

**Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group**

**Wednesday December 20, 2023**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Charles River Room**

**Public Services Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue**

**AND**

**Virtual Meeting using Zoom**

Meeting ID:

**834 7583 6726**

(Instructions for accessing below)

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US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 Then enter ID: **834 7583 6726**

Direct Link to meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83475836726>

- I. Welcome and Meeting Goals, *Heidi Frail and Natasha Espada, Co-Chairs*
- II. Approval of Minutes from HONE Meetings of September 7, 2023, October 5, 2023, October 18, 2023, November 9, 2023 and November 15, 2023
- III. Review of Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Compliance Modeling Results for Studied Scenarios, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- IV. Review of Alternative Affordability Percentage Thresholds Analysis, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- V. Review Strategy for January 18 Community Meeting, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- VI. Next Steps

**Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group**

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Heidi Frail     | Select Board (co-chair)   |
| Natasha Espada  | Planning Board (co-chair) |
| Kevin Keane     | Select Board              |
| Jeanne McKnight | Planning Board            |
| Joshua Levy     | Finance Committee         |
| Ronald Ruth     | Land Use Attorney         |
| William Lovett  | Real Estate Developer     |
| Liz Kaponya     | Renter                    |
| Michael Diener  | Citizen at Large          |

# Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group Meeting

Town of Needham, Massachusetts

December 20, 2023



**HOUSING NEEDHAM (HONE)**

**TOWN VISIONING FOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING**

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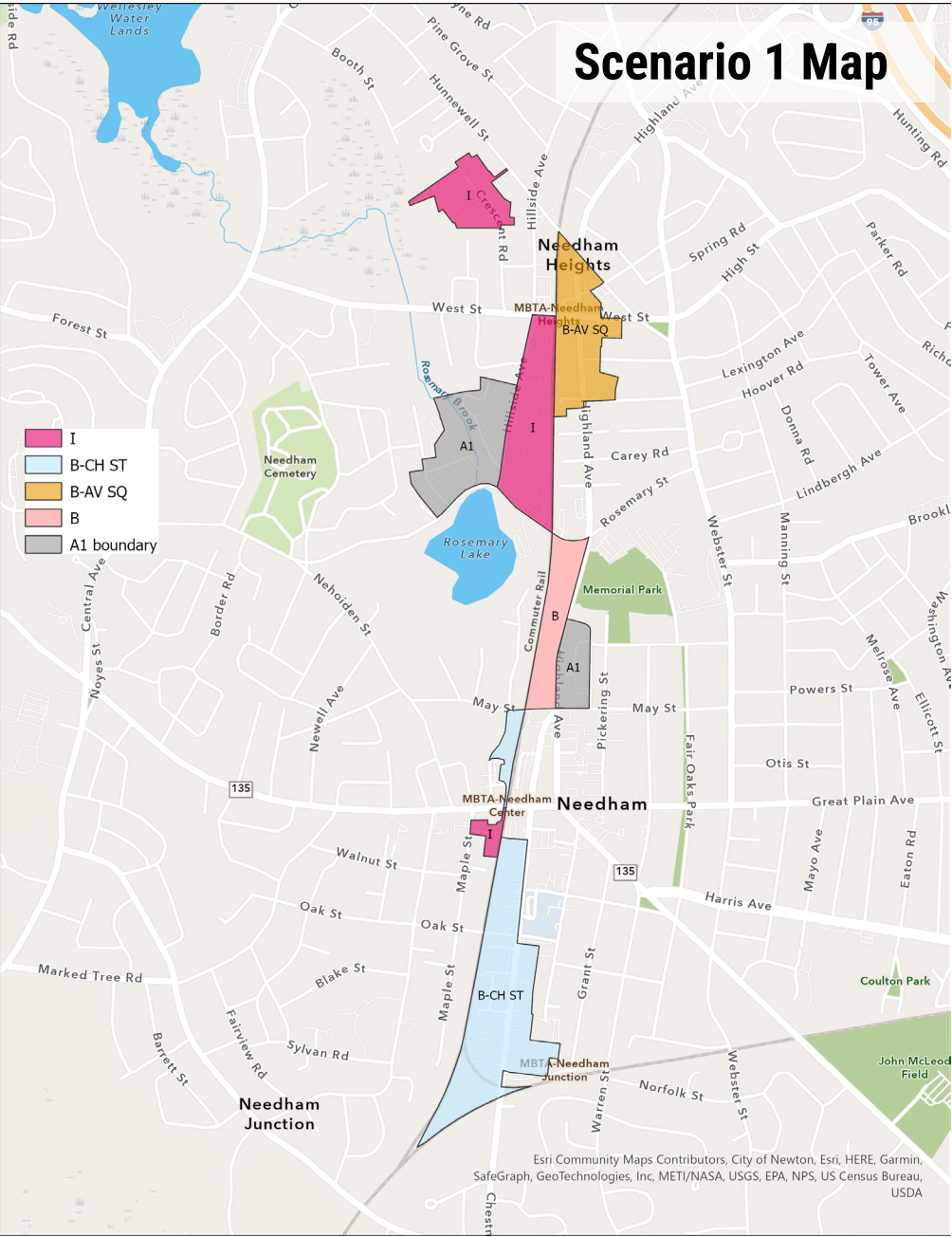
Public Meeting #2 Early Thoughts

# Scenario Modeling Results

## Scenario 1 - Minimum Housing Unit Count

- 1. Begin with existing zoning districts.
- 2. Apply Housing Plan height, dimensional, density changes.
- 3. Keep 1.5 parking space per unit requirement.
- 4. Subtracting zoning districts to lower unit count while being mindful of impact on density (15 DU/AC).
- 5. Introduced 18 DU/AC cap in Avery Square and Chestnut Street to get unit count down further without impacting overall density of the MBTA District.

| Zoning Metrics                  | District Name |          |                       |                          |            |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------|
|                                 | Apartment 1   | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Industrial |
| Max Units per Lot               |               |          |                       |                          |            |
| Minimum Lot Size                | 20,000        | 10,000   | 10,000                | 10,000                   | 10,000     |
| Height (Stories)                | 3.0           | 3.0      | 2.5                   | 3.0                      | 3.0        |
| FAR                             | 0.50          |          | 0.70                  | 0.50                     | 0.50       |
| Max Blg Coverage                |               |          |                       |                          |            |
| Max Lot Coverage                |               | 25%      |                       |                          |            |
| Minimum Open Space (%)          |               |          |                       |                          |            |
| Open Space per Dwelling Unit    |               |          |                       |                          |            |
| FY Setback                      | 25            | 10       | 10                    | 25                       | 25         |
| Rear Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20         |
| Side Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20         |
| Parking per Unit                | 1.5           | 1.5      | 1.5                   | 1.5                      | 1.5        |
| Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      |               |          |                       |                          |            |
| Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre | 18            |          | 18                    | 18                       |            |



## Scenario 1 Results

| D2 - Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery<br>Square<br>Business | Chestnut<br>Street<br>Business | Industrial | Total  |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------|
| Gross Acreage      | 23.07       | 9.78     | 16.20                       | 34.25                          | 28.08      | 111.38 |
| DDD Acreage        | 20.77       | 9.78     | 16.20                       | 34.25                          | 28.00      | 109.00 |
| Unit Capacity      | 433         | 210      | 198                         | 448                            | 348        | 1,637  |
| DU/AC              | 20.8        | 21.5     | 12.2                        | 13.1                           | 12.4       | 15.0   |

### CTRB Mixed Use Offset Calculation

- 1. Ran Compliance Model on the full CTR-B District.
- 2. Resulting unit capacity is 337 units.
- 3. Using the 337 units as an offset, we can bring the unit capacity of the MBTA 3A District from 1,637 to the required 1,784 units.

## Scenario 2 – Housing Plan

- 1. Models the Housing Plan with all proposed zoning district changes and height, dimensional and density changes.
- 2. Models a 1.0 parking space per unit requirement.
- 3. Does not include GR or CTRB districts as they would not comply with MBTA Guidelines.
- 4. Does not include a small A1 district adjacent to CTRB and small I district adjacent to CTRB because they are not contiguous and less than 5 acres

| Zoning Metrics                  | District Name |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
|                                 | Apartment 1   | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Hillside Ave Business | Industrial |
| Max Units per Lot               |               |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
| Minimum Lot Size                | 20,000        | 10,000   | 10,000                | 10,000                   | 10,000                | 10,000     |
| Height (Stories)                | 3.0           | 3.0      | 2.5                   | 3.0                      | 3.0                   | 3.0        |
| FAR                             | 0.50          |          | 0.70                  | 0.50                     | 0.50                  | 0.50       |
| Max Blg Coverage                |               |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
| Max Lot Coverage                |               | 25%      |                       |                          |                       |            |
| Minimum Open Space (%)          |               |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
| Open Space per Dwelling Unit    |               |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
| FY Setback                      | 25            | 10       | 10                    | 25                       | 25                    | 25         |
| Rear Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    | 20         |
| Side Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    | 20         |
| Parking per Unit                | 1.00          | 1.00     | 1.00                  | 1.00                     | 1.00                  | 1.00       |
| Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      |               |          |                       |                          |                       |            |
| Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre | 18            |          |                       |                          |                       |            |



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## Scenario 2 Results

| D2 - Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Hillside Ave Business | Industrial | Total  |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|
| Gross Acreage      | 76.67       | 9.79     | 16.13                 | 36.74                    | 7.10                  | 26.26      | 172.69 |
| DDD Acreage        | 57.04       | 9.79     | 16.13                 | 36.74                    | 7.10                  | 26.17      | 152.97 |
| Unit Capacity      | 858         | 210      | 319                   | 544                      | 56                    | 542        | 2,529  |
| DU/AC              | 15.0        | 21.5     | 19.8                  | 14.8                     | 7.9                   | 20.7       | 16.5   |

Scenario 3 – Housing Plan + 1.0 Parking + CTRR

- 1. Models the Housing Plan with all proposed zoning district changes and height, dimensional and density changes.
- 2. Models a 1.0 parking space per unit requirement.
- 3. Includes new CTRR district and new A1 adjacent to CTRR.
- 4. Does not include GR district.

