

LAND USE, PLANNING AND ZONING

REPORT OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

In addition to administering the Town's Farm Preservation Bylaw, the Agricultural Commission (AC) works to encourage the continued pursuit of agriculture in Weston, promote agricultural economic opportunities in Town, mediate, advocate, educate and/or negotiate on farm issues, preserve prime agricultural lands and pursue all initiatives appropriate to retaining farming in Weston. The Commission consists of six residents, the majority of whom are substantially engaged in the pursuit of agriculture.

The Agricultural Commission met six times during the year and met with the Board Selectmen on several occasions to advise and support them in negotiating the grazing license for the Alpaca Project on Town land.

As required in the Town's Farm Preservation Bylaw, the Agricultural Commission prepared a notification form to be mailed to all residents of the Town informing them that Weston is farm friendly and upon sale or rent of their property, residents need to inform newcomers of that fact.

As an outreach to the farms of Weston and neighboring towns, a potluck supper was held at the Elliston Farm in August and celebrated a time honored custom of hospitality.

As the year ended, plans were being made for a collaborative event to raise awareness and interest in responsible landscaping including reduction of pesticide and fertilizer use and protection of soil and water resources.

Finally, the Weston Agricultural Commission participated in a workshop for educating and empowering the Commission members in the region to be aware of resources and services available to them in the pursuit of their work.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF APPEALS

The Town of Weston adopted its first set of zoning regulations in 1928. Since that time, the Zoning By-Laws have been amended periodically to promote the health, safety, convenience, morals and welfare of the citizens of the Town. The zoning regulations provide for certain building restrictions, and it is the role of the Board of Appeals to determine whether relief from these restrictions is warranted in certain situations. To that end, the Board of Appeals hears and makes decisions on applications for: variances from zoning restrictions; findings for the reconstruction, alteration or extension of a pre-existing, non-conforming structure or lot; special permits; Comprehensive permits, and appeals of the decisions of the Building Inspector.

Variances: A property owner may petition the Board of Appeals for relief from the Zoning By-Law's building restrictions. The Board of Appeals will publish a legal notice of the petitioner's request, notify the petitioner's abutters, and hold a public hearing on the matter. A variance may be granted only upon the petitioner demonstrating that:

- Special circumstances relating to the soil conditions, shape or topography of the land or structures make the literal enforcement of the zoning regulations a substantial hardship;
- Desirable relief may be granted without detriment to the public good; and

- The granting of the variance would not nullify or substantially derogate from the intent of the Zoning By-Laws.

Satisfaction of these three legal requirements must be made at the public hearing before the Board of Appeals will grant a variance request. The Board makes a written decision which is then filed in the Town Clerk's office.

Findings: Many of Weston's properties were developed and built prior to the current Zoning By-Law's adoption. These older properties may be deemed pre-existing, non-conforming structures and lots. Although they are "grandfathered," any property owner seeking to extend, alter or reconstruct the buildings must petition the Board of Appeals for a finding that the proposed addition or change will not be more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. This procedure requires published legal notice, notice to abutters, and a public hearing in much the same manner as a variance request. The Board of Appeals files its written decision with the Town Clerk's office.

Special Permits: Special permits may be granted for a variety of exceptional uses of property as described in the "Use Regulations" section of the Zoning By-Law. Special permits are granted for uses which are in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning By-Law and may include conditions, safeguards and limitations on time. Examples of special permits are those granting the operation of summer camps and the conversion of a residential dwelling to include an accessory apartment.

Comprehensive Permits: In 1969 Massachusetts enacted the "Anti-Snob Zoning Act," allowing for the override of local zoning legislation, in order to construct low and moderate income housing. A developer seeking to build such housing appears before the Board of Appeals with an application for a comprehensive permit. This process is handled similarly to other requests before the Board, with the exception that these requests typically require multiple hearings before a decision is reached, due to the complexity of the Comprehensive permit process.

The Board of Appeals typically meets twice a month, and in the past year heard approximately sixty cases. One application for a Comprehensive Permit was approved by the Board; Weston's affordable housing stock is currently at 3.5%. The volume of cases has remained consistent with previous years. The Board's hearings are public and notices are mailed to legal abutters. Notices of hearings are posted at the Town Clerk's office and on the Town website. The Board makes every effort to consider the opinions of the petitioners, their neighbors, and other interested Town entities such as the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen, the Historical Commission, the Conservation Commission, the Board of Health, the Building Inspector and the Town Engineer.

Assistance: Assistance with applications and questions related to the Zoning Board of Appeals may be directed to the office in the Town hall.

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) evaluates proposals submitted by Town boards and committees or community groups for use of funds that the Town receives pursuant to Article 31 of the Town By-Laws and the state Community Preservation Act (CPA) which the Town accepted in 2001. The Act provides for a participating town to adopt a property tax surcharge up to 3% with the State matching the local receipts. The Town of Weston voted in 2001 to surcharge up to the 3 % maximum.

In October the Town received its sixth disbursement from the State's matching Community Preservation Trust Fund. The State continued to match at the 100% level with the FY08 amount of \$1,404,486 based on total net local receipts of \$1,404,486 recorded in FY07. It is estimated that at the end of fiscal year FY08 (June 30, 2008), the Town will have received a total of \$15,510,837 in local and state revenue, exclusive of investment income.

Pursuant to the CPA legislation, a community must spend, or set aside for future spending, a minimum of 10% of annual CPC receipts on: open space (excluding recreational purposes), historic preservation, and community housing. The remaining 70% of funds, the so-called "unreserved funds," may be allocated to any one or a combination of the three main uses, including public recreational purposes, at the discretion of the CPC and subject to the approval of Town meeting. Up to 5% of the annual CPA funds may be spent on the operation and administration costs of the CPC.

At the Annual Town Meeting on May 7, 2007 and the Special Town Meeting on November 28, 2007, the CPC presented its recommendations for FY08. Appropriations approved by Town Meeting were as follows:

Administrative Allowance	Operating Expenses	75,000
Open Space	Debt service on Sunday Woods	307,500
	Open fields restoration, 4th phase	
	20,000	Playing fields
		1,000,000
Historic Resources	Rehabilitation of Fiske Law Office - Supplemental Funds	28,000
	Rehabilitation of Melone Homestead- Supplemental Funds	85,000
	Feasibility Study -Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library	35,000
	Feasibility Study -Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library (STM)	50,000
	Evaluation of Old Library for Archives	2,500
Community Housing	Brook School Apartments debt service	305,049
	Affordable Housing Consultant-Phase II	20,000
	Staffing Assistance -Community Housing	10,000

Several of the projects voted at the May 2007 Annual Town Meeting are underway. Construction documents are being finalized for the Fiske Law Office and Melone Homestead rehabilitation projects. The Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library Committee has selected an architect and is reviewing proposed space layouts for the Tavern and the Old Library in consultation with Historic New England. The committee plans to hold informational meetings to show residents the proposed plans and to provide a forum for the committee to answer questions about the project. The exterior renovation of the JST, funded prior to town meetings, is completed.

