

**East End Smart Growth District
40R Application
Section 6. Local Public Notice and Hearing**

Attachment 6-3:

The City of Amesbury Planning Board held a virtual Public Hearing on November 9, 2020 to discuss the proposed East End Smart Growth District. This meeting was posted in accordance with open meeting law. Minutes from that public hearing can be found here:

https://www.amesburyma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6891/f/minutes/2020_11_09_minutes.pdf, as can the meeting presentation and recording:

<https://www.amesburyma.gov/community-economic-development/pages/east-end-smart-growth-overlay-district>.

We received many comments (as can be viewed in Attachment 6-2) that the public was not involved enough and that this process felt like our minds had already been made up. Based on this, the team decided to conduct a much more thorough public engagement process. Over the next 6 months, we held 3 specific workshops that allowed us to better understand the strengths and opportunities of the neighborhood and the challenges people are facing. We heard that **traffic, density and design** were the top three issues. So, at an in person workshop on March 30, 2021, we created an exercise where they could build their own smart growth district. We gave them Legos and asked them to work with their tables of 5-6 people (socially distanced) to design the district. We saw between 80-250 units pop up between the 6 tables. Many of those had units that were directly on Clarks Road.

Based on all of this, we modified the District and our approach in the following ways:

- Expanded the District officially to the south AND north side of Route 110.
- Reduced the number of units that were proposed from over 200 on the south side, to just over 100.
- Worked with the Traffic and Transportation Committee and Department of Public Works to develop several traffic mitigation strategies, including creating a one-way street on Clarks Road past the District, installing “Local Traffic Only” signs, constructing a sidewalk on the east side of Clarks Road to Main Street.
- We applied for Community One Stop for Growth funding to explore the impacts/opportunities for development in the East End Neighborhood

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extending over to the Route 150/I-495 interchange. We understand the need to look more comprehensively at all of the development (proposed or approved) in this area and come up with policies, programs and infrastructure improvements to offset impacts and take advantage of potential opportunities.

We presented these final modifications at a presentation to the Planning Board on June 17th. We received a lot of comments from the residents thanking us for listening to their concerns. In addition to addressing the comments in the actual design and layout of the District, the City also applied for a Community One Stop for Growth grant to look at the comprehensive impacts and benefits from this proposed Smart Growth District. We were awarded the funds and started the project in January 2022.