| Zoning Metrics                  | District Name |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
|                                 | Apartment 1   | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Hillside Ave Business | Center Business Residential | Industrial |
| Max Units per Lot               |               |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| Minimum Lot Size                | 20,000        | 10,000   | 10,000                | 10,000                   | 10,000                | 10,000                      | 10,000     |
| Height (Stories)                | 3.0           | 3.0      | 2.5                   | 3.0                      | 3.0                   | 2.5                         | 3.0        |
| FAR                             | 0.50          |          | 0.70                  | 0.50                     | 0.50                  | 1.00                        | 0.50       |
| Max Blg Coverage                |               |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| Max Lot Coverage                |               | 25%      |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| Minimum Open Space (%)          |               |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| Open Space per Dwelling Unit    |               |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| FY Setback                      | 25            | 10       | 10                    | 25                       | 25                    |                             | 25         |
| Rear Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    |                             | 20         |
| Side Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    |                             | 20         |
| Parking per Unit                | 1.00          | 1.00     | 1.00                  | 1.00                     | 1.00                  | 1.00                        | 1.00       |
| Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      |               |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |
| Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre | 18            |          |                       |                          |                       |                             | 18         |

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## Scenario 3 Results

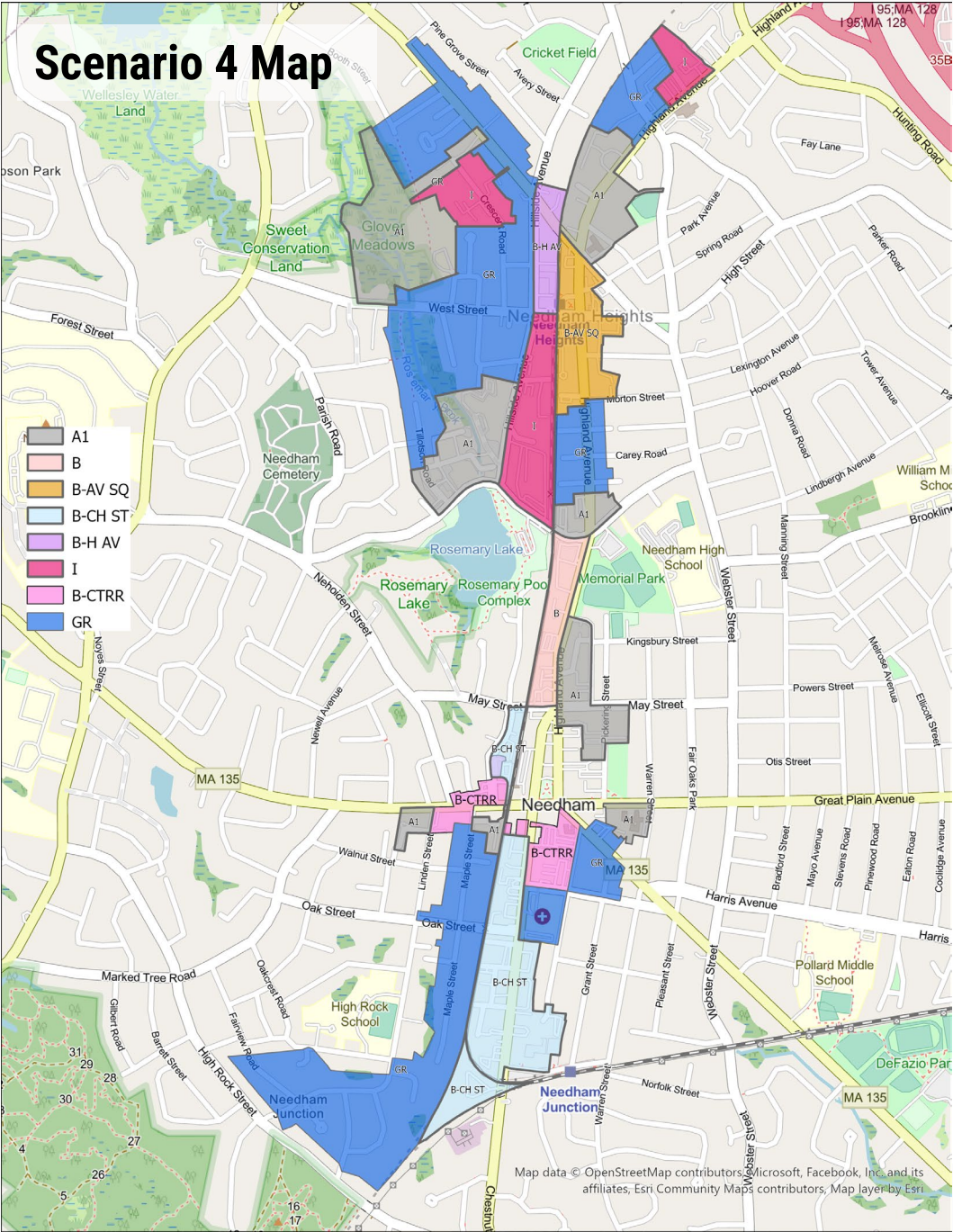
| D2 - Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery<br>Square<br>Business | Chestnut<br>Street<br>Business | Hillside Ave<br>Business | Center<br>Businss<br>Residential | Industrial | Total  |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------|
| Gross Acreage      | 78.81       | 9.79     | 16.13                       | 36.74                          | 7.10                     | 11.82                            | 26.26      | 186.65 |
| DDD Acreage        | 59.19       | 9.79     | 16.13                       | 36.74                          | 7.10                     | 11.82                            | 26.17      | 166.94 |
| Unit Capacity      | 891         | 210      | 319                         | 522                            | 56                       | 90                               | 542        | 2,630  |
| DU/AC              | 15.1        | 21.5     | 19.8                        | 14.2                           | 7.9                      | 7.6                              | 20.7       | 15.8   |

Scenario 4 – Housing Plan + 1.0 Parking + CTRR + GR

- 1. Models the Housing Plan with all proposed zoning district changes and height, dimensional and density changes.
- 2. Models a 1.0 parking space per unit requirement.
- 3. Includes new CTRR district, GR, and I district to the north.

| Zoning Metrics                  | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Hillside Ave Business | Center Business Residential | Industrial | GR     |
|---------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------|
| Max Units per Lot               |             |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |        |
| Minimum Lot Size                | 20,000      | 10,000   | 10,000                | 10,000                   | 10,000                | 10,000                      | 10,000     | 10,000 |
| Height (Stories)                | 3.0         | 3.0      | 2.5                   | 3.0                      | 3.0                   | 2.5                         | 3.0        | 2.5    |
| FAR                             | 0.50        |          | 0.70                  | 0.50                     | 0.50                  | 1.00                        | 0.50       |        |
| Max Blg Coverage                |             |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |        |
| Max Lot Coverage                |             | 25%      |                       |                          |                       |                             |            | 30%    |
| Minimum Open Space (%)          |             |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |        |
| Open Space per Dwelling Unit    |             |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |        |
| FY Setback                      | 25          | 10       | 10                    | 25                       | 25                    |                             | 25         | 20     |
| Rear Setback                    | 20          |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    |                             | 20         | 20     |
| Side Setback                    | 20          |          |                       | 20                       | 20                    |                             | 20         | 14     |
| Parking per Unit                | 1.00        | 1.00     | 1.00                  | 1.00                     | 1.00                  | 1.00                        | 1.00       | 1.00   |
| Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      |             |          |                       |                          |                       |                             |            |        |
| Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre | 18          |          |                       |                          |                       | 18                          |            | 4      |





## Scenario 4 Results

| D2 - Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery<br>Square<br>Business | Chestnut<br>Street<br>Business | Hillside Ave<br>Business | Center<br>Businss<br>Residential | Industrial | GR     | Total  |
|--------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------|--------|
| Gross Acreage      | 81.81       | 9.79     | 16.13                       | 36.74                          | 7.10                     | 11.82                            | 31.23      | 158.45 | 353.07 |
| DDD Acreage        | 62.19       | 9.79     | 16.13                       | 36.74                          | 7.10                     | 11.82                            | 31.14      | 154.06 | 328.97 |
| Unit Capacity      | 922         | 210      | 319                         | 522                            | 56                       | 90                               | 542        | 186    | 2,847  |
| DU/AC              | 14.8        | 21.5     | 19.8                        | 14.2                           | 7.9                      | 7.6                              | 17.4       | 1.2    | 8.7    |



## Results of all 4 Scenarios

| Outputs       | S1     | S2     | S3     | S4     |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gross Acreage | 111.38 | 172.69 | 186.65 | 353.07 |
| DDD Acreage   | 109.00 | 152.97 | 166.94 | 328.97 |
| Unit Capacity | 1,637  | 2,529  | 2,630  | 2,847  |
| DU/AC         | 15.0   | 16.5   | 15.8   | 8.7    |

Two Public Input Scenarios – Housing Plan + Upzoning

| Zoning Metrics                  | District Name |          |                       |                          |        |                       |              |            |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|------------|
|                                 | Apartment 1   | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | CTR-R  | Hillside Ave Business | General Resi | Industrial |
| Max Units per Lot               | 0             | 0        | 0                     | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0            | 0          |
| Minimum Lot Size                | 20,000        | 10,000   | 10,000                | 10,000                   | 10,000 | 10,000                | 10,000       | 20,000     |
| Height (Stories)                | 4.0           | 4.0      | 4.0                   | 4.0                      | 3.5    | 4.0                   | 2.5          | 4.5        |
| FAR                             | 1.00          | 1.50     | 1.50                  | 1.50                     | 1.25   | 1.50                  | 0.00         | 0.00       |
| Max Blg Coverage                | 0%            | 0%       | 0%                    | 0%                       | 0%     | 0%                    | 0%           | 0%         |
| Max Lot Coverage                | 0%            | 0%       | 0%                    | 0%                       | 0%     | 0%                    | 60%          | 70%        |
| Minimum Open Space (%)          | 20%           | 20%      | 20%                   | 20%                      | 20%    | 20%                   | 20%          | 20%        |
| Open Space per Dwelling Unit    | 0             | 0        | 0                     | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0            | 0          |
| FY Setback                      | 25            | 10       | 10                    | 25                       | 25     | 25                    | 20           | 25         |
| Rear Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20     | 20                    | 20           | 20         |
| Side Setback                    | 20            |          |                       | 20                       | 20     | 20                    | 14           | 20         |
| Parking per Unit                | 1.0           | 1.0      | 1.0                   | 1.0                      | 1.0    | 1.0                   | 1.0          | 1.0        |
| Lot Area per Dwelling Unit      | 0             | 0        | 0                     | 0                        | 0      | 0                     | 0            | 0          |
| Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre | 24            | 24       | 24                    | 24                       | 24     | 24                    | 4            | 24         |

All zoning parameters are based on public feedback from Meeting 1 except setbacks, parking ratio, and open space %.