The following table shows CPC fund revenues and appropriations through FY07:

<u>CPA FUND - REVENUE AND APPROPRIATIONS THROUGH FY07</u>					
	<u>FY03</u>	<u>FY04</u>	<u>FY05</u>	<u>FY06</u>	<u>FY07</u>
<u>Community Preservation Act -</u>					
<u>Revenue</u>					
Prior Year Balance	<u>931,777</u>	<u>1,832,972</u>	<u>3,285,506</u>	<u>4,396,304</u>	<u>5,668,766</u>
Property Surcharge	<u>1,042,135</u>	<u>1,123,880</u>	<u>1,186,916</u>	<u>1,315,380</u>	<u>1,404,486</u>
State Match	<u>935,343</u>	<u>1,051,629</u>	<u>1,122,336</u>	<u>1,189,089</u>	<u>1,315,380</u>
Investment Income	<u>8,141</u>	<u>16,750</u>	<u>117,960</u>	<u>320,375</u>	<u>663,8081</u>
Donations/Other	<u>2,821</u>	<u>2,145</u>	<u>23,713</u>	----	
Total Revenues	<u>2,920,217</u>	<u>4,027,376</u>	<u>5,736,432</u>	<u>7,221,148</u>	<u>9,052,440</u>
<u>Use of Community Preservation</u>					
<u>Funds</u>					
<u>Open Space Allocation</u>					
Balance - beginning of fiscal year	<u>93,212</u>	<u>239,101</u>	<u>123,101</u>	<u>-6,149</u>	<u>1,351</u>
Appropriation not used					<u>18,330</u>
New allocation	<u>180,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>800,000</u>	<u>1,200,000</u>
Open Space subtotal	<u>273,212</u>	<u>459,101</u>	<u>343,101</u>	<u>793,851</u>	<u>1,219,681</u>
Less: Appropriations for					
Debt Service - Sunday Woods	<u>-34,111</u>	<u>-336,000</u>	<u>-329,250</u>	<u>-322,500</u>	<u>-315,000</u>
Field Restoration	----	----	<u>-20,000</u>	<u>-20,000</u>	<u>-20,000</u>
Dupont/Nicholas Land	----	----	----	<u>-450,000</u>	---
Playing Fields	----	----	----	----	<u>-600,000</u>
Case Estates Consultants	----	----	----	----	<u>-85,000</u>
Balance at end of fiscal year	<u>239,101</u>	<u>123,101</u>	<u>-6,149</u>	<u>1,351</u>	<u>199,681</u>
<u>Historic Preservation Allocation</u>					
Balance - beginning of fiscal year	<u>93,212</u>	<u>58,212</u>	<u>53,212</u>	<u>33,212</u>	<u>53,212</u>
Appropriation not used	----	----	----	----	<u>182,666</u>
New allocation	<u>180,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>250,000</u>	<u>400,000</u>
Historic Preservation subtotal	<u>273,212</u>	<u>278,212</u>	<u>273,212</u>	<u>283,212</u>	<u>635,878</u>
Less: Appropriations for					
787 Boston Post Road	<u>-155,000</u>	----	----	----	----
Mill Dam, 39 Crescent Street	<u>-60,000</u>	----	----	----	----
809-811 Boston Post Road	----	<u>-225,000</u>	----	----	----
Melone Homestead	----	----	<u>-240,000</u>	----	----
Fiske Law Office	----	----	----	<u>-230,000</u>	----
Central & Farmers' Cemeteries	----	----	----	----	<u>12,500</u>
412 Highland Street	----	----	----	----	<u>200,000</u>
823 Boston Post Road	----	----	----	----	<u>250,000</u>

1 \$164,248 of this amount, attributable to the Case Estates debt service, will be subject to an IRS penalty of \$110,000(FY07) 5 years after the land purchase.

<u>Balance at end of fiscal year</u>	<u>58,212</u>	<u>53,212</u>	<u>33,212</u>	<u>53,212</u>	<u>173,378</u>
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Community Housing Allocation

	<u>FY03</u>	<u>FY04</u>	<u>FY05</u>	<u>FY06</u>	<u>FY07</u>
<u>Balance - beginning of fiscal year</u>	<u>93,212</u>	<u>273,212</u>	<u>333,212</u>	<u>190,212</u>	<u>186,491</u>
<u>New allocation</u>	<u>180,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>	<u>450,000</u>	<u>350,000</u>
<u>Community Housing subtotal</u>	<u>273,212</u>	<u>493,212</u>	<u>553,212</u>	<u>640,212</u>	<u>536,491</u>

Less: Appropriations for

<u>809-811 Boston Post Road</u>	----	<u>-160,000</u>	----	----	----
<u>Brook School Apartments</u>	----		<u>-363,000</u>	<u>-453,721</u>	<u>-420,307</u>
<u>15 Jones Road</u>	----	----	----	----	<u>- 83,000</u>
<u>Affordable Housing Consultant</u>	----	----	----	----	<u>-20,000</u>
<u>Balance at end of fiscal year</u>	<u>273,212</u>	<u>333,212</u>	<u>190,212</u>	<u>186,491</u>	<u>13,184</u>

Administrative Funds

<u>Allocated</u>	<u>59,500</u>	<u>44,000</u>	<u>60,000</u>	<u>120,000</u>	<u>116,000</u>
<u>Spent</u>	<u>-8,134</u>	<u>-20,870</u>	<u>-37,878</u>	<u>76,161</u>	<u>-40,000</u>
<u>Returned to unallocated funds</u>	<u>51,366</u>	<u>23,130</u>	<u>22,122</u>	<u>43,839</u>	<u>76,000</u>

Unallocated Funds

<u>Balance - beginning of fiscal year</u>	<u>652,141</u>	<u>1,262,447</u>	<u>2,775,981</u>	<u>4,179,029</u>	<u>5,427,712</u>
<u>New Unallocated Funds</u>	<u>1,388,940</u>	<u>1,490,404</u>	<u>1,730,926</u>	<u>1,204,844</u>	<u>1,317,674</u>
<u>Unexpended Administrative funds</u>	<u>51,366</u>	<u>23,130</u>	<u>22,122</u>	<u>43,839</u>	<u>76,000</u>
<u>Unallocated subtotal</u>	<u>2,092,447</u>	<u>2,775,981</u>	<u>4,529,029</u>	<u>5,427,712</u>	<u>6,821,386</u>
<u>Less: Appropriations for</u>					
<u>Open Space - Sunday Woods</u>	<u>-800,000</u>	----	----	----	----
<u>Fiske Law Office</u>	<u>-30,000</u>	----	----	----	----
<u>Historic Preservation - JST</u>	----	----	<u>-350,000</u>	----	<u>-360,000</u>
<u>Case Estates - Hillcrest Corridor</u>	----	----	----	----	<u>-2,920,000</u>

