

5/28/08

Balancing Housing production and resource conservation Breakout session

Moderator: Jim Stockard

Introductory Remarks: Jenny Raitt

Suggestions for how to start?

349,000 units needed.???

Trying to accommodate seniors, starters and families: What is the mix of units that are needed to meet the needs – do not want to have all one-bedroom - MAPC projections did not include bedroom number, but did include different types of units - MF emphasis on multi-family units would probably free up existing single-family dwellings for families- This may be more appropriate to plan for at the local level in order to make sure that it meets the local needs. However, want to make sure that diversity of units

To what extent has region fallen short of 11,000 unit per year goal? Market fluctuation but is around 11,000 average.

There is a need to have both an affordability and bedroom number overlay added to the MAPC goals.

Make sure that that the MAPC plans include the opportunity around foreclosures that are occurring. (MAPC will take into account market fluctuations and opportunities, such as now the opportunity to pursue affordable housing).

Need to remain flexible with the final number, in case situation changes in future. Also concern that the Greater Boston Report Card may not have been as predictive as it might be.

How does this plan include people working out of their homes – allow entrepreneurs to work out of their homes – allow for “clutter zones”.

Accessory units – this is often a push for significant expansion of the footprint of the dwelling that will have impacts on lot coverage (storm-water flow, increased wastewater flow, more total bedrooms within the structure). Be thoughtful about how this might conflict with other MetroFuture goals.

349,000 over 22 years over 101 communities is too abstract a number – MAPC should prepare a proposal to assign each 101 cities and towns how many units they should develop, and how they should go about achieving those goals - (Similar to how this is done in European countries – MetroFuture projections do assign a certain amount of growth to each TAZ and community level)

One participant took the MetroFuture numbers to his community – they said “so what”. MAPC needs to make these projections consequential so that communities will take them seriously (city should be required to implement a plan – need to have stronger

reasons for following MF GOALS). Most of the production will need to occur within the existing larger communities; these communities need more money for housing, not circuit riders. Need to focus more on the communities that will bear the greater burden of housing production, and provide them with more assistance.

Ideas for “how to influence “people with hands on the levers” Three issues

- Fiscal (school) Including benefits of Mixed use
- Traffic – needs help with modeling
- Visualizing density – need to provide with examples of how it works well elsewhere – need to be able to see the potential

Money is there for existing 40R/40S for communities that have passed so far – need to have more explicit funding mechanism for future.

Need more actions related to land protection: not enough in this section (although may be in other sections).

At the local level, the point is “How to get more housing in Danvers”: They are evaluating a proposal for 279 units on 20+ acres on Ipswich River, and proposal for mixed use in the downtown – Two polar extremes. Leadership in the town needs to be able to evaluate between these two and to provide incentives for one of these to move forward.

Each town has its master plan, but they did not take into account the regional level needs. Communities must get benefits from taking into account their neighboring communities needs and /or regional needs. Example is sharing of affordable units between town communities for affordable housing built on nthe border (access through one to the other town) 40 B runs counter to goals of 40R and smart growth. For example, need for the ability to trade housing credits for open space credits

Is there any precedent for regional-approval (county-based) approval of developments (just about anywhere else)

Marlborough and Southborough did agree to share affordable housing credits for a project on the border-

To answer Danvers – that was one of the purposes of the 40R proposal – so that zoning would be in place to steer development. This provides incentives for developers.

Recommendation – in opposition to MAPC proposal to change 40R to special permit. By right is advantage to the developer (since they have already gone through the 40R zoning process); This takes away the predictability for the developer.

Needs to be a mixture of incentives and “sticks’ to encourage communities to do more. Maybe cherry sheet - local aid – changes.

Needs to be mechanism to assist communities with infrastructure costs in order to be able to guide development to where they want it to go, this is particularly important in smaller towns. This will enable communities to build their own share of future units needed.

PWED program – create a similar program to enable housing development for infrastructure to enable housing (it was noted that this would be CDAG, which exists now, but is limited to \$10 million per year which is not enough).

40B is a huge incentive for communities trying to reach the 10% goal. Ipswich accomplished its 10% in part due to the town passing a \$10 million bond.

Communities should be able to control locations of 40B IF the communities designated growth districts.

Communities have not chosen to designate growth areas in the past? What needs to change in order to get communities to designate growth areas? Racism is a big issue. Also, need to have family units. Opposition should be confronted and addressed with regard to these issues particularly if they are barriers to the development of more affordable housing.

Opposition expressed to Ch. 40B reforms outlined in 9B6. Three individuals expressed the need for 40B specifically because of how segregated the region is. Communities and the State rely on 40B to produce affordable housing outside of the City of Boston due to lack of by-right zoning for multi-family housing.

What about the communities that have actually done the 10%. Should talk about the “phony 40B affordable communities” Where only 25% of the units were affordable but get to count the 100% of the units. Should “Face it” AND count only the affordable units. (even though there is a policy to promote rental units in the past).

Concerns 9E6. Potentially at conflict with many objectives. If weaken 40b, will likely not succeed in achieving many other MetroFuture goals. **NEED TO MAKE CHANGES TO THIS RECOMMENDATION** as of right, include specific affordability mix, make sure they are real districts (NOT IN A SWAMP), density requirements, must include multi-family housing.

Strengthen by adding design requirements, bedroom numbers, etc. – type of housing for fair housing.

Housing does not pay for itself. School costs need to be separated from property tax (Noted that this was true for single family, but not for multi-family units)

Community Preservation Act should be a tool for establishment of affordable housing, but funds are not used as effectively as they might be. State should establish and incentive on the state match for the CPA fund if they create new units. Also, take underutilized housing authority lands to create additional units. 2010 decennial census will reset the 40b 10% calculations, need to take that into account in planning.

Re 9B6, communities can protect open space via conservation restriction

Bottom-up method of affordable housing – use neighborhood groups to designate what is appropriate affordable housing (talk to Bill Bauser for details on this).

Greenspace funds: regional impact fee system, cost for development and these costs are used to provide for infrastructure funds to promote development where a community wants it. (development impact fee).

Technical assistance for 40R DISTRICTS similar to 43D – need to address increased costs for communities that designate the districts.

Re GREENSPACE FUND – MORE REGIONAL ENLIGHTENED SELF INTEREST FOR DISCUSSION OF TRANSP, OPEN SPACE AND Development.

Need to have some sort of state enabling legislation to allow broader regional entities similar to Cape Cod Commission, and regional open space programs, Should be done as INCENTIVE Program-NOT REQUIRED

CPA should be mandated for each community- too important to leave as local option.

Need to be more aware of expiring use issues. Communities need help in continuing these units.

Challenge to MAPC: Some group of towns must step forward to say they want to start a pilot. MAPC should generate this group to start.

Environmental overlay critical in relation to where housing is located

How the housing fits into overall plan for the state – most efficient centers should be where the majority of unit should go.

Look at shared equity models for preservation of affordable units.