

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

REAL PROPERTY REUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

Present: Ald. Albright (Chairman), Ald. Hess-Mahan, Danberg, Fuller, Gentile, Lipof, Crossley, and Leary; also present: Ald. Cote, Harney, Sangiolo, Brousal-Glaser, Norton, and Schwartz  
Staff: Alexandra Ananth (Chief Planner for Current Planning), James Freas (Acting Director of Planning & Development), Ouida Young (Associate City Solicitor), Linda Finucane (Assistant Clerk of the Board), Carol Stapleton (Parks & Recreation)

#384-11(6) ALD. COTE, SANGIOLO, HARNEY, BROUSAL-GLASER, NORTON  
requesting (1) that the Board of Aldermen reverse its decision of February 6, 2012 which, in accordance with the recommendation of the Real Property Reuse Committee, declared 70 Crescent Street with the exception of the piece designated as the Reverend Ford Playground unnecessary for all municipal use, and return the property at 70 Crescent Street to the Parks & Recreation Department (2) that His Honor the Mayor and the Parks & Recreation Department work with a *70 Crescent Street Committee* to establish a memorial park dedicated to those residents of Newton and the state as a whole who lost their property and their way of life to the construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike.

ACTION: DENIED 7-0-1 (Leary abstaining)

NOTE: Please see note below.

#384-11(4) JOINT ADVISORY PLANNING GROUP and PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT filing their separate reports pursuant to Ordinance Sec. 2-7(2)b) identifying alternatives for the future use of the former Parks & Recreation site at 70 Crescent Street, Auburndale, which was declared surplus by the Board of Aldermen on February 6, 2012.

ACTION: HELD 8-0

NOTE: Ms. Ananth recapped the item to date. Ms. Ananth also provided a copy of the survey prepared by Hancock Associates, dated 10/29/14, although a slight portion of the playground encroaches on the Myrtle Baptist Church property the survey is sufficient to issue a Request for Proposals. However, it would be premature to obtain an appraisal.

Alderman Cote said he is not against affordable housing, but there are constituencies that are not being taken care of. Things have changed significantly in the past three years since the property was declared surplus. Density in this neighborhood keeps increasing and open space keeps decreasing. There are at least five parcels with the potential for development. This area should have been the focus of long-range planning by the city. In the early 1960's, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority took by eminent domain almost 350 homes and businesses to extend the Turnpike through Newton. It is fitting that this property, already owned by the city and with no acquisition costs other than remediation, should be returned to the neighborhood as open space -

a memorial to those who lost their homes. There is no guarantee that the playground will be retained if the property is sold to a developer. Would a developer work with Myrtle Baptist Church to improve its parking?

Ald. Sangiolo said that although the Parks & Recreation Commissioner surplused the property, the Parks & Recreation Commission recommended retaining it as open space. Ald. Harney pointed out that one of the goals in the Comprehensive Plan is to identify and acquire parcels for pocket parks, particularly in northern parts of the city. Ald. Norton said this proposal makes sense. The Board just approved \$1 million for Waban Hill Reservoir in a neighborhood without density issues. This is an opportunity to provide open space in another kind of neighborhood. Ald. Brousal-Glaser said this is not about not wanting affordable units. A park would not serve just the neighbors, but West Newton and Auburndale as well.

Ald. Leary agreed that pocket parks are appealing. Initially, she supported keeping this as open space but it takes money to create and maintain a park, and it is not clear where the money would come from. An amount of quality housing could finance improvements to the existing park.

Ald. Cote said that Worcester had received state funds for Veterans memorial. The Board just approved \$1 million for Waban Hill Reservoir, which will incur additional costs, such as a dam, etc. This proposal can be accomplished by grant writing, community efforts, education tool funding.

Ald. Yates noted that for two years the city has been shut out of grants; however, now that the city has submitted an Open Space Plan to the state grants may be possible. As President of the Friends of Hemlock Gorge, he is familiar with the work volunteers do, which is a way to get things done that do not need capital. It appears there is interest and enthusiasm for a park.

The Chairman stressed the importance of including Myrtle Baptist Church in all the conversations and suggested that these begin as soon as possible.

Ald. Danberg remarked that the numbers of emails sent to the Board emphasize how important the playground is to the neighborhood however she questioned the logic of a memorial to the loss of housing by not creating housing.

Rev. Haywood, whose family lost nine houses, does not want a memorial park.

Ald. Sangiolo suggested that since so much time has passed the committee should hold another public hearing.

Ald. Crossley said many of the emails received by the Board were troubling. There is no plan to eliminate the existing playground. The Joint Advisory Planning Group and Planning Department both recommend that the playground be enlarged and improved, and be made more accessible to others with an improved access. The Commissioner of Parks & Recreation has been very clear

that a new park would be low on the city's list of priorities. Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds are not unlimited. There is a long list of projects seeking CPA money. She reminded the committee that Community Preservation Act funds (CPA) can be used for HP access and historic preservation, but not maintenance. Eight units of modestly sized housing would provide the benefit of open space, expand and improve the playground, and create a better access.

