

## UPDATE ON A VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICT: PLANNING BOARD REPORT

In April, The Planning Board reconvened with BRPC staff, Brian Domina and MacKenzie Greer, to take final steps in researching and drafting a Village Center District Bylaw, (a proposed revision to New Marlborough's Protective Bylaws.) It had become clear that The Board would not be able to finish the process in time for both information sessions and creating a final draft bylaw for a vote at the May 7<sup>th</sup> Town Meeting. BRPC staff had work still to cover with The Board: refinements of language pertaining to conversion of existing principal structures, dimensional standards, and accessory dwelling conflicts with the Intensity Table within the draft bylaw. These topics will needed to be clarified and incorporated before preparing a draft The Planning Board can bring forward to The Town for public feedback.

However, to present an overview, The Board, with BRPC staff, prepared a handout for Town Meeting. This handout covers the impetus for a change in our bylaws, what the new districting will accomplish, how to get involved, and some maps and data showing development trends in New Marlborough. If you missed it at Town Meeting, extra copies of the handout are available at The Mill River Store and can be viewed and downloaded at The Town Website. \*

The Planning Board will attend the next meeting of The Board of Assessors on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The goal will be to see if, and how, the proposed village center boundaries correspond to the assessor's map of currently plotted neighborhoods and to understand possible tax impacts. BRPC staff suggested that The Planning Board give the assessors a couple of test parcels to see what effect smaller lot size might have on assessed value. (The Proposed Village Center District will allow development of lots with frontage of seventy-five feet instead of one hundred and fifty feet.)

Moving forward, The Board will hold information sessions in late summer. A Public Hearing will be held at least 45 days prior to a Special Town Meeting. The Board will begin public outreach at Burrirt Day on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Please watch for time and dates for the information sessions, Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting in this paper, The Town Website, and Maggie's List: [maggies-list@googlegroups.com](mailto:maggies-list@googlegroups.com). There will be opportunity to review draft documents, proposed village boundaries, proposed dimensional standards, and permitted uses and to give input during the summer before The Board prepares final draft Village Center District language and boundary maps for a vote.

New Marlborough currently has one zoning district, Town-Residential. Please stay informed and engaged as we move forward in the process of considering a shift to two districts, Village Center and Rural-Residential.

□ reported by Holly Morse  
Member of The Planning Board

\*[www.newmarlboroughma.gov/Pages/NewMarlboroughMA-Bcomm/Planning/index](http://www.newmarlboroughma.gov/Pages/NewMarlboroughMA-Bcomm/Planning/index).