

**Town of Westwood
Islington Center Task Force Meeting
September 15, 2016
7:00 PM
Thurston Middle School, Cafeteria, 850 High Street**

Meeting Minutes

Chairman Helen Gordon called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and informed everyone that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to hear a presentation on Petruzziello Properties' response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Islington Center Redevelopment. She explained that Mr. Petruzziello and his development team will make a presentation, after which the Task Force will ask questions, and then the audience will be given chance for questions and comments.

Task Force Members Present:

Helen Gordon, Michael Walsh, Nancy Donahue, Trish Tucke, Nora Loughnane, Abby McCabe, Trevor Laubenstein, Kela Klosi, Trish Tucke, Mary Beth Persons, Tricia Perry, Nicole Banks, Danielle Sutton, Sarah Cleveland, Michael Reardon, Paul Sicard, Michael Jaillet, George Hertz, Rabih Shanshiry, and Albert Wisialko.

Members Absent: Pam Dukeman, Todd Korchin, Jack Patterson, and George Hertz.

Peter Zahka introduced himself as the attorney representative for Mr. Giorgio Petruzziello of Petruzziello Properties, LLC. Attorney Zahka also introduced the rest of the team, including Mr. Antonio Petruzziello and the project architect, Mike McKay, who was not able to be present this evening. Mr. Zahka stated that Petruzziello Properties owns over 100,000 sq. ft. of commercial space and 160 residential units in Dedham, Medfield, and Westwood. He explained that the proposal submitted is broken into Site 1 and Site 2, with Site 1 being on the School Street side/west side of Washington Street, and Site 2 being on the East Street side/east side of Washington Street.

Mr. Zahka said that Site 1 was proposed to include a number of small ground floor commercial spaces along Washington Street and the corner of School, with 28 one-bedroom apartments on the upper stories and sufficient parking spaces to meet the needs of these proposed uses. He added that Site 1 also proposes the renovation of the historic Blue Hart Tavern, which would be given to the Town to be leased or owned.

He explained that Site 2 would consist of a new CVS building, as the anchor tenant, proposed at the corner where the Islington Community Center (ICC) building now stands, with the branch library moved to where the CVS is today, and 76 parking spaces. Mr. Zahka said that a basement would be constructed under the relocated library, and that a new 10,000 Sq. Ft. addition would be built behind the library for community spaces (such as the Youth and Family Services and Recreation programs that currently use the ICC) and the MMO (Mother Morning Out Nursery). He also said that the steeple from the ICC building would be saved and incorporated into the design of the new community space/addition. Mr. Zahka pointed out that the CVS, as proposed, would have a total of 12,500 SF of space with some of that dedicated to storage, and would include a drive-through.

Mr. Giorgio Petruzziello then summarized details of the proposal in the presentation available here: <http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/townofwestwood/file/Presenation%2009-15-2016.pdf>.

Discussion, Questions and Comments:

- A question was asked: What is the difference between Supreme Development and Petruzziello Properties?

The Proponent responded: Supreme is the development and construction arm of Petruzziello Properties.

- A question was asked: What would be the phasing of the proposal?

The Proponent responded: Site 1 (the School Street side with the mixed use building) would be built first. This would allow CVS to temporarily relocate to Site 1. Then work could begin on Site 2, and the Library could be moved to the former CVS site and the MMO/Community Center addition could be constructed. MMO could stay in the ICC until the new building opens. The new CVS building would be built last.

- A question was asked: How long has Petruzziello Properties been developing property?

The Proponent responded: Giorgio Petruzziello has been developing properties for 19-20 years.

- A question was asked: Is the location of CVS flexible?

The Proponent responded: CVS wants to be at a corner or is not interested in moving.

- A question was asked: How viable is the CVS portion?

The Proponent responded: Petruzziello Properties has a signed Letter of Intent with CVS for the northeast corner An Islington Center location is desirable because the pharmacy does very well.

- A resident commented: The development seems too tall, the proposed apartments don't seem necessary, and the proposal is not in keeping with the small town feel.
- A question was asked: Who would live in the residential units?

