

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee

Meeting with Adam Winstanley, Barbara Green, and Katie Enright

14 December 2017

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee (KCSC) hosted a presentation about possible future development of the Kmart site by Adam Winstanley (Winstanley Enterprises), Barbara Green (Winstanley Enterprises), and Katie Enright (Howard Stein-Hudson).

The meeting was attended by members of several other committees including Economic Development Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Selectmen, and the Acton Community Housing Corporation.

Attendees included

- KCSC
 - Andy Brockway
 - Bob van Meter (ACHC)
 - Jon Benson (FinCom)
 - Larry Kenah (EDC)
 - Peter Darlow (DRB)
- Board of Selectmen
 - Peter Berry (KCSC)
- Finance Committee (FinCom)
 - Jeff Bergart
- EDC
 - Derrick Chin (Planning Board)
 - Larry Kenah (KCSC)
 - Mike Majors (FinCom)
- Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC)
 - Nancy Tavernier
- Town of Acton
 - Matthew Selby, Director of Land Use and Economic Development
 - Roland Bartl, Planning Department
 - Kristen Guichard, Planning Department
- Other
 - Danny LeBlanc

Meeting Summary

We looked at three proposals for future development of the Kmart site. All three proposals included mixed-use development (commercial plus residential). There were variations among the three proposals that are described later in these notes.

None of these proposals would be allowed with existing zoning. We realized that there were different expectations between Adam and the committee about when we would bring zoning changes before town meeting. Adam thought that we planned to introduce the changes at Spring 2018 Town Meeting. KCSC had no such plans and expressed the opinion that it would be difficult to put together a successful effort for that meeting.

We concluded the meeting by deciding to meet among ourselves the following week (20 December 2017 at 7:00 am in Room 9 of Acton Town Hall) to talk about other options for bringing proposed zoning changes before the town.

Meeting Details

Andy Brockway Overview and Introductions

We met with Adam and Katie earlier this year (21 September 2017). That meeting looked at development in general terms. The purpose of this meeting was to look at some more specific proposals for developing the site.

Andy reminded everyone that Stop & Shop is the owner of the site and that Kmart currently manages the site. Kmart is in the final five-year installment of a lease for the property.

Andy then introduced Adam and his colleagues.

- Adam Winstanley - Winstanley Enterprises
- Barbara Green - Winstanley Enterprises
- Katie Enright - Howard Stein-Hudson

Three Plans

What follows is a poor attempt to translate pictures (layouts of buildings and parking areas) into words. We will attempt to capture the key points common to all three proposals and the key differences between them.

Common Elements

- The existing Kmart building is razed.
- The existing McDonald's building is razed.
- The Verizon property is not included.
 - Adam has talked with people from Verizon and the cost of moving all of the "cables" (copper, fiber, etc) that converge on that building to somewhere else would be very very expensive (of order \$10M).
- There are two two-story commercial buildings on Main Street with an entry road between them that allows access to the rest of the site.
 - Each building might have retail or restaurants on the first floor with office space (healthcare, professional, etc) on the second floor.

- There are two four-story residential buildings in the center of the property. Some of the details of these buildings vary from plan to plan.
 - The ground floor of each building is covered parking.
 - The upper three floors contain residential units.
- There is a three-story residential building on Route 111 across the street from the tennis courts.
 - There are 20 residential units in this building.
 - The first floor is covered parking.
 - The second and third floors are residential units.
- There is a roadway that makes its way through the property.
 - One entrance/exit is located on Main Street (Route 27) approximately across the street from the Subway store.
 - The second entrance/exit is located on Massachusetts Avenue (Route 111). The actual location of this end of the roadway varies from plan to plan.

First Plan (128 residential units)

This is the plan that Katie, Adam, and Barbara like the most. It was the only plan that was in color.

