

Town of Westford's Boston Road Development

Frequently Asked Questions

Listed below are some frequently asked questions regarding the Town of Westford's proposed affordable housing development off of Boston Road. Please refer to the letter from the Board of Selectmen dated May 27, 2009 for an overview of this development. Additional information is available on the Town's web site.

Will the building site be clear-cut of trees to allow for the development of these homes?

The site WILL NOT be clear-cut and retaining a buffer between the development and Boston Road is in everyone's best interest. The actual layout and exact location of the development has not yet been decided. The Developers response to the RFP included the development plan created by the Town's site consultant. Until an application is filed with the ZBA, the actual street and home locations are not known to an exact degree. We do know the developer and the Town have both stated that a buffer to Boston Road is a necessity and not having one would most likely impact sales of these homes. In no way has anyone suggested trees be removed and not be replaced.

Will construction take place within the buffer of the vernal pool?

There will be no construction within the required vernal pool buffer. The proposed development will meet all our local regulations for buffers around the vernal pool. The Towns' bylaws require a 50' undisturbed area and a 75' no build area from the vernal pool. The current concept plan meets this requirement.

Is this development allowed given past Town Meeting votes?

Yes. The Town has had two separate Town Counsels review the past Town Meeting votes and both have agreed that the proposed development is allowed.

Why were 20 houses chosen for this development and why are they so close together?

The Town of Westford hired Randall Arendt, a world renowned site planner, to look at the site and provide us a conceptual plan. Please reference his plan on the Town's web site. It was through evaluating the sites features and constraints and maintaining buffers between the development and Boston and Blakes Hill Roads, that Mr. Arendt came up with the site area in his design. Once the site area was established, Mr. Arendt created

his proposed housing plan. The goal was to create a neighborhood community that would foster relationship building and offer open space for all residents to enjoy. Similarly designed neighborhoods have been successful in other communities. The developers' concept plan was modeled after Mr. Arendt's plan.

One of Westford's goals is to create affordable housing. The Town wished to create as many units as possible that would help us to achieve our goal while ensuring the new development was an asset to our town. In no way would the Town propose a development that it felt would be detrimental to the neighborhood or the community, just to get more units.

We have been asked if we could spread out the houses more or reduce the number of homes. If the houses were spread out more, more land would be required to keep the same number of units, the sense of community that we are trying to achieve would be diminished, and the cost of constructing the development would go up, therefore making it difficult to have all the homes be affordable. We felt it was not in the Town's best interest to do this.

If we dramatically reduced the number of homes, the development would not be financially feasible as an affordable housing development and we would reduce our contribution of adding much needed affordable homes to our community.

If the affordable housing development is built, what will happen to the remaining land?

The Board of Selectmen, at their 6/9/09 meeting, unanimously agreed that the remaining land should be put into conservation. The Board will make an amendment to the petition article to transfer any remaining land to the care, custody and control of the Conservation Commission.