Ald. Gentile said there was never talk of removing the existing playground. He wished to clarify that the playground was not surplus; the intent is to work with Myrtle Baptist Church for better public access; the intent is to enlarge the existing playground using money from a modest development on the site. Many of the statements circulating are confusing and misleading and the furthest thing from the truth. The JAPG report suggested 8-20 units of housing. The committee's preference is eight, which he believes would be a responsible development that he would like to see move forward. The committee and the Board will make decisions, not a developer.

The Chairman noted that she recently received a MAPC presentation from a forum on housing (March 12, 2015) (enclosed) which emphasized expanding multi-family and smaller single-family homes that are affordable to a wide range of incomes. Ms. Ananth pointed out that the Mayor of Boston has issued a mandate to create more housing. The region's housing shortage is impacting long-term economic growth.

Ald. Lipof said a development cap of 12,500 square-foot buildings with no more than eight units could increase the size of the playground considerably.

Ald. Fuller understands that the neighborhood is sensitive and it is legitimate; there has been a lot of development. She suggested that the committee hold another public hearing to hear the public's comments.

Ald. Hess-Mahan believes in a shared common goal. An example is 76 Webster Park, the former Forte Estate abutting Dolan Pond, where a total of three units of affordable housing were created and a conservation restriction was placed on approximately two-thirds of the remaining land. The city can dictate its terms in a Request for Proposals (RFP). The city could explore being the developer. The homes could be Net Zero Energy, a prototype for development in the city. He reiterated that the Capital Improvement Program includes \$34 million worth of Parks & Recreation projects in a queue (Gath Pool, Warren tennis courts, Newton Highlands Playground, etc.) – most of which are also CPA eligible. Weston and Sampson created a rough estimate of the cost of remediation at \$1.8-\$2 million. Where will the money for remediation of the site come from? By working together the city can optimize the project.

Ald. Sangiolo suggested that all the units be affordable, and wishes to have that discussion before any final vote. Alderman Crossley doubts the city can achieve its goals without any middle-income units.

The Chairman believes this could be a win-win situation with increased open space, as the neighborhood requests, with increased housing as the city needs for its long-term economic benefit. Ald. Gentile understands that not all agree. While he disagreed with the need for another public hearing on the original reuse matter, he did feel that a hearing to allow people to express their views regarding proposed RFP criteria would be a good idea.

To clarify the Mayor's position, the Mayor stated in an email that he would support whatever the Reuse Committee and the Board want to do at the site.

Ald. Hess-Mahan moved No Action Necessary on #384-11(6), but the docketors preferred a motion to deny. He withdrew the motion and substituted a motion to deny, which motion carried 7-0-1, with Ald. Leary abstaining.

#384-11(4) was held unanimously. The Committee will schedule a public meeting to solicit comments as soon as practical.

#287-11(4) JOINT ADVISORY PLANNING GROUP and PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT filing their separate reports pursuant to Ordinance Sec. 2-7(2)b) identifying alternatives for the future use of the former Newton Centre Library/Health Department building at 1294 Centre Street, Newton Centre, which was declared surplus by the Board of Aldermen on March 6, 2012.

**ACTION:** HELD 8-0

**NOTE:** The committee reviewed a draft Request for Interests provided by the Planning Department and attached to this evening's agenda. Ald. Lipof suggested the city approach one of the area art schools who perhaps in collaboration with artists in Newton could use the space to mount exhibits. Alderman Yates said he understands that the McMullen Museum of Art at Boston College is looking to move. What about Cultural Affairs? Alderman Danberg said a consortium of institutions might be interested. When she attended a fashion show at Lasell College they lamented that nobody knows about the college's School of Fashion Design. Mt. Ida College also has a fashion design program.

It has been represented that the rear wing of the building was a 1950's addition and therefore perhaps not as important for preservation as the front of the building; however, Lisa Gordon of Elgin Street said it is part of the 1927 building. Originally it was a lecture hall, with bookshelves added at a later date. Don Tellalian, a member of the Joint Advisory Planning Group (JAPG) and a past member of the Historical Commission, confirmed that it was original to the building. Mr. Tellalian reported that the JAPG had seriously discussed that, if necessary, it could possibly be demolished to attract the right, long-term lessee.

A Request for Interest is the first step in the process, intended to cast the net for proposals as wide as possible. The challenge is finding users to fund maintenance and make it accessible to the community. Perhaps the group running the Waban Community Library Center could be contacted for suggestions. Although the Cypress Street lot is available, on-site parking is problematic. Alderman Fuller asked whether the RFI should reference a potential parking garage

on the Cypress Street lot; however, since the adjacent parcel is in private ownership, the committee felt this was not pertinent to the RFI. The committee asked for clarification of the phrase "...in tradition of the old library..."?

The committee suggested that April 23, 2015, which is in three weeks, will provide enough time to allow responses to the RFI, and Ms. Ananth agreed.

