

## **McLean Applications Ruled Incomplete**

The Planning Board has ruled unanimously that the site plan applications submitted in late May by the three developers for the McLean land did not contain all the required information. That ruling does not mean that the applications have been rejected. Since the McLean land was exempted from the town's master planning requirement, the board does not have the right to reject the developments outright but only to require changes within the zoning law. However, unless the developers provide the missing data promptly, there may be a delay in the public hearing process, which was to begin in September. Construction is not expected to start before next spring at the earliest.

The board sent each of the three developers a letter containing a long list of missing data. One element common to all three was a requirement for new traffic studies containing specific information on the impact on each street. The letters to the townhouse developer and the developer of the R&D complex noted that such a study would require further information about the occupants of the buildings. The board required Northland Residential Corporation, the townhouse developer, to conduct a market study to see how many of the townhouse buyers are likely to be empty-nesters and how many will be families with children. It required Belmont ValueRealty, developer of the R&D complex, to identify the potential users. Planning Board members remarked during the board's June 20 meeting that the complex could legally hold office space rather than R&D labs.

Another element missing from all three applications was the "coordinated planning document binding on all applicants within the McLean District." This was required by Dick Bett's letter of May 19, 1999, to McLean. Without these documents, it's impossible for the Planning Board to know whether there will be appropriate, safe connections among the zones' roads; water and sewer pipes; electric, telephone, and gas lines; and storm water drainage systems. Even the partial information that was provided left the board's consultant dissatisfied with the number of dead-end water pipes and similar connections.

The Planning Board's June 20 meeting was the last for Chairman Joseph Newberg, whose term expired on June 30 and who asked not to be reappointed. He said he can no longer put in the amount of time required by the Planning Board. The selectmen are expected to appoint a replacement on July 10. The Planning Board's remaining members are Joseph Barrell, a plumbing contractor who recently oversaw the renovation of Belmont's historic Town Hall; Joseph Noone, a lawyer; Karl Haglund, a planner who works for the Metropolitan District Commission; and Andrew McClurg, a traffic consultant.

– Sue Bass