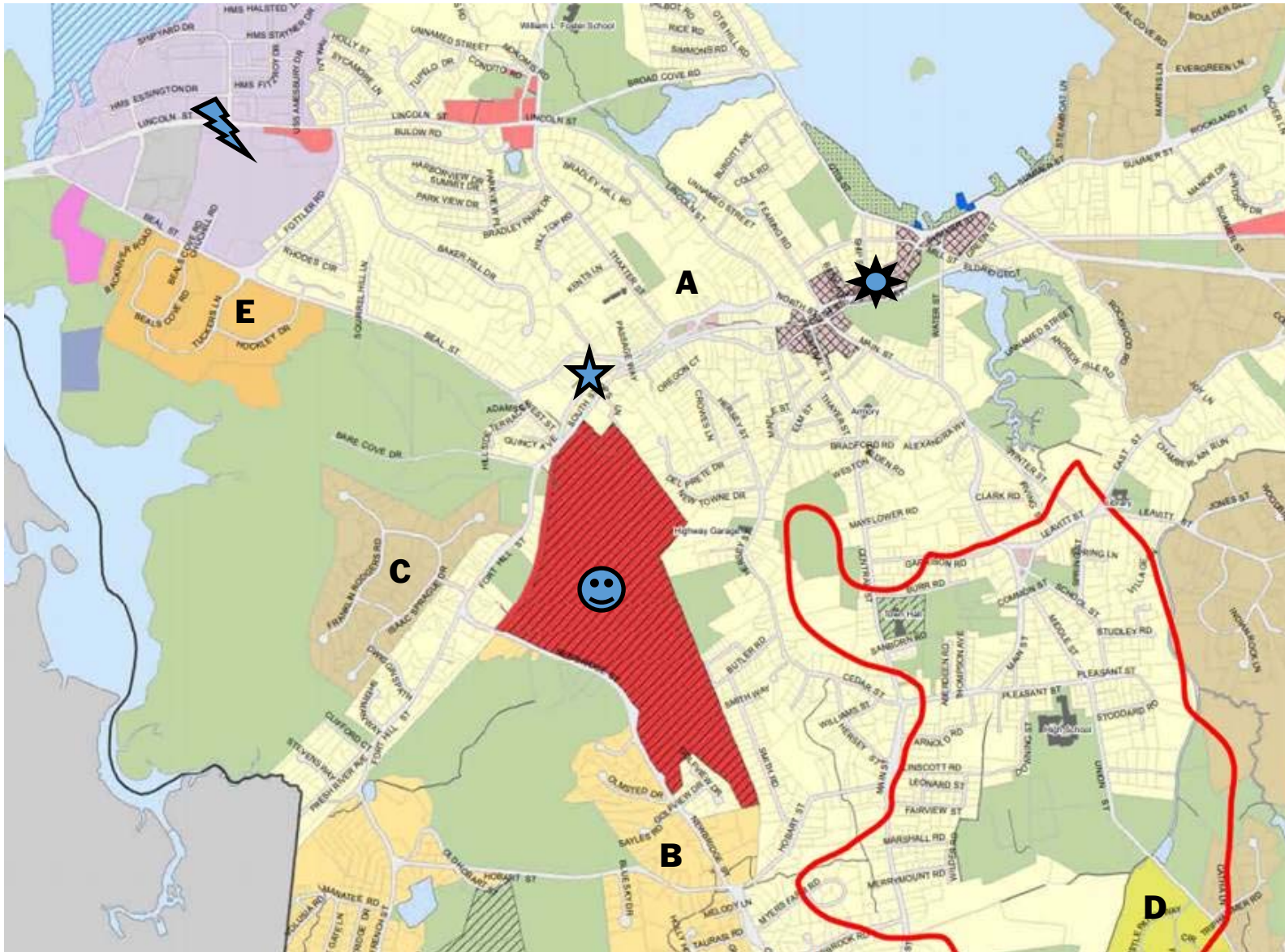






Wayne*, MA

Pop. 16,356



Key

-  200 acre parcel
-  Commuter rail stop
-  Downtown district
-  Other commercial district