<u>Unallocated Fund Balance at end of FY</u>	<u>1,262,447</u>	<u>2,775,981</u>	<u>4,179,029</u>	<u>5,427,712</u>	<u>3,541,386</u>
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Total of all balances at the end of the Fiscal Year

	<u>1,832,972</u>	<u>3,285,506</u>	<u>4,396,304</u>	<u>5,668,766</u>	<u>3,927,629</u>
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REPORT OF THE CASE ESTATES BUILDINGS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CEBAC)

In November 2006, Town Meeting voted to purchase the 62-acre Case Estates property from Harvard University for \$22.5 million. The actual closing has been postponed due to the discovery of soil contamination, with remediation expected to begin in the spring of 2008. In connection

with the expected purchase, CEBAC was formed to recommend actions to be taken with regard to the three existing buildings on the property.

As directed by the Board of Selectmen, CEBAC looked for ways to balance the need to recoup all or part of the town's financial investment while providing for active reuse for these historic buildings compatible with the wishes of the townspeople. The committee includes designees of the Planning Board, Historical Commission, and Case Estates Review Committee, plus three additional members with expertise in real estate and financial analysis.

The buildings in question are as follows:

- On Lot 4, a 2-story frame schoolhouse (1910) and 1 ½-story yellow brick barn (1927). The red schoolhouse, originally called the clubhouse, was the headquarters for Marian Case's Hillcrest Farm, a unique enterprise that began in 1909 as an experimental farm and practical summer agricultural school for local boys. By 1920, Hillcrest had evolved into a regional horticultural center and the name was changed to Hillcrest Gardens. The Arnold Arboretum inherited the property in the 1940s and renamed it the Case Estates. Further information on the historical importance of Hillcrest to the Town of Weston can be found in Pam Fox's book *Farm Town to Suburb*. CEBAC treated the entire 1.6-acre lot as a single item in its financial analysis.
- On Lot 5, a late 18th century 2 ½-story frame farmhouse built for Thomas Rand Jr. on a 1.4-acre parcel.

All three buildings are located within the Case's Corner National Register Historic District.

Beginning in the spring of 2007, CEBAC considered possible outcomes for these buildings and performed an initial analysis of the financial consequences. Valuation assumptions were taken from the Summary Appraisal Report prepared by Crosswhite Property Advisors (October, 2006).

The following options were analyzed:

- Selling the properties outright to the highest bidder, resulting in the probable development of large new homes; CEBAC concluded that this outcome is not consistent with the town's stated goals in acquiring the Case Estates. However, the option was used as an economic benchmark for considering other alternatives.
- Selling the properties to private parties with preservation restrictions, in keeping with the town's interest in maintaining the historic appearance of the adjacent Case Estates land being purchased for conservation
- Keeping the properties under town ownership and renting them to private residents at market rates; the committee consulted with realtors on rental rate assumptions.
- Keeping the properties under town ownership and renting or leasing them to particular tenants who could take on much of the maintenance of the buildings and land in exchange for a lower rent; Land's Sake, which now leases nearby municipal purposes land, has expressed interest in such an arrangement. Land's Sake presented plans to the committee for a center for community education or suburban ecology institute, using the schoolhouse for classrooms, meeting space, offices and the barn for environmental programs geared toward school children, scouts, garden clubs members, and adults of all ages.

In examining rental and lease scenarios, CEBAC considered the possibility that the town might decide at a later date to sell the properties with restrictions, either for financial reasons or if

maintaining them as rental properties was found to be impractical. A twenty-year time frame was used for the analysis, and the committee left open the idea of selling the buildings after 20 years. The committee looked at the cost of keeping and renting the properties, funding this scenario using long-term bonds issued at the town's typical bond rates. Lease-to-buy arrangements were considered. The committee also examined estimates of the initial cost to the town for fixing up the three buildings in preparation for sale, rental, or lease.

CEBAC will present its recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in the spring of 2008, in anticipation of further public discussion.

REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission is responsible for the protection and management of Weston's conservation land and the administration of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

The administration of the Wetlands Protection Act continues to take over one half the time of the Conservation Commission. A total of 87 hearings were conducted during the year. Persons contemplating any work in or within 100 feet of a wetland, or within 200 feet of a stream which flows continuously throughout the year, should seek information about the Wetlands Protection Act at the Commission's office in the Town Hall.

During the past year, the Commission has remained committed to the responsible use and management of the Town Conservation land. Trails, fire roads, and hilltop outlooks have been maintained for public use and enjoyment with most of the funding provided by the Weston Forest and Trail Association. Fields throughout the Town have been mowed under contract by Land's Sake.

The Commission enjoyed another year of stewardship of the Case Estate's Forty Acre Field, which was purchased by the town for municipal purposes from Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum. This area has been managed for the Commission by Land's Sake. Land's Sake is a nonprofit, community service organization dedicated to the productive use and maintenance of land in Weston as well as providing education and employment for young people in Weston. Vegetables, flowers, herbs and fruit were provided for sale at a farm stand or on a pick-your-own basis. Maintenance of this area continued with brush clearing, mowing, walking path upkeep, and tree work. Land's Sake also continues to maintain the apple orchard on Concord Road.

The Greenpower Farm project continues to be a vital part of the Town's activities. This project is administered and paid for by the Conservation Commission and managed for the Commission by Land's Sake. Approximately 15,000 pounds of fresh produce was delivered at no cost to homeless shelters and food pantries. About 70 youngsters participated in this program. These young people received a practical introduction to organic farming and gardening. They were also involved in the distribution of produce to those who needed it. As in the past, land was also made available for community garden plots. Our popular maple syrup project was continued at the "sugar shack" at the Middle School. The Commission supported Land's Sake's involvement with environmental education projects which were conducted with the School Department.

A forest management plan has been implemented which now provides firewood and saw logs. By selective cutting and careful management, the Town's forests will ultimately be more productive and will provide improved wildlife habitat. Interpretive and signed trails are located on Conservation land off Crescent Street. Land's Sake has been granted a license by the Commission to occupy the Melone Homestead off Crescent Street. This property provides office space and living quarters for some of their staff. Land's Sake has built a greenhouse and storage

shed near the house. There are several fields and a developing sugar bush in the same area which is being used by Land's Sake in connection with the maple syrup project. This location makes an ideal home for Land's Sake and many of their activities.

