

**From:** [Doriann Jasinski](#)  
**To:** [meetings](#)  
**Cc:** [Doriann Jasinski](#)  
**Subject:** SHOPC minutes 2/1/23  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 11, 2023 9:18:57 AM

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**Approved April 4, 2023**

**THE SOUTHBOROUGH HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE  
(SHOPC)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 1, 2023 7PM**

**VIRTUAL MEETING/REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

Members present: Doriann Jasinski, Tom Bhisitkul, Andrew Dennington, Jesse Stein, and Douglas Manz. Members absent: Alex Frisch and John Wood Also present: Sarah Hoecker, Consultant and/prior Business Administrator I

**CALL TO ORDER:**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM.

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**Consent Agenda:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Dennington & Mr. Bhisitkul provided a few grammatical updates to the minutes. **MOTION** by Mr. Dennington to approve the Meeting Minutes as emended from January 10, 2023. **Seconded** by Mr. Bhisitkul. **ROLL CALL: Dennington-Yes, Bhisitkul-Yes, Stein-Yes, Wood-Yes, Manz-Yes, Jasinski-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes-6, No-0, Absent-1 Frisch**

**SHOPC/Capital Planning Subcommittee Update:**

Mr. Bhisitkul stated he has put in a lot of hours into the document to prepare it for review by the Subcommittee. Ms. Jasinski acknowledged all the efforts made by Mr. Bhisitkul and the subcommittee. Mr. Dennington indicated the Capital Planning Committee presented to the Select Board about a month ago and some of the decisions they are making about future planning hinge on the subcommittee report. The subcommittee will complete the report in advance of the next SHOPC meeting.

**MAPC 5-Year Strategic Spending Plan**

Ms. Jasinski stated the final MAPC 5-Year Strategic Spending Plan was distributed to everyone and she would get it over to Mark Purple, TA for additional distribution to the Select Board.

**Warrant Article**

Ms. Jasinski read the current proposed language from Town Counsel Tallerman. The

goal is to transfer the Community Preservation Act monies approved at town meeting into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund immediately upon approval at Town Meeting. Mr. Dennington noted there was an email thread that indicated there cannot be a warrant article to transfer monies on an annual basis and this would have to be an annual warrant article. Mr. Bhisitkul expressed it will be important to make sure the warrant articles moving forward do not contain language that leaves the monies under the direction of the Community Preservation Committee.

### **MRD Zoning Discussion:**

Mr. Stein shared Section 174 13.2 Major Residential Development (MRD) of the Southborough bylaw. Highlighting a few details, noting there is a current 12.5% requirement for affordable housing in all major residential developments. The most challenging part of the MRD is in (5)(b) which requires “single-family dwellings” within a multifamily development. This would be a challenging requirement to meet with a site like 21 Highland Street. Mr. Stein noted that overlay districts, like the one that was just established downtown, and 40B both trump the current MRD. Mr. Dennington stated the minim lot size was flagged in the 5-Year Strategic plan to take a look at since many current lots do not meet the required size. Mr. Stein stated his concerns on return on investment in bring edits forward to Town Meeting since there are other factors such as the MBTA Communities requirement. Mr. Dennington began to talk about the Dell EMC property as a solution to MBTA Communities requirements. Additionally, he noted there is a recommendation in the 5-Year Strategic Plan to remove the artificial cap on the number of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) within town. Currently the creation of ADUs requires a special permit with approval from the Board of Health, Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board. Mr. Bhisitkul expressed concern with a similar cap on elderly housing in town. Mr. Stein added that under the current cap only 4 more units of elderly housing can be constructed in Southborough. Mr. Bhisitkul expressed next steps outlined in the Housing Production Plan are to update current zoning bylaws to remove barriers to affordable housing. He went on to say the MRD in Southborough is more of a cluster subdivision bylaw meant to protect open space. Currently the MRD is not written to be the mechanism to create multifamily housing density. Mr. Bhisitkul clarified he was not in favor of changing any open space requirement. He gave the example that potential developers of 21 Highland Street said the lot could sustain 12-15 units. Under the current MRD that would not be allowed because the lot could not be used to create 12-15 stand alone lots as required by the MRD. Mr. Manz agreed it would be more effective to leave the underlying zoning alone and create an overlay. He additionally expressed his support for ADUs and stated a permit for ADUs should not go through three layers of approval. He offered a solution of finding opportunities for locations in town where ADUs can be created by-right and other locations where creation may need a special permit. Mr. Manz also said creation of ADUs either by-right or special permit

would not create more than one unit. Mr. Jasinski stated SHOPC should have this on the agenda for another discussion. Mr. Stein supported further discussion before engaging the Planning Board for a joint meeting.

### **MBTA Communities:**

Ms. Jasinski indicated she had not received a copy of the final action plan submitted to the state. She said once she received it she would disseminate it to the group. Mr. Bhisitkul asked if the documents were in fact submitted. Ms. Jasinski answered Yes. Mr. Dennington stated the Chair of the Planning Board Meme Luttrell had presented to the Select Board for approval a few weeks ago. He expressed the action plan form was a fairly simple document to submit, but it did start the clock for compliance, which includes approval at Town Meeting next year 2024. Mr. Manz asked who was taking the lead on this effort? Mr. Stein said Planning is taking the lead. Mr. Dennington indicated Planning obtained a technical assistance grant from the state to undertake the process. He further indicated the department retained Bohler Engineering to complete next steps. Ms. Jasinski stated she would be attending a meeting with Bohler and the Planning Board tomorrow.

