

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AGENDA

- 1 Open meeting:**
- 2 Review and approve minutes (November 17):**
- 3 Review CEDC discussion, Thomaston Green: (attached)**
- 4 Review and discuss, A plan to Encourage workforce housing, John Fancy (attached)**
- 5 Main Street update, Kendray Rodriguez**
- 6 New business**
- 7 Adjourn**

CEDC Meeting and Discussion of Thomaston Green

Inbox

B

Benjamin Griffin

Fri, Nov 18, 9:54
AM

to Bill, Diane, Kara, me, Jonathan, Chris, Kendrey, John

At the meeting yesterday, we discussed the next steps for moving forward with the Thomaston Green. It was the consensus of those in attendance that, barring any major changes in the final version of the Thomaston Green Plan of Action developed as a result of the three public meetings, the Committee should recommend the following to the Select Board:

1. Follow a two-stage process for any necessary approvals by the Town voters;
2. The first stage, which should be scheduled as soon as practicable, would have the voters approve the general division of the Green property as follows (a simple map should be prepared to illustrate):
 - a. The portion of the property south of William King Street (except for Lot 1) would be devoted to park/open space, as well as a pedestrian access corridor between Main and William King Streets;
 - b. With respect to the remainder of the of the Green property (the lots between Main and William King Streets and Lot 1) the Town would use a portion for community structures (e.g., Fire Station, EMS, Community Health Care Facility) and a portion for tax revenue-producing development consistent with the Thomaston Green Design Standards and existing zoning.
3. Upon voter approval of the basic property division in item 2, detailed work would proceed to prepare options for actual use of the property. A committee of interested citizens and representatives from the Select Board and appropriate Town Departments would be formed to develop one or more plans for the use of the park/open space for approval by the voters.. The CEDC (including representatives of the Select Board and appropriate Town Departments) and interested citizens would develop one or more plans for use of the remaining space for approval by the voters. The work of the committees would proceed as quickly as possible.

We should discuss and hopefully finalize this recommendation at the Committee's next meeting before forwarding it to the Select Board.

Ben

Town of Thomaston

A Plan to Encourage and Support Workforce/Affordable Housing in the TR3 Zoned Area

December 2022

The Need – Thomaston is a small community located in midcoast Maine with over 68% of residents living in the residential village centered on Route 1 and the Saint George River. The population, 2,739, declined in the last 25-years and is aging and retiring causing a shortage of working people. Local employers are experiencing difficulty in recruiting new employees when they cannot find affordable/workforce housing within a reasonable distance. The result has been understaffing leading to unhappy, overworked people, restaurants and stores reducing hours, and even days, they are open and, in one case, employees sleeping in their vehicles. At least one long-term restaurant has closed because of staffing issues.

The Area – Recognizing the benefits and economy of providing services to the built-up village area the Town has zoned about 226 acres abutting the north side of the village as a Transitional Residential (TR3) Zone (see Figure 1). This area has the same restrictions as the Urban Residential (R3) Zone allowing development to match the existing village. Encouraging and supporting development within this area to include a proportion of affordable/workforce housing is one of the top priorities recently identified by the Town and accepted by the Select Board at their December 5, 2022.



Figure 1 TR3 Zoned area in yellow

The Current Situation – In the 30-years, since the TR3 Zone was established only one subdivision has been approved in this zone and that was the 19-lot Ashland Drive located on the far northeastern side of the TR3 area. This is a large lot subdivision that is not serviced by public water or sewer. The houses constructed tend to be on the high end and unaffordable by those earning the median income or slightly above.

Actual development of the TR3 zone has been hampered by several factors including reluctance of a developer to take on a large project; restrictive ordinances that require the infrastructure to be all complete, including underground electric, before any houses can be built and, in the past, an uncertain market for housing.

The Plan – Recognizing that lack of infrastructure is the main impediment to development it is proposed that a road be built from Beechwood Street westward through the TR3 area to connect with Clark Street and Brooker Street. The approximate route is shown on Figure 2 below. It would use the east end of Ice House Road as a starting point and would involve only three landowners, one of which is the Town.

