

THE BEDFORD BANNER

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Chamber of Commerce Says Vote NO on Article 6

Written by Christine Pinney, with contributions from Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP and Selectman, Sheldon Moll

The following interview was conducted to educate voters on the proposed Article 6, "Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Site Plan Design in the Limited Business District and General Business District". It will appear on the Warrant to be presented at Bedford's Town Meeting on March 26, 2007 at 7:30 pm. An abridged text is available on line at www.bedfordchamber.org and copies of the Warrant with the complete article will be mailed to registered voters in early March. All registered voters are encouraged to attend.

- What does the Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Article 6, say?
- What do proponents say about it?
- What do opponents say about it?
- What are the costs for businesses?
- How does/can this affect the process that businesses use to make changes to their properties and structures?
- What other things are important to note?
- What's next?

Q: What does the Zoning Bylaw Amendment say?

A: (*Sheldon Moll, Selectman*) Basically, it cites a series of very general design and construction guidelines while the Town's existing Zoning/Building Bylaws are inferred and pertinent. It is very general and not specific.

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) The proposed Design Standards are included in a Warrant Article that

would mandate, through zoning certain building and site design in the Limited Business and General Business Districts, located essentially along Great Road and North Road.

Q: What is good about it? What do proponents say about the article?

A: (*Sheldon Moll, Selectman*) What is marginally good about it is that it provides at least some developer design guidelines.

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) I agree that the concept of design guidelines is good and even a necessity. In my opinion, however, they should be just that, guidelines. Placing such guidance in a zoning bylaw makes the provisions mandatory, and as noted by Sheldon, this is a problem not only for the design team that has trouble interpreting what the Board member's thoughts are, but also locks the Planning Board in with no opportunity to allow good design that does not meet this criteria. While the Town of Bedford is proud of its colonial heritage and we are blessed by the Bedford Minutemen, pole capping and other historic visions of our past, we also have many other attractive architectural styles. Further, some schools of thought suggest that we should not move forward in time trying to merely re-create the character of the past, but establishing a community character of our own, with attractive architecture whether it be reminiscent of the past or a modern improvement.

Q: What is not good about it? cons – What do opponents say about the article?

A: (*Sheldon Moll, Selectman*) What is bad about it is that since it is so general it allows the Planning Board to be very arbitrary in analyzing a developer/architects proposals and then sending the applicant back for design changes. This typically results in increased developer costs due to the lack of initial definition and a stretched timeline that also can affect developers' costs. This is one of the primary complaints about the Planning Board and the Town that developers have voiced in the past which results in their trying to avoid Bedford as a development site.

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) Echoing the thoughts of others, the problem with broad guidelines is

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Synchronous Solutions

Helping Businesses Reduce Their Marketing Frustrations While Improving Growth

Would you classify your marketing efforts as a success or, like most companies, classify them as ineffective and a waste of money?

There is a reason for this. Most companies are intimidated and confused by all the marketing options available to them so they take the easy way out and do what everyone else does or the ever-popular strategy of “do nothing”. The result is usually a series of uncoordinated and confusing marketing tactics leading to marketing frustration, wasted dollars and a lack of any significant increase in growth.

However, companies are justified in being confused and frustrated trying to figure out what will work best for them. Did you know that a company has a choice of 43 generic growth strategies and obviously thousands of ways to implement them? Which ones should you choose?

Well, in reality there are no more than 5 growth strategies that apply to a company and only 2 or 3 will have any significant impact on the bottom line. Synchronous Solutions helps clients select the relevant strategies that apply to them, identifies the best growth opportunities for those strategies and then helps them define, develop and implement the supporting marketing tactics they need. We take the guesswork out of marketing through a better understanding of their business realities and customers

And, as a small business ourselves, we realize that time and revenues are always tight. That is why, using a set of proprietary tools, we are able to do this very quickly and inexpensively.