## Two Public Input Scenarios – Housing Plan + Upzoning

### Scenario 5 – No GR

| Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Central Business Residential | Hillside Ave Business | Industrial | Total  |
|---------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|
| Gross Acreage | 28.16       | 9.78     | 16.20                 | 34.25                    | 11.82                        | 7.09                  | 33.08      | 140.38 |
| DDD Acreage   | 25.86       | 9.78     | 16.20                 | 34.25                    | 11.82                        | 7.09                  | 33.00      | 138.00 |
| Unit Capacity | 749.00      | 154.00   | 263.00                | 602.00                   | 120.00                       | 62.00                 | 571.00     | 2,521  |
| DU/AC         | 29.0        | 15.7     | 16.2                  | 17.6                     | 10.2                         | 8.7                   | 17.3       | 18.3   |

### Scenario 6 – With GR

| Model Outputs | Apartment 1 | Business | Avery Square Business | Chestnut Street Business | Central Business Residential | Hillside Ave Business | General Resi | Industrial | Total  |
|---------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------|--------|
| Gross Acreage | 28.16       | 9.78     | 16.20                 | 34.25                    | 11.82                        | 7.09                  | 178.30       | 33.08      | 318.68 |
| DDD Acreage   | 25.86       | 9.78     | 16.20                 | 34.25                    | 11.82                        | 7.09                  | 146.52       | 33.00      | 284.52 |
| Unit Capacity | 749         | 154      | 263                   | 602                      | 120                          | 62                    | 213          | 571        | 2,734  |
| DU/AC         | 29.0        | 15.7     | 16.2                  | 17.6                     | 10.2                         | 8.7                   | 1.5          | 17.3       | 9.6    |

# Fiscal Impact Model & Results

To test the fiscal impact of Needham’s proposed MBTA Districts, RKG Associates constructed a fiscal impact model to understand the potential tax revenues from new development compared to the municipal and school costs to support that development.

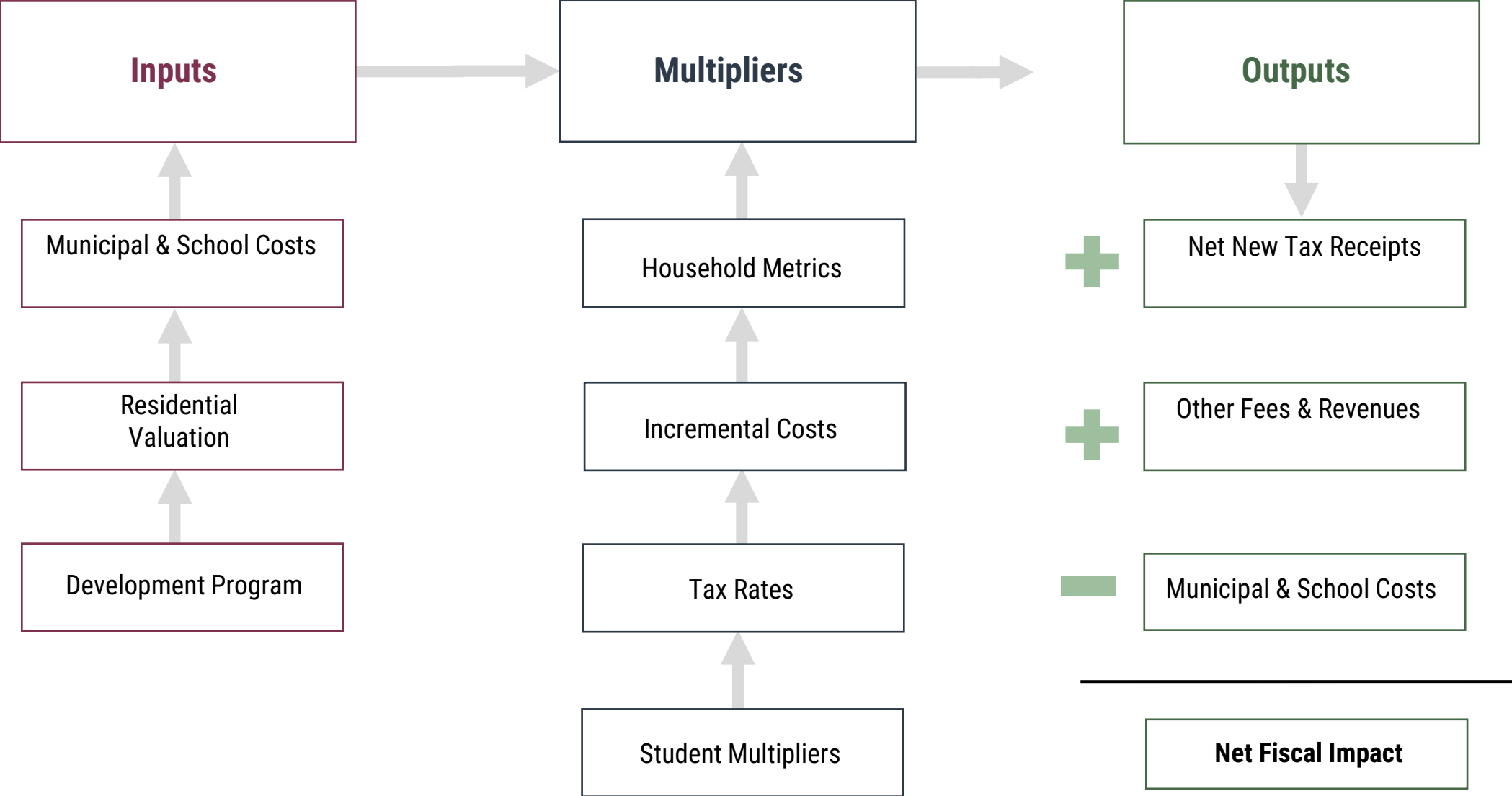
## MODEL ASSUMPTIONS

- Town tax rates
- Multi-family Valuation
  - Based on costs researched by RKG
- Existing property values and taxes
- Development program
- Incremental governmental expenditures
  - General government
  - Public safety (police and fire)
  - Public works
  - Schools
- Student generation rates per unit

## CONSTRUCTION COST ASSUMPTIONS

| Residential Type     | Gross SQFT per Unit | Per SQFT Cost | Total Value per Unit |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Studio Apartments    | 500                 | \$300         | \$150,000            |
| One Bed Apartments   | 750                 | \$300         | \$225,000            |
| Two Bed Apartments   | 1,050               | \$300         | \$315,000            |
| Three Bed Apartments | 1,250               | \$300         | \$375,000            |

Source: RS Means, CoStar, Needham Assessor Database, RKG Associates 2023





- RKG identified costs by department that are likely to increase with the addition of a new household in town. We anticipate costs such as police staff salaries, library expenditures, or maintenance of recreation fields to increase with new households while a department head’s salary or hours for Town Counsel to experience little to no impact.
- RKG identified all costs that are likely to vary (incremental costs) with the addition of new households as a subset of the Town’s total operational budget.
- Other Category accounts for debt service, unemployment, retirement, and insurance. Items not likely to increase substantially with the addition of a new housing unit.
- Once we establish the incremental budget, we must apportion that budget to residential and non-residential uses. For that we use a breakout of assessed value from Mass Department of Revenue (DOR) which shows 88% of Needham’s assessed value driven by residential with 9% driven by commercial/industrial property.

Variable Expenses by Town Department (FY24)

| Use Category           | FY 2024 Budget | Incremental Share of Budget | Residential Proportional Share @ 88% | Efficiency Adjustment | Adjusted Expenses |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| General Gov’t          | \$14,358,516   | \$6,338,432                 | \$5,577,820                          | 10%                   | \$557,782         |
| Public Safety - Fire   | \$10,695,558   | \$10,655,531                | \$9,376,867                          | 75%                   | \$7,032,650       |
| Public Safety - Police | \$8,749,162    | \$8,614,268                 | \$7,580,556                          | 60%                   | \$4,548,334       |
| Public Works           | \$20,340,339   | \$8,793,620                 | \$7,738,386                          | 15%                   | \$1,160,758       |
| Other                  | \$66,335,088   | \$0                         | \$0                                  | 0%                    | \$0               |
| TOTALS                 | \$120,478,663  | \$34,401,851                | \$30,273,629                         |                       | \$13,299,524      |

Source: Town of Needham FY24 Budget, RKG Associates.

Assessed Value by Property Class (2023)

| Class                 | Value            | % of Total |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|
| Residential           | \$10,715,862,649 | 88%        |
| Commercial/Industrial | \$1,151,557,337  | 9%         |
| Total                 | \$12,247,868,326 | 97%        |

Source: MA DOR 2022, RKG Associates.  
Remaining 3% is personal property tax.

- After calculating the incremental costs by department and the share of that budget allocated to residential uses, we must calculate municipal costs on a per household (HH) basis. This forms our estimates for calculating future costs of the housing in MBTA Districts.
- The cost allocation by land use table to the right summarizes the calculations used to estimate the per HH cost. The incremental budget for each major category of town services is allocated to residential uses using the share of total assessed value on the prior page. Those allocations are then divided by the total number of occupied households in Needham. This calculation gives us an estimate of cost on a per HH or per FTE employee that we can apply to each scenario.