The committee voted 8-0 to hold the item. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ald. Susan S. Albright, Chairman

Attachments: Email from Commissioner DeRubeis  
Email from Mayor  
Parks and Open Space (by priority) CIP  
InnerCoreForum PowerPoint

**Email from Commissioner DeRubeis to Alderman Cote**

**From:** Robert J. DeRubeis  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 26, 2015 2:24 PM  
**To:** James R. Cote  
**Cc:** Dori F. Zaleznik; Alice Ingerson; Alexandra Ananth  
**Subject:** Historical Park

Good Afternoon Alderman Cote;

I have noticed that some of the e-mails that are circulating with respect to Crescent Street, have referenced me as being in support of the historical park proposal. I just want to clarify and reiterate the discussion that we had the recently with Dori and Alexandra. I am in favor of a larger park area than is presently located at Crescent Street, however, I want to be clear that the viability of that increased open space would warrant some housing to bring it to fruition. I do not want to confuse my support for the idea of a historical component on the site as agreement for the entire site being left as open space. I look forward to working with you in the future.

When responding, please be aware that the Massachusetts Secretary of State has determined that most email is public record and therefore cannot be kept confidential.

**Susan Albright** <susansophia.albright@gmail.com> 9:04 AM (11 hours ago)

to Setti

Jim Cote came to my office this week to plug his robinhood park plan. He told me that you reaffirmed to him that you have no interest in the small number of affordable houses that would be created there. You have lots more irons in the fire and that the 2 or 3 affordable houses that would be created are inconsequential.

Did he represent you correctly?

--

Susan Albright  
Alderman-at-Large  
Ward 2

10:45 AM (10 hours ago)

**Setti Warren**

to me

Not sure I understand what you are asking .Our office is supporting whatever the reuse committed and the boa want to do at that site , period. You all need to figure out what you want there . That has been my and our opinion from day one and it hasn't changed . Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

5.18 GB (34%) of 15 GB used

Priority	Dept	Project Title	Project Description / Justification	Est Cost in FY2014	RISK Factor	Funding Source	Prior Year Funding	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
----------	------	---------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------	-------------	----------------	--------------------	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

**Large Vehicles and Equipment Total: \$8,344,000**

**Parks and Open Space (by Priority)**

19	Parks/Rec	Newton Centre Playground- last phase of 6 phase accessibility project	Add ADA compliant access route to a portion of Newton Centre Playground. Approved for CDBG funding by City Commission on Disability.	\$ 90,000	46.3	CDBG Eligible	\$ 45,000	\$ 45,000				
22	Parks/Rec	Purchase Manet Road MWRA Reservoir	Five acre parcel located at Manet Road has been surplus by the MWRA in January 2013. State legislation filed to allow purchase. Interest by the community to	\$ 850,000	45.8	CPA Eligible	\$ 30,000	\$ 820,000				
98	Parks/Rec	Newton Highlands Playgrnd - Ph I Design & Construction	Phase I of 2008 Master Plan for park renovation. Addresses drainage problems & bulids new ball fields and courts. Highly used park.	\$ 1,970,000	37.1	CPA Eligible	\$ 320,000				\$ 1,829,384	
141	Parks/Rec	Replace Weeks Playground Tennis Courts	Replace 4 existing tennis courts at Weeks Playground.	\$ 220,000	35.1	Bonding						
142	Parks/Rec	Replace McGrath Playground (Warren) Tennis Courts	Replace 4 existing tennis courts at McGrath Playground (Warren).	\$ 220,000	35.1	Bonding						
176	Parks/Rec	Newton Highlands Playground - Phase II Design & Construction	2008 Master Plan for park renovation in 2 phases. Ph II will complete the fields to provide tennis courts and football field.	\$ 1,925,000	33.6	Bonding						
196	Parks/Rec	Newton Upper Falls/ Braceland Playground - Design & Construction	Master Plan for park renovation - Construction will include new athletic fields, new play structure and sitework and improvements.	\$ 1,675,000	32.8	Bonding						
236	Parks/Rec	Replace Cold Spring Park Tennis Courts	Replace 3 existing tennis courts at this location. Courts have deteriorated.	\$ 180,000	28.7	Bonding						
237	Jackson Homestead	Restoration of Historic East Burying Grounds	Preservation of Remaining 24 Tombs in two of the three burying grounds. Priority to East, then West Parish sites. Safety Concern.	\$ 148,135	28.7	CPA Eligible						
238	Parks/Rec	Replace Halloran Field Athletic Lighting (Albemarle)	Replace the athletic lighting at the City's premier athletic complex	\$ 150,000	28.4	Bonding						
253	Parks/Rec	Replace Cabot Park Tennis Courts	Replace two existing tennis courts at Cabot Park.	\$ 120,000	26.0	Bonding						
270	Parks/Rec	City Hall and War Memorial Historic Landscape Preservation Project	Restoration and preservation of City Hall grounds Historic Landscape	\$ 1,500,000	25.0	CPA Eligible						
271	Parks/Rec	Replace Newton South High School Tennis Courts	Replace 12 existing courts at this location and lighting. Consider Private-Public Partnership.	\$ 750,000	23.8	Bonding						
273	Jackson Homestead	Restoration of Historic West Burying Grounds	Preservation of Remaining 24 Tombs in two of the three burying grounds. Safety concern for visitors.	\$ 146,000	23.0	CPA Eligible						
277	Parks/Rec	Farlow & Chaffin Parks Historic Landscape Preservation Plan	Restoration and preservation of Farlow and Chaffin Park. Could break out into design vs construction- 2 yrs	\$ 640,000	19.6	CPA Eligible	\$ 52,000					
279	Jackson Homestead	Repair/Replace Fencing at Historic Burying Grounds	Restoration of Fences at all 3 burying grounds	\$ 406,600	17.8	CPA Eligible						