CHAMBER CALENDAR



March 8 7:30 a.m.	Chamber of Commerce Directors Meeting <i>Bedford Police Station</i>
March 15 12:00 noon	Working Women’s Alliance <i>Shawsheen Room, Town Center</i>
March 26 7:30 p.m.	Annual Town Meeting <i>Bedford High School</i>
April 12 7:30 a.m.	Chamber of Commerce Directors Meeting <i>Bedford Police Station</i>
April 19 12:00 noon	Working Women’s Alliance <i>Shawsheen Room, Town Center</i>
April 24 5:30-7:30 p.m.	Multi- Chamber Networking Event <i>Hilton Garden Inn 420 Totten Pond Road, Waltham</i>

First we help companies through a simple exercise that will enable us to identify the best 2 or 3 growth strategies for their business. Should it be just be an acquisition strategy, a retention strategy, something else or a combination and most importantly for what type of customers or prospects?

Then using our new service called Quick-Knowledge, we are able to identify the best opportunities to make these strategies work and from a place you never thought possible – your financial system. There is a wealth of knowledge in your financial system, but until now it has never been useful from a marketing perspective. However, we are now able to provide small businesses with the answers to success by helping them to:

- Ease the lead generation and sales process by knowing who their best prospects are and what they should be selling to them.
- Increase the average sale by identifying their best up-selling opportunities
- Allocate time and revenue resources properly against profitable customers instead of bargain hunters and non-loyal ones.

- Reduce their wasted marketing dollars and increase their marketing ROI by identifying past under-performing marketing efforts.

Now, with a clear understanding of their best growth strategies and armed with the knowledge of the best way to make it happen our clients are now ready to implement the appropriate marketing tactics. Additionally they also have a process in place to measure what is working and not working so they can learn and constantly improve on their future marketing efforts.

The result, instead of frustration, they have a cohesive marketing strategy based on knowledge whose supporting marketing tactics will deliver sustained growth.

For more information about Synchronous Solutions’ services and how we may be able to help end your frustration with your marketing efforts, please call David Wright at 781-271-1459 or email at dave@synchronous-solutions.com

VOTE NO ON ARTICLE 6 *continued from page 1*

that they are not specific and do not provide detailed guidance to designers. While on its surface, this approach allows flexibility for good design, that determination is at the whim of 5 individuals (who might change over time) and their own opinions on the style of architecture and appropriate site design elements. Specific problems: 1) the regulation of historic properties appears to overlap the jurisdiction of the Bedford Historic District Commission and/or Historic Preservation Commission. Do we want the Planning Board opinion on renovation of historic structures to possibly conflict with that authority granted to our historic groups by the Massachusetts legislature? 2) an encouragement for shared parking appears well intended, but imposition of this requirement would create a zoning violation as the requirements are stated with no authority of the Planning Board or building inspector to waive the parking requirements of the zoning bylaw, and therefore this provision will be impossible to satisfy, and possibly serve a reason for rejection of site plan approval.

Q: What are the costs for businesses?

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) In recent decades we have passed the burden of public amenities to business. This is a benefit to residential taxpayers and a burden to business. When site improvements and often off-site improvements are requested by a permitting authority, they must bear a rational nexus to the scale of the proposal. If the Planning Board imposes conditions in its permits to small business owners that are onerous and costly (or out of scale with the application before it), the proposed improvement may never be realized due to the cost of the sidewalks or trees or other improvements, the town doesn't get those desired improvements and both the small business and the town lose.

Q: How does/can this affect the process that businesses use to make changes to their properties and structures?

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) If Bedford truly wants small business to thrive, it needs to facilitate, not hinder, the process - including the ability of business owners to incrementally upgrade their properties. (e.g. Dalya's, Knowfat onerous conditions of approval).

Q: What other things are important to note?

A: (*Sheldon Moll, Selectman*) By failing to invite the Chamber to their first Public Hearing, they the planning board avoided direct comments from the business community.

Q: What do you recommend for next steps?

A: (*Sheldon Moll, Selectman*) Business owners or landlords who are Bedford residents may speak at Town meeting, voice their concerns, and ask the voters to hold off until the design concepts are more clearly stated.

A: (*Pamela J. Brown, Esq. AICP*) Ask the Planning Board to work with the Business Community, historic and design professionals to craft design guidelines that can be perfected over time by the panning board, without the need to return to town meeting for change. While non-binding (on either the applicant or the board), such guidelines would provide much needed direction for applicants.

The Chamber is in support of guidelines to enhance site design and compliment the historic architecture of the town; however, as a zoning Bylaw this amendment will mandate design standards that are not explicitly defined within the language bylaw. The Bedford Chamber of Commerce recommends a NO vote on Article 6 to allow the details of design guidelines to be developed.

