

**TOWN OF WAYLAND - TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE**  
**MEETING MINUTES OF TOWN BOARDS/COMMITTEES/COMMISSIONS**

**Posted in accordance with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law**

**Economic Development Committee**

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Meeting Minutes of Friday December 8, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 8:33 am at Wayland Town Building.

Members in attendance:

In person: Rebecca Stanizzi (Chair), Nick Zafiropoulos, Jesse Lopez

Virtual: Brad Young

Absent: Emily Kaplan, Dan Crossman

Also in attendance: Public comment Joe Strazzulla, Quentin Nowland

(1) Public Comment	Action Items
<p>Joe Strazzulla – Owner of Cochituate Village (Donelan’s plaza) Provided comment letter against proposal, as owner/manager of next door property since 1960. Letter attached.</p> <p>Public Comment: He has offered to purchase property from current owner, to make it more productive as the end and last piece that has not been developed.</p> <p>Present proposal goes to “industrializing” this area – instead needs to serve daily needs of residents. Proposer is not community resident nor longtime owner.</p> <p>Wayland is Class B retail, not Class A like Rt 9, Mr. Strazzulla wants to attract Class B retail, not Class C, and wants to make property more valuable. Thinks it’s a waste to suggest something that is not universally accepted as viable or necessary.</p> <p>Apartment complex was proposed two years ago, but property couldn’t support the sewer; would have liked to have seen residential. Property in overall area handicapped by sewer requirements, including his own (5 leach fields just for his uses on site).</p> <p>He appreciates that Arts Wayland needs a location. Mr. Strazzulla lives in Hopkinton; arts were introduced at the schools, which he sees as ideal site for art center since that’s where the kids are and that’s where open space is. Property will never disappear.</p> <p>Mr. Strazzulla suggested to speak with Hopkinton how they developed one of the largest art centers in the state. Select Board gave them land etc 30 years ago. Concerned that an art center in this location will never be able to grow. (If he could do it, would like to rent them space on his property) But they need a space that won’t go away.</p>	

Becky noted Arts Wayland did reach out to Mr. Strazzula's company about space, but they cannot do the space for free or reduced cost at Cochituate Village.

Mr Strazzulla was asked, What uses could go on that site?

JS: At some point, drug stores have evolved over time to health care.

Day care centers popular today. Low intensity water businesses.

Restaurant could work in the right size with a "white knight" (sp?) accelerated sewer system (oxygen spurs activation of system, speeding up process, maintain it 4 times/year). Cochituate is terrible for sewer.

He would not compete against his own tenants, perhaps create box units 1200-1500 sf sizes for small businesses. Noted dress shop did well for 10 years. (But all retail is now chains; none left?) Second floor office space is "like gold" since people want to work close to home. Landscapers, tech companies, insurance, lawyers, etc.

Q: How is self storage adverse to his site, how is Mr. Strazzulla's property harmed by it? Asked several times to try to understand how he is directly affected.

More general reasons:

- Storage will not benefit village one single bit
- Arts Wayland is only a wedge
- Arts Wayland – this is bad for them. Will never grow. He's seen other spaces, they will die. Only 12 parking spaces.

Points related to his property:

- Project's assumption that his parking will be used [this notion was corrected by Ms. Stanizzi, he had been asked early on if he wanted to coordinate parking lots, he declined, as is his right; other empty parking may be available in the neighborhood for events, being explored. So his parking is not being assumed]
- He will never be able to put a building out front if one is built there [which is true if he builds there too?]

Returned to Arts Wayland, Town concerns:

- Arts Wayland needs site dedicated to it – not limited access, not limited growth. [Noted If AW launches to larger space, then another group can use this space as a great incubator]
- Theoretical concern, what if someone wants a new use in the future, will adding a benevolent use [for a zoning change] be used as precedent? (Answer: We already have precedent at Town Center with municipal pad, green, etc, this is commonly done in other towns to get community spaces from projects)

Does Mr Strazzulla want this zoning on his property?

JS: Confirmed no, does not want the zoning on his property.

Why hasn't anything been built to date on this site?

JS: Marginal location, needs more sewer room, which he says he has.

