASS West Campus Site as it would be for seniors.

Mr. Huntoon explained that all of the buildings on the 34-acre piece of land had been demolished. He said they wanted to leave as much undeveloped land as they could and also wanted to stay away from the wetlands to retain the natural beauty of the site. He also said the plan was to build a variety of different housing that would meet a variety of different needs within the community. Mr. Huntoon explained Trammell Crow would be responsible for building the driveway and there would have to be an on-site sewer system installed, and a stormwater management system would be designed and noted the CHOICE project would benefit from that.

Mr. Huntoon said the CHOICE piece of the project would be a three-story elevated building with approximately 54-units within a 30% to 60% range of affordable housing for aged 62 plus. He also said a little bit further into the site would be approximately five townhouse units on each side of the drive, then another 48-units, and finally the larger suburban garden four-story elevator service buildings.

Mr. Huntoon said the proposed development would have a total of 394 housing units that would be split between senior, affordable, and a variety of AMI's, as well as townhouses, three-story walk-up buildings, and traditional four-story market-rate buildings.

Mr. Hedison said one of the things that he really liked about the proposed site was that green space would remain on the site.

Melissa Robbins, representing the legal team for the project, explained the existing zoning regulations for the proposed project would not work. She said to develop a project such as the one proposed she would suggest a new overlay. She also said it may qualify under the new economic development legislation of 2020 which might change the voting threshold at Town Meeting to a simple majority.

Select Board Member Lefebvre asked Mr. Hedison if the housing project would only be available to Chelmsford residents. Mr. Hedison replied 70% of the 54-units would likely have a preference for those who live or work in Chelmsford. He added 8 to 16 of the units would be set aside as units with rental assistance from his office.

Select Board Member Wojtas asked if the clubhouse facilities would be available to everyone including the CHOICE residents. Mr. Huntoon replied each building would have its own residential facility and the open space would be open to all.

Planning Board Member Raisbeck asked how large the sewer system would be. Mr. Huntoon replied On-Site Engineering had already performed multiple test kits to examine the soil. He said the system would be large enough to accommodate all of the units, including the CHOICE units. He added the exact location had not yet been determined. Mr. Huntoon noted that once the system was built and commissioned there was a state-mandated escrow account that they would have to pre-fund for replacements reserves to maintain the plant.

Planning Board Member McDougall asked if a traffic study had been done. Ms. Robbins replied they would be looking at the traffic patterns in the area but were trying to determine what the total number of units would be and if they had the Town's support.

Select Board Member Carota asked if the freshwater would be coming out of North Chelmsford. Mr. Huntoon replied his team had spoken with Superintendent Harper of the North Chelmsford Water District and there were no issues raised.

Select Board Member Carota asked how landscaping and snow removal services would be shared between Trammell Crow and CHOICE. Mr. Huntoon replied there would be snow storage areas designated on the site and they would likely use the same contractors and Trammell would likely be responsible for taking care of the landscaping.

Planning Board Member Shanahan asked if there would be other entrances and exits on the site. Mr. Huntoon replied that for the time being there was one entrance into the property.

Planning Board Member Shanahan asked how long Trammell planned on keeping the property. Mr. Huntoon replied Trammell planned to be a long-term holder; approximately 10 to 15 years.

Select Board Member Dixon stated his biggest concern was that Chelmsford residents be given preference over out-of-town individuals.

Planning Board Member Parlee asked what percentage of the full project would be affordable housing and how much was counted towards the Town's 10% requirement. Ms. Robbins replied it was approximately 13% and all of the Chelmsford Housing Authority units would count towards the inventory but the entire site would not. He asked that an "As-of-Right" plan be made available.

Planning Board Member Connolly asked if the roads and driveways in the proposed development would all be private. Mr. Huntoon replied that was correct. She asked if the walking trails would be

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available to non-residents. Mr. Huntoon replied that was something they were open to looking at, particularly where the undeveloped land around the wetlands was located.

Planning Board Member Connolly asked how much the units would cost. Mr. Huntoon replied a studio would be in the \$1,700 - \$1,900 per month range, one-bedroom units would be a little bit more than that, the two-bedroom units would be in the low to mid \$2,000 per month range, and the three-bedroom units would be in the upper \$2,000 per month range.

Planning Board Member Araway stated she felt neighbors would have concerns with the proposed four-story buildings. Mr. Huntoon replied he welcomed abutter comments and wanted to be good neighbors.

Chair Timmins asked if there were any history from Trammel's developments regarding what percentage of the units ended up housing families with children. Mr. Huntoon replied he did not have exact numbers but it would be an intergenerational campus with a senior component. He said while there would be children, it was not the targeted market.

Community Development Director Belansky commented that the proponents were looking for conceptual support or interest in discussing the proposed project further. He said it would require a Town Meeting rezoning.

Manager Cohen commented the original concept was to provide housing for the community of people who wished to stay in the community but no longer needed a large, single-family home. He said he did not see ~~was~~ how it connected into the adjoining neighborhoods, for example with sidewalks. He said he did not see what the proposed development offered to the greater community as well as those that lived on the site.

Ms. Robbins said if there were general support from both Boards they could schedule a site walk and discuss what the structure would look like for Town Meeting.

Chair Timmins suggested that there should be an early public input session scheduled to hear from community members.

Chair Timmins took a poll of the Select and Planning Boards to indicate support of the proposed project moving forward as follows:

#### Select Board

Board Member Lefebvre:	Interested
Board Member Wojtas:	Interested
Board Member Carota:	Interested
Board Member Dixon:	Interested
Chair Timmins:	Interested

#### Planning Board

Board Member Parlee:	Interested
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Board Member Raisbeck:	Interested
Board Member McDougall:	Interested
Board Member Shanahan:	Interested
Board Member Connolly:	Interested
Board Member Araway:	Interested
Associate Member Clifford:	Interested

Note: Planning Board Member Walsh had left the meeting at the time of Chair Timmins poll.

Mr. Belansky said his recommendation was that the staff work with the proponent to develop a timeline/action plan moving forward.

**MOTION:** Select Board Member Lefebvre made a motion to adjourn at 7:45PM. Planning Board Member Raisbeck seconded the motion.

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**DOCUMENTS:**

**ALEXAN CHELMSFORD – SELECT AND PLANNING BOARD PRESENTATION – 20210513**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE: MAY 24, 2021**