For more details and up to minute information visit www.bedfordchamber.org.

To the Bedford Chamber of Commerce:

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for making Elm Brook Place the non-profit recipient of the 2006 Tastes of Bedford benefit.

Elm Brook Place helps over 180 men and woman in their recovery from serious and persist mental illness to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

Members who come to Elm Brook Place have a place to come to, opportunities for meaningful work, opportunities for meaningful relationships, and always, a place to return to when needed.

Our services for members include: Career planning; job placement; Educational assistance with GED, completing a college degree or learning a trade; A day structure that includes comradery and skill building; Assistance with all disability entitlements including Social Security, housing subsidies, and medical insurance; Social and recreational opportunities; and opportunities for empowerment and leadership.

We rely on donated and fundraised money to provide our members with special extra-curricular activities that we could otherwise not afford. Some examples of past events we have been able to fund for groups are: The opportunity to see the magic of Boston Ballet's "The Nutcracker"; A day at Canobie Lake Park; Airfare for members to attend educational/ rehabilitation conferences; A summer boat ride down the Essex River Estuaries with lunch at Woodmans; A day at the Museum of Fine Arts; and Blue Man Group, to name a few.

These are things that our members, most of whom live on a small disability income, get to experience for free because of your generosity!

We will use the \$1,000 the Bedford Chamber has awarded us towards special trips and events that will enrich the lives of our members.

We are very grateful to the Bedford Chamber of Commerce and its members for supporting Elm Brook Place and it's mission, and for being part of such a caring community.

Sincerely,
All the Members and Staff at
Elm Brook Place

Patriot Pediatrics Selected Business of the Year by Chamber of Commerce

By Elizabeth Coules

The Bedford Chamber held its Annual Dinner last night at the Minuteman Club on Hanscom Air Force Base. The Dinner serves as background for the Chambers' Annual awards to those whom have best served the Bedford and business community. The dinner was sponsored by Brookline Bank, Flatbread Pizza and Cambridge Savings Bank. Executive Director, Maureen Sullivan, served as emcee for the dinner award ceremonies.

Patriot Pediatrics, a medical practice which provides comprehensive care to children in Bedford community was presented with the "Business of the Year" award. The practice provides community resources and support by setting up medical clinics outside of their practice for children with special health concerns in addition to lecturing and educating Bedford teachers, town administrators and surrounding school systems about health concerns and preventative measures. Patriot Pediatrics' four pediatricians (Doctors: Mitchell Feldman, David Geller, Francine Hennessey, and Meera Sukumaran) and two nurse practitioners (Carissa Glavine and Mary Shupe) as well as many other nurses and assistants make up this team which provides ethical and community-based core values.

"Business Person of the Year" was presented to Judith Brown, President of New England Nurseries and long standing Chamber member. This award is given to acknowledge Judith's good citizenship and productive volunteer efforts over the years within the Bedford community in many organizations such as the American Association of University Women, Bedford Women's Community Club, Bedford Garden Club, Bedford Council for the Arts and the Bedford Historical Society to name a few. Judith, originally from Waco, TX and a business graduate of Baylor University, has traveled far from her original roots to become a valued citizen in the Bedford community.

The "Diversity Award" given to a Bedford business that has done the most to promote respect, for all people in our

community, including equality in public interactions and enhancement of employee education, was presented to Mike Walker of Whole Foods Market. Whole Foods has been at the business diversity training table since the Selectmen, the Chamber, and the Violence Prevention Coalition first began providing business diversity training to Bedford businesses in the spring of 2002. This year Whole Foods stepped up to the plate once again when the Diversity Training Planning Committee needed a trainer for the October 2006 Business Diversity training, a refresher course for previously trained businesses and an opportunity for new Bedford businesses to receive training. Whole Foods represents in its approach to participating in and volunteering for business diversity training as well as in its employee hiring practices and policies the true spirit of the BCOC's promoting diversity award.

The "Outstanding Service to the Chamber" is awarded to a Chamber member who has gone above and beyond their normal responsibilities. This year's recipient Elizabeth Coules was instrumental in making many of the Chamber fundraisers more successful. Her commitment to bringing in fabulous restaurants for Flavors, coordinating and maintaining a town data base for publicity and always going that extra mile made her a unanimous choice for this year's award.