A Residence A (20,000sf)

B Residence B (30,000sf)

C Residence C (40,000sf)

D Residence D (multi-family up to 8 units/acre)

E Residence E (multi-family up to 12/acre, 15% affordable)

*fictitious town



Affordable Housing Trust Case Study

45 minutes

Town of Wayne*, MA

Wayne

Population: 16,356

Five-member Board of Selectmen

Community Preservation Act (CPA) passed in 2009 at 1.5%

Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI): 7.8%

Scenario

The town has voted to bond CPA funds to purchase 200 acres of land (in red on the map) for community housing and open space. Town Meeting has also directed the affordable housing trust to oversee the process of proposing the split in land between community housing and open space (acreage proportion), appropriate zoning for the community housing site and developing a request for proposals for the community housing site.

Background

The Board of Selectmen and Planning Board are committed to reaching 10% on the SHI. Wayne needs 128 units to meet this goal. The Select Board would like this land purchase to not only allow the town to reach the 128 unit goal, but surpass it slightly. The community has experienced a few developments under Chapter 40B and town leadership want more control over where and how development happens.

Nearby neighbors are adamantly against developing this parcel that has been a private country club for decades. Some neighbors have engaged an attorney and are considering possible legal action.

The land is across the street from a commuter rail stop. It is less than one mile from downtown and less than two miles to another significant commercial district. There is extensive public open space near the parcel. Residential zones surround most of the parcel with the majority requiring a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet (light yellow on map). However, 70% of the houses in this zone do not meet that minimum lot size.

The town has determined that only eight of the 200 acres are unbuildable and they are the furthest from the commuter rail. Additionally, the parcel has access to sewer and water. It is currently zoned as “business recreation.”

Some people have used the common argument that a large housing development will negatively impact the schools. In reality, school enrollment in Wayne has been stable in recent years with slight increases predicted over the next five years.

Others argue that the traffic from a large housing development will be unbearable, adding undue pressure on the infrastructure and increasing safety concerns.

*Wayne, MA is a fictitious town.

While the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) supported acquiring the parcel, two members live near the land and oppose the development of housing there. They have been outspoken in local press against using part of the land for housing.

Questions for discussion

1. You are members of the Affordable Housing Trust and have been charged with a significant project! Where do you start? What overarching goals will you establish for the project, balancing the interests of the Select Board, abutters and other stakeholders?
2. How do you decide what proportion of the parcel should be designated for housing and what proportion for open space?
3. How would you propose zoning the parcel? The following are options:
 - a. Residence A – 20,000 square feet per lot
 - b. Residence B – 30,000 square feet per lot
 - c. Residence C – 40,000 square feet per lot
 - d. Residence D – multi-family up to eight units per acre
 - e. Residence E – multi-family up to 12 units per acre, requiring 15% affordable at 80% area median income (AMI)
 - f. Open Space Residence Development – up to 12 units per acre, 50% of land left as open space
 - g. 40R district
 - h. Leave zoning as is
4. How would you justify and explain your choice?
5. As you begin to develop the request for proposals (RFP) to create community housing:
 - a. Will you specify how many units you are seeking?
 - b. Will you clarify homeownership versus rental housing?
 - c. Will the RFP outline affordability levels (up to 100% AMI allowed with CPA funds)?
 - d. What criteria might you include to help evaluate proposals (e.g., proposal puts the town over 10% on the SHI, mixed income development up to 100% AMI)?
6. How might you approach the neighbors who oppose housing development at this site?
7. How could you build a broad coalition of support for your proposal?

Key

1 acre = 43,560 square feet

Under Chapter 40B, all rental units are added to the SHI and only affordable homeownership units (market rate homeownership units do not count toward the 10%).