### **Special Municipal Town Employee Designation:**

Ms. Jasinski asked if there were any updates. Mr. Dennington said it was on the agenda for the next Select Board meeting.

### **EMC/Dell Property**

Ms. Jasinski set the stage by outlining new requirements for the MBTA Communities, which states the town will be in compliance as long as it has 10 acres designated within the .5 acres from the train station and the remainder (40 acres) designated somewhere in town in a minimum of 5-acre increments. She went on to say that the approximately 39-acre EMC/Dell property is a potential solution for the town to designate one location for the MBTA Communities compliance. Ms. Jasinski reached out to both Chairs of Planning and Open Space respectively to begin discussion about utilizing the property as a potential solution. She also reached out to the realtor for the property who indicated it was being marketed to developers as a 40B property. Ms. Jasinski expressed she felt as though this location would not impact the neighbors. She noted the town would reach safe harbor status with the development of 78 units. Development on this location would not change traffic patterns and is a perfect place to create new space for affordable units. Ms. Jasinski floated the idea of the town purchasing the parcel and working with a developer to create a project. Mr. Manz noted this will likely be a market driven process and stated he would be interested in additional information. Mr. Manz raised a concern about the 15 unit per acre density requirement, noting that at 39-acres there could be well over 400 units created on that site. Mr. Bhisitkul reiterated that MBTA Communities legislation does not require an affordability component, however, there is language that indicates the town can impose an affordability requirement if they choose to do so, with a 10% cap. In a 40B project 25%

of the units are required to be affordable. Mr. Manz indicated he was interested in exploring the opportunity more. Mr. Dennington said he has yet to hear that anyone thinks putting the flexible portion of the MBTA Communities requirement on that site is a bad idea. He additionally said Southborough usually has an Annual Town Meeting and a fall town meeting. He asked Mr. Stein if there would be any capacity to hear this in fall of 2023. Mr. Stein said it would be challenging to get the warrant article through public hearings so quickly. Discussion ensued about how to time the warrant article to give it the most likelihood of passing. Mr. Stein cautioned since the two locations to satisfy the MBTA Communities are linked and while the 39-acre portion is not controversial, the portion around the train station will be more challenging. Ms. Jasinski asked about a joint meeting with the three boards. Mr. Bhisitkul said he felt as though Doriann should meet with the chairs and report back with further instructions.

### **Grant Opportunities:**

Ms. Hoecker briefly outlined potential grant opportunities through the One-Stop application and the Housing Choice Designation. She stated she will be reviewing the previous submission for the One-Stop application and be sending out information from her discussion with Doriann and the state regarding Housing Choice Designation.

### **5 Cordaville Road Property:**

Ms. Jasinski stated the Historic Commission is looking to purchase the home at 5 Cordaville Road. She further acknowledged the Select Board wanted to meet on February 7, however, SHOPC would not have a quorum to attend on that date which she relayed to the chair. Mr. Dennington recognized Kevin Miller as the Chair of Historical in the audience. He went on explain the Historic Commission voted to preferentially preserved through the demolition delay bylaw, starting the 9-month clock. Ms. Jasinski indicated SHOPC has not walked the property. She further stated it is a single family home that could potentially use up all of the currently allocated housing monies. She stated she was concerned about the process of inquiry about the property up to this point. Mr. Dennington expressed interest in learning more about the property, noting that other entities in town might have willingness to invest resources. Mr. Bhisitkul asked if it was clear they are intending to use the funds from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund? Mr. Dennington confirmed that was his understanding. Mr. Bhisitkul highlighted it would not be overly beneficial to use all of the AHTF monies to create one affordable unit, with the main goal being on preservation vs affordability. Mr. Stein noted this is an example of why some people may want to keep housing monies under the direction of CPC, to ensure proper process. Mr. Manz asked if SHOPC knew the asking price of the property. Mr. Dennington acknowledged Mr. Miller might be able to answer the question. Mr. Miller was permitted to speak. He stated the walk through of the property in December was strictly to assess historic value, then the rest of the discussions evolved from there. Mr. Miller did say it was in quite rough shape, but it was on the

historic registry, and in a good location for a small family. Test sites have perked for a two-family home onsite. Mr. Miller said the asking price was “short” money” but decline to provide a dollar value. He encouraged SHOPC to come to the table to work as friends and partners. Mr. Manz supported Mr. Bhisitkul’s comments that SHOPC wants to try to maximize return on investment and serve as many people as possible. Mr. Miller said he was bringing the idea forward as a “win win” for both boards. He said the town is likely the only way this home can be saved. Mr. Dennington asked when the demolition delay will end? Mr. Miller stated it was voted on in January, meaning the delay will end it September. Mr. Stein advised Mr. Miller could have asked to be on the SHOPC agenda when these ideas started to formulate to inform the committee.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 7PM.

**ADJOURN: MOTION** by Mr. Stein to adjourn at 8:43 PM. **Seconded** by Mr. Manz. **ROLL CALL: Bhisitkul-Yes, Dennington-Yes, Manz-Yes, Stein-Yes, Jasinski-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes–5, No–0, Absent–2 Wood, Frisch**

**Documents Used:**

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- Section 174 13.2 Major Residential Development (MRD) of the Southborough Bylaw

Respectfully Submitted,

Doriann Jasinski  
SHOPC Chair

2 SHOPC Meeting Minutes from February 1, 2023

Sent from my iPhone