Again, if you haven't bought/built here yourself, how are you as

<p>property owner harmed if someone else builds this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Because of marginal design.</li> <li>- It will be built and flipped.</li> <li>- Proximity to parking area. “Don’t want to create a war over parking” with Arts Wayland concert goers.</li> <li>- Inserts Arts Wayland as a sweetener – putting a facility you wouldn’t ever put there on its own.</li> </ul> <p>[Discussion: The addition of AW was to create something for the community, to bring activity and value. All comes back to voters whether they are ok with the balance. Wayland as a community is struggling for tax revenues. Mr. Strazzulla can’t give existing space for free, no one else can. So how can we create that incubator spaces – and design a building that looks good, brings new people there]</p> <p>Jesse reassured Mr. Strazzulla we are not advocating for self-storage per se, we are neutral on that use. Arts Wayland is not being used as a wedge to get self-storage in, EDC sees this as <i>opportunity to get free space for Arts Wayland, in a great spot</i>. The issue is a balance for Town Meeting to decide.</p> <p>Mr. Strazzulla suggested the Town owns adjacent property on other side – put Arts Wayland there [note: land is Conservation Land, not available]. He asked why doesn’t Town just buy the site. “Communities have the money when they dictate that it’s necessary.” If you need schools renovated, you raise the money. If you think AW is appropriate, raise the money. You negotiated a deal with a developer, who will build and sell; this creates a trade-off.</p> <p>He doesn’t want to be warring with neighbors over parking. Jesse can sympathize, and we need to address that.</p> <p>Jesse has seen how difficult it is to raise money. Spending often gets voted down at Town Meeting. Our purpose is to bring things to vote so voters can decide. We’re looking for small wins. It’s not as cut and dried as just allocating the money.</p> <p>Joe served as a Select Board, Planning Board in Hopkinton, he knows how difficult to raise an army to survive Town Meeting. But to compromise on the location of the Arts center because it’s offered free, and eventually will not be able to sustain itself for lack of facilities to park or use a lot of water, and in spot which has no room to grow is tantamount to being short sighted for a temporary goal.</p> <p>Mr. Strazzulla was “flabbergasted that a community as affluent and sophisticated as Wayland can’t support its own arts center.” Three major donors in Hopkinton gave \$3-4 million 30 years ago. Many volunteered. Select Board gave them the land. Joe has no argument with Arts Wayland, but has problem with self storage.</p> <p>“I don’t oppose an arts center there, it’s probably an ideal location.” He asserts to just build 5,000 sf arts center there, on its own, surrounded by parking, sewer. [But of course we as a town don’t have the \$10M to do it, nor control do we have control of the private</p>	
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<p>property]</p> <p>He appreciated the time. He acknowledged that parking spaces closest to Arts Wayland are often empty – due to Wayland zoning which requires high parking counts, which is one of his complaints. It was suggested for him to talk to George, perhaps work out a deal for those spaces? Let’s resolve ahead of time if he’s concerned about potential conflict?</p> <p>Moved to discuss <u>MBTA Communities zoning</u>, Mr. Strazzulla is interested to add in residential to his site to be able to improve property and upgrade his existing sewer. He notes ideally, an MWRA connection is just over town line in Natick 500’ away – but Natick has to agree, and Wayland to ask. Becky: Has been mentioned in past, but never pursued – concerns about growth that would ensue.</p> <p>Becky: Current guidelines do not allow an MBTA mixed use zoning district where the retail is required to stay in place. Perhaps we could ask the state for a special district; they must pre-approve any mixed use districts prior to vote – potentially ask? Worth a try (see further discussion, below).</p> <p>JS: Currently Wayland sewer requirements are state requirements and then multiplied by 2 – this limits development. Combining his 5 systems into 1 would mean -- with all users with different requirements, some with grease traps, maintenance etc – it would have to go to highest standard. So sewer is one concern. Second concern: height restriction (35’ should be 39-40’ to allow third floor). Third concern: Difficulty in building structure on top of existing uses, or rebuild, pure logistics.</p> <p>He would like to stay in conversation about MBTA Communities, many variables that would make it difficult, but worth exploring from his perspective.</p> <p>Regarding <u>Wayland Business Association</u> (of which he mentioned he had been involved years ago before it dissolved), EDC is working on getting a collective in some format bringing businesses together. He is interested in being on any group. In Hopkinton, all info is automated, with emails, get togethers. “They work as well as the energy of those who are involved” Focused group, gather 3-4 times/year. Chamber of Commerce. Has struggled for years.</p> <p>Mr. Strazzulla completed his public comment.</p> <p><u>Additional Public Comment:</u> Quentin Nowland, 4 Windy Hill Lane</p> <p>Quentin (QN) owns the new self storage facility in Sudbury behind Whole Foods. Lived in Cochituate for years, then moved north.</p> <p>Becky: How did zoning work in Sudbury for your self storage?  QN: Site was zoned residential but they got constructive approval. Sudbury had rejected it, but with change in Town Manager/Planner</p>	
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<p>they had 100 day time window, meetings got missed, got constructive approval by default (!)</p> <p>Mr. Nowland asked if we're looking at all three Business B districts? Answer: No</p> <p>Concerned about spot zoning – since not for safety or general welfare of Town – Arts Wayland use doesn't comply? Concern of years of litigation, time and money</p> <p>QN: Could Joe tear down Donelan's and then do self storage if George doesn't? Answer: No – zoning this site only, not Donelan's</p> <p>QN: Arts Wayland space – who's responsible? Concerned that Town is on the hook. Answer: Arts Wayland handles everything on site, maintenance, insurance etc.</p> <p>Septic for storage is same size as single family house. With the addition of AW – now parking and septic becomes an issue?</p> <p>AW has been around for 40 years – but here, no room to grow? Will it succeed?</p> <p>Does a 90,000 sf building fit into the neighborhood? In Sudbury, residences not close by, on busy road Rt 20 vs here.</p> <p>Joe wanted to do small commercial building on this site. That would save on time, litigation. [This is private land, we are not in control of it.]</p> <p>Has Arts Wayland really pursued other locations, churches, schools? [Yes. Wayland doesn't have extra spaces like old leftover historic buildings, or permanent spaces at churches or schools.] Quentin is happy to research further.</p>	
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(2) Approve Meeting Minutes from Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2023
<i>[Ran out of time to review due to long public comment/discussion]</i>