The Proponent responded: The proposal is for apartments. The apartments make the project viable because density is needed to keep the businesses open. One-bedroom apartments are proposed to limit school impacts and one-bedroom condos do not sell. Additionally, there is less control over who moves into an owner-occupied unit, but with apartments the landlord can perform background checks and has more control over the tenants than if the units were offered for sale.

- A comment was made: Relocate the library and MMO space to the School Street side of Washington Street.
- A question was asked: What will be the impact to property values in the area?

The Proponent responded: Property values are expected to increase with new investment for the new construction.

- A comment was made: Safety would likely increase because the proposed apartments would create a 24-hour safety watch and mixed-use and upper story housing is an old concept.
- A comment was made: The proposed new construction of the town buildings should be reviewed to see if it makes sense for the town.
- A comment was made: The current use and services of the Islington Branch Library were reviewed and it was noted that there is a need for improvement.
- A comment was made: The Recreation Department programs and spaces at the ICC currently are very well used and the Recreation Department continues to need some large spaces for when there is inclement weather. The Recreation Department is interested in working together on ideas to maintain a presence in Islington.
- A comment was made: Youth and Family Services reside in the ICC and need some private office space for confidential meetings, a waiting area, and large space for various programs.
- A question was asked: What would MMO be charged for rent?

The Proponent responded: The projected rent is not known at this time but would be market rent.

- A comment was made: The scale and density seems overwhelming. especially the prototype CVS building.
- A question was asked: What is the expected rental capacity for the apartments?

The Proponent responded: All of the apartments are expected to be rented within 60 days and the rent for one-bedrooms would be approximately \$1,600-\$1,800 per month.

- A comment was made: CVS could stay at its current location and for the proposal calls for too many apartments.
- A comment was made: CVS on the corner doesn't feel like a village center design. Not supportive of apartments. Suggest less density, less parking and less impervious surface. Suggest a different design for MMO.

The Proponent responded that the proposed apartments/residential portion could be eliminated, but doing so will cause other aspects to also be eliminated such as the community and MMO space.

- A comment was made: Concerned about the property value impacts for nearby properties.
- A comment was made: Consider fewer apartments than the 28 proposed.
- A comment was made: This is an opportunity to refresh the area with historic elements being retained. The Blue Hart Tavern should be moved to a more visible street location. The proposal will improve the area with a new look.
- A comment was made: Site 1 and Site 2 should be being independently viable and developed as separate pieces.
- A question was asked: What would be the impacts to traffic?

The Proponent responded: If this proposal moves forward, a complete application will be submitted to the various boards and committees. The Planning Board requires a traffic study as part of the application submittal. The Planning Board also hires a peer review consultant to professionally review the submissions.

- A comment was made: Concerned about the proposed new height for the three story building.
- A question was asked: What will happen when the municipal lot is no longer available to serve all the businesses in the area?

Mr. Jaillet responded: The municipal parking lot was established after the purchase of the former gas station to serve as a parking lot for those local businesses that lost parking when the street was redesigned and the angled parking spaces were removed. The angled spaces that were lost were largely the parking in front of the Magaletta buildings.

- A question was asked: Will the existing tenants stay?
- The Proponent responded: Café Diva is unsure if they're going to stay. Crown Cleaners and the Barber would like to stay.
- A comment was made: The front walls of the ICC should be kept but the rest should be demolished and rebuilt as a new MMO space. Keep the library and CVS where they area.
 - A comment was made: This proposal and its significant investment could be a catalyst for other properties in town. The Proponent will have to demonstrate that there is enough parking with this proposal. It looks like the 31-33 municipal spaces will still remain and the new parking layout provides more parking than we have today.

Chairman Gordon called the discussion to an end and said that the Task Force would meet again to review further aspects of the Petruzziello Proposal in October.

The Task Force members picked a couple of possible dates for the next meeting. These selected October meeting date will be confirmed after checking with the members of the task force who were unable to attend this meeting. October 12 and October 13 were suggested as the tentative dates.

Any further comments should be sent to staff: Ms. Nora Loughnane and Ms. Abby McCabe.

Everyone was encouraged to sign up for the Town's list serve to receive weekly updates for upcoming meetings. The weekly web events email list can be found here: <http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/index.cfm/page/Town-Email-Lists/pid/26876>.

On a motion made by Mr. Walsh, seconded by Mr. Wisialko, the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.