

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ZONING & PLANNING COMMITTEE AGENDA

TUESDAY MAY 29, 2012

7:45PM Room 202

ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION:

- #150-09(3) ALD. ALBRIGHT, JOHNSON, LINSKY proposing that a parcel of land located in Newtonville identified as Section 24, Block 9, Lot 15, containing approximately 74,536 square feet of land, known as the Austin Street Municipal Parking Lot, currently zoned Public Use, be rezoned to Business 4. (12/10/10 @9:21AM)
- #60-10 ALD. HESS-MAHAN proposing that sections 30-15(s)(10) and 30-24(b) of the City of Newton Ordinances be amended to substitute a 3-dimensional computer model for the scaled massing model in order to facilitate compliance with recent amendments to the Open Meeting Law and that sections 30-23 and 30-24 be amended to reflect the filing procedures in Article X of the Rules & Orders of the Board of Aldermen. [02/23/10 @ 3:24 PM]
- #48-12 ALD. ALBRIGHT requesting a discussion with the Executive Office and the Planning Department on the creation of a housing trust. [02/10/2012 @ 9:13AM]
- #162-11 ALD. YATES requesting a report from the Director of Planning and Development on the status of the update of the *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, particularly as it pertains to the Charles River Pathway. [05/12/11 @ 10:16AM]
- #63-12 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION submitting its annual report of activities undertaken in 2011 and recommendations for improving the economic condition and development of the city. [03-09-12 @3:14PM]

ITEMS NOT YET SCHEDULED FOR DISCUSSION:

The location of this meeting is handicap accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons requiring assistance. If you have a special accommodation need, contact the Newton ADA Coordinator Trisha Guditz at 617-796-1156 or tguditz@newtonma.gov or via TDD/TTY at (617) 796-1089 at least two days in advance of the meeting.

#162-12 THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION requesting a one-year moratorium, starting immediately, where no bank shall be allowed to be built or opened for business on the ground floor of any building in any Business District within the city unless granted a Special Permit from the Board of Aldermen. [05-17-12 @ 4:18 PM]

#391-09 ALD. DANBERG, MANSFIELD, VANCE AND HESS-MAHAN requesting an amendment to §30-19 to allow payments-in-lieu of providing required off-street parking spaces when parking spaces are waived as part of a special permit application.

#152-10 ALD. BAKER, FULLER, SCHNIPPER, SHAPIRO, FISCHMAN, YATES AND DANBERG recommending discussion of possible amendments to **Section 30-19** of the City of Newton Ordinances to clarify parking requirements applicable to colleges and universities. [06/01/10 @ 4:19 PM]

REFERRED TO ZONING AND PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#102-11 ALD. HESS-MAHAN, JOHNSON, COMMISSIONER LOJEK & CANDACE HAVENS requesting an amendment to Chapter 17 to establish a fee for filing a notice of condo conversion. [03-29-11 @ 4:55PM]

FINANCE REFERRED BACK TO ZAP COMMITTEE 3/26/2012

REFERRED TO ZONING AND PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#95-11 ALD. HESS-MAHAN proposing an ordinance requiring that a notice of conversion to condominium ownership be filed with the Inspectional Services Department and that the property be inspected to determine compliance with all applicable provisions of the state and local codes, ordinances and the rules and regulations of all appropriate regulatory agencies. [03-24-11 @ 9:30AM]

FINANCE REFERRED BACK TO ZAP COMMITTEE 3/26/2012

#64-12 ALD. HESS-MAHAN requesting an amendment to Newton Revised Ordinances Sec 30-24(f)(8)b) to clarify the inclusionary zoning preference provisions for initial occupancy of units for households displaced by the development thereof and for units to serve households that include persons with disabilities. [03-14-12 @ 8:54AM]

REFERRED TO ZONING & PLANNING AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

#79-12 COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE recommending the appropriation of nine hundred thirty eight thousand sixty-three dollars (\$938,063) to the Planning & Development Department for the creation of seven units of affordable rental housing at 12 and 18-20 Curve Street, West Newton, as described in the proposal submitted by Myrtle Village, LLC. [03/01/12 @ 5:00 PM]