**Parks and Open Space Total: \$10,990,735**

**Roads and Paving (by Priority)**

11	DPW	Street Paving - Cold Plane and Pave 20 Streets	Roads include Lowell, Melrose, Staniford, Freeman, Lake, Crystal, Berwick, Oak, Grove, Central, Bridge, Temple, Walnut, Linwood, Walnut Pl, Newtonville, Daniel, Ridge,	\$ 3,032,150	47.6	Chapt 90/ Alt Funds	\$ 3,032,150					
21	DPW	Sidewalk Improvements	Improve pedestrian safety. Repair/replacement of sidewalks in poor condition and new sidewalks in village centers, school zones, on major roads.	\$ 150,000	45.8	Chapt 90/ Alt Funds	\$ 150,000					





# Inner Core Committee Forum on Housing

March 12, 2015

8:30 am - noon

# The MAPC Region



Dover is in Three Rivers and South West Subregions.  
Milton and Needham are in Inner Core and Three Rivers Subregions.

# Metropolitan Area Planning Council

- Established in 1963 as a public agency
- Created under MGL Chapter 40B Section 24
- Governed by representatives from each of the 101 cities and towns in Metro Boston, gubernatorial appointees and designees of major public agencies

# MAPC Strategic Plan Priorities 2015-2020

- **Expand the supply of housing that the region needs to grow economically, with an emphasis on multi-family housing, smaller single-family homes, and homes that are affordable to a wide range of incomes.**
  - Better integrate and help advance policies that advance housing, economic development, transportation planning, public health, energy, + fair housing activities.
  - Identify impediments to fair housing and implement recommendations to remove barriers + increase choice.

# MAPC Strategic Plan Priorities 2015-2020

- **Expand the supply...**
  - Assist municipalities with regionalization activities.
  - Engage and gain input from real estate development professionals to inform local program incentives and opportunities, learn about real estate trends, and discuss development patterns.