## Total Households in Needham

| Category               | Totals |
|------------------------|--------|
| Total Households (HHs) | 11,710 |

Source: US Census 2017-2021 Estimates.

## Cost Allocation for Residential Units

| Cost Category          | Variable Budget     | Cost per HH    |
|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| General Gov't          | \$557,782           | \$47.63        |
| Public Safety - Fire   | \$7,032,650         | \$600.57       |
| Public Safety - Police | \$4,548,334         | \$388.41       |
| Public Works           | \$1,160,758         | \$99.13        |
| Other                  | \$0                 | \$0.00         |
| <b>TOTALS</b>          | <b>\$13,299,524</b> | <b>\$1,136</b> |

- RKG calculated the estimated number of school aged children that could result from the addition of each residential unit.
- RKG utilized school aged children (SAC) ratios from local Needham data from the school department on recently constructed multi-family developments and RKG's proprietary list of residential development projects and SAC ratios from around the Greater Boston region.
- RKG then calculated an incremental education cost specific to Needham's school budget based on 2022 budget information provided by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Using local costs only (net of state aid and grants), the estimated cost to educate a child in the Needham District was \$12,128. This accounts for 58% of the full cost to educate a child in Needham of \$19,829.
- By multiplying the local cost to educate a child by the number of school children in each scenario we can estimate total education cost. These costs, along with municipal costs, are then then netted against the gross property tax revenue for each scenario later in this analysis.

## SCHOOL ASSUMPTIONS

| Use Category        | SAC Ratio per Unit |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Studio – MKT        | 0.00               |
| One Bedroom – MKT   | 0.00               |
| Two Bedroom – MKT   | 0.06               |
| Three Bedroom – MKT | 0.50               |
| Studio - AFF        | 0.00               |
| One Bedroom – AFF   | 0.00               |
| Two Bedroom – AFF   | 0.06               |
| Three Bedroom – AFF | 1.20               |

| Budget Category          | FY22 General Fund   | % of Included Costs | Per Pupil Cost  |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Classroom Teachers       | \$41,671,615        | 62%                 | \$7,492         |
| Instructional Leadership | \$8,319,399         | 12%                 | \$1,496         |
| Other Teaching Services  | \$9,466,212         | 14%                 | \$1,702         |
| Instructional Materials  | \$3,579,993         | 5%                  | \$644           |
| Transportation           | \$1,070,662         | 2%                  | \$192           |
| Pupil Services           | \$3,346,074         | 5%                  | \$602           |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>\$67,453,955</b> | <b>58%</b>          | <b>\$12,128</b> |

Source: DESE 2022, Residential Demographic Multipliers for Massachusetts, 2017, Town of Needham SAC Metrics, RKG Associates SAC Database.

To calculate an estimated net fiscal impact for each district under each scenario....

$$\begin{array}{l} \boxed{\text{Number of Units}} \times \boxed{\text{Per Unit Revenue}} = \text{Gross Property Tax Revenue} \\ \boxed{\text{Number of Units}} \times \boxed{\text{Per Unit Municipal Costs}} = \text{Municipal Costs} \\ \boxed{\text{Number of Units}} \times \boxed{\text{SAC Ratio}} \times \boxed{\text{Per Child School Costs}} = \text{Education Costs} \end{array}$$

$$\text{Gross Property Tax Revenue} - \text{Municipal Costs} - \text{Education Costs} = \boxed{\text{Net Fiscal Impact}}$$

# Fiscal Impact Analysis - Results

| Least Unit Scenario      |              |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| District Name            | Units        | Net Fiscal Impact  |
| Apartment 1              | 433          | \$585,574          |
| Business                 | 210          | \$277,675          |
| Avery Square Business    | 198          | \$262,551          |
| Chestnut Street Business | 448          | \$608,440          |
| Industrial               | 348          | \$474,779          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>            | <b>1,637</b> | <b>\$2,209,019</b> |

| Housing Plan Scenario    |              |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| District Name            | Units        | Net Fiscal Impact  |
| Apartment 1              | 858          | \$1,154,415        |
| Business                 | 210          | \$277,675          |
| Avery Square Business    | 319          | \$423,019          |
| Chestnut Street Business | 544          | \$744,688          |
| Hillside Ave Business    | 56           | \$69,404           |
| Industrial               | 542          | \$741,091          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>            | <b>2,529</b> | <b>\$3,410,292</b> |

| Housing Plan + CTRR         |              |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| District Name               | Units        | Net Fiscal Impact  |
| Apartment 1                 | 891          | \$1,206,519        |
| Business                    | 210          | \$277,675          |
| Avery Square Business       | 319          | \$423,019          |
| Chestnut Street Business    | 522          | \$705,909          |
| Hillside Ave Business       | 56           | \$69,404           |
| Center Business Residential | 90           | \$110,006          |
| Industrial                  | 542          | \$741,091          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>               | <b>2,630</b> | <b>\$3,533,623</b> |

| Housing Plan + CTRR + GR    |              |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| District Name               | Units        | Net Fiscal Impact  |
| Apartment 1                 | 922          | \$1,252,680        |
| Business                    | 210          | \$277,675          |
| Avery Square Business       | 319          | \$423,019          |
| Chestnut Street Business    | 522          | \$705,909          |
| Hillside Ave Business       | 56           | \$69,404           |
| Center Business Residential | 90           | \$110,006          |
| Industrial                  | 542          | \$741,091          |
| GR                          | 186          | \$248,601          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>               | <b>2,847</b> | <b>\$3,828,385</b> |

# Fiscal Impact Analysis – Additional Revenues

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| Least Unit Scenario      |                  |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| District Name            | CPA Tax          | Excise Tax       |
| Apartment 1              | \$29,794         | \$259,516        |
| Business                 | \$14,447         | \$125,862        |
| Avery Square Business    | \$13,629         | \$118,670        |
| Chestnut Street Business | \$30,834         | \$268,506        |
| Industrial               | \$23,949         | \$208,572        |
| <b>TOTALS</b>            | <b>\$112,653</b> | <b>\$981,126</b> |

| Housing Plan Scenario    |                  |                    |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| District Name            | CPA Tax          | Excise Tax         |
| Apartment 1              | \$59,071         | \$514,237          |
| Business                 | \$14,447         | \$125,862          |
| Avery Square Business    | \$21,950         | \$191,191          |
| Chestnut Street Business | \$37,438         | \$326,043          |
| Hillside Ave Business    | \$3,873          | \$33,563           |
| Industrial               | \$37,320         | \$324,844          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>            | <b>\$174,099</b> | <b>\$1,515,740</b> |

| Housing Plan + CTRR        |                  |                    |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| District Name              | CPA Tax          | Excise Tax         |
| Apartment 1                | \$61,348         | \$534,015          |
| Business                   | \$14,447         | \$125,862          |
| Avery Square Business      | \$21,950         | \$191,191          |
| Chestnut Street Business   | \$35,920         | \$312,858          |
| Hillside Ave Business      | \$3,873          | \$33,563           |
| Center Businss Residential | \$6,185          | \$53,941           |
| Industrial                 | \$37,320         | \$324,844          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>              | <b>\$181,043</b> | <b>\$1,576,274</b> |

| Housing Plan + CTRR + GR   |                  |                    |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| District Name              | CPA Tax          | Excise Tax         |
| Apartment 1                | \$63,460         | \$552,595          |
| Business                   | \$14,447         | \$125,862          |
| Avery Square Business      | \$21,950         | \$191,191          |
| Chestnut Street Business   | \$35,920         | \$312,858          |
| Hillside Ave Business      | \$3,873          | \$33,563           |
| Center Businss Residential | \$6,185          | \$53,941           |
| Industrial                 | \$37,320         | \$324,844          |
| GR                         | \$12,835         | \$111,478          |
| <b>TOTALS</b>              | <b>\$195,990</b> | <b>\$1,706,332</b> |

# Economic Feasibility Analysis



The economic feasibility analysis tests development scenarios under a hypothetical scenario that does not factor in any site-specific details such as potential remediation, infrastructure, or demolition costs. Like the MBTA Compliance Model, the EFA model is meant to test whether affordability thresholds and specific set asides create hardships for a developer wanting to build under the community's Inclusionary Zoning regulations.

Current market conditions serve as point in time inputs to the EFA model such as asking rents, construction hard costs on a per sqft basis, cap rates, land values, interest rates, and more are outlined on the following pages. One important qualification for this type of analysis is that it is meant to merely test the relationship between zoning requirements and market conditions, it does not factor in site or deal specific details.