The Commission has initiated a survey of the bounds of the land under its jurisdiction. This project will clarify the limits of the private land which abuts the conservation land in town.

REPORT OF THE CRESCENT STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Crescent Street Historic District is a Local Historic District established under MGL Chapter 40C and is the only such district in Weston. There are eight houses in the district. The Crescent Street Historic District Commission is charged with review of proposed exterior modifications of structures and other features located within the district, in accordance with Article XXIV of the Bylaw as enacted in 1993, provided that the changes are visible from Crescent Street. Of the five members serving on the Commission, three are district residents.

On August 7, in response to a request by the owner, the Commission met to review informally proposed changes to the residence at 10 Crescent Street, a property located within the District. The owner proposed to enlarge the ground floor area at the building's easterly end in order to accommodate a new playroom, and to increase the second floor area above the playroom for a master bedroom suite. The changes entailed modifications to the building's roofline and elevations visible from Crescent Street. On October 15, in response to a Request for Determination by the owner, The Commission met to review revisions to the drawings incorporating the Commission's suggestions. After deliberation and discussion of the owner's presentation, the Commission determined that the changes reflected the Commission's comments and were in keeping with the Colonial Revival style of the residence and voted 3-0 to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work.

REPORT OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Historical Commission is appointed by the Board of Selectmen to preserve Weston's architectural, cultural and landscape history and to educate the public about its value. The seven-member Commission formally meets every three to four weeks at Town Hall but members are also engaged in other aspects of the Commission's work throughout the year. With the resignation of longstanding former Chair, Judy Markland, the Selectmen appointed two new Co-Chairs: Marisa Morra for Demolition Delay activity and Gloria Cole for administrative matters. The following is a summary of the Commission's activities for 2007.

Demolition Delay activity

This was an exceptionally busy year for the Commission. Weston's Demolition Delay By-law requires that the Historical Commission review any demolition application for a building built prior to 1945 and to determine whether the proposed demolition would adversely affect a historically or architecturally significant structure. If the building is deemed significant and the proposed demolition detrimental, the Commission may impose a six-month delay on construction to try to find a way to save the structure while still fulfilling the applicant's needs. A delay may be lifted whenever the proposed demolition is no longer detrimental.

Summary of Demolition Delay Activity for 2007:

Applications received: 57 (a 32% increase from 2006)

Applications approved without meeting: 26 (a 7% decrease from 2006)
Initial Determination Hearings: 31 (a 106% increase from 2006)
Public Hearings to impose a six-month delay: 12 (a 600% increase from 2006)
Six-month delays imposed: 5 (a 250% increase from 2006 with one delay lifted (after one month))
One two-year building permit moratorium was triggered by the unauthorized demolition of a significant property.

The Commission revised and adopted a new Demolition Application Form in December to help clarify the process and provide the Commission with the information it needs to efficiently carry out its work.

Historical Markers

The Commission authorized six historical markers for pre-1945 houses which retain their architectural and/or landscape integrity and contribute to their neighborhoods. The cost of the marker increased this year to \$160 to cover expenses. The Commission is eager to enhance the visibility of significant properties throughout Weston.

Community Preservation Act / Preservation Restriction Committee

Projects and Activity

- The \$200,000 preservation restriction (approved at Town Meeting on May 8, 2006) for the Meadowbrook School's property located at **412 Highland Avenue** was returned to the Community Preservation Committee after the school declined to accept the proposed restriction citing concerns about the fiduciary duty of the school's board.
- Other Historical Resource Projects recommended by the CPC and approved by voters at town meetings this year include supplemental funds for the Fiske Law Office-\$28,000 and the Melone Homestead-\$85,000. A feasibility study was funded for reuse of the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library-\$50,000 as well as an Archives Study/Old Library-\$2,500.

Fiske Law Office and Melone Homestead Rehabilitations

The detailed design development for both Fiske and Melone has continued and preparation for construction bids is underway. This work includes HVAC, electrical, structural, foundation, plot planning, and septic systems. Budget increases were accepted by town meeting to cover recent construction cost increases as well as initially unidentified problems such as lead paint mitigation and possible roof replacement at Melone House. Weston Facilities Manager Jerry McCarty and the WHC Fiske and Melone Subcommittee are managing the construction phase.

Josiah Smith Tavern / Old Library Committee

Consulting architects, preservationists and restaurateurs (among others, including many community members) have provided support and practical information to the JST/OL committee as they struggle with the complex issues involved in revitalizing these historic structures with the best interests of the Town in mind. Strict Historic New England and Department of the Interior requirements for preservation and rehabilitation of the buildings add to the complexity of the project. Ensuring the financial stability of the buildings will be crucial to their maintenance and survival. The vision for the future of these buildings is to return the Tavern to its original use as a restaurant and tavern and transform the Old Library to a Town History Center and Archives with office and operations space for the Historical Commission, Weston Historical Society and Women's Community League. Progress is methodical but steady and continued, broad community support will be crucial to the project's success.

Historical Archives Committee

The Historical Archives Committee's ongoing efforts to improve archives preservation included the purchase of a fireproof storage cabinet for valuable and fragile documents in the Town Hall records storeroom. In January 2007 the Committee submitted their Historical Archives Committee Report to the Weston Historical Commission. The report provided a review of the 2006 archival survey, a comparison of archives in five other New England communities, as well as short and long term recommendations for three of Weston's historical archives collections: records storage at Town Hall, the Historical Commission, and the Weston Historical Society. The report concluded that a centralized repository is urgently needed for Weston's historical archives currently scattered in town buildings, with no location records or ways to track them, and with few, if any, environmental controls for preservation. An immediate recommendation from the 2006 survey - to identify the best place to store and make available Weston's archival collections - was acted upon through approval at the May 2007 town meeting of \$2,500 in CPA funds to hire another professional archivist to address this issue. Archivist Rachel Onuf was hired in August 2007. Her Report of a Space Assessment was received in October 2007 and distributed to members of the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library Committee, as well as to the architect who is conducting their feasibility study of active reuse of the two buildings. Ms. Onuf's assessment, which is also currently available on the town web site, concluded that the best space for Weston's historical archives is the space originally designed for records storage in the lower level of the Old Library.

Historic Area Designations / GIS Map - Historic Layer

Weston currently has eight National Register Historic Districts. No new districts were added in 2007.

Pam Fox prepared survey and "Area Forms" for the following historic areas around Irving Road, Viles St., Lantern Lane and Old Coach Road and also prepared Inventory Forms for Regis College.

Judy Markland and Pam Fox worked with Kevin Kirmelewicz, Weston's GIS Coordinator, to develop the historic layer of the town's GIS map. The locations of the town's historic areas and its National Register buildings are now shown on this layer and will soon be available online.

