Progress Report from the Plymouth County Hospital (PCH) Reuse Committee

June 14, 2016
General info about PCH Grounds

- 55 acres total
- Frontage on High Street and Pierce Avenue
- Hanson obtained the land in 1999
- 5-6 studies of property over a 16-year period. Results combined in Old Colony Planning Council feasibility report.
  - Includes 2015 community survey
- Several town committees have grappled with what to do with this property.
Map of PCH site

Parcel 3 - trails and meadows

Parcel 2 existing buildings and land (plus u-shape around parcel 1)

Parcel 1 - old hospital building

High Street
Three Parcels

- Old hospital building plus land (8 acres)
  - building is beyond repair and needs to be demolished

- U-shaped land surrounding the hospital plus additional buildings and land (24 acres)
  - Building with Hanson Food Pantry and Beekeeper’s Association
  - Hanson Community Garden
  - Water tower and smaller buildings
  - A variety of community-oriented uses suggested

- A thin strip of land leading to 3 large meadows (22 acres)
  - In back of property heading north toward Wampatuck Pond
  - Most studies recommend this land for open space or conservation
Parcel 1 - Old hospital building (8 acres)
Parcel 2 - Food pantry, community garden, water tower, other buildings (24 acres)
Parcel 2 (con’t)
Parcel 3 - trails and meadows (22 acres)
Parcel 3 - trail and meadows (con’t)
Committee focused on hospital parcel first

- Prior studies indicate building needs to be demolished.
- Demolition is expensive
- Exploratory options to benefit town of Hanson and limit taxpayer cost
Exploring options for 8-acre PCH parcel

Committee actions to date:

- Reviewed feasibility report from Old Colony Planning Council
- Requested and received info on cost of demolition
- Met with Teresa Santalucia, Hanson Housing Authority (HHA)
- Met with Laura Kemmett, Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
- Met with Josh Cutler, State Representative
Exploring options for 8-acre PCH parcel (con’t)

- Invited and toured property with nonprofit developers
  - Michael Mattos of Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative (AFSC)
  - Jeremy Wilkins of Urban Edge
- Looked into Recovery Centers of America (suggested by property abutter)
- Urban Land Institute call - nonprofit provides customized team of experts for community projects
- Held several walks on property for community members
Lessons learned to date

- Demolition costs = $1.5 million plus (2015 estimate)

- Housing Authority:
  - Reorganized and is well-positioned to play a role as needed
  - ‘ground lease’ approved at town meeting about ten years ago
  - Hanson could retain property but lease to HHA for 99 years to manage development

- CPC funding for demolition possible. Could combine with other funding (grants or taxes)

- Developers note limited public funds for elderly or over 55 housing. Funding more readily available if some workforce or affordable housing units included.
Lessons learned to date (con’t)

- Better potential if linked to “transit-oriented development” district (close to commuter rail)

- Recovery Centers of America built a treatment center in Danvers
  - Benefits include low traffic and tax revenue potential
  - Negatives include concerns about impact on community

- Urban Land Institute
  - Provides customized team of experts to do site visit, interviews, research
  - Submits recommendations to Hanson - no strings attached
  - Small cost but they usually can find sponsors to fund cost
Possible options to fund demolition of PCH

- Seek developer proposal to demolish/ incorporates cost into project
- Seek developer proposal to demolish in exchange for 8 acres of land
- Use a combination of funds
  - Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds
  - CPA funds plus grants
  - CPA funds or grants plus tax
- Pay for demolition through taxes
  - $1.5+ million cost
Next Steps

- Present options and request guidance from Selectmen (today)
- Further develop options and/or requests for proposals (RFP)
- Consider applying for ULI expert team visit
- Review options for remaining two parcels
- Other?