For example, if the zoning allows a height maximum of four stories, wood frame construction will be used as an input across the different development scenarios (e.g., 6, 25...200 units). The results may show that a 200-unit wood frame project is feasible but if there are no parcels that are large enough to accommodate a 4 story 200 unit stick built structure with parking, despite the results indicating feasibility, it is unlikely that development would move forward.

| Construction Costs                    | Input    | Source            |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Land Acquisition (per unit)           | \$50,000 | Assessment Data   |
| Total Land Costs                      | Variable | Assessment Data   |
| Soft Costs (percentage of hard costs) | 20%      | Local Developers  |
| Hard Costs (per SQFT)                 |          |                   |
| Residential                           | \$150    | RS Means          |
| Commercial Stick Built                | \$265    | RS Means          |
| Commercial Podium                     | \$335    | RS Means          |
| Commercial Steel                      | \$450    | RS Means          |
| Parking Assumptions                   |          |                   |
| Parking Ratio (district dependent)    |          | Town of Needham   |
| Parking Cost by Type                  |          |                   |
| Surface (per space)                   | \$8,000  | Local Developers  |
| Structured (per space)                | \$35,000 | Local Developers  |
| Underground (per space)               | \$75,000 | Local Developers  |
| Operations & Expenses                 |          |                   |
| VACL (percentage)                     | 5%       | Moody's Analytics |
| Operating Expense (% of EGI)          | 23%      | Local Developers  |



# Economic Feasibility Analysis: Assumptions

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| Revenue Sources                                               | Input      | Source                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Rents by Bed Count (per SQFT)*</b>                         |            |                           |
| Studio/Efficiency                                             | \$4.94     | CoStar/Market Comps       |
| One Bedroom                                                   | \$3.99     | CoStar/Market Comps       |
| Two Bedroom                                                   | \$3.55     | CoStar/Market Comps       |
| Three Bedroom                                                 | \$3.65     | CoStar/Market Comps       |
| <b>Sale Value (per SQFT)</b>                                  |            |                           |
| <b>Other Income</b>                                           |            |                           |
| Parking Revenue (surface/structured)<br>(per month per space) | \$50/\$150 | Local Developers          |
| On-Site Laundry (per month)                                   | N/A        | N/A                       |
| Other (please list)                                           | N/A        | N/A                       |
| Financial                                                     | Input      | Source                    |
| Lending Rate (Percentage)                                     | 6%         | Local Developers / CoStar |
| Lending Term (Years)                                          | 30         |                           |
| Debt Equity Ratio                                             | 70/30      |                           |
| Cap Rate                                                      | 5%         |                           |
| Return Expectations                                           |            |                           |
| Internal Rate of Return (IRR)                                 | 15%        |                           |
| Return on Cost (ROC)                                          | 6.0%       |                           |
| Cash on Cash (CoC)                                            | 5.5%       |                           |



The following table outlines the specifics of each scenario run through the economic feasibility model.

| EFA Scenarios                                                                                                                                                                    | S1 - Minimum Threshold | S2              | S3              | S4              | S5 - Maximum    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Unit Count                                                                                                                                                                       | 6                      | 25              | 50              | 100             | 200             |
| Construction Type                                                                                                                                                                | Stick                  | Stick           | Stick           | Stick           | Stick           |
| Parking Assumption                                                                                                                                                               | Surface                | Surface         | Structured      | Structured      | Structured      |
| Parking Ratio                                                                                                                                                                    | 1                      | 1               | 1               | 1               | 1               |
| For S1 – S5, IZ set asides were tested at 10% though 20% at 2.5pp increments. Parking ratios were held constant at 1 and the area median income threshold was held at 80% of AMI |                        |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| IZ Scenarios                                                                                                                                                                     |                        |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| IZ %                                                                                                                                                                             | 10.0%                  | 12.5%           | 15.0%           | 17.5%           | 20.0%           |
| AMI                                                                                                                                                                              | 80%                    | 80%             | 80%             | 80%             | 80%             |
| Rounding                                                                                                                                                                         | Round up at 0.5        | Round up at 0.5 | Round up at 0.5 | Round up at 0.5 | Round up at 0.5 |

To evaluate the performance of each scenario, three return measures are presented in the results:

- **Internal Rate of Return (IRR)**, which is the annual rate of growth an investment is expected to generate, in this case how profitable is a specific development scenario estimated to be?
- **Cash-on-Cash (CoC)**, which is the cash income earned from cash invested in a development scenario
- **Return on Cost (RoC)**, which is an estimate of how much profit is earned relative to the total cost of the development scenario

## Internal Rate of Return

|                | 10.0%  | 12.5%  | 15.0%  | 17.5%  | 20.0%  |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| S1 – 6 Units   | 20.30% | 20.30% | 20.30% | 20.30% | 20.30% |
| S2 – 25 Units  | 21.55% | 21.55% | 21.09% | 21.09% | 20.04% |
| S3 – 50 Units  | 20.48% | 20.11% | 19.53% | 19.30% | 19.19% |
| S4 – 100 Units | 20.69% | 20.20% | 19.85% | 19.36% | 19.06% |
| S5 – 200 Units | 20.62% | 20.21% | 19.89% | 19.46% | 19.06% |

**Internal Rate of Return (IRR)**, is the annual rate of growth an investment is expected to generate, in this case how profitable is a specific development scenario estimated to be. **Market expectation sits around 15% meaning the results of these hypothetical scenarios exceed market expectations.**

## Cash-on-Cash

|                | 10.0% | 12.5% | 15.0% | 17.5% | 20.0% |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| S1 – 6 Units   | 7.60% | 7.60% | 7.60% | 7.60% | 7.60% |
| S2 – 25 Units  | 8.66% | 8.66% | 8.21% | 8.21% | 7.28% |
| S3 – 50 Units  | 7.88% | 7.52% | 6.98% | 6.78% | 6.68% |
| S4 – 100 Units | 8.06% | 7.60% | 7.28% | 6.83% | 6.56% |
| S5 – 200 Units | 7.99% | 7.61% | 7.31% | 6.92% | 6.56% |

**Cash-on-Cash (CoC)**, is the cash income earned from cash invested in a development scenario. **Market expectation sits around 5.5% meaning the results of these hypothetical scenarios exceed market expectations.**



## Return on Cost

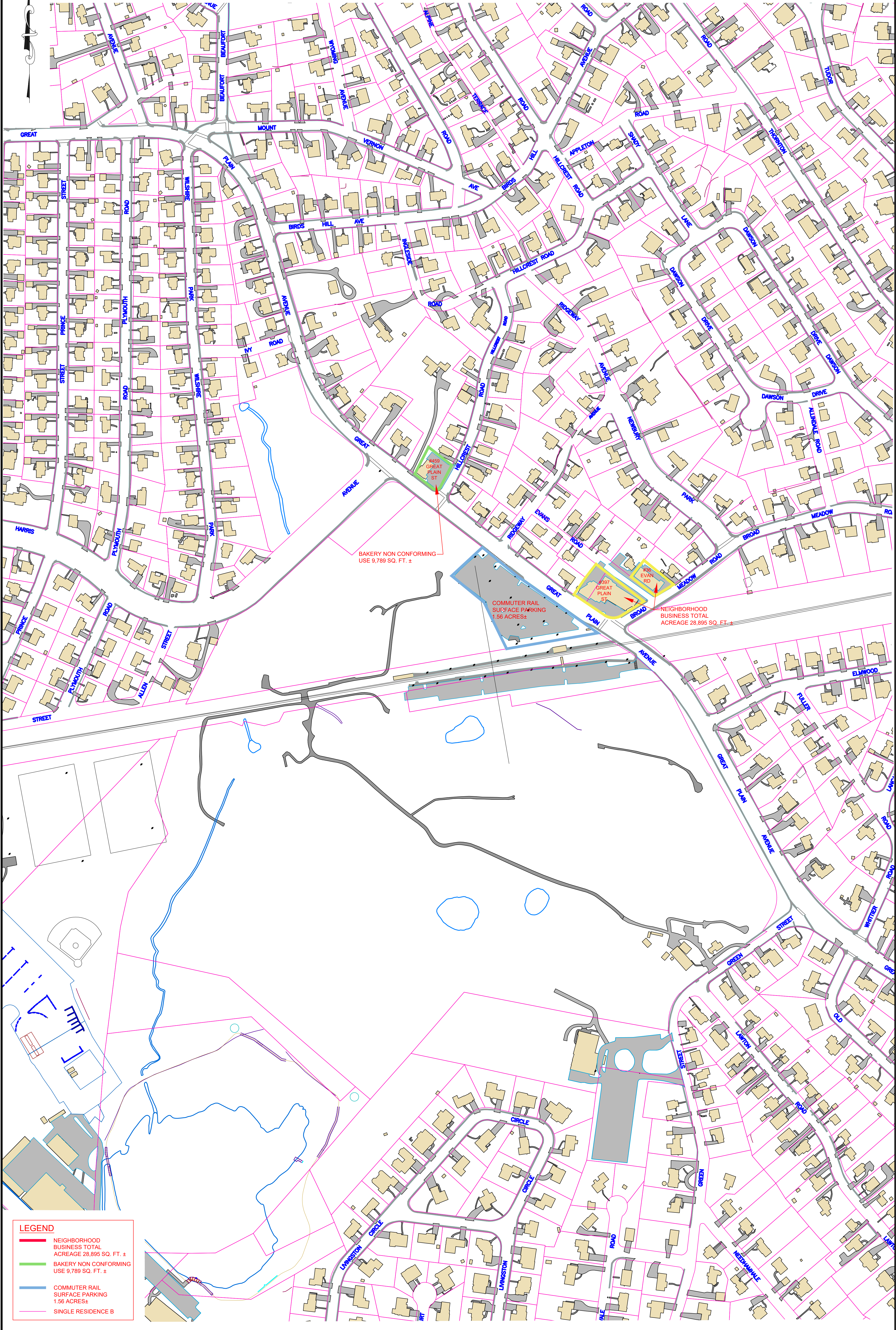
|                | 10.0% | 12.5% | 15.0% | 17.5% | 20.0% |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| S1 – 6 Units   | 7.32% | 7.32% | 7.32% | 7.32% | 7.32% |
| S2 – 25 Units  | 7.63% | 7.63% | 7.50% | 7.50% | 7.22% |
| S3 – 50 Units  | 7.40% | 7.29% | 7.13% | 7.07% | 7.04% |
| S4 – 100 Units | 7.45% | 7.32% | 7.22% | 7.08% | 7.00% |
| S5 – 200 Units | 7.43% | 7.32% | 7.23% | 7.11% | 7.00% |

**Return on Cost (RoC)**, is an estimate of how much profit is earned relative to the total cost of the development scenario. **Market expectation sits around 6 - 6.5% meaning the results of these hypothetical scenarios exceed market expectations.**

# Public Meeting #2



HERSEY STATION AREA  
ZONING/LAND USE PROFILE



**LEGEND**

- NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS TOTAL ACREAGE 28,895 SQ. FT. ±
- BAKERY NON CONFORMING USE 9,789 SQ. FT. ±
- COMMUTER RAIL SURFACE PARKING 1.56 ACRES±
- SINGLE RESIDENCE B



Town of Needham, Massachusetts  
**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Meeting Minutes  
September 7, 2023

**Place:** Hybrid Meeting, Charles River Room, PSAB, 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham  
The Board will attend in person. The public may attend in person or via Zoom.