- A single roadway enters the site from Main Street, passes between the two interior buildings, turns right at the back of the property, and exits onto Route 111 at the western edge of the property (not that far from the existing driveway onto Route 111). The words “enter” and “exit” are for descriptive purposes only. The roadway is two-way traffic.
- The two interior buildings are simple rectangles.
- Each interior building contains 54 residential units spread across the upper three floors.
- There is a 2,600 ft² clubhouse at the western edge of the property.
- Most of the property not occupied by buildings is set aside for parking by residents or by people visiting any of the retail or commercial establishments located in the two buildings located on Main Street.

Second Plan (148 residential units)

The second plan is similar to the first plan but explores a “what if” scenario. It includes the property occupied by Baker Whitney Oil.

This plan really is speculative. Adam has not spoken with the Baker Whitney Oil folks.

Similarities with First Plan

- Same two interior buildings
- Same clubhouse
- Same entry road from Main Street

Differences from First Plan

- Another three-story residential building facing Route 111 is added to the property.
 - The ground floor is dedicated to parking. Because of the grade of the land, this parking is not visible from Route 111.

- There are 20 additional residential units distributed between the second and third floors of this building.
- The exit road onto Route 111 is moved to the east, between the two residential buildings, so that it lines up with Charter Road.
 - It was not clear at the meeting whether this alignment was with the existing Charter Road or the revised Charter Road from the most recent iteration of the infrastructure plans.
- There is still a single road through the property with this slightly different alignment.

Third Plan (158 residential units)

The third plan, like the second, includes the Baker Whitney Oil property. It differs in the interior.

- The two interior buildings are L-shaped rather than rectangular. They enclose open space that breaks up the roadway through the property.
- The clubhouse disappears in this plan.
- The number of residential units in each building is different.
 - Each interior building has 57 units (up from 54 in the first and second plans).
 - Each building facing Route 111 has 22 units (up from 20 in the first and second plans).

Other Observations

The preceding notes summarize pictures and numbers taken from the same drawings. There were additional comments about one or another plan during our walk-through exercise.

- Adam was thinking of one building of condos and two with rental units.
- He was thinking of something like 10% affordable units.
 - Bob Van Meter thought that ACHC might have some resources to increase the affordable mix from 10% up to 20%.
- Adam stressed that this is not a 40B plan.
- Adam saw a mix of half one-bedroom units and half two-bedroom units.
 - He did not anticipate either three-bedroom units or smaller units (such as studio apartments) as part of this development.
- In the discussion about impact of development on schools, Nancy Tavernier pointed out that changing demographics affect the schools even in the absence of construction.
 - A house with only adults living there is sold.
 - The house if purchased by a family with school-age children.

What about Zoning?

Somewhere around 8:45, Katie Enright reminded everyone that these proposals could make zero progress under current zoning. After a few minutes of discussion, we all realized that Adam was operating under the assumption that we would present a zoning article at Spring Town Meeting. The committee had no such plans. The conversation that followed bounced around several related topics. I am not sure that I can provide structure to the conversation so I will simply list key points.

- Adam volunteered to do the work related to materials like presentations, pictures, etc.
- Andy Brockway pointed out that there is significant effort related to getting the vote out.
- There is related work associated with actual town meeting presentation.
 - Addressing concerns that were raised last time and will almost certainly be raised when the zoning changes are again presented at town meeting. These include
 - Impact on schools
 - Impact on affordable housing
 - Various questions related to so-called green issues
 - Addressing arguments raised against the zoning proposal
- If Spring Town Meeting (first week in April) is too soon, what about a special town meeting in June?
 - One advantage to June is that it allows more time to prepare for the town meeting effort.
 - A second advantage is that we will be able to point to concrete progress on the infrastructure improvement project. The zoning changes can be part of a larger but more concrete set of circumstances.

Everyone agreed that we cannot afford to lose another town meeting vote on zoning changes for Kelley's Corner.

The committee agreed to meet to talk about the when and how of proposed zoning changes on Wednesday, 20 December 2017, at 7:00 in the early morning.

These notes were recorded by Lawrence J Kenah.