Educational Outreach

On May 14 & 15, the Historical Commission participated for the first time in *Town Government Day* to explain the workings of the Commission and the importance of historic preservation to all of Weston's third grade students. The Commission hopes to expand its outreach into the public schools by providing additional information and enrichment activities. Educational outreach projects about the National Register Historic District between the Josiah Smith Tavern and the Golden Ball Tavern as well as the Field School are in the planning stages.

The Commission authorized spending \$2500 for the conservation & reformatting of the **1798 Federal Tax Census** book (including tax and property records for Weston, Newton, and Waltham.) The book was scanned, images corrected and several archival quality DVDs printed so that the book may be used for research without being handled. DVDs will be available for research at the Local History department of the Weston Public Library some time in 2008. The Historical Societies of Newton and Waltham may be offered copies of the DVDs to help defray costs.

Commission members volunteered and provided support to the Weston Juniors whose **Holiday House Tour** on December 8th featured six important, pre-revolutionary private homes plus the Golden Ball and Josiah Smith Taverns. The tour sold out and all proceeds went to the Women's Community League Service and Scholarship Fund. Diana Chaplin, chair of this event, should be commended for focusing on the importance of these beautiful and inviting historic properties.



Awards and Honors

The Commission is honored to report that our consultant, Pam Fox, was awarded the Local Preservationist Award by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The award is given to an individual who has made an exceptional contribution to the preservation of his or her community. Pam's was the only individual award granted by the MHC this year. We're delighted that her efforts for the Commission, Planning Board, Open Space Committee, Historical Society, Case Estates, Golden Ball and more were recognized.



Appreciation

The Commission is very grateful to:

- **Ann Swaine** for her patience and persistence in administering the Demolition Delay Bylaw at Town Hall. With the increase in activity this year, Ann was a model of “grace under pressure.”
- **Pam Fox** for her many generous and good-natured contributions of time, energy, and expertise regarding Weston and its buildings.
- **Judy Markland** for her continued efforts on behalf of the Commission and the Town in spite of her “retirement.”
- **Susan Haber** for her tireless work on behalf of the Town and the Historical Commission, especially with the transition in leadership after Judy Markland’s resignation.

REPORT OF THE PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is responsible for the review of land division, either through construction of a subdivision road or, where sufficient frontage exists, through submission of an Approval Not Required (“ANR”) plan under the Subdivision Control Law. The Board also reviews and approves proposals for: (1) new residential development that is constructed on Scenic Roads and/or that exceeds a certain square footage, (2) commercial projects, (3) tree and stone wall removals/enhancements where they are or will be in the Town’s right of way on a Scenic Road, (4) long range planning activities including proposed amendments to the Zoning By-law (the “By-law”) and other land use regulations. In 2007, the Board held 33 formal meetings, numerous public hearings, and 18 site walks.

More specifically, in 2007, the Board:

- Reviewed and approved six Site Plan Approval Applications for new residential construction under the Residential Gross Floor Area (“RGFA”) provision to the By-law. Of these RGFA applications, four also qualified for review because of their location on a Scenic Road;
- Reviewed and approved five Site Plan Approval Applications for new residential construction under the Scenic Road provisions of the By-law;
- Reviewed and approved eleven amendments to previously issued Approvals under the RGFA and/or Scenic Road provisions of the By-law;
- Reviewed and approved one removal and rebuilding of a stone wall under the General Town By-law, the Scenic Road By-law;
- Endorsed 1 ANR plan under the Subdivision Control Law;
- Reviewed and approved two Flexible Development Subdivision plans;
- Reviewed and approved two proposals for a personal wireless telecommunications facility;
- Granted a Special Permit for a 69- unit Active Adult Residential Development (“AARD”);
- Reviewed and commented on an Environmental Notification Form (“ENF”) for a 1.69 million square foot mixed use development just over the Weston Town Line;
- Reviewed and granted Site Plan Approval for a single family affordable dwelling unit;
- Met with the Zoning Board of Appeals (“ZBA”) to discuss potential revisions to the By-law concerning the building of stone walls located in setback areas, in the Town’s right of way and/or along Scenic Roads, and the definition of the word “structure” as used in the By-law;

- Presented for approval at Town Meeting the rezoning of the parcels containing the Old Library and the Josiah Smith Tavern from Single Family Residence District to Business District
- Met with the Board of Selectmen numerous times to discuss the expected impact on Weston roads of increased traffic from proposed developments development in neighboring communities.

Approval Not Required Plans

A landowner with sufficient frontage as defined in the By-law may request endorsement from the Board for his/her subdivision plan. The Board endorsed one ANR plan under the Subdivision Control Law, which enlarged the parcel at 180 Ash by adding 156 Wellesley Street.

Site Plan Approval for Residential Construction

The Board reviewed and approved six projects that exceeded the RGFA for a house greater than 10% of its lot size or greater than 6,000 square feet (“SF”), four of which also are located on a Scenic Road. The Board reviewed and approved four additional projects proposed on Scenic Roads,² including both teardowns of existing smaller homes and new construction on vacant lots. In each case, the Board placed conditions on Site Plan Approval which included the elimination of excessive exterior lighting, modification of the elevation of the proposed house, maintenance of existing vegetation, addition of new vegetative buffers, reduction in the amount of impervious surface, and management of storm water. Additionally, the Board granted amendments to eleven properties that previously were issued a Special Permit or Site Plan Approval.³

Subdivision Approval

In 2007, the Board completed its review and approved the flexible development at 102 Ash Street. This plan proposed a three-lot subdivision that maintains the existing home fronting on Ash Street and adds two homes that exceed the RGFA. The septic system, location of the driveway for the existing home, and screening were among the issues addressed.

The Board finally completed its review and approved a three-lot Flexible Development Subdivision at 26 Love Lane. The initial applicant was unable to meet his obligations to the Trust, the owner of the parcel, which subsequently took over as the applicant. The plan will contain a shared septic system and stormwater management system along with a private road. There will be a substantial amount of stone retaining walls due to the change in grade on the parcel. Most of the buffer along Love Lane will remain and will be augmented with a large number of plantings.

² 536 North Avenue, 25 Ash, 81 A Brook (abuts Viles Street), 17 Silver Hill

³ 56 Chestnut St, 180 Ash St, 178 Merriam St, 805 Boston Post Road, 4 Deerpath,

64 Oak, 33 Skating Pond, 15 Dogwood, 63 Ash, 9 Drumlin, 118 Chestnut

Telecommunications

The Board issued a Special Permit to Omnipoint Communications, Inc., for a wireless communications facility on the roof of College Hall at Regis College. Because the parcel was located outside of the Personal Wireless Service Overlay District, the Zoning Board of Appeals issued a Use Variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals prior to issuance of a Special Permit by the Planning Board. The Board also issued a Special Permit to Nextel Communications of the Mid-Atlantic, Inc. to co-locate three wireless antennas on the existing "stealth" monopole at the Weston Police Station at No. 180 Boston Post Road By-pass.