**Present:** Co-Chair, Heidi Frail; Co-Chair, Natasha Espada; Michael Diener; Liz Kaponya;  
Kevin Keane; Joshua Levy; William Lovett; Jeanne McKnight; Ronald Ruth

**Remote:** Karen Sunnarborg, Community Housing Specialist

**Staff:** Katie King, Deputy Town Manager; Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community  
Development; Alexandra Clee, Asst. Town Planner; Amy Haelsen, Director,  
Communications & Community Engagement

**Guests:** Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates

**Call to Order**

At 7:00 pm., H. Frail called the meeting to order disclosing the meeting is being video recorded.

- I. N. Espada welcomed everyone. Members and guests introduced themselves.
- II. H. Frail reviewed the HONE Advisory Group Purpose and Charge as stated in the enclosed Meeting Packet <https://www.needhamma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/11949>

Needham will comply with the MBTA Communities Act. The group's work is to make zoning compliance work for the Needham community. Members and the community were reminded to respect different views of one another, speak thoughtfully, civilly and with kindness.

**III. Status of Housing in Needham**

K. Sunnarborg, Community Housing Specialist

This presentation was developed from the Town's Housing Plan.

- Massachusetts is confronting a housing crisis shortage according to a 2022 national study.
- Needham is not susceptible to zoning overrides since surpassing the 10% Chapter 40B affordability threshold.
- The recent Housing Plan documented a wide range of unmet housing needs.

The hope is that the rezoning will boost housing production leading to some greater housing diversity and affordability over time and address some community housing needs.

**IV. Overview of MBTA Communities Act**

Eric Halvorsen of RKG Associates presented an overview of the Act and compliance guidelines available in the meeting packet. E. Halvorsen and Emily Innes of Innes Associates worked with EOHL (Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities) formerly known as DHCD.

The presentation helped members to understand what Chapter 40A, Section 3A is and is not and how to interpret the guidelines. Tests for land area and unit capacity will measure how the community moves forward with compliance requirements. EOHLC determines guidelines, calculations and regulations for each community.

### **MBTA Communities Act MGL c. 40A Section 3A**

The law established zoning requirements for each of 177 designated MBTA Communities (MGL c. 161A Section 1).

### **The purpose behind the new law:**

- Massachusetts has a housing shortage; we need to produce more housing.
- Placing housing near transit is good policy for housing, economy, transportation, and climate.

### **What the MBTA Communities Act is NOT**

It is a zoning mandate, not a building or construction mandate. The Town has to zone to allow for the targeted number of units. It is not restricted to affordable housing but housing needs across the spectrum. The MBTA Communities Act is not optional. Per Section 3A, Needham would be ineligible for certain grant programs if it does not comply.

The deadline to submit the compliance application to EOHLC is December 31, 2024 or earlier.

Alexandra Clee suggested we understand how this requirement can be tailored to address housing and economic development needs.

### **MBTA Communities is a tool, it is not the tool.**

The Continuum of Housing and Supportive Tools – communities have a number of tools available for those unsheltered, those extremely/low income, and those moderate income/workforce, market rate.

**Zoning is not housing production.** Additional factors guide production such as: market strength, financial feasibility to build, developable sites, sellers, available labor, community desirability.

E. Halvorsen detailed the compliance requirement process and how things are measured and modeled. The presentation is included in the meeting packet.

### **Multi-family housing was defined under Section 3A.**

Members discussed present minimum square footage for lot size in business zoning versus MBTA Communities zoning. The push and pull between district size, district location, excluded land, zoning regulations and unit capacity all impact the final density metrics.

E. Innes described zoning and existing units. Needham does not presently comply with MBTA Communities. The community needs to understand what is happening with MBTA Communities.

### **Zoning Guidelines and Requirements**

In addition to the district and unit capacity tests, the MBTA Guidelines place additional restrictions on the zoning which are described in the presentation in the Meeting Packet.

Affordable Housing requirements cannot exceed 10% of the total units offered at no less than 80% of the area median income. If you want to go above 10% and/or below 80% AMI, the Town must complete an **Economic Feasibility Analysis** to prove the requirement will not create a financial hardship for new development.

E. Innes described new mixed-use guidelines (not mandatory mixed use) and how to keep a mixed use district and get a bit of credit for the number of units zoned elsewhere as well as how to incentivize mixed use in exchange for extra height or density.

Members discussed zoning for multi-families compared with other zoning.

### **V. Review of the Scope of Work and Finalize Timeline**

Lee Newman, Dir., Planning & Community Dev.; Eric Halvorsen, RKG Assoc.; Emily Innes, Innes Assoc.  
L. Newman described the scope of work and timeline in the Meeting Packet.

The **Scope of Work** includes compliance testing, develop zoning scenarios, conduct a build-out analysis of proposed MBTA districts, a fiscal impact analysis of future housing development, produce 3-D renderings of districts, test financial feasibility implications of changes to the Town's inclusionary zoning, develop a draft of the zoning bylaw, design guidelines that apply to MBTA districts, develop a draft zoning bylaw, and design guidelines that apply to MBTA districts. Consultants will review with Town Staff and HONE Advisory and provide a draft and final report detailing project components.

#### **Timeline**

|                   |                                                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| September 2023    | HONE Kick-off                                               |
| September/October | MBTA Modeling                                               |
| October 2023      | EFA Analysis                                                |
| November 9, 2023  | Public Meeting 1                                            |
| November/December | Advanced Modeling                                           |
| January 17, 2024  | Public Meeting 2                                            |
| February 15, 2024 | Draft Zoning presentation to HONE Advisory                  |
| March 2024        | Public Meeting 3                                            |
| April 4, 2024     | HONE Advisory meets to review final zoning and final report |
| April 2024        | Close-out                                                   |

K. King suggested HONE can submit to EOHLC in April 2024 to give the State 90 days to tell us if we would comply before going to Town Meeting. If we hear from the State by the end of June,

we have July-September 2024 for the Planning Board's formal process to vet zoning before Town Meeting. If the State tells HONE we would not comply, we have that Planning Board timeline to make adjustments to comply. We should be ready for October 2024 Town Meeting.

H. Frail suggested using time after HONE submits to EOHLC for community engagement and education. We can cross-examine experts and explain subjects of interest to the community.

## **VI. Review of Housing Plan Identified Compliance Strategies**

N. Espada reviewed the **2022 Housing Plan - Preliminary MBTA Study** in the Meeting Packet.

The Housing Plan map was used to help members understand the corridor of Highland Avenue from Webster Street to the Center, and then the Chestnut Street corridor to the Junction. That area is designated by the zoning group to achieve some of the goals with modification.

- The Needham Heights district area is shown at the top of the map.
- The center of the map is the Center district, which is recommended to not be included.
- The lower district is the Chestnut Street district.

She reviewed the four starting points recommended last year by the Housing Plan Working Group as stated in the Meeting Packet.

- Allow multi-family housing by right at existing Apartment A-1 dimensional limits.
- Location focused on areas along Highland Ave. to Chestnut St. corridor near transit and where higher density development already exists. Needham Center had been intentionally excluded given former State requirements, but now things have changed.
- Rezoning identified some existing Single Residence B (SRB) and General Residence (GR) areas to change to A-1 requirements by right.
- Change to A-1 provisions in business areas that currently allow multi-family housing and others, including some industrial areas that do not. Minimum lot area would be 10,000 sq. ft. as opposed to 20,000 sq. ft.

See page 33 of the Housing Plan for updated information.

## **VII. Public Engagement Process - Amy Haelsen, Director, Communications & Community Engagement**

Educate stakeholders on MBTA Communities Law. Avail them of opportunities to provide input.

- Stakeholders: homeowners, renters, commercial property owners, developers, businesses, employees, group subsets, seniors, Town Meeting members, persons with disabilities.
- Identify what the community wants and needs to know.

She described methods and venues by which information will be shared with stakeholders.

K. King reiterated HONE is a community engagement visioning process. Information on MBTA Communities can be found on the Town web site **NeedhamMA.gov/** Search **MBTA Communities** or scroll down to **Hot Topics** then **MBTA Communities**. Sign up for the **NotifyMe** group so you receive emails only about this work. Email HONE until April at: **planning@needhamma.gov**

Within two weeks, HONE will announce this effort via postcards making people aware of the first Community Meeting November 9 and how to contact and engage HONE.

### **VIII. Questions and Comments**

What about infrastructure (schools, fiscal, drainage)?

- Get results of the build-out, analysis and susceptibility to change. Ask department heads to review impacts on infrastructure, traffic, police service, fire service, schools as part of the build out analysis.

Does the Planning Board have the 2016 Economic Analysis?

- A fiscal analysis has not been done on what consultants think will be the build-out scenarios along this corridor as a function of this rezoning. That is part of the project scope.
- L. Newman will make available older fiscal impact analysis done for the Muzi site, also for the Needham Center, and Chestnut St. corridor. The rezoning does mirror that analysis. A conversion from the special permit use to an as of right use would be comparable. It was suggested the industrial zoning done along Gould St. could be a good computational model. Members discussed cost factor considerations.

Help us come up with a Site Plan Review Bylaw for this kind of housing.

- The sample zoning which E. Innes worked on with EOHLIC includes a Site Plan Review section which communities can adopt or modify; if they have their own, the consultant will use that.

A map of Needham commuter rail stops with the half circle is in the Housing Plan.

### **IX. Next Steps:**

Focus on preparing for the October 5 HONE meeting. Have the final plan ready for the November 9 Community Meeting. Members were urged to be familiar with the Housing Plan.

Consultant work October-December:

- Work on fiscal impact, EFA, build-out, and 3-D renderings before January
- Present Scenarios 1 and 2 to department heads; weigh before HONE Advisory.