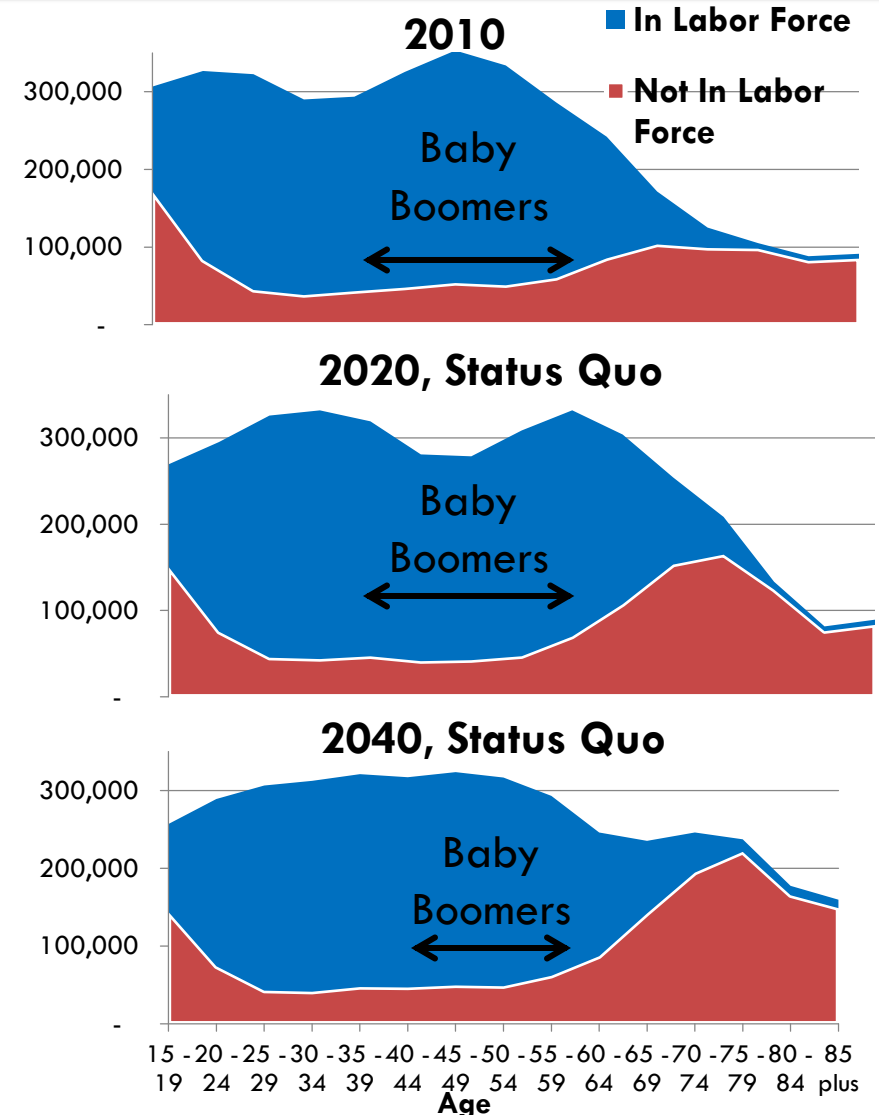


# MAPC Strategic Plan Priorities 2015-2020

- **Encourage both residential and economic development that is oriented to take advantage of its proximity to current and planned subway and light rail stops, commuter rail stations, and key bus stops.**
  - Undertake TOD station area plans that address interdisciplinary issues and issues related to implementation.
  - Develop professional capacity to conduct site-based pre-development planning activities, including pro-forma development, feasibility analyses, and urban design.

# Wave + Impact of Boomer Retirement

- Baby Boomers (born 1945 – 1970) comprise 49% of labor force
- One million workers now over the age of 40 will retire by 2030 (39% of labor force)
- Existing population is insufficient to fill vacant positions