Highland Meadows

In February, the Planning Board issued a Special Permit for the first Adult Active Residential Development ("AARD") constructed in Weston. "Highland Meadows," will be built on the 44-acre parcel owned by Highland Real Estate Development LLC, located between Highland Street and the Boston Post Road/ Route 20. The AARD is an alternative type of residential development allowed in Weston by vote of Town Meeting in May, 2005. Under the terms of the by-law passed at that time, and the Special Permit, an AARD is restricted to persons 55 years of age and older, and a minimum of 10% of the units must be "affordable" as defined by State regulation. The purpose of the AARD is to provide a maturing population with alternative housing choices that reduce the burden of individual property maintenance, to encourage flexibility in site planning, and to protect natural features and scenic views. Construction of the perimeter road began in early spring along with installation of the wastewater treatment plant and roadway utilities. Construction is divided into several phases with several building permits issued for Phase "A" buildings. Building Permits were issued for two model homes, the clubhouse, and several other detached condominium units. According to the approved Phasing Plan, the seven on-site affordable units will be constructed in Phase B.

As part of the Development Agreement for the AARD and a condition of the Special Permit, the Planning Board reviewed and approved the Site Plan for No. 45 Church Street, the off-site affordable unit to be constructed by Highland Real Estate Development. The proposal was reviewed by the Zoning Board of Appeals and was issued a Comprehensive Permit under the Local Initiative Program. Construction of the house will begin in spring of 2008. A deed restriction that ensures that the house remains perpetually affordable will be recorded with the State.

Traffic

The Planning Board, along with the Board of Selectmen, continued to study and formally express concern about the impact of traffic on Weston roads and the regional highway system from development in Waltham and proposed development along the Route 128 corridor from the Massachusetts Turnpike to Route 3. The Green Street proposal for 530,000 square feet of office and retail use combined with the proposal by the Related Company for 1.9 million square feet of mixed retail and office use at the former Polaroid site, will produce over 41,000 additional vehicle trips per day, on a highway system that is currently strained. Working with the Town's traffic consultant and legal counsel, the Boards have coordinated with the Mayor of Waltham and area legislators to continue to raise the issue of safety and capacity of the roadways with State highway officials through the Mass Environmental Policy Act ("MEPA") process.

Massachusetts Broken Stone Site

The 74 acre former Massachusetts Broken Stone site at No.133 Boston Post Road is currently owned by BP Weston Quarry LLC ("Boston Properties"). Boston Properties was issued a Special Permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals in December 2000 for construction of a 350,000 SF office building ("Weston Corporate Center".) Boston Properties has submitted an application for amendment to their Special Permit to the Zoning Board of Appeals with Site Plan Approval from the Planning Board. The Board has held two hearings and is in the process of reviewing the application. Changes requested by Boston Properties include reconfiguration of the building for a multi-tenanted facility, change to building cladding and windows, decrease in surface parking and increase in structured parking underground. The building size and total number of parking spaces remains the same. The Board requested updated traffic counts from Boston Properties for Route 20 which was reviewed by the Board's traffic consultant.

Long Range Planning Projects

Over the past year, the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals discussed and have developed a zoning amendment that adds a definition of "structure" to the Zoning By-law. Without a definition in the By-law, the Town defaults to the definition of structure in the State Building Code. The definition proposed by the Boards identifies those items that are prohibited from location in a zoning setback without a variance, such as a tennis court, swimming pool, or deck. A final recommendation will be made and a zoning amendment will be proposed for May Town Meeting 2008.

The Planning Board has discussed revisions to the By-law that would address questions of how the RGFA is calculated, whether certain types of spaces such as above-grade finished basements and certain types of finished attic space should be counted in RGFA calculations, and under what circumstances additions should be reviewed under the RGFA by-law. These discussions continue with other boards and the development community.

Members of the Board continue to meet informally with developers each week to answer questions about the By-law as it relates to their projects.

Input and Participation on other Town Matters

The Board remained involved in land-use and community development issues, including work with the Affordable Housing Consultant, hired by the Board of Selectmen, to study ways in which the Town can encourage the development of additional affordable housing.

The Board held a public hearing and made a recommendation at the Fall Town Meeting to rezone the parcels that contain the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library to a Business "B" district, as a step in furthering any future programs for these buildings.

Several discussions have been held with representatives of Harvard University regarding clean up of arsenic from the Case Estates property on Wellesley and Ash Street. The Planning Board has Site Plan Approval authority over removal of materials from the parcels. Issues for further discussion will be The Board of Selectmen has insisted that the site be freed of contamination

prior to Town purchase of the land. Removal of contaminated soil will necessitate Site Plan Approval by the Planning Board. Site Planning issues include truck access and egress, re-grading, method and extent of removal of trees and plants, storm water control during construction, and rehabilitation of the site.

The Town Planner is working on a committee with other Departments to update and broaden storm water regulations for the Town.

REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCIES

REPORT OF THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING COUNCIL

Created in 1963, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) promotes inter-local cooperation and advocates for smart growth by working closely with cities and towns, state and federal agencies, non-profit institutions, and community-based organizations in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston. MAPC strives to provide leadership on emerging issues of regional significance by conducting research, building coalitions, and acting as a regional forum for action.

MAPC is governed by 101 municipal government appointees, 21 gubernatorial appointees, and 13 appointees of state and City of Boston agencies. An Executive Committee comprising 25 elected members oversees agency operations. The agency employs approximately 40 professional staff under the leadership of an executive director. Funding for MAPC activities is derived from governmental contracts and foundation grants, and a per-capita assessment on member municipalities. MAPC has divided the region into eight sub-regions, which are overseen by councils of local leaders, with a staff coordinator who provides organizational and technical support.

Advancing Smart Growth

MAPC's **MetroFuture: Making a Greater Boston Region** initiative is planning for Metro Boston's growth and development through 2030. In 2007, the project involved nearly **1,000 people** (on top of the 4,000 who participated in previous years). MAPC presented the MetroFuture plan at a May 1 Boston College Citizen Seminar, where participants overwhelmingly voted to ratify it and work for its implementation. MAPC is now developing an implementation strategy, addressing public policy, public funding priorities, and changes in practice within the private sector. By mid-2008, MetroFuture will transition from a planning initiative to an advocacy program, uniting the efforts of MAPC, partner organizations, and the thousands of "plan-builders" in an effort to alter regional priorities and growth patterns consistent with the new plan.