From the Chamber Office

- **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR NON PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS** with Budgets between \$100,000 & \$200,000

A proposed change to the Massachusetts Attorney General's required review levels has been submitted. Currently non profit organizations who's budgets are \$100,000 to \$499,999 are required to file a review annually. This number was decided many years ago and has not been adjusted since for inflation. This proposed bill will raise the required level from \$100,000 to \$200,000. This will save many non profits thousands of dollars a year.

Please call or write your State Senator and Representative and ask them to support this bill. The more organizations they hear from – the more likely this bill will be passed. Even if this does not directly impact you – please call in support of smaller non profits that can save thousands of dollars. Please pass this on to all non profits in Massachusetts that you know. Please use the following information when calling/writing your Senator & Representative:

House Bill # 274
Senate Docket # 1146

- Membership renewals not paid within the next thirty days will result in your membership termination.



Chamber President Lea Ann Knight with Award winners Judith Brown, Mike Walker, Francine Hennessey and Executive Director Maureen Sullivan (Photo Credit: Community News Flash).



Welcome to New Members

Fetch It

48 Great Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-275-0584

Bakery, boutique and dog grooming spa

Kimberly Bee Design

27 Dunster Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-271-0418

Full service interior design firm

Mr. Handyman of Central Middlesex

18 A Westford Street
PO Box 78

Carlisle, MA 01741
781-275-0600

One Call Does It All! No job Is Too Small

Julie's Music

4 Carlisle Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-538-5625

Music & musician marketing

Nolaria Consulting

21 Reeves Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-275-4070

Provides software consulting and technical writing services educational & non-profit institutes, and to commercial companies.

Suzanne's Virtual Shopping Mall

2 Old Causeway Road
Bedford, MA 01730
781-275-7882

An independent distributor with Market America

The Bedford Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

12 Mudge Way
Bedford, MA 01730
Tel. (781) 275-8503
Fax: (718) 275-8501
www.bedfordchamber.org

Office Hours:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

President: Lee Ann Knight
Executive Director: Maureen Sullivan

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Debbie Spencer – RE/MAX

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Bedford, MA 01730
617-285-7300

Real Estate Sales

Steve McKenna & The Home Advantage Team of Bowes/GMAC Real Estate

1010 Mass Ave
Arlington, MA 02476
781-645-0506

Real Estate Sale

Open Enrollment for Chamber of Commerce Health Insurance Program begins April 1, 2007

We would like to remind Chamber of Commerce Members that April 1st, 2007 is open enrollment. This Open Enrollment is for Chamber of Commerce members and their employees with businesses in Massachusetts. This is the opportunity for members to make changes to their group policy; Chamber members have until April 30th, 2007 to make plan changes. If you are self-employed or a small business owner, this is a great opportunity for you to enroll in the Health Insurance programs available as a member of the Bedford Chamber of Commerce.

Member Renewals

B & D Advertising Agency
Baudanza Electric Company
Baystate Financial
BCAT
Bedford Acupuncture
Bedford Builders
Bedford Cable Access Television
Bedford Car Wash
Bedford Florist
Bedford Funeral Home
Bedford Glen Hotel
Bedford Jewelers, Inc.
Bedford Motel
Bedford Orthodontics
Bieren's Garage
Brookline Bank
Bruegger's Bagels
Café Luigi
Callahan Karate Studio
Cambridge Savings Bank
Carleton-Willard Village
Carlton & Duran, CPAs, P.C.
Christine Pinney Marketing
Design Photo
Designs Unlimited
Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial Veterans Hospital
Edward Jones
Elm Brook Place
Frank Webb's Bath Center
FUJIFILM Recording Media
Manufacturing U.S.A., Inc.
Great Road Gallery & Framing
Hanscom Federal Credit Union
Keller Williams Realty
Live-Life-Well
McColough Associates, Inc.
Mead Bros. Tree Service, Inc.
Middlesex Bank
MITRE Corporation
Mr. David Hannum
New England Nurseries, Inc.
Patriot Pediatrics
Peter C. Quinn Insurance Agency, Inc.
Progress Software
QEI
Richard E. Egan Insurance
Right at Home
Shoemaker, Inc.
Sovereign Bank
St. Michael Parish Center
The Equipment Shop
Total Fitness Today, Inc.
Twins Auto Body
Women's Financial Network
Vela Ventures