**MOTION:** K. Keane moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 am.

**SECONDED:** J. McKnight

**VOTE:** Unanimously approved

**MOTION CARRIES:** 9-0

**Informational** - The Meeting Packet is available at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

Respectfully submitted, Dale Michaud

Town of Needham, Massachusetts  
**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Meeting Minutes  
October 5, 2023

**Place:** Hybrid Meeting, Charles River Room, PSAB, 500 Dedham Avenue, Needham  
The Board will attend in person. The public may attend in person or via Zoom.

**Present:** Co-Chair, Heidi Frail; Co-Chair, Natasha Espada; Kevin Keane; Jeanne McKnight;  
Ronald Ruth

**Remote:** Michael Diener; Liz Kaponya; Joshua Levy; William Lovett

**Staff:** Katie King, Deputy Town Manager; Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community  
Development; Alexandra Clee, Assistant Town Planner; Karen Sunnarborg,  
Community Housing Specialist

**Guests:** Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates

**Call to Order**

At 6:00 pm., H. Frail called the meeting to order disclosing the meeting is being video recorded.

**I. Welcome and Meeting Goals, Heidi Frail, Co-Chair**

H. Frail reviewed the meeting agenda.

**II. Approval of Minutes of September 7, 2023**

This item was postponed until the next meeting.

**III. Review of Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Compliance Modeling Results, Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates**

Consultants presented results of running two scenarios through compliance models for the Town's existing bylaw zoning as well as the Housing Plan. ***The presentation is available in the Meeting Packet at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>***

**Existing Zoning Proposal**

Consultants described changes the Town would need to make if Existing Zoning Districts and parameters were modeled to allow multi-family housing as of right.

Of the districts modeled, only two don't currently allow multi-family housing in the Industrial and Business district. All other districts allow multi-family housing by special permit at 18 units per acre. The conversion is from a special permit process to an as of right. The apartment district allows it as of right at that density. The Town could open up the use in the Business and Industrial district at those density parameters.

- M. Diener discovered General Residence is listed as 2 units per acre when it should be 2 units per *quarter* acre. This equates to 8 units per acre rather than 2 units per acre.

Existing Zoning Districts were modeled with total acreages. The General Residence unit capacity is bringing down the density.

### Housing Plan Proposal

Consultants reviewed what would happen if we modeled the Housing Plan Proposal rezoning some parcels of land and making slight modifications to zoning parameters.

Scenarios for Pathways to Compliance using Existing Zoning versus Housing Plan were reviewed. Consultants compared gross acreage, additions/changes to Apartment 1 and SR B zones, and dimensional zoning. They discussed why the Center District was not modeled.

Consultants will confirm whether MBTA modeling for the 7 districts using existing zoning includes contiguous requirements.

Members agreed it is good news the Town does not need to make zoning changes to the General Residence district to achieve compliance, but could if you want to encourage housing.

### **IV. Questions and Comments**

Members discussed coming to a consensus for a committee approach; are we in this for compliance, or is this for housing production? We could choose not to rezone any General Residence but it is possible that we could. Hitting our numbers is one thing; deciding what is best for Needham is another.

Present two scenarios to the public and get community feedback.

It is difficult to rezone near the Hunnewell area as there would be inequity there. If that block of General Residential is omitted in the Industrial area because there is no contiguity, what happens to the numbers? The General Residence district brings the numbers down. See how much can be on Highland and Chestnut Streets.

Members discussed the equity of the Housing Plan density - 72 acres in the Heights; 25 acres in the Central Business and Chestnut St. areas. Zoning maps and options were discussed.

- Have multi-family in the Heights; these areas are presently zoned A-1.
- Look to minimize traffic.
- Create more density closer to the downtown than in the Heights.
- Create a smaller district with more density to try to drive business, foot traffic, development.
- Contrast this scenario for Community feedback versus a more spread out plan.
- Reallocate some of the density.
- Exclude some Downtown area in the Housing Plan.

General Residence district in the Housing Plan has not been rezoned. We count it but it has not changed.

Consultants explained the guidance on mandatory mixed use districts. You can have mixed use; you cannot mandate it. *Presentation in the Meeting Packet at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>*



Needham must make changes to Existing Zoning as it does not meet density requirements. The Housing Plan may not need to be changed. Once EOHLC releases guidance, consultants may need to rework the plan.

### Shifting the Density

Look at the Housing Plan scenario. By adding these portions, we do shift the density. When we consider this is Existing Zoning and we would not be changing it in this scenario though we count it in the district, the density is well proportioned along the area we are discussing. H. Frail disagrees. The Housing Plan adds pieces that help to fill in some of those spaces.

Members discussed why the Linden/Chambers Housing Authority property is not listed. It is publicly owned land, will be senior restricted, and is 100% affordable housing. It cannot be included in the MBTA zoning because it is restricted to seniors.

Members discussed whether it could be an overlay zone or amend the underlying zoning to be compliant with MBTA 3A.

The consultants suggested one option for the Center Business district is to identify streets where you want first floor mandated mixed use and create a donut. The center of the donut would not be the MBTA 3A district but a mandatory mixed-use district. Around the center, change the area that is Center Business zoned so you have contiguity and maintain your core, mixed use walkable development. You still maintain some units in the Center Business district. Members agreed we want units in an area that is walkable.

Members discussed the height in the Housing Plan.

Present Existing Zoning to the community.

- A simple chart showing Apartment A1 and Hillside Avenue Business that allow multi-family housing. This is our Existing Zoning which does not meet MBTA 3A requirements.
- The next page is Existing Zoning Districts with a description of the changes.

K. King suggested the scenarios are complicated. There is a lot of wiggle room for compliance.

- What does the community want Needham to look like? Call out particular areas.
- How do people feel about multi-family housing only in Needham Center?
- On what particular areas do we want feedback?
- How do you feel about height or parking areas?
- Build neighborhoods the way people want to live in them versus strict compliance.

The October 18th meeting will be a formatting meeting to organize thought points and a vision.

Members discussed the questions they want the community to provide feedback.

- In which areas would more density be beneficial?

- Zoning - where do we want density, height, parking (get answers that pass at Town Meeting)
- Provide community questions to the consultants to build visual tools for public meeting
- Existing density - Under current zoning, the area could look like X or Y. If the building exists, here is what it would look like to add two floors under the current density.
- One member suggested presenting only the Housing Plan since the Existing Zoning does not meet the density requirements for an MBTA 3A district.

## **V. Next Steps**

Next meeting: October 18, 2023, 6:00 pm, hybrid

Members discussed the strategy for the next meeting.

- Inform the community of MBTA parameters and levers to be changed (geography, height, parking).
- Small group meetings (short presentation, easels, post it notes for community feedback)
- Provide stations with photos (Mapping, Existing Zoning, Housing Plan, Existing Density, Height, Parking, Neighborhood Transition). All these factors can be changed.
- The Housing Plan recommendations:
  - Are these district defining boundaries appropriate?
  - Visualizations - Zoning will lead to this. People need to understand that 50 acres of density means six-story buildings versus 350 acres which spreads out the density.
- Consensus:
  - Two large print 4' x 12' maps with true Existing Zoning numbers, Housing Plan suggestions and numbers
- At the next meeting, talk about format of the public meeting and how to incorporate maps
- Downtown, Needham center, Chestnut St., mixed or single use in both districts at what density
- Due to stations, the public meeting will be in-person, virtual and recorded

Consultants will put together draft setup of stations, concepts, how to engage public feedback

- Use levers not setbacks to frame comments (height, parking, density (more or less), open space
- Use simple animations to frame results 'if this, then that'
- Consultants will staff the stations
- Hold a second public meeting to engage questions using post-it note feedback from the first meeting
- November public meeting - Consultants will prepare an animated PowerPoint storyboard

**MOTION:** R. Ruth moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 pm.

**SECONDED:** K. Keane

**ROLL-CALL VOTE:** H. Frail, aye; N. Espada, aye; M. Diener, aye; L. Kaponya, aye; K. Keane, aye; J. Levy, aye; W. Lovett, aye; J. McKnight, aye; R. Ruth, aye. Unanimous.

**MOTION CARRIES: 9-0**

**Informational** - The Meeting Packet is available at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

Respectfully submitted,  
Dale Michaud, Recording Secretary

Town of Needham, Massachusetts  
**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Public Services Administration Bldg., 500 Dedham Ave.  
Meeting Minutes  
November 15, 2023

**Place:** Hybrid meeting in the Charles River Room and via Zoom  
**Present:** Co-Chair, Heidi Frail; Michael Diener, Liz Kaponya, Kevin Keane, Joshua Levy, Jeanne McKnight, Ronald Ruth  
**Remote:** William Lovett  
**Absent:** Natasha Espada  
**Staff:** Amy Haelsen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement; Katie King, Deputy Town Manager; Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development; Alexandra Clee, Assistant Town Planner  
**Guests:** Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates

At 7:00 pm., H. Frail called the public meeting to order. The meeting is being video recorded.

**I. Welcome and Meeting Goals - Heidi Frail, Co-Chair**

**II. Review Feedback from Community Meeting and Recap - Heidi Frail, Co-Chair; Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates**

H. Frail - Feedback was overwhelmingly positive. People were pleased to see the maps, levers, and learn about the MBTA Communities Act Law. One improvement would be to include Hersey Station. She noted a positive, concrete impression from residents toward an increase in density. The community meeting was about education and getting public feedback. We are accepting public comment throughout the process. **Residents may email questions to [planning@needhamma.gov](mailto:planning@needhamma.gov).**

J. McKnight manned Station, Apartment A-1. It was difficult to engage with such a large number of people. Residents asked why we are not looking at Hersey Station. The lever that increased from 3 to 4 stories was well supported. There was a lot of support for zoning at Hillside School.

J. Levy heard many comments about Hersey Station. Residents felt the Heights are overburdened; spread the units around Town. We don't want Needham to look like Brookline, Cambridge, or Somerville. Keep in mind why people want to live in Needham. People felt starter unit housing could look differently with a mix of unit types such as 3 standalone units on a parcel. E. Halvorsen said it would have to be 3 units in a single structure. People felt positively about more density.