As a member of the **Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance**, MAPC helped form the Transportation Investment Coalition. This group of business, environmental, public interest, and planning organizations is pressing for savings, efficiencies, and new revenues to address the state transportation finance deficit. The Alliance joined with others to advocate successfully for an increase in the Commonwealth's Bond Cap, increasing the resources available to address the state's capital needs. Through the Alliance, MAPC is also working to reform the state's arcane zoning laws through a new and diverse commission, chaired by Undersecretary for Economic Development Gregory Bialecki.

Collaboration for Excellence in Local Government

Through its **Metro Mayors Coalition**, MAPC helped 21 communities secure over \$2 million in **Shannon Grant funding** over the past two years to implement multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplinary strategies to combat youth violence, gang violence, and substance abuse. In 2007, Gov. Deval Patrick and more than 240 mayors, police chiefs, safety officials and violence prevention workers participated in the coalition's third annual Community Safety Summit to advance strategies to curb youth violence.

Cities and towns now have the option of joining the Massachusetts Group Insurance Commission (GIC) with a new law drafted by MAPC and the **Municipal Health Insurance Working Group**. This option will help communities save millions of dollars each year by taking advantage of lower insurance rates available through the GIC. MAPC facilitated the Working Group and helped to build consensus for the proposal. We are now providing technical support to cities, towns, and regional entities who are interested in joining the GIC.

MAPC collaborated with the Commonwealth's 12 other regional planning agencies, municipal officials and other local leaders to help produce "**A Best Practices Model for Streamlined Local Permitting.**" The result of dozens of focus groups and a statewide permitting survey, the document provides an array of recommendations that municipalities can consider to create a more clear, efficient and predictable permitting process without compromising local standards of development review. The guide is available at www.mass.gov/mpro.

Collaboration for Public Safety

MAPC performs fiduciary, planning, and project management duties for the **Northeast Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council (NERAC)**, a network of 85 cities and towns north and west of Boston. In 2007, MAPC helped to develop the School Threat Assessment Response System (STARS), an emergency planning toolkit for each school district in the region. With the assistance of MAPC, NERAC provided portable radios programmed for the Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network, enabling real-time radio communications among police, fire, and other first responders during major emergencies. In the past year, NERAC established an online information clearinghouse for police and fire departments, and began planning for emergency evacuations from a regional perspective. MAPC also helped NERAC to set up three regional crime mapping centers that use GIS to visualize crime data through maps.

MAPC completed **Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) plans** for nine communities in 2007, on top of the 20 completed in recent years. Each plan includes an inventory of critical facilities and infrastructure, a vulnerability analysis, and a mitigation strategy with recommended actions. MAPC will continue working with 46 cities and towns in 2008.

Collaboration for Municipal Savings

MAPC's **Regional Purchasing Consortia** administered six procurements for 42 cities and towns, saving communities up to 20% on purchases such as office supplies, paving services, and road maintenance. Similar savings were realized by the 300 agencies that participate in the **Greater Boston Police Council (GBPC)**, which is administered by MAPC. In fiscal year 2007, MAPC conducted seven procurements for various types of vehicles, including police cruisers and heavy-duty trucks. Overall, 187 municipalities purchased 329 vehicles at an estimated cost of over \$20 million.

Reliable Data, Available to All

Since its official launch in February, MAPC's **MetroBoston Data Common** online data and mapping tool has been used by dozens of constituents to create customized maps for developing

grant applications, analyzing development proposals, or improving services. You can create maps, charts, and graphs on the Data Common by accessing www.metrobostondatacommon.org. In addition to supporting this online tool, the Metro Data Center at MAPC responds to **data requests** from member communities, non-profit organizations, businesses, residents, students and other state agencies.

In the past year, MAPC used **visualization tools** that combine GIS technology, photography and graphic design to help increase community awareness about proposed zoning bylaws in Bellingham and Dedham, and to illustrate what different parts of the region would look like under **MetroFuture**.

Charting a Course to Regional Prosperity

MAPC developed its annual **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** (CEDS) for the region, in partnership with the US Economic Development Administration. The report contains an analysis of trends and conditions in the regional economy, highlighting challenges and opportunities. The economic analysis in the CEDS is targeted to front-line economic development staff working in the public and community-based sectors.

Working for 12 contiguous urban communities in the Metro Mayors Coalition, MAPC is developing an **inventory of potential development** sites near municipal boundaries to support coordinated planning. MAPC also developed the **Smart Workplace Project**, a GIS map of smart-growth friendly sites for commercial and industrial development throughout the region. In collaboration with the University of Massachusetts Boston, MAPC is taking a regional look at the **space needs of the life sciences industry**.

Working with the Immigrant Learning Center and the Commonwealth Corporation, MAPC convened academic, institutional and non-profit researchers to develop an **immigration research agenda**.

Getting Around the Region

Under its new **Regional Bike Parking Program**, MAPC negotiated discount group purchasing contracts with three leading vendors of bicycle parking equipment. This allows MAPC municipalities and other public entities to purchase discounted equipment and, in some cases, to receive state or federal reimbursement for the cost. Communities around the region have used the program to put new racks at schools, libraries, parks, and shopping areas. The program will continue in 2008.

In 2007 MAPC also began work on the **Regional Pedestrian Plan**. This plan will identify policies to make walking a convenient, safe, and practical form of transportation throughout the region. Proposed solutions will include best practices for local jurisdictions as well as steps that could be taken by the state or by the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

MAPC has developed a web-based **Parking Toolkit** that addresses common parking issues. Cities and towns can learn how to do a parking study, how to reduce parking demand and manage supply, how to make use of existing parking, and how to finance parking improvements. The Parking Toolkit is the first in a series of Sustainable Transportation Toolkit products that MAPC will develop over the coming years. Visit <http://transtoolkit.mapc.org> to access these tools.

On Beacon Hill: 2006 – 2007 Legislative Session

- **Municipal Health Insurance:** MAPC and the Municipal Health Insurance Working Group built consensus and drafted the new law allowing cities and towns to save millions of dollars each year by joining the Group Insurance Commission.
- **Shannon Community Safety Initiative:** Over the last two years, MAPC's advocacy and grant development services have helped nearly two dozen communities to secure over \$2 million in funding for interdisciplinary programs that focus on youth violence, drugs, and enforcement against gangs.
- **Statewide Population Estimates Program:** A \$600,000 line item in the 2008 budget will provide the State Estimates Program with more resources to prepare for the 2010 Census. This program will help correct the deficiencies of recent population estimates and to prevent similar deficiencies from occurring in 2010.
- **Surplus Land:** MAPC continues to advocate for passage of a new policy on the disposition of surplus state land. Specifically, we continue to build support for our proposal that encourages smart growth development on surplus land while giving municipalities a meaningful role throughout the disposition process.
- **Community Preservation Act:** In 2007, the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition and Community Preservation Coalition reached consensus around legislation to help more communities participate in the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The legislation, filed by Senator Cynthia Creem (D-Newton), would also secure adequate funding over the long term for the state's CPA matching fund.
- **Zoning Reform:** The new zoning reform commission, initiated by the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance and chaired by Undersecretary for Economic Development Greg Bialecki, is now working to draft legislation dealing with such matters as "approval not required," grandfathering, consistency between master plans and zoning, and incentives to expand housing production.