### Agenda Items for Discussion

Topic	Update	Action Items
(3) MBTA Communities Zoning 2024		
a) Planning Board (PB) efforts update – zoning sites; article(s) strategy; public forum date/format	<p>Public forum next week 12/11. Reviewed excerpt from PB presentation of sites around Wayland. Green – good for MBTA district, Yellow – Maybe, Red – limited/not possible.</p> <p>From above discussion, we can't do a Mixed Use district where commercial is <u>required</u></p>	(All) Plan to attend and spread the word for 12/11 public forum

	<p>to stay. That's why some commercial districts are labeled red, or not feasible, no one wants to lose the retail.</p> <p>[Town Center, as a current mixed use district, has large stable of commercial and makes sense for them to maintain it, so it's not as much of a concern that retail would disappear there.]</p> <p>Question: Do we ask as a committee that a mixed-use district be submitted to the state for pre-approval before Town Meeting, to try for a mixed use district with mandatory commercial? The worst they could say is no, might as well ask. <i>[Brad agreed, but he had to leave meeting and quorum ended before poll of all members completed]</i></p> <p>Brad: EDC should be laser focused on maintaining commercial districts. Mainstone = not our purview? Perhaps West Rt 20 [near Sudbury border] is not a good area since we'll lose our commercial?</p> <p>Becky: Residential in place of say Candela properties along Rt 20 (on left as you turn on road leading to Longfellow health club) would be 6x the value of current commercial. Do we let it go residential for best result for Town?</p> <p>Assessment just came in for Alta Oxbow: \$72.8M (!) Equal to half the value of our <u>entire</u> commercial tax base (\$152M) – in one project. <u>\$1.1M+</u> in tax revenues every year, forever.</p> <p>Wayland is very good at expensive condos and expensive apartments – which is not good for affordability, but which is very good for our tax base. Doesn't generate a lot of kids – Alta projected 20-30 kids – actual is 16 kids. Services low except for seniors (more calls to Senior Center with 55+ building, so perhaps we should add person at Senior Center, esp with St Ann's coming) – but otherwise home run.</p> <p>If we see all 750 units built, it's worth \$4M/yr – or \$800 for every single household/yr, forever = thousands of dollars over time.</p>	<p>Becky to try to attend next PB meeting to discuss; unfortunately has standing 6-8pm Tuesday conflict. To attend if possible if scheduled after 8pm.</p>
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	<p>So the larger question is, should Wayland embrace residential, embrace MBTA zoning, as a financial engine?</p> <p>[Brad needed to leave the meeting; quorum dropping so meeting ending. Other topics, noted on agenda only to be addressed if time allowed, were not discussed.]</p>	
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(8) Confirm next meeting, typically second Friday each month: January 12, 2024
Confirmed for January 12, 2024

(9) Adjourn
Jesse motioned to adjourn. Nick seconded. Approved 4-0 to adjourn at 10:05am

Minutes respectfully submitted by Rebecca Stanizzi.

Attachments:

- Comment letter from Joe Strazzulla 12/8/23 (1p)
- 193 Commonwealth Ave project information summary from Select Board meeting 11/20/23 (9pp - now posted to EDC webpage)

Main Street Property, Inc.

Post Office Box 5

Hopkinton, MA 01748

December 7, 2023

Wayland Economic Development Committee, Planning Board and Select Board,

I am opposed to adding a storage facility use to the Business B Zoning District. My family has owned the Chochituate Village Shopping Center since 1960 and have invested significantly in this Wayland property over these past sixty-three years. We have every intention to continue investing in Wayland. Because of our commitment to our property, we are shocked at the land development proposal that has been brought to your attention by the present land owner, thru George Bachrack and Jerry Cohen of SSG Development and SF Properties. Not only are they asking the Town to amend the Zoning Bylaws for their benefit, they are also asking the Town to look at a short-term benefit that will negatively affect all of us who have long term investments in Wayland.

It is my belief that the Town, in drafting our present Bylaws, believed that Wayland and Cochituate Village were special places that should be protected. Land development profits have always been a motive for working outside or changing the rules governing zoning and other regulations. This proposal is no different.

Regarding their offer to find a location for Arts Wayland, that use has many locations permitted under our present Zoning Bylaws. As we have told you, we have also offered to purchase this property from the present owner and our plan would be to incorporate the property into our present Center, all within the existing zoning bylaws.

We look forward to the opportunity to further discuss this issue with you all personally.

Sincerely Yours, Joseph A. Strazzulla, President

508-655-2616 (waylandrealty@gmail.com)