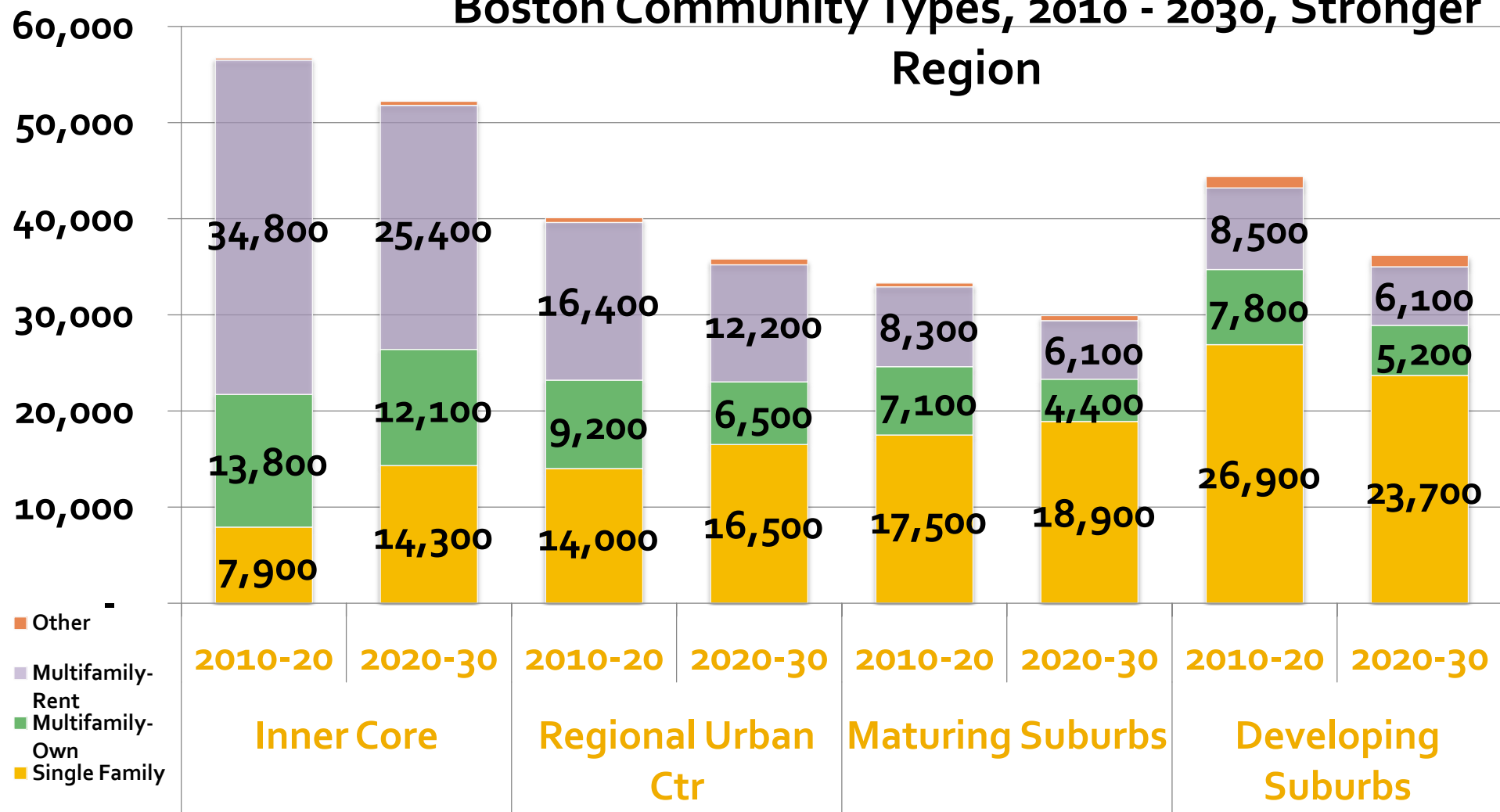
# Projected Changes in Inner Core

	Status Quo	Stronger Region
<b>Inner Core</b>		
Population Change 2010-30	111,300 (8%)	202,500 (15%)
Household Change 2010-30	68,600 (12%)	103,400 (18%)
Housing Unit Change 2010-30	72,300 (12%)	108,800 (18%)



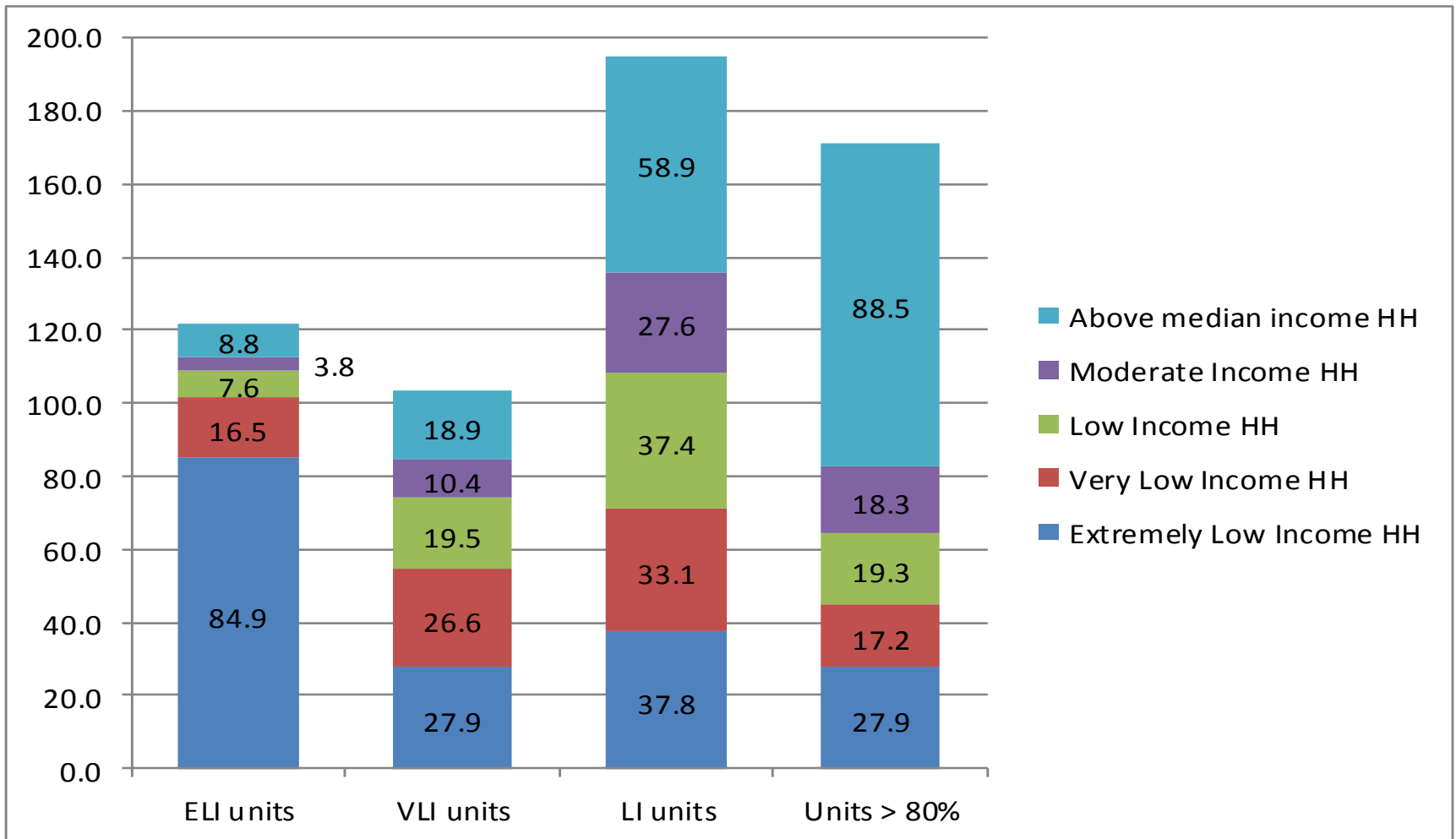
# Projected Housing Demand - Subregions

Housing Unit Demand by Type and Tenure, Metro Boston Community Types, 2010 - 2030, Stronger Region