REPORT OF THE METROWEST GROWTH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The MetroWest Growth Management Committee (MWGMC), formed in 1985, includes leaders from Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Marlborough, Natick, Southborough, Wayland, Weston and Wellesley. The organization helps local elected officials and planning staff meet growth management challenges by facilitating inter-local collaborative planning and problem solving to enhance the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the MetroWest region. In addition, MWGMC is the oldest of the eight subregions of the regional planning agency, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).

One selectman and one planning board member represent each member community. Weston's representatives to the Committee are Selectman Douglas Gillespie and Planning Board Member David Mendelsohn. MWGMC is funded by member assessments, grants and contracts. MWGMC maintains an office in Natick and employs a staff of two to deliver core services to member communities.

Technical Assistance – In FY07, the Technical Assistance to our member communities continued to expand.

Stormwater - MWGMC developed Stormwater regulations to implement the Stormwater Bylaw developed last year. The regulations are available on our website (www.metrowestgrowth.org).

Housing - MWGMC is working with the Town of Weston to ensure that the Town government structure is effectively and efficiently structured to accomplish affordable and moderate housing goals. MWGMC provided significant technical assistance under contract to the Town of Ashland by developing a Housing Plan, Inclusionary Bylaw, and Planned Production Strategy. In addition, MWGMC assisted with the development of rules and regulations for Holliston's Inclusionary Housing bylaw.

Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation - MAPC and MetroWest staff continue to work with communities to identify areas within each community that are at risk of damage from natural hazards, evaluate existing protection measures, and develop a multiple-hazard mitigations strategy to reduce future damages. MWGMC is providing an in-kind match rather than asking each community to provide the \$3,000 local match. The local plans will be drafted in early 2008; the regional plan will be completed by mid-2008, and will make each community eligible to receive federal disaster mitigation.

Legislative Breakfasts - We continued our practice of holding two legislative breakfasts in FY07. Our legislative breakfasts provide an opportunity for municipal leaders and legislators to discuss issues of local, regional, and state importance that may have an impact for MetroWest communities. Each municipal leader is invited to explore strategies to accomplish mutual shared goals. Legislators are invited to speak about issues on which they'd like local feedback or assistance.

Planners Roundtable - Our Planners' Roundtables for local planners and planning board members provide staff and officials with technical information and training on planning and growth issues. It also provides planners with the opportunity to share expertise, experience, and questions with their colleagues.

Regional Impact Review (RIR) - One of the core services MetroWest Growth Management provides to its members is the Regional Impact Review (RIR). Regional Impact Reviews provide local leaders an opportunity to comment on the impacts of proposed commercial, industrial, and residential development projects, and provides administrative services to citizen advisory boards. This allows for regional development impacts to be considered early in the development project.

NYANZA -MWGMC voted to establish a Nyanza Task Force to develop strategies to further study and mitigate the plume that has affected the Sudbury River. MWGMC is in the process of obtaining grants from multiple sources to develop strategies to further mitigate the human health risk, and establish an educational awareness campaign.

"Main Street MetroWest" - MWGMC and MAPC are about to begin a study of the Route 9 corridor from I-95 to the Worcester city line, "Main Street MetroWest". Included in the study will be all of the major roads feeding into Route 9. In addition, MAPC and MetroWest, together with the Central Mass Planning Commission, are developing a scope of work to study the interchanges of I-495/Route 9, I-90/I-495, and I-495/I-290.

Route 20 Corridor - MWGMC is working with communities along Route 20 from I-95 through Marlborough to develop Land Use Strategies - Planning for Alternative Mode transportation

connected to sustainable land use strategies and Trip Reduction Ordinances and Programs, including transit subsidy requirements for the MetroWest communities along the Route 20 Corridor. We hope that this study will serve as the foundation of a corridor plan for Route 20.

MetroWest Matters

MWGMC held a very successful event, **MetroWest Matters**, at The MathWorks in Natick. The event was co-sponsored by The MathWorks, the MetroWest Daily News, MAPC, Leadership MetroWest, the MA Smart Growth Alliance, the Marlborough Transportation Committee, and the entire MetroWest legislative delegation.

The event focused on the fact that MetroWest is a dense, diverse, congested, and highly successful hub of economic activity. This economic activity generates jobs, demands for housing, pressure to develop open space and lots of traffic. In 2001, the state reported that there were 19,000 acres of developable land in the MWGMC subregion. If developed, that would add 239 miles of new roads, 50,000 more people, almost 50 million additional square feet of commercial/industrial building space, and 19,000 more units of housing. Roughly translated, that would be 320,000 additional vehicle trips. At the event, we heard about how we've grown, how we could grow, the issues associated with our growing pains, and some opportunities to help us in the future. The next event is scheduled for March 21, 2008 at Framingham State College.

The **MetroWest Transportation Task Force (TTF)** focuses on analyzing and advocating for MWGMC communities on transportation matters. Chaired by John Stasik, the TTF seeks improved transportation services to the region and devising strategies to influence transportation planning and decision-making. This past year the TTF focused much of its time and effort on the MetroWest RTA, and hopes to present a draft strategic plan for consideration by the MWRTA Board in early 2008.

RTA Efforts

The newly formed MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) was one of the major successes of FY07. The new MWRTA is the 15th regional transportation authority in Massachusetts and paves the way for local control of the LIFT bus system, the Natick Neighborhood Bus, and other public transit options in the area. Now, the MWRTA members include Framingham, Ashland, Natick, Wayland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Weston, Sherborn and Sudbury

The newly created MWRTA board hired Ed Carr of Natick as Administrator. Mr. Carr is the former Director of Transit for the MA Executive Office of Transportation. For the first five months, the MWRTA shared space with MWGMC at our office in Natick. The MWRTA is now located at 160 Waverly Street, Framingham, but MWGMC continues to work very closely with Mr. Carr to develop a comprehensive public transportation system for MetroWest.

Economic Development

MWGMC and the Mass. Office of Business Development (MOBD) hosted a special training workshop for area planning boards and other permit granting authorities on Chapter 43D, Expedited Permitting. Because 43D applies to all permit granting, from project submission to building permit, we hope to follow this workshop with another that is tailored for municipal staff involved in issuing permits such as building commissioners, public safety inspection personnel, DPW for water & sewer connection permits, etc.