L. Kaponya reported residents said Newton proposed twice as many units to be built as statutes require. Residents wondered if there were legal options to squelch the MBTA Communities Act.

W. Lovett noted the commentary was positive overall. Residents are still concerned whether this is a housing production plan or a zoning plan. We need to stay on point that this is a zoning plan.

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L. Newman said people were expressing concern that decisions may have already been made. This is a planning effort. The feedback we are getting is what will shape how we move forward. The Housing Plan is an informative document but is not the final plan.

### **III. Selection of Zoning Scenarios to Model for MBTA Communities Compliance - Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates**

#### **Meeting Stats and Public Feedback**

One-hundred seven residents participated in-person; one-hundred thirty participated online.

#### **MBTA Q&A**

Station 3: Center Business District Station      Station 5: A1 District Station  
Station 4: General Residence District Station      Station 7: Business Districts Station

E. Halvorsen shared Take Aways from public feedback for lot size, FAR, Height, and DU/AC.

Station 6: Industrial District Station. He shared Take Aways from public preferences for lot size between 5,000 and 20,000 SF, Height and DU/AC.

Consultants shared High Level Take Aways per district. A summary document, take-aways and public comments will be compiled and available online. The presentation is **available at:** <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

### **IV. Overview of the Schedule Moving Forward - Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates**

| <i><b>Tasks and Schedule</b></i> | <i><b>Nov 15</b></i> | <i><b>Nov16-Dec20</b></i> | <i><b>Dec 20</b></i> | <i><b>Jan 4</b></i> | <i><b>Jan 18</b></i> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| HONE Meeting #5                  |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Run Scenarios                    |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Conduct Fiscal Impact            |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Conduct EFA                      |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Conduct 3-D Modeling             |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Plan for Public Meeting          |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Execute Public Meeting           |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |
| Public Meeting #2                |                      |                           |                      |                     |                      |

Consultants stressed the urgency of determining two to three additional scenarios based on public feedback.

K. King suggested planning to the vision and what the community said, not to the compliance model.

E. Halvorsen presented questions for potential scenarios which are listed in the presentation.

Members discussed using the Housing Plan Scenario as a jumping off point. Members decided to include Hersey Station but revisit the conversation. Consultants will work with staff to determine what Hersey Station zoning will look like. Members decided not to add Hillside School to the Housing Plan Scenario. Members decided to leave out the Housing Authority property unless the Town would not comply with MBTA Communities Act and then consider adding it at that time.

Members discussed modeling a scenario that includes the Center Business District. E. Halvorsen explained the mixed-use rules. HONE could choose to model multifamily as of right, with no mandatory commercial on the ground floor in the Center. HONE could choose to keep the Center Business district out. We could create a donut or crescent shape where we have voluntary mixed use in the Center Business district on peripheral streets allowing multifamily on the edges but keep the core mandatory mixed use. There was consensus to model this last option. Where there are commercial store fronts, members prefer to avoid those streets and do a crescent shape if possible. Staff will investigate where the crescent shape would be.

One member felt one scenario should be the minimum to meet the 1,784 units required by law while not changing the layout of the Town affording the least disruption to residents' way of life.

Members discussed whether to model the Housing Plan with or without General Residence.

- Connect GR blocks to Apt. A-1 blocks.
- The community expressed some support for increasing density in the GR district.

Note the Housing Plan map with recommended changes.

- For the GR highlighted areas, do we include for contiguity alone with no zoning changes?
- Or do we want zoning changes to allow three or four families as of right in the GR area?

Members agreed General Residence would need to be changed or ~~get rid of it~~ not include it in the compliance analysis.

Members discussed how the number of parking spaces impact the number of units. The consultants will run a proposal for 1 parking space per unit and for 1.5 parking spaces per unit.

Members determined scenarios for the consultants to model.

**Scenario 1** - Housing Plan

**Scenario 2** - Modified Housing Plan plus Hersey area plus downtown Center crescent minus the General Residence district.

**Scenario 3** –Modified Housing Plan plus Hersey area plus downtown Center crescent plus the General Residence district.

**Scenario 4** - Minimally compliant district. The consultant will draw this.

Consultants will work with staff to use their discretion on any unanticipated decision points that come up during the modeling.

**Informational** - The Meeting Packet is available at <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

**MOTION:** K. Keane moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 pm.

**SECONDED:** L. Kaponya

**ROLL-CALL VOTE:** M. Diener, aye; H. Frail, aye; L. Kaponya, aye; K. Keane, aye; J. Levy, aye; W. Lovett, aye; J. McKnight, aye; R. Ruth, aye. Unanimous.

**MOTION CARRIES: 8-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud  
Recording Secretary



Town of Needham, Massachusetts  
**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Meeting Minutes  
October 18, 2023

**Place:** Virtual Meeting via Zoom. The public may attend via Zoom or telephone.  
**Present:** Co-Chair, Heidi Frail; Co-Chair, Natasha Espada; Michael Diener, Liz Kaponya, Kevin Keane, William Lovett, Jeanne McKnight; Ronald Ruth  
**Absent:** Joshua Levy  
**Staff:** Amy Haelsen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement; Katie King, Deputy Town Manager; Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development; Alexandra Clee, Assistant Town Planner; Karen Sunnarborg, Community Housing Specialist  
**Guests:** Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates

**Call to Order**

At 7:00 pm., H. Frail called the meeting to order disclosing the meeting is being video recorded.

**I. Welcome and Meeting Goals, Heidi Frail, Co-Chair**

H. Frail reviewed the meeting agenda.

**II. Review of revised/updated Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Compliance Modeling Results, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates***

The General Residence District in all of the modeling is inaccurate and will be corrected.

Members discussed whether EOHLC modeling is absolute or whether the State would consider modifications. District deductions from MBTA acreage such as wetlands, setbacks and surface parking were discussed, as well as publicly-owned land.

**III. Review of Presentation Materials and Engagement Strategies for Community Meeting of November 9, 2023, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates***

E. Halvorsen reviewed the Run of Show Outline for Public Meeting #1 including tasks assigned to 8 willing volunteers. The outline included the purpose of each participatory station. Stations include: MBTA Q&A Station, Zoning Map Station, Center Business Station, General Residence, Industrial, Apartment A1 and Business District Stations. The purpose of the Public Meeting #1 is to secure feedback from residents on crafting zoning districts to comply with the MBTA Communities Act.

A hybrid meeting option for collecting community feedback was described. A summary of community feedback and graphics will be available on the Town website within one week.

An presentation outline stating the purpose and process for the Public Meeting was discussed.

Emily Innes reviewed each district's Board Design for Public Meeting #1. The Boards include lot size, lot coverage, height, and dwelling units per acre for each district.

#### **IV. Review of Community Meeting Outreach Strategy, Amy Haelsen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement**

Residents have received postcard notification of the November 9th Public Meeting.

As stated in the HONE Working Group meeting of September 7, A. Haelsen will share information with the public in the following manner:

|                     |                             |                                |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 Postcard mailings | Boston Globe                | Community meetings Nov/Jan/Mar |
| FAQs                | Instructions to share input | Needham Channel                |
| Hometown Weekly     | Needham Local               | Needham Observer               |
| NotifyMe list       | On-line Survey              | Town Social Media page         |
| Town web site       | Weekly Newsletter           |                                |

- In-person engagement opportunities, community events, Harvest Fair 10/1/23, Farmer's Market
- Opportunities for HONE to attend board/committee meetings, and civic groups
- Partners identified to spread the word: Board of Health, Commission on Disabilities, Council on Aging, Council of Economic Advisors, Town Boards, faith-based organizations, Interfaith Clergy Association, identity network groups such as the Indian Community of Needham, Chinese Friends of Needham, League of Women Voters
- Populations difficult to reach: renters in apartment buildings (place posters in the lobby); owners of complexes; ask the business community to inform their customer base
- A. Haelsen will reach out to school PTC heads to funnel information to their networks as well as an email to Town Meeting members.
- H. Frail will connect with Cathy regarding notifying high schoolers of the Public Meeting.

HONE is a community engagement visioning process. Information on MBTA Communities can be found on the Town web site **NeedhamMA.gov/** Search **MBTA Communities** or scroll down to **Hot Topics** then **MBTA Communities**. Sign up for the **NotifyMe** group so you receive emails only about this work. Email HONE until April at: **planning@needhamma.gov**

#### **V. Questions and Comments**

In the proposed scenarios for modeling with maps, the Housing Plan called for rezoning some additional sites for the Apartment A-1 district which were not shown. These are already developed for multi-family dwellings and include Avery Condominiums and Steven Palmer, a former school converted to apartments. We should add those to our numbers. It is restricted in an odd way. It doesn't count on the subsidized housing inventory. The Town can write a compelling argument for inclusion.

Why not rezone the condominium development on Denmark Lane as multi-family condos?

The consultants are in the process of creating the zoning maps and encouraged members to submit suggested changes as soon as possible.

How will members respond to process questions? How will resident input be processed?

The presentation will be an overview of requirements under the MBTA Communities Law and the stations in the room so the community understands how the zoning can be manipulated to achieve the right outcomes for what can be achieved.

Members discussed handing out a QR code and web link to the Town web site for the presentation, maps, and recorded meeting.

Needham's responsibility with the MBTA Communities Act is to come up with 1,784 or more multi-family dwelling units. Why were 5,183 units proposed? Why was three times the required amount of multi-family dwelling units proposed when residents may be concerned about height of the buildings and/or density?

Prior to the compliance modeling introduced by consultants, the Housing Needham Working Group (HONE) took existing zoning and added to it in a way they thought was reasonable. The compliance modeling gives HONE a way to check the outcome and tweak the plan depending on our objective. Do we want to comply? Do we want to do more?

Members discussed the General Residence district was considered in the large unit number. HONE never thought we could use General Residence as a multi-family factor. When you deduct the column for General Residence, you get fewer units. We have what is existing and what is proposed. Needham will decide what we want these areas to be for the community.

Members agreed actual photographs would be more useful than presentation slides in presenting the