# Who Occupies Affordable Units\*?

\*no subsidy



Source: CHAS Table 15C, based on the 2005-2009 American Community Survey

# Implementation is Key: Takeaways from Regional Housing Plan

- Coordinate regional and local plans to ensure diverse housing production
  - Prepare municipal Housing Production Plans that reflect 'New Paradigm' growth targets
- Ensure zoning regulations help to diversify overall housing supply and affordability
  - Allow multi-family housing by right, infill and reuse zoning overlays, and conversion of single to multi-family.
- Increase affordable housing production in appropriate locations
  - Encourage adoption of Smart Growth Zoning Overlay Districts and Compact Neighborhoods
  - Identify Priority Development Areas for housing development

# Implementation is Key: Takeaways from Fair Housing + Equity Assessment

- Disseminate fair housing data and provide trainings
- Empower people who wish to move from lower-opportunity neighborhoods to higher opportunity neighborhoods to move;
- Enable people who wish to remain in neighborhoods that are experiencing reinvestment to remain;
- Invest in neighborhoods that are still suffering from disinvestment for the benefit of the current (and particularly low-income) residents;
- Implement the “disparate impact” rule and “affirmatively further fair housing” for all protected classes.



# Issues in Inner Core Municipalities

- Density
- Demolition/ Replacement with new, larger homes
- Preservation/ community character
- Gentrification/ pricing out and displacement of lower-income households
- Continued shrinking of federal housing funds and level state housing funds
- Pressure for new housing
- Housing for middle-income households
- Fair housing/ discrimination

# Thank You!

**For more information, please contact:  
Jennifer Raitt,  
Assistant Director of Land Use &  
Chief Housing Planner  
617-933-0754 | [jraitt@mapc.org](mailto:jraitt@mapc.org)**

[www.mapc.org](http://www.mapc.org)  
[@MAPCMetroBoston](https://twitter.com/MAPCMetroBoston)