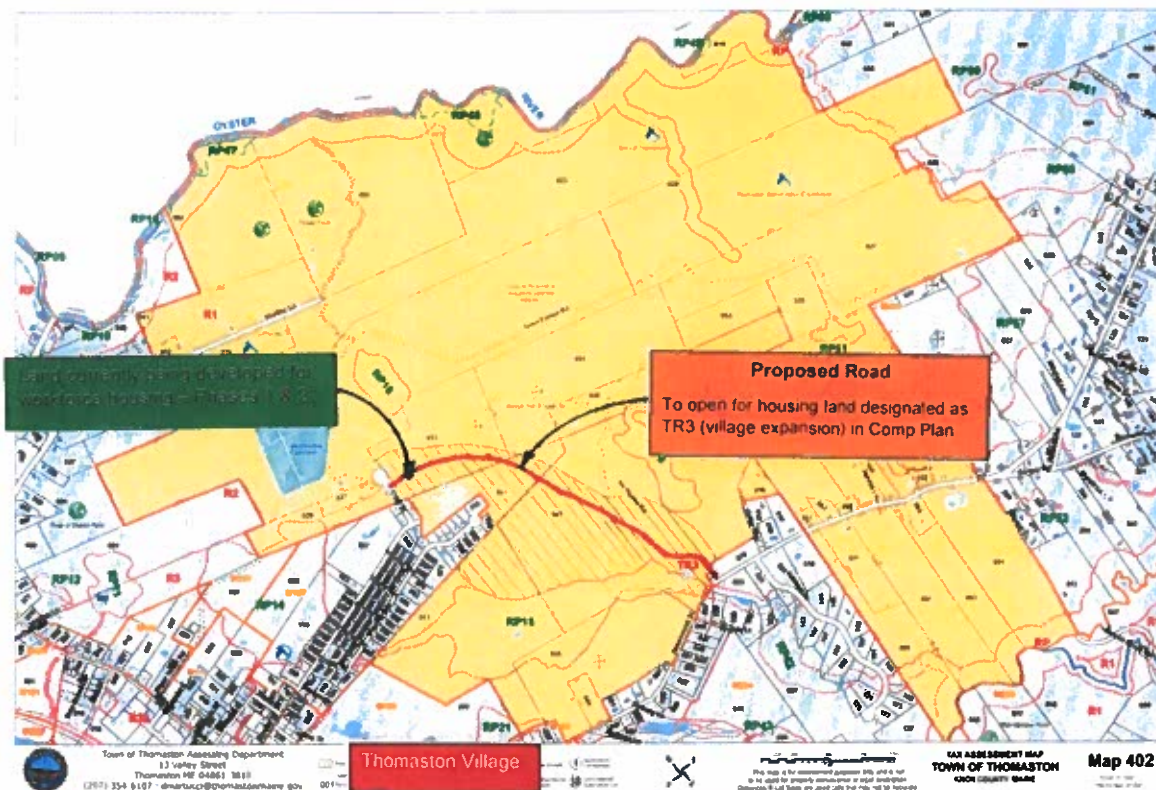


Figure 2 General Location of Proposed Road in Red

The road would be built to the Town’s standards and would include a sidewalk. Storm drains to handle stormwater would be part of the plan and, as much as possible, the stormwater would be directed to retention basins and existing wetlands.

In addition to the road, a wastewater pump station would be built near the corner of the intersection of Beechwood Street and the proposed road (Ice House Road). A gravity sewer would collect wastewater from the TR3 area and convey it to the pump station and from here; it would be pumped in a force main to the treatment facility. This would also allow future gravity sewers to be built north and south on Beechwood Street.

An 8-inch water main would run along the proposed road connecting with the line on Clark Street and could be extended the short distance south on Beechwood to connect with the existing line there. The 8-inch pipe would allow fire hydrants in the proposed development area.

This plan should be reviewed by the Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee for their comments and then go to the Select Board for their approval.

Landowner Agreements – The first step before the Town invests any serious money in this plan is to get an agreement with the landowner that they: (1) agree with the plan and are willing to work with the Town on it, (2) will convey to the Town a 60-foot wide right-of-way across their land for the road (this should be in writing as an option) and (3) that they will develop, or allow others to develop, some portion of their land and include some affordable/workforce housing.

Moving Ahead – Once the options are in place the project can move ahead with these steps all at the same time:

1. Hire an engineering firm to complete a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) that lays out the design and actual location for the road with provisions for side streets and all infrastructure including water lines, sewers, pump station and underground power and communications, includes needed survey work and estimate of final design and construction costs.
2. Begin exploring sources of funding for construction. NOTE: The PER will be needed for funding applications.
3. Begin publicity for the project such as public meeting to present plan; article in the Town newsletter, etc.

Schedule – To move this project ahead as soon as possible the following schedule is suggested:

<i>December 2022</i>	Review plan for comments to the Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee.
<i>January 2023</i>	Plan approval by Select Board and approval of funding for PER and legal work. Complete agreements with landowners.
<i>February 2023</i>	Hire engineering firm to do PER. Begin search for final design and construction funding.

- April 2023 Begin public meetings, publicity, etc.
 Begin discussions with housing developers for construction of
 affordable/workforce housing.
- June 2023 Finish PER after presentation to and approval by Select Board.
 Town meeting to accept R-O-W and approve funding.
 Hire engineering firm to do final design and permitting.

Scheduling beyond this point is dependent on obtaining funding.