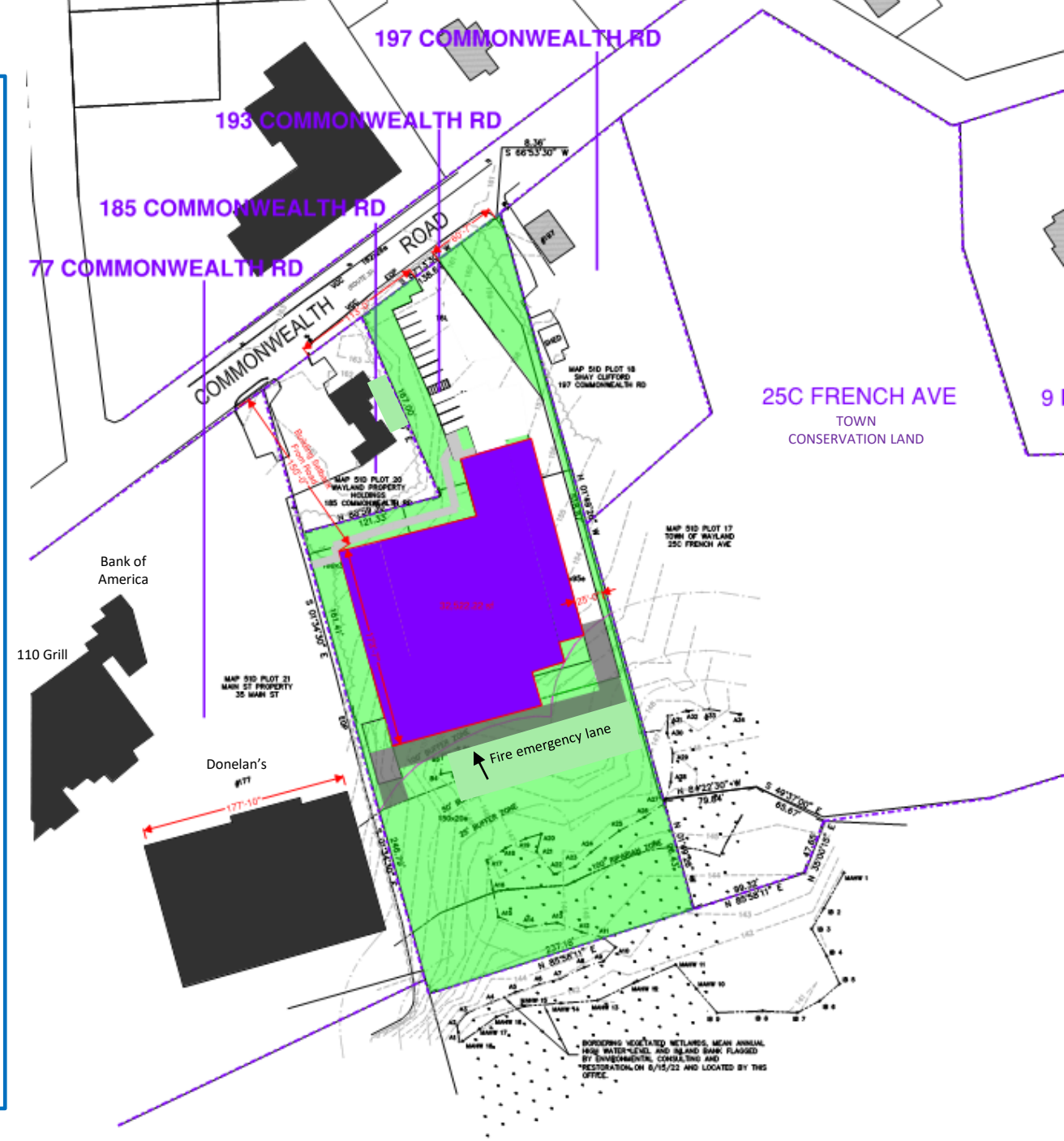
## 193 COMMONWEALTH ROAD PROPOSED SELF STORAGE:

- Serves local customers:  
75% Residential / 25% Small Business clientele  
(life changes/downsizing; small business inventory)
- Low traffic, parking & asphalt vs. typical business use
- Low noise (especially with internal loading)
- Typically a desirable quiet transitional/buffer use between commercial and residential areas
- New tax revenues (net new est. \$120-130k/yr)
- Low or no impact to Town schools, services