# **Local Perspectives: City of Boston**

**Kevin McColl**

**Policy Advisor, Department of  
Neighborhood Development, City of  
Boston**

---



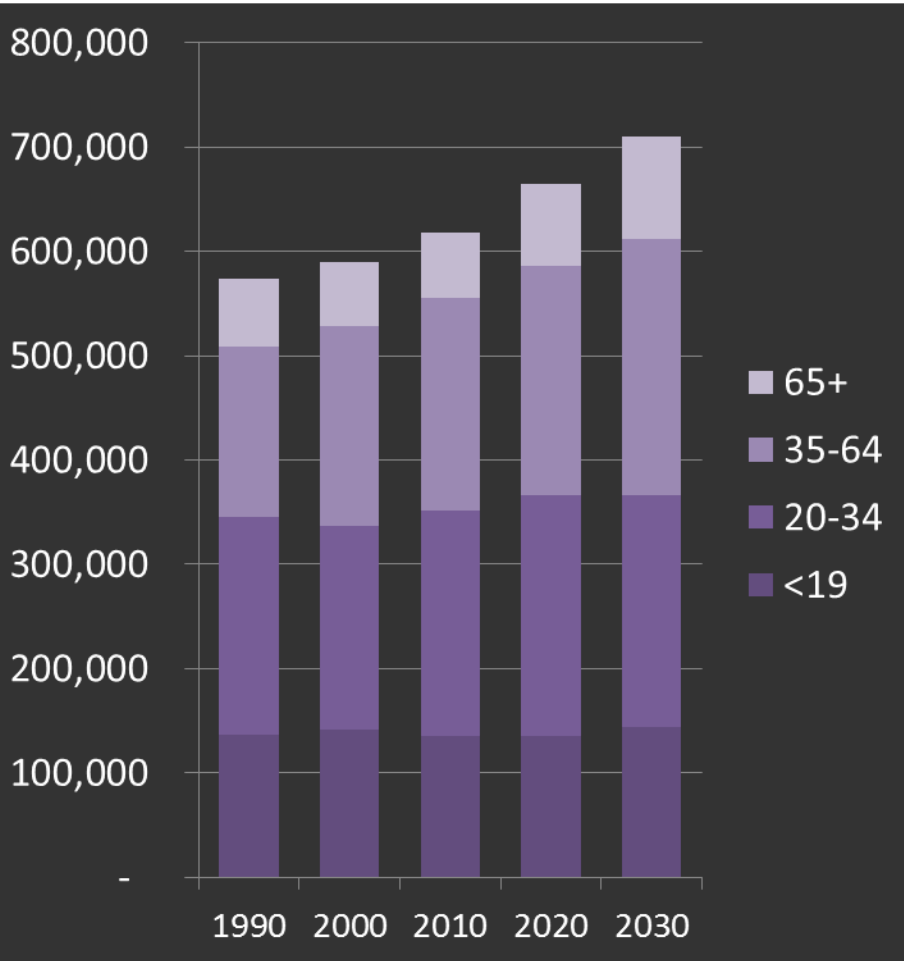


# HOUSING A CHANGING CITY: BOSTON 2030





# Housing Boston 2030 Goal: Ensure Boston Grows Responsibly



**91,000 more Bostonians  
by 2030**

**53,000 new units**

**20% increase in the City's  
density**

**Seniors – fastest growing  
demographic: up 54%**

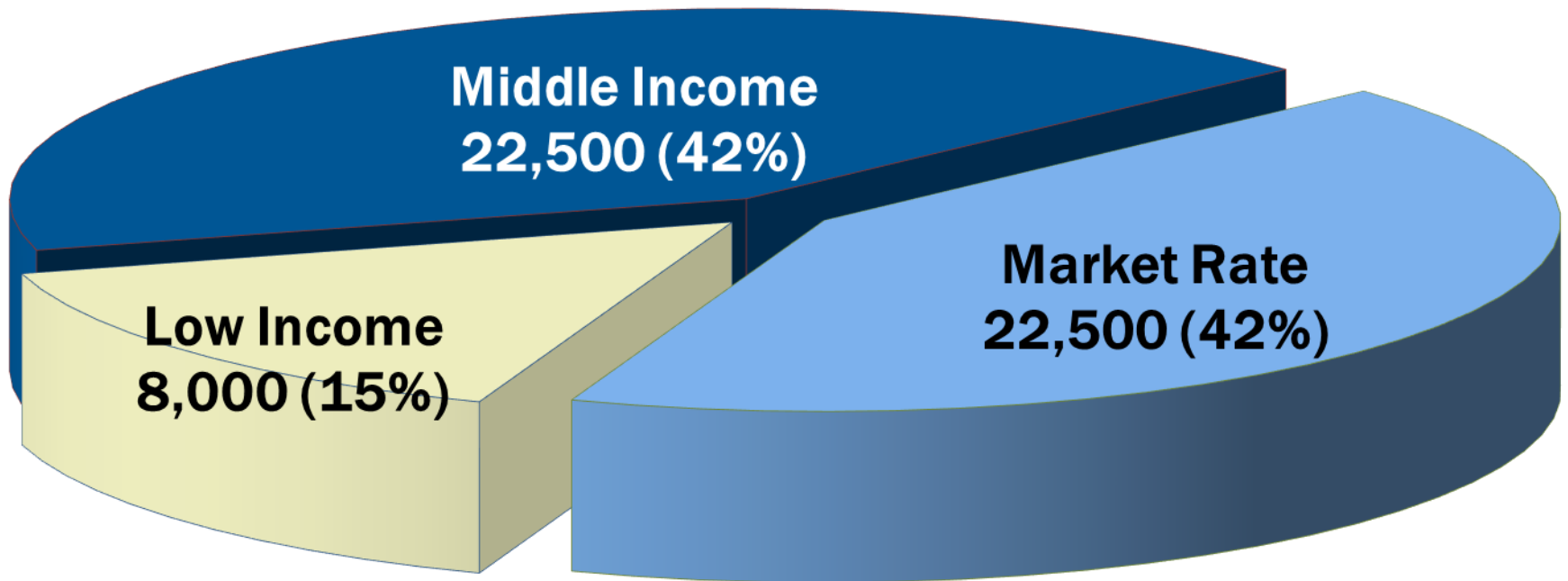


# Sources of Housing Demand



# 53,000 Units For Whom?

**TOTAL PROJECTED COST: \$23 BILLION**



# Low Income Housing



**8,000 new units**

- **6,500 family**
- **1,500 senior**

**\$863 million from City Sources**

**\$2.1 Billion from State/Federal**



# The Middle Class



20% of Units Citywide Low  
Income Housing

What's happening in the middle?



60% of Growth is in Luxury  
Market Areas

- 36% of Boston's Population is in the Workforce:
  - \$50,000 - \$125,000 annual household income
  - Boston's 2012 median household income was \$53,136.
- At an income of \$80,000 a middle class household can only afford:
  - Rental Housing: 50% of the market
  - Homeownership: Only the bottom 25% of the market.



# Middle Income Housing Goal: Create 22,500 Units by 2030



## PRODUCTION SOURCES

City Assisted/Inclusionary	4,000
Market Workforce Units	11,000
Market Senior	2,500
Released Student Units	5,000

- Density in moderately-priced areas
- Targeted production tax incentives
- Workforce housing labor rate
- Permitting systems for small builders
- Public Land
- Dorm Production



# Boston 2030 Legislative Package

- 1. Senior Housing Funding** To Replace Federal 202 Program. Carve-out from Bond Bill
- 2. State Lands.** Allow Communities to petition State to release surplus lands, and provide discounts proportionate to the number of affordable units created
- 3. Middle Income Production Tax Incentives.** Allows communities to establish target districts free of taxes for up to 4 years after construction start (construction and rent-up period only).