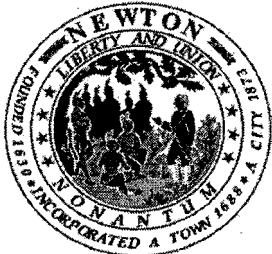
- #49-11 ALD. JOHNSON, Chair of Zoning and Planning Committee, on behalf of the Zoning and Planning Committee requesting that the Director of Planning & Development and Commissioner of Inspectional Services review with the Zoning & Planning Committee the FAR data collected during the eight months prior to the new FAR going into effect and the 12 months after. This committee review should occur no less than bi-monthly but could occur as frequently as monthly, based on the permits coming into the departments. [02-15-2011 @8:44AM]
- #25-12 TERRENCE P. MORRIS, G. MICHAEL PEIRCE, JASON ROSENBERG, JOHN LOJEK proposing a zoning ordinance amendment to amend section 30-15(c)(3)(b) by inserting the word “*subject*” before the word “*lot*”, the word “*and*” before the word “*such*” and the word “*adjoining*” after the word “*such*” so that the paragraph reads as follows: *(b) if the subject lot was held in common ownership at any time after January 1, 1995 with an adjoining lot or lots that had continuous frontage on the same street with the subject lot and such adjoining lot had on it a single-family or two-family dwelling.* [01/30/2012 @ 3:14PM]
- #11-12 ALD. HESS-MAHAN & LINSKY requesting discussion on the implementation and enforcement of the provisions of Section 30-5(c)(1) of the Newton Ordinances which requires that “[w]henver the existing contours of the land are altered, the land shall be left in a usable condition, graded in a manner to prevent the erosion of soil and the alteration of the runoff of surface water to or from abutting properties.” [1/11/12 1:01PM]
- #61-10 ALD. CICCONE, SWISTON, LINSKY, CROSSLEY AND HESS-MAHAN requesting a discussion relative to various solutions for bringing existing accessory and other apartments that may not meet the legal provisions and requirements of Chapter 30 into compliance. [02/23/10 @ 2:48 PM]
- #164-09(2) ALD. HESS-MAHAN requesting that the Planning Department study the dimensional requirements for lot and building size for accessory apartments and make recommendations for possible amendments to those dimensional requirements to the board of Aldermen that are consistent with the Newton Comprehensive Plan. [01/07/10 @ 12:00 PM]
- #81-11 ALDERMEN JOHNSON, CROSSLEY, HESS-MAHAN, LAPPIN & DANBERG requesting the Director of Planning & Development and the Chair of the Zoning Reform Scoping Group provide updates on the Scoping Group’s Progress. These updates will occur at the frequency determined by the Chair of the Scoping Group and the Chair of the Zoning and Planning Committee. [3/14/2011 @ 11:16PM]

- #153-11 ALD. DANBERG, ALBRIGHT, HESS-MAHAN, JOHNSON requesting that Chapter 30 be amended by adding a new Sec. 30-14 creating certain Retail Overlay Districts around selected village centers in order to encourage vibrant pedestrian-oriented streetscapes which would allow certain uses at street level, including but not limited to financial institutions, professional offices, and salons, by special permit only and require minimum transparency standards for street-level windows for all commercial uses within the proposed overlay districts. [05- 10-11 @3:19 PM]
- #153-11(2) ALD. DANBERG, ALBRIGHT, HESS-MAHAN, JOHNSON requesting the map changes necessary to establish certain Retail Overlay Districts around selected village centers. [05-10-11@3:16 PM]
- #65-11(3) ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE requesting that the terms “flat roof” and “sloped roof” be defined in the zoning ordinance.
- #154-10(2) ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE requesting to amend **Section 30-1 Definitions** by inserting revised definitions for “lot line” and “structure” for clarity. [04-12-11 @11:34AM]
- #154-10 ALD. JOHNSON, CROSSLEY and HESS-MAHAN requesting to amend **Section 30-1 Definitions**, by inserting a new definition of “lot area” and revising the “setback line” definition for clarity. [06/01/10 @ 9:25 PM]
- #153-10 ALD. JOHNSON, CROSSLEY AND HESS-MAHAN requesting to amend **Section 30-15 Table 1** of the City of Newton Ordinances to allow a reasonable density for dwellings in Mixed Use 1 and 2 districts. [06/01/10 @ 9:25 PM]
- #183-10 ALD. JOHNSON, CROSSLEY AND HESS-MAHAN requesting to amend **Section 30-13(a) Allowed Uses in Mixed Use 1 Districts** by inserting a new subsection (5) as follows: “(5) Dwelling units above the first floor, provided that the first floor is used for an office or research and development use as described above;” and renumbering existing subsection (5) as (6). [06/07/10 @12:00 PM]

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chairman

#63-12



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Economic Development Commission

2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

Prepared for: Mayor Setti D. Warren and Newton Board of Aldermen

Prepared by: Newton Economic Development Commission

Submitted March 2012

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2012 MAR -9 PM 12: 14
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Preserving the Past  Planning for the Future

I. Background

The Economic Development Commission (EDC) was established under General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8A to promote and develop business and industry within the City of Newton. The Commission is charged with strengthening the local economy leading to new job opportunities for residents and expansion of the City's tax base. City Ordinance Article V, Section 22-95 lays out the governing provisions as summarized below:

1. The Commission shall consist of 15 members appointed by the Mayor.
2. The Commission has the power and duty to:
 - study, investigate, and appraise economic conditions and trends;
 - promote, assist, and encourage the preservation, development and location of new and existing Newton industry, business and commerce;
 - investigate and assist in the establishment of commercial projects and identify appropriate commercial areas and zones for such establishment;
 - prepare and distribute informational publications;
 - cooperate with civic agencies/commissions/associations, state/federal agencies, municipal departments and officials, and business associations and organizations;
 - advise and make recommendations to appropriate officials, agencies, boards, department, and commissions of the City.

This report is prepared and submitted to the Board of Aldermen in compliance with City Ordinance Article V, Section 22-95 (g) (10).