### Additional design elements for Wayland:

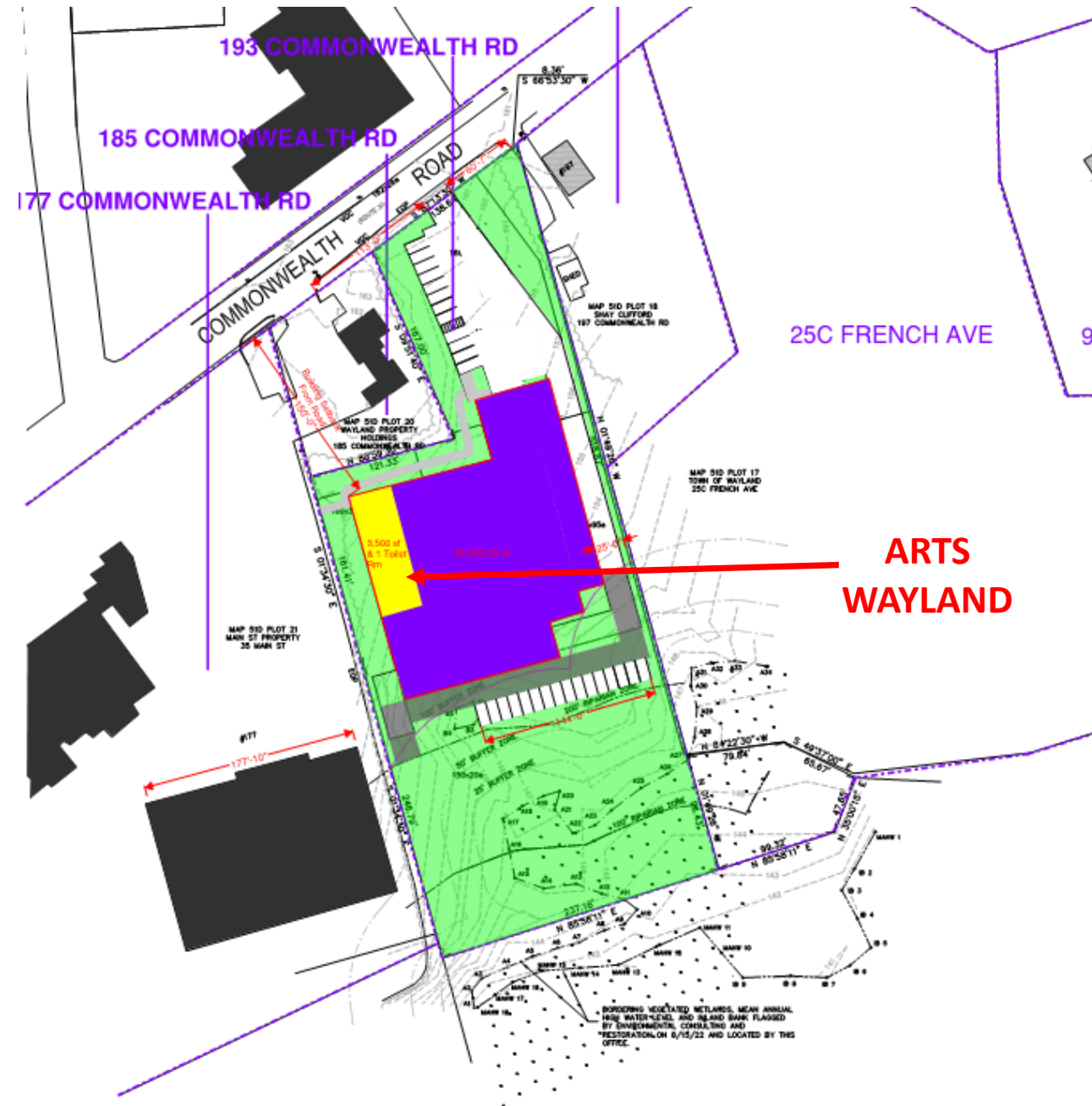
- ✓ Detailed architectural design for village setting
- ✓ 800 sf community room & Recreation Dept storage
- ✓ Net zero building including rooftop solar

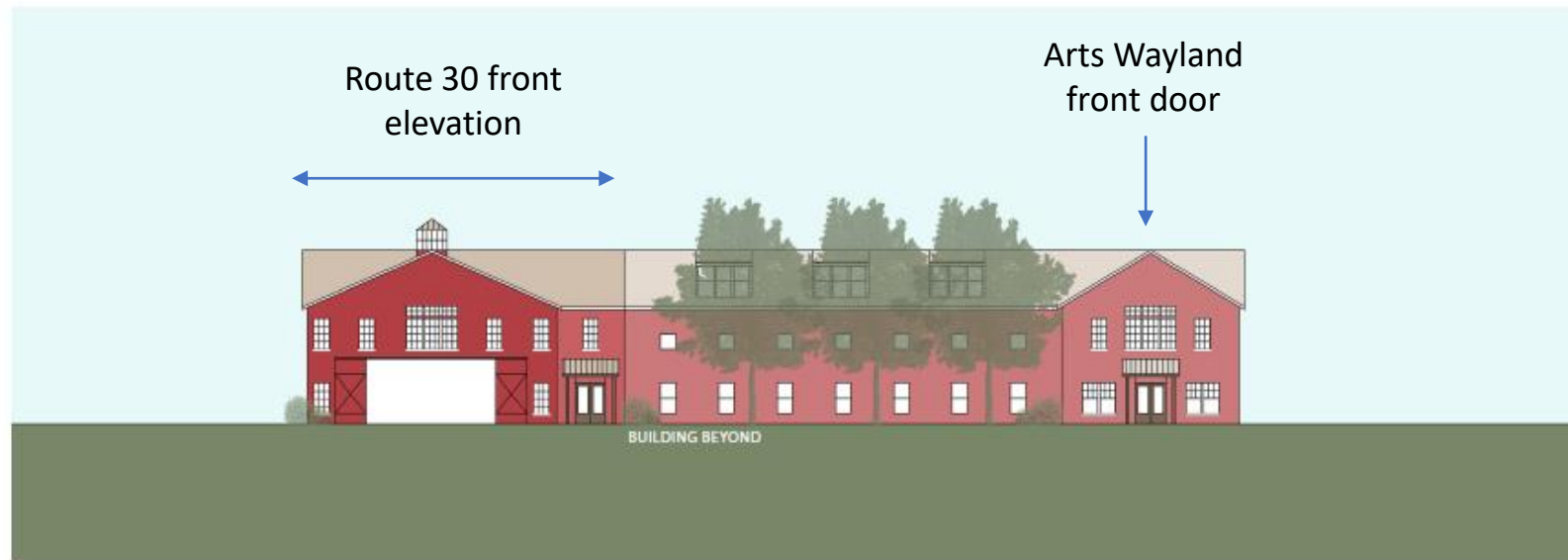
*.....but still lacking street level vitality?*



## **\*NEW\* ARTS WAYLAND ADDITION:**

- Activates most prominent ground floor corner, adding vitality to the building and the village
- Now 3,500 sf space with glass roll-up doors facing west
- Brings arts uses back to Cochituate, and brings small-venue live music to the neighborhood
- Walkable destination for many residents
- Daytime parking on site for classes, gallery.  
Ideally will use nearby excess evening parking (TD Bank, Middlesex Bank, Donelan's?) for concert-goers instead of adding parking at back of site
- Arts Wayland happy to open up space for Town, Rec or community meetings (like at Town Center)
- Property is “energized” with community use, while providing new development and tax revenues – win win



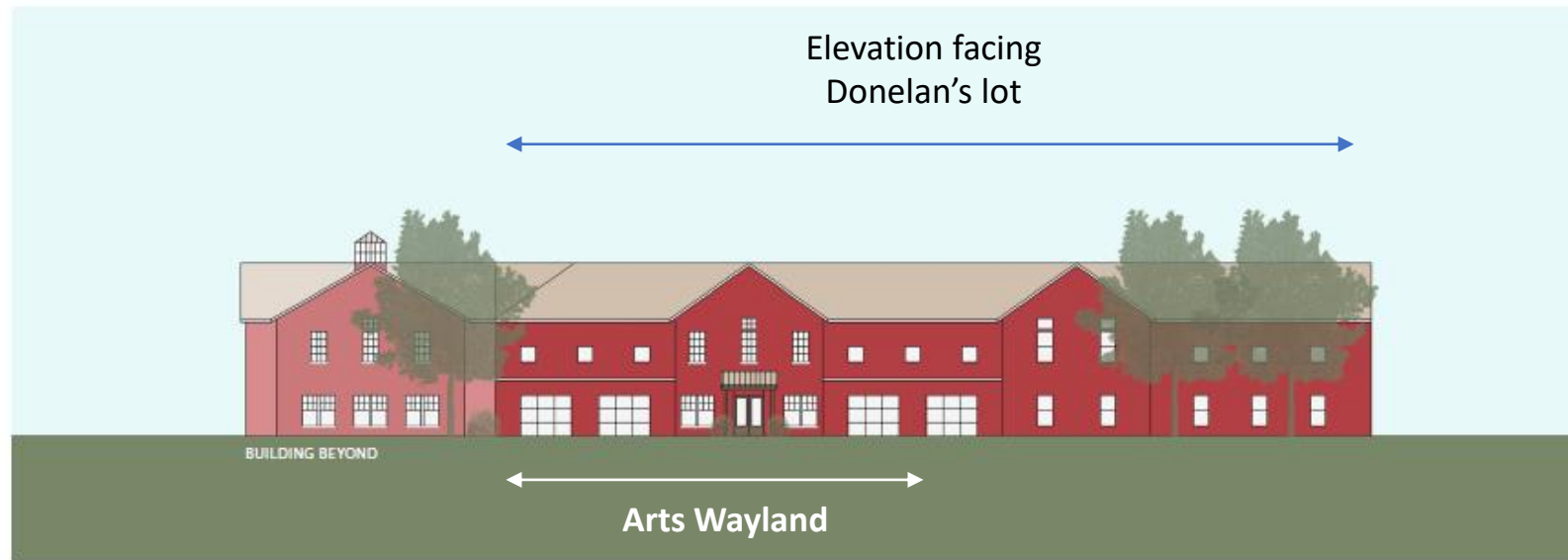


North Elevation

Scale: NTS

Red barn style  
(as example,  
similar to new  
storage facility next  
to Whole Foods on  
Route 20 Sudbury)

*Note: Design  
not complete yet.  
Design and colors to  
be determined with  
input from the  
community and  
neighbors*



West Elevation

Scale: NTS

*Note:  
Length of west  
façade is similar to  
length of adjacent  
front façade of  
Donelan's building*

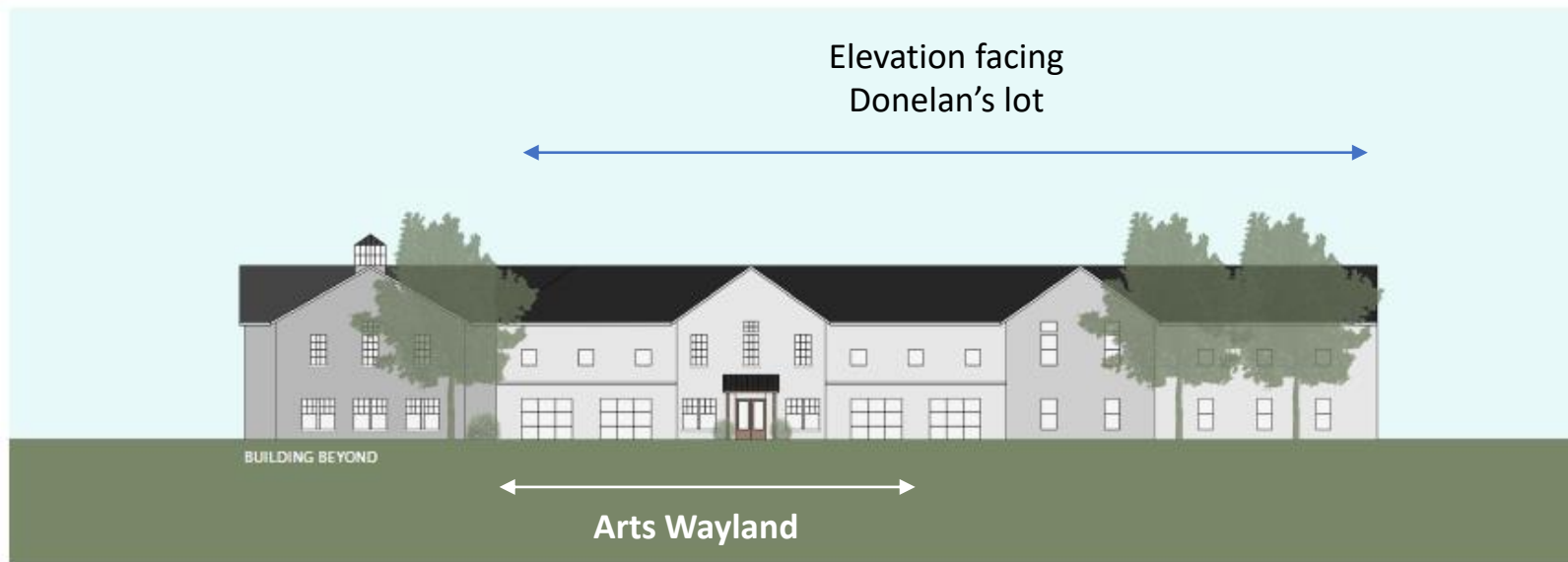


**North Elevation**

Scale: NTS

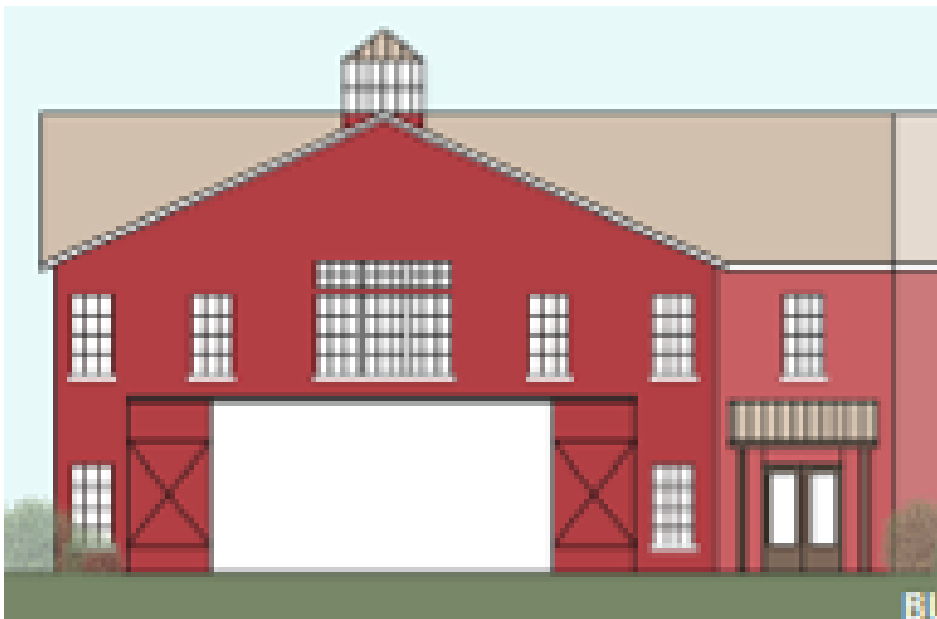
Gray alternate  
instead of red --  
more muted to  
blend into  
Cochituate village  
colors?

*Note:  
Design and colors  
to be determined  
with input from  
the community  
and neighbors*



**West Elevation**

Scale: NTS



## NEW ADDITION TO ZONING REQUIRED

- Self storage not currently defined as a Use in Wayland Zoning
- Proposal to add Self Storage to existing Business-B Village Zone, in this area only, with specific criteria e.g.:
  - Deeper setback from roadway
  - Any third floor (zoning allows 35') must have angled roofline to appear as two-story building
  - Village design with natural materials, scale and colors (no fluorescent green or orange)
  - Limited parking
  - Prominent façade(s) activated
  - Low, modest plinth road signage
  - Limited/night sky site lighting (*\*important to neighbors*)  
....etc. to fit into village surroundings and be a good neighbor
- Perhaps consider officially requiring, if possible:
  - Net zero building
  - Community space





## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- Will building will be surrounded by chain link fence with a bunker-like chain link rolling gate out front...?
  - ✓ **No.** No chain-link fence, no chain-link gate, no fence  
Loading area will be inside the “barn doors”
- Will the building be cheap industrial, or bright green/orange...?
  - ✓ **No.** Building will be tastefully designed and detailed with a village feel, and with colors limited by zoning
- Is the building seriously larger than the Middle School!...?
  - ✓ **No.** WMS is 118,301 sf vs 96,000 sf here (19% less)  
WMS footprint is 118,301 sf vs 32,500 sf here (73% smaller)  
Length (170') is similar to Donelan's building front (177').  
Length is within range of other neighborhood properties:  
Middlesex Bank/PO (126'), Starbucks plaza (142'), Royal Nursing Home (151'), Walgreens/110/BofA (210')
- Is the building already designed?
  - ✓ **No.** Design shown is *just an example* – actual to be tailored based on input from community along the way. The project design would need to be fully approved by Planning Board after any zoning is approved.



## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

- Isn't this spot zoning?
  - ✓ **Does not appear to be.** Size of a zone is not the determining factor. Spot zoning typically:
    - Changes from one use to another (e.g. often from residential to commercial)
      - ✓ This only adds a commercial use to existing commercial zoning
    - Is inconsistent with surrounding uses
      - ✓ New commercial use is consistent with surrounding uses
    - Is inconsistent with massing of surroundings
      - ✓ Scale here is consistent with surrounding uses
    - Is approved by a limited group of individuals (city councilors, planning board, e.g.)
      - ✓ Will be reviewed by town-wide Town Meeting
    - Benefits only a private property owner
      - ✓ When a municipality benefits, courts typically are favorable to arguments against spot zoning

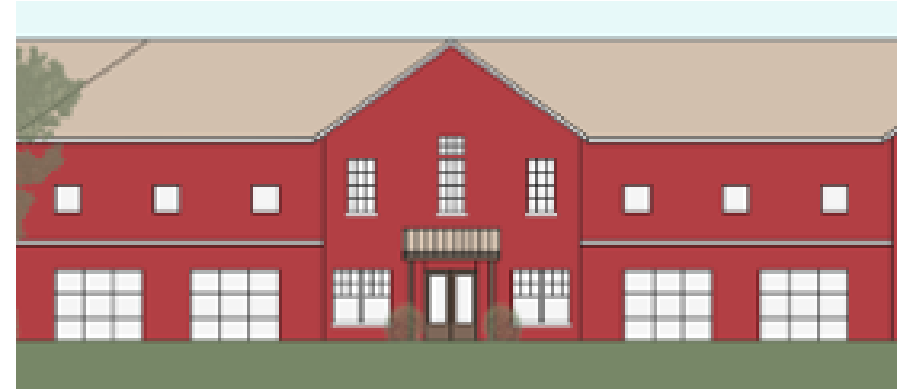
## COMPARISON OF TWO COMMUNITY SPACES:



### COUNCIL ON AGING/COMMUNITY CENTER:

- Wayland Center location
- 10,000 sf
- \$11,000,000+ Town Cost
- Green building (net zero, roof & lot solar)
- Town pays utilities, insures, landscapes, cleans, maintains, staffs – all taxpayer \$
- \$0 tax revenues on site

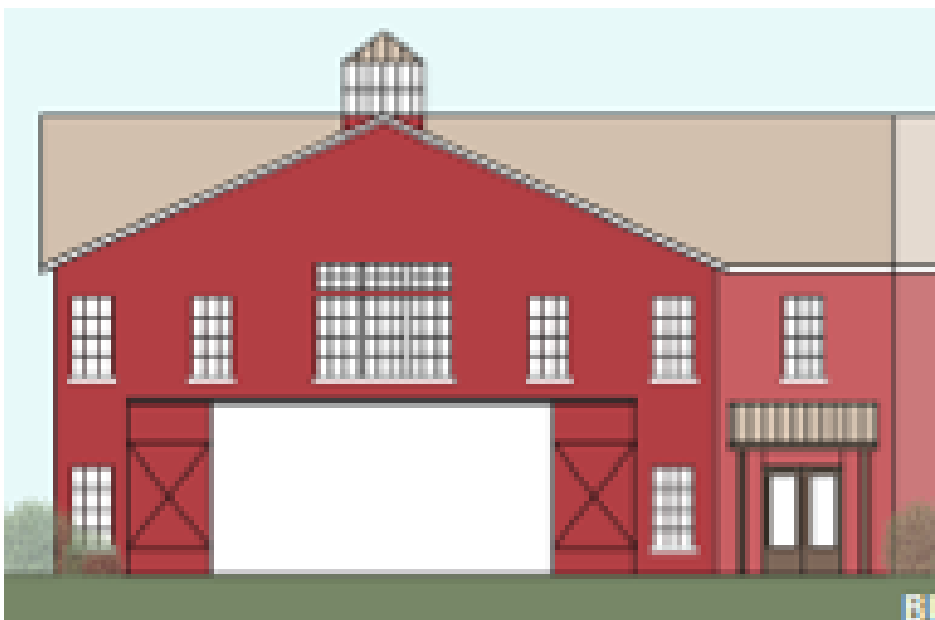
VS



### ARTS WAYLAND:

- Cochituate location
- 3,500 sf
- \$0 Town Cost
- Green building (net zero, rooftop solar)
- No operating cost to Town  
*Arts Wayland* manages, pays utilities, cleans, maintains, staffs – all volunteers/donations
- Approx \$130k new tax revenues on site
- *Space proposed to be owned by Town but used by AW*





**Zoning contact:**

**Rebecca Stanizzi (Chair, EDC)**

**[rstanizzi@wayland.ma.us](mailto:rstanizzi@wayland.ma.us)**

**For public questions, comments, or feedback  
(Encouraged!):**

**Project:**

**George Bachrach**

**[gab321@comcast.net](mailto:gab321@comcast.net)**

**Developer Team:**

George Bachrach is an attorney, former state senator, and former President of the Environmental League of MA. He is the co-founder of The Civic Action Project, training the next generation of civic leaders.

Jerry Cohen is a founding partner of SSG Development and the founder of SF Properties. A graduate of Brown University and Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management, he is the former Vice Chairman of Mass Development and currently serves on the boards of Tufts Medicine and the American Jewish Committee.