II. 2011 in Review

The EDC has been and continues to be involved in a wide range of projects. Below is a summary of major projects and activities conducted during the January - December 2011 period:

Short-Term and Long-Term Goals and Strategies - The Economic Development Commission continues to advance its mission through its established goals and strategies developed based on priorities found in major relevant economic developments documents - *Newton Comprehensive Plan*, *Economic Development Charter*, *FY2012 Planning and Development Budget Presentation-Economic Development Goals*, and *Newton Center Task Force Study*:

Short-Term Goals and Strategies:

- Streamline the City's permitting processes and address structural changes to make the City more responsive to the business community; institute predictability.
- Improve Newton's "bio-ready" status
- Investigate Regional Economic Development Partnerships
- Look into best practices and ways that Newton can actively partner with cities and towns
- Gather data on economic development metrics and statistics
- Actively monitor the advancement of and assist:
 - Riverside
 - Newton Centre

- Austin Street/Newtonville
- Chestnut Hill Square/Route 9
- Needham Street

Long-Term Goals and Strategies:

- Continue to monitor active projects in Newton Centre for consistency with the *Newton Centre Task Force Study Report: Firefighters' Triangle, Cypress Street, Business Improvement District (BID)*, and address the implementation of plans proposed in the study
- Zoning process simplification
- Re-zoning
- Parking
- Washington Street Corridor
- Future Village Studies

The advancement of these goals may be through EDC's monitoring, review/action, incubation and structural changes to make processes more responsive and predictable.

Priority Setting Workshop - The EDC held a brainstorming session which developed a master list of possible economic development/business promotion ideas and projects. This exercise led to the development of the Existing Business Support Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on Business Attraction, and the investigation of a Newton Small Business Incubator.

Existing Business Support Subcommittee - Chaired by Collins, this subcommittee's charge is to better understand the needs and concerns of Newton existing businesses and to identify ways we can offer support to them. The subcommittee established a formal ongoing effort to visit and listen to approximately five local businesses a month. For the first round of visits, a list of 15 businesses was selected representing a diverse sampling of businesses by location, type, and age of establishment. Since September the subcommittee has met with New England Mobile Book Fair, Hip Stitch, Stoddard's, Green Planet, Bread and Chocolate, and Boca Bella Café. The Subcommittee will report back on its findings. The development of an EDC Awards Program was also discussed.

Subcommittee on Business Attraction - Chaired by Steele, this subcommittee has been speaking with companies and real estate professionals to examine how Newton is perceived as a place to do business. The goal is to both promote business attraction to the City and also identify and address any real or perceived barriers to entry for business in the City. Over the course of the past several months, the subcommittee has performed six interviews with real estate brokers and developers and is working to expand its focus to mid-size companies. The subcommittee's goal is to develop a whitepaper of findings which will also result in a suite of individual recommendations to be presented to the Mayor's office and Aldermanic committees as appropriate. The subcommittee will also bring specific issues to the attention of appropriate City bodies as they are identified in the interviews.

Newton Small Business Incubator - Initiated by Lipof, the EDC began to investigate the concept of a Small Business Incubator as a source of business attraction, promotion, and job creation for the City. The EDC received a commitment from Suffolk University that their MBA/JD capstone practicum class had selected the Newton Small Business Incubator for its course of study. A Newton Small Business Incubator Market Feasibility Analysis will be prepared and completed for Spring of 2012. The EDC met to develop an informational/conceptual presentation to be presented to the students in January 2012.

A business incubator is a program designed to support the successful development of companies through an array of business support resources and services.

Coordination with Mayor Setti Warren - In January 2011, the Mayor attended the EDC meeting to offer his vision for economic development and areas of opportunities for the City. He identified his four economic development priorities: Austin Street, Needham Street, Newton Centre, and Chestnut Hill Square. He stressed the importance of villages and the need to build partnerships between businesses, property owners, and residents through Neighborhood Area Councils. The Mayor met regularly with EDC Officers Collins and Steele for updates and progress on areas of collaboration. He sought their input in the development of his Business Roundtables Initiative. Lipof and Settles were identified to represent the EDC in this initiative. Collins and Steele attended the Mayor's "Village Summit" on December 4, 2011, participating in the "Partnering with Local Business" Break-Out Session and the West Newton and Waban village discussions.

Coordination with Board of Aldermen - In October, Collins, Steele, and Leader met with Board of Aldermen President Scott Lennon and Vice President Cheryl Lappin to discuss ways they can work more effectively on economic development issues. A joint meeting between the EDC/BOA was scheduled for February 16, 2012 for a kick-off event. A meeting has been scheduled in January with Alderman Marcia Johnson, Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals, to discuss shared areas of concerns and collaboration.

Guidelines for Addressing the EDC - The EDC updated the guidelines that had been developed to assist business/commercial applicants who come before the EDC for an evaluation to their official submitted proposals. Based on their usage, a need for improvement was identified. Moss fine-tuned the Guidelines (see Attachments).

Development Proposals - The EDC reviewed three projects that had Special Permit applications before the BOA Land Use Committee. The Commission wrote letters of support on behalf of these projects (see Attachments): Special Permit #149-11, Sovereign Bank, 624 Washington Street; Special Permit #161-11(1)(2)(3)&(4), Chestnut Hill Shopping Center LLC, 33 Boylston Street; Special Permit #148-11(2), 111 and 115-119 Elm Street and 8 Border Street.

Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce - In September, Collins, Steele, and Stout met with Bob Halpin, President of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, to explore areas of collaboration. Co-sponsoring "Thought Forums" featuring local business leaders and having EDC members serve on Chamber committees were discussed.

Newton League of Women Voters - The EDC joined the League of Women Voters in cosponsoring a public forum on "The Future of Transportation in Newton" in November at the Newton Public Library. The LWV approached the EDC to co-sponsor a future forum in May of 2012.

Zoning Reform Group - The EDC closely followed the efforts of the Zoning Reform Group, a committee appointed by the Mayor charged with studying the current ordinance to identify parts in need of updating or clarification. Steele volunteered as the EDC liaison, and an EDC member was in attendance at all meetings of the ZRG to ensure that the EDC remained actively involved in the revision of zoning codes pertaining to commercial, office, industrial, and mixed-use properties.

Closing of Postal Offices - The EDC submitted a letter in opposition to the proposed closing of five post offices in Newton by the US Postal Service. (See Attachments)

Financial Feasibility Analysis Model - In February, the EDC adopted a financial cost/benefit model developed by Plottel and Steele designed to evaluate projects as they come before the EDC. The financial insights gained from the "beta" model will help identify a project's impact upon the City and will allow for more fruitful discussions between the EDC and developers.

Chestnut Hill Square - The EDC monitored the advancement of the Chestnut Hill Square mixed-use development project by New England Development for the 11.5-acre site located on Boylston Street/Route 9. Collins attended the BOA Finance Committee meeting in November regarding "I-Cubed" financing, the Commonwealth's Infrastructure Investment Incentive Program.

Newton Centre - Newton Centre continues to be high priority area. The EDC monitors and actively lends support in ongoing public, business, and commercial activities proposed in the village. This commitment is a result of its investment in the development of the *Newton Centre Task Force Study Report*, the *Newton Centre Renaissance-A Road Map Forward*, and the advancement of priorities and action steps identified in those reports.

Firefighters' Triangle - Chaired by Plottel, a feasibility study of the Firefighters' Triangle site located in Newton Centre concluded in May, and a paper was prepared summarizing the efforts to date. The working group consisted of Eisenberg, Steele, Leader, Ives, Adams, Pears, and Lew.

Parking Meters - Moss identified that the one-hour time limit on some of the parking meters in Newton Centre may be inadequate to serve the needs of the abutting restaurant and business uses. The EDC voted to approve her recommendation to explore extending the meter limit for a period longer than an hour to better serve the restaurants and other village center businesses. In December, a docket item was filed by Alderman Vicki Danberg before the Traffic Council to explore the matter.

Retail Overlay District - The EDC wrote a letter to the BOA Zoning and Planning Committee supporting the concept of retail overlays in village centers for the purpose of increasing density, providing parking relief, and requiring professional and financial services to locate on second floors without a special permit (see Attachments).

Cypress Street - As a result of recommendations identified in the *Newton Centre Task Force Study*, a group of stakeholders composed of property owners, Aldermen, interested citizens, City staff, and EDC members Eisenberg and Pears continue to investigate parking solutions and financing for Newton Centre at a site on Cypress Street. Pears has developed urban design model.

Business Improvement District - In February, the EDC held a joint meeting with the Board of Aldermen Long Range Planning Committee. Stout and Collins presented an informational PowerPoint presentation on Business Improvement Districts (BID) and the rationale for considering one for Newton Centre, an identified priority established in the *Newton Centre Task Force Study*. A BID is a special assessment district in which property owners vote to initiate, manage, and finance services and enhancements beyond those provided by a municipality.

Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) - Leader continues to serve as the EDC representative on the EDAC, a separate, independent commission that reviews the federally-funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Micro-Enterprise Loan Program. Legal staff investigated the EDC request to merge the EDC/EDAC and found that the EDC Charter would have to be amended to

allow the expanded responsibility of administering CDBG functions - an onerous administrative/legislative task which would outweigh the efficiencies sought.

Regional Economic Development Partnerships - The EDC continues to explore ways of collaborating with our adjoining communities in various economic development efforts. In May, Collins, Steele, and Stout joined an association of Economic Development Planners/Directors from adjoining communities (Brookline, Natick, Watertown, Lexington, Dedham, Framingham, Somerville) who meet regularly to discuss municipal economic development efforts and strategies.

Austin Street - A high priority for the EDC is the advancement of an appropriate mixed-use development at an underutilized parking lot located on Austin Street in Newtonville. Jack Leader was selected from the EDC to serve on the 14-member Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) appointed by the Mayor and Ward 2 Aldermen to study the potential development at the site. Leader served as Chair and reported regularly to the EDC on the progress of the JAPG. The JAPG study concluded and an RFP will be issued for a mixed-use, commercial, residential project with associated parking. The EDC will continue to monitor advancement of this project.

Dukakis Center Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) -The EDC and the Long-Range Planning Committee of the Board of Aldermen held a joint meeting in December where Stout presented a brief summary of the completed EDSAT questionnaire on the City's economic development strengths and weaknesses. The completed EDSAT will be submitted to the Dukakis Center for tabulation and analysis in 2012. Collins, Steele, Bob Halpin, Alderman Stephen Linsky, and Alderman Lisle Baker met regularly with Stout and Havens to assist in the formulation of answers for the more nuanced evaluations.

Riverside - The EDC continues to monitor progress by the developer B.H. Normandy towards developing a mixed-use transit oriented development at Riverside. Throughout the year, members of the EDC attended meetings and discussions regarding the evolving proposal. Moss, Pears, and Collins attended the October 6th Community Meeting at the Williams School and reported back to the EDC in October. In November, Docket Item #440-11 was filed by the Ward 4 Aldermen, and the EDC filed a letter regarding their concerns about the implications of the Docket item to the Mayor, Board of Aldermen, and Havens. (See Attachments)

Membership

Jerry Adams
Daphne Collins
Matthew Cuddy
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Jack Leader
Peter Kai Jung Lew
John R. A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Christopher Steele

- New Appointments in 2011 were Barry Abramson, David Abromowitz, Ron Lipof, Joyce Moss, and Darryl Settles. Resignations in 2011 were received by Matthew Cuddy and Joyce Moss.

- Jerry Adams, former Chair, Vice-Chair, and member of the EDC, served for nine years until his death in January 2011.
- The EDC held annual elections of officers in March. Daphne M. Collins was re-elected Chair Christopher Steele was elected Vice-Chair, and Jack Leader was re-elected as Secretary.
- Collins assisted in the selection process of Mayoral Commission appointments by reviewing candidate applications for vacancies on the Planning and Development Board, Economic Development Commission and Economic Development Advisory Committee, and conducting pre-appointment interviews of finalists.

Staffing - Amanda Stout, AICP, Senior Economic Development Planner staffs the EDC. Stout continues to update the economic development website to make it a more responsive, informational, and promotional tool; she has participated in many of the EDC's initiatives; guided business applicants through the established EDC's review process; and has identified and coordinated early in the City's application process projects of special interest to the EDC.

As the ED Senior Planner, she works on the Mayor's Business Outreach Initiatives, serves as the City's liaison to small business owners, and collaborates with the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Enterprise Initiative (WEI), the Newton Cultural Alliance (NCA), and other organizations. She works on long-range planning projects for village centers and commercial corridors and keeps the EDC informed of relevant projects; in 2011 these included the Needham Street Corridor master planning effort and the "Envisioning West Newton Village and Washington Street" study undertaken by MIT graduate students.

III. Attachments

- A. June 2011 (revised) – Guidelines for Addressing the EDC
- B. June 8, 2011 – EDC Letter regarding Special Permit #149-11, Sovereign Bank, 624 Washington Street
- C. July 19, 2001 – EDC Letter regarding Special Permit #161-11(1)(2)(3)&(4), Chestnut Hill Shopping Center LLC, 33 Boylston Street
- D. October 11, 2011 – EDC Letter regarding Special Permit #148-11(2), 111 and 115-119 Elm Street and 8 Border Street
- E. October 11, 2011 – EDC Letter regarding Docket item #153-11; Retail Overlay district to encourage vibrant pedestrian streetscapes
- F. December 13, 2011 – EDC Letter regarding proposed closings of Newton's Post Office branches
- G. December 16, 2011 – EDC Letter regarding Docket item #400-11, Riverside Station



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

Guidelines for Addressing the Newton Economic Development Commission

June 2011

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Barry Abramson
David Abramowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

You have recently filed for a special permit with the City of Newton, and based on your project's size, location, complexity and/or use, the Newton Economic Development Commission (EDC) invites you to speak with us so that we can better understand your project and make more informed recommendations.

The EDC is an advisory board charged with promoting, assisting, and encouraging the development and expansion of Newton industry, business and commerce. In discussing your project with you, we will provide you with feedback and may forward a recommendation to the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor which could take the form of an official EDC letter, summary in the Planning Department's Project Report, and/or EDC representation at public hearings.

We appreciate your interest in doing business in Newton and working with us to ensure Newton has a vibrant business and commercial sector. For further information, please contact Amanda Stout, Senior Economic Development Planner, at 617-796-1127 or astout@newtonma.gov.

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Newton, MA 02459
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Preserving the Past



Planning for the Future

1

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

We ask that you come prepared to discuss the questions and issues enumerated below. By addressing these topics, we will better be able to provide you with meaningful feedback and, as appropriate, make concrete and substantive recommendations.

If your project is relatively straight forward, please come prepared to explain: Why you are proposing the new business or change to your existing business, your business experience, and how the change fits into your business plan; the investment you are making in the property; any job creation benefit to the City; any anticipated new sales, meal or hotel taxes; how the venture supports the goals of the Newton Comprehensive Plan.

For larger, more complex projects, we ask that you address the following:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

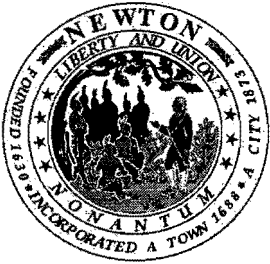
- Please describe the project, including its location, size, nature and intensity of the proposed land uses(s); if there is a residential component, how many units, of what size and type.
- Please bring an area map, a conceptual plan, and any architectural plans and elevations that have been prepared.
- How will the proposed project interact with and incorporate adjoining and nearby properties and uses? Will there be shared open areas, pedestrian or bike access, or other opportunities to positively impact the residential and commercial experience in Newton?
- Are there any conflicts with existing land use patterns and zoning regulations, which you will need to address with other City committees or departments?
- What assumptions did you use when you generated your due diligence with respect to the market for this kind of development?

PROJECT TEAM:

- Describe your team's experience in the delivery of this type of project.

PROJECT BENEFITS and COSTS:

- What is the investment that you are making in the property?
- What do you expect the project to generate in property tax revenue for the City? What do you estimate the property to generate in sales tax revenue
- How many temporary and long-term jobs will the project generate? What kinds of jobs will these be? Where will the labor force(s) be coming from?
- Will your project provide opportunities for other, existing local businesses (such as suppliers, professional services, restaurants, etc)? Are there any possible conflicts with existing businesses?
- What impacts, if any, do you foresee on school enrollment, water/sewer utilization, traffic patterns, parking demands, and quality and availability of green space?
- Are there any negative economic impacts that you foresee that are specific to the construction period? What mitigation are you proposing to alleviate them?
- Are there other long-term economic impacts that you foresee resulting from the project – positive or negative? What mitigation plans do you propose to address long-term negative impacts?
- Explain how the project supports the goals of the *Newton Comprehensive Plan*, paying particular attention to pages 3-23 to 3-32 and 6-1 to 6-9.



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

June 8, 2011

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

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The Honorable Ted Hess-Mahan, Chairman and
Aldermen of the Land Use Committee
Board of Aldermen
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth
Newton Centre, MA 02159

RE: Special Permit #149-11
Sovereign Bank, 624 Washington Street

Dear Alderman Hess-Mahan and Aldermen of the Land Use Committee:

This letter is to report on a presentation made by representatives of Sovereign Bank, Robert Buco, Senior Vice-President, and Steve Buchbinder, local counsel, to members of the EDC held on May 10, 2011. The EDC limited its review to the economic development aspects of the proposed relocation. Members of the EDC (Collins, Kai Jung Lew, Moss, Pears and Plottel) voted to **support the special permit application**.

The support of the Sovereign Bank proposal was based on the business rationale for relocation, commercial property improvements, positive tax revenue, and overall compatibility with the established Economic Development Goals and Strategies identified in Newton Comprehensive Plan (NCP).

Business Rationale

As part of Sovereign Bank's strategic business plan, the bank is closing its Austin Street branch tucked below Shaw's Market in Newtonville and relocating to a more prominent location at 624 Washington Street. No longer in the village center, this location will allow Sovereign to provide a full-service bank, including a drive-through option, visible from Washington Street and the Turnpike. Sovereign Bank has identified the drive-through component as critical to the success of this branch, allowing them to better serve the commuter customers, elderly and parents with young children.

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Commercial Property Improvements

The proposal will improve a visible commercial building currently tenanted by Frost Automobile. Located at a prominent and popular retail corner (Whole Foods and Marty's Liquors) on Washington Street, the improved bank will add a strong commercial presence and provide a healthy retail tenant for the property owner.

The bank has agreed to provide \$250,000 to fund transportation improvements to this commercial/commuter intersection at Washington and Crafts Streets, addressing the additional traffic resulting from this business and contributing to the locale overall.

Tax Revenue

Presently the property has a FY2011 Assessed Property Value of \$906,500, with a FY2011 Annual Tax Revenue of \$19,126 in property taxes. In addition to the up-front building fees, the bank's anticipated investment of \$2.5 - \$3 million in improvements to the property will certainly increase the tax revenue for the City.

Job Creation

The number of employees is projected to remain the same as its present location - 5 to 7 employees. No net job loss or creation is anticipated.

Compatibility with Economic Development Vision, Goals and Strategies of the Newton Comprehensive Plan (NCP)

Overall the project was found to be compatible with the stated Economic Vision, Goals and Strategies of the NCP's for Washington Street, one of the City's major east-west commercial/transportation corridors. As called for in the NCP, the EDC concurred that a study is needed to develop a comprehensive vision for Washington Street to address development in a more proactive and integrated approach.

Conclusion

The EDC supports this proposal and the granting of the applicant's special permit request. Overall the economic benefits and contributions are positive. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC: Board of Aldermen
Members of the Economic Development Commission
Steve Buchbinder
Robert Buco, Senior Vice-President, Sovereign Bank



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

July 19, 2011

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

The Honorable Ted Hess-Mahan, Chairman and
Aldermen of the Land Use Committee
Board of Aldermen
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth
Newton Centre, MA 02159

RE: Special Permit #161-11(1)(2)(3)&(4)
Chestnut Hill Shopping Center LLC, 33 Boylston Street

Dear Alderman Hess-Mahan and Aldermen of the Land Use Committee:

This letter is to report on a presentation made by Robert Frazier, Senior Vice President of Development for W/S Development, and Franklin Stearns, Partner at K&L Gates, to members of the Economic Development Commission held on June 14, 2011. The EDC limited its review to the economic development aspects of the proposed project. With a quorum present, the following members of the EDC (Collins, Steele, Leader, Abramson, Eisenberg, Lew, Lipof, Moss, and Settles) voted to **support the special permit application.**

The support of the Chestnut Hill Shopping Center proposal was based on the following concepts discussed at the meeting:

- W/S Development has considerable experience developing "lifestyle centers," such as Legacy Place in Dedham, and redeveloping and re-tenanting older shopping centers to enhance their value and sustainability.
- This proposal will add approximately 100 permanent jobs to the City, as W/S Development plans to move their office headquarters from the current office in Brookline across Boylston Street to Newton.
- With this proposal, the applicant will make a \$6 million investment in building and roadway improvements, which will lead to increased tax revenue and one-time building permit revenue to the City.
- The proposal includes a strategic mix of office space designed to complement and provide a steady customer base to retailers and restaurants during off-peak hours, which has proved successful at Legacy Place.

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- Commissioners were supportive of the applicant seeking approval of a restaurant with greater than 50 seats, as this pre-approval may be helpful in attracting a suitable tenant and giving the tenant the flexibility to determine the number of seats they actually need.
- This proposal is consistent with the established Economic Development Goals and Strategies identified in the Newton Comprehensive Plan as it seeks to enhance the property values, aesthetics, and vitality of Route 9, one of the City's most important commercial corridors.

Sincerely,

Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC: Board of Aldermen
Members of the Economic Development Commission
Franklin Stearns, K&L Gates
Robert Frazier, W/S Development
Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

October 11, 2011

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

The Honorable Ted Hess-Mahan, Chairman and
Aldermen of the Land Use Committee
Board of Aldermen
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth
Newton Centre, MA 02459

RE: Special Permit #148-11(2)
111 and 115-119 Elm Street and 8 Border Street

Dear Alderman Hess-Mahan and Aldermen of the Land Use Committee:

This letter is to report that at the May 10, 2011 meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), the Commission heard a presentation by Constantine Taleas (owner), Don Lang (architect) and Steve Buchbinder (attorney) regarding the proposal at 111 & 115-119 Elm Street and 8 Border Street. Before this meeting, the applicant was given a set of relevant economic development questions prepared by the EDC to inform and guide the presentation and discussion. The EDC (Collins, Kai Jung Lew, Leader, Moss, Pears, and Plottel) voted to **support the granting of the special permit application.**

The EDC agreed that this project will revitalize an underutilized, vacant site in the core of West Newton village and will provide complementary retail and housing options along a visible commuter, pedestrian, and commercial corridor. In addition, this proposed \$2.5 million project will increase the City's net tax revenue to a potential of \$30,000 to \$40,000 from \$7,500 presently.

Furthermore, the EDC found this project to be compatible with the economic development goals established in the Newton Comprehensive Plan which promotes vibrant attractive village centers through the development of housing above retail and the expansion of commercial/retail services within walking distance of residential neighborhoods.

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The EDC suggested to the applicant that the design of the building's commercial ground floor be reconfigured to allow more flexibility to respond to potential leasers.

The EDC wholeheartedly supports this proposal and the granting of the applicant's special permit request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC: Board of Aldermen
Members of the Economic Development Commission
Steve Buchbinder
Constantine Taleas
Don Lang
Candace Havens, Director of Planning
Amanda Stout, Senior Economic Development Planner



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Economic Development Commission

October 11, 2011

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Elsenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives

Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

The Honorable Marcia Johnson, Chairman and
Aldermen of the Zoning and Planning Committee
Board of Aldermen
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth
Newton Centre, MA 02459

RE: Docket item #153-11
Retail Overlay district to encourage vibrant pedestrian streetscapes.

Dear Alderman Johnson and Aldermen of the Zoning and Planning Committee:

This letter is to report that at the September 13, 2011 meeting of the Economic Development Commission (EDC), the Commission voted (9-0 with 2 abstentions) to support the concept of a retail overlay district in village centers for the purposes of encouraging vibrant pedestrian streetscapes by increasing density, providing parking relief, and requiring professional and financial services to locate on the ground floor only by special permit.

The discussion at the EDC meeting acknowledged that there are many details and nuances that have yet to be clarified and that as this item moves forward, the EDC would appreciate the opportunity to comment and provide insights.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC: Board of Aldermen
Members of the Economic Development Commission
Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development
Jennifer Molinsky, Chief Planner for Long-Range Planning
Seth Zeren, Chief Zoning Code Official
Amanda Stout, Senior Economic Development Planner

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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

Patrick R. Donahoe
Postmaster General
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, D.C. 20260-0010

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

December 13, 2011

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

Dear Postmaster General,

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

The Newton Economic Development Commission writes this letter to oppose the proposed closings of Newton's post office branches at West Newton, Nonantum, Lower Falls, Boston College, and Upper Falls. In Newton these post offices make good business sense. They provide a useful service and product, contribute to the social fabric of our neighborhoods, generate tie-ins and foot traffic for their business neighbors, and are profitable, long-term reliable business tenants/owners. These Post Offices are important to the vibrancy and a sense of place of our village centers.

Commissioners

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

Located within walking distance from the neighborhood, doing business at the post office in Newton has always been a sustainable easy pedestrian option, one that provides opportunities to socialize and shop. With the closing of the branches, the consolidate options will require an automobile where there is limited parking, and long waiting lines. Not unlike Netflix, we believe the aggrieved Newton customer will be driven to select the simpler, greener services provided by the competition (UPS, FedEx, email) rather than the deal with the inconveniences at the merged sites.

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

We understand the need to cut costs and restructure to face the challenges of the new market, but closing profitable viable post offices that work doesn't make sense. All five post offices slated for closure have bottom lines and profits the envy of their village business neighbors: Newton Upper Falls' annual walk-in revenue is \$439,409, Newton Lower Falls' is \$315,661, West Newton is \$552,920, Nonantum is \$489,256, and Boston College is \$101,680, (for just a nine month period at part-time daily hours).

The long-term eight employees who work at these centers are members of their village neighborhoods. They often assist their residential and business customers beyond the quantifiable ones, particularly for the elderly and home-based businesses. In addition, they are good solid patrons of the small business and services of their village centers, whose daily counts of meals and coffees sold help make the monthly rent.

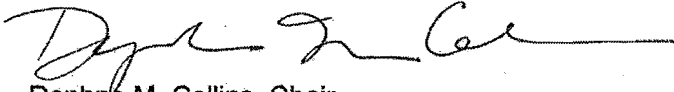
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We are pleased that these employees are not slated for cuts and will be reassigned to the merged centers. Given that the consolidated model appears to be flawed in its ability to generate level revenue, we question how the USPO will be able to sustain the cost of these employees.

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These are complicated economic times. Newton can ill afford any vacancies in our Village Centers, the implications exacerbate the challenging conditions for remaining businesses and make it more difficult for our business landlords to attract new tenants. We urge you to leave open the Newton Post Offices. Today they work, are good business, and are an important viable village neighbor.

Sincerely,



Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC:

Senator John Kerry

Senator Scott Brown

Congressman Barney Frank

Mayor Setti D. Warren

Ward 1 Aldermen: Scott F. Lennon, Carleton P. Merrill, Allan Ciccone, Jr.

Ward 3 Aldermen: Anthony Salvucci, Ted Hess-Mahan, Greer Tan Swiston

Ward 5 Aldermen: John Rice, Brian E. Yates, Deborah Crossley

Ward 7 Aldermen: R. Lisle Baker, Sydra Schnipper, Ruthanne Fuller

Marc Laredo, Ward 7 Alderman-elect



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Economic Development Commission

The Honorable Setti D. Warren, Mayor
The Honorable Scott Lennon, President and Members of the Board of Aldermen
City of Newton
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Setti D. Warren
Mayor

December 16, 2011

Candace Havens
Director
Planning & Development

RE: Docket Item 400-11 Riverside Station

Amanda Stout
Senior Economic
Development Planner

Dear Mayor Warren, President Lennon and Members of the Board of Aldermen:

Commissioners

The EDC submits this letter highlighting some of the economic implications that we foresee at the Riverside MBTA site and urges that the City closely examine the financial and economic development consequences of Docket Item 400-11. The development of a mixed-use, transit oriented project at Riverside is an established City economic development priority, and one that this Commission has paid close attention to over the years. We consider the recent Docket Item 400-11 a first step towards achieving that goal.

Daphne Collins, Chair
Christopher Steele,
Vice Chair
Jack Leader, Secretary

The Newton Comprehensive Plan of 2007, as voted on and approved by the Newton Board of Aldermen, states that *Riverside represents a significant development opportunity which the City can ill afford to ignore. Riverside has the capacity, access to highways, public transportation and location to attract several million square feet of high quality mixed use development. In fact, it is important to develop a dense enough project on this site to help pay to solve the access issues(.), as well as mitigate the effects on the neighborhood and city.*

Barry Abramson
David Abromowitz
Charles Eisenberg
Robert Gifford
Jane Ives
Peter Kai Jung Lew
Ronald Lipof
Joyce Moss
John R.A. Pears
Philip Plottel
Darryl Settles

Based on the facts available today, the EDC performed an analysis looking at the impact on Newton's Annual Gross Tax Revenue for two different scenarios. These estimates illustrate the possible financial ramifications for the City. We hope you will seriously consider these numbers when weighing the cost benefit of Docket Item 400-11.

The results are presented in the table below:

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Option	Use	Development Size	Tax Revenue Conservative
Normandy DEIR 2010	Commercial	445,700 sf	\$2,200,000
	Residential	290 units	\$600,000
	DEIR Total		\$2,800,000
Docket Item 400-11	Commercial	245,000 sf	\$1,200,000
	Residential	290 units	\$600,000
	Docket Item 400-11 Total		\$1,800,000


Clearly, financial benefits should not be the only economic development consideration. Creating a sustainable, pleasant, and vibrant place to work and live must also be considered. We urge you to select a zoning envelope that can unlock and realize our best vision for the site - a place that offers employment, housing, retail and dining opportunities, social and cultural amenities, public green spaces connected to the Charles River, transportation options and access, sensitively connected to the Lower Falls and Auburndale neighborhoods.

We understand that reasonable concerns about impacts on schools, storm water and traffic must be addressed. The EDC is concerned that the zoning parameters of Docket Item 400-11 are set too low and the constraints on such a valuable property will hinder its full economic development potential and leveraging capacity to generate sufficient revenue for community mitigation and citywide benefit. The rational choice is to set the limits for Riverside at a scenario which will allow the property to respond not only to a project at hand but also to development opportunities in the future.

That we have a developer eager to move forward on the site speaks volumes of their commitment, the positive market potential of the site and our City. As this project continues to evolve, the EDC looks forward to working with you and is available for advice and support to make a development at Riverside fiscally responsible and beneficial for all the stakeholders involved.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Daphne M. Collins, Chair
Newton Economic Development Commission

CC: Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development
Greg Schwartz, Alderman-elect
David A. Kalis, Alderman-elect
Marc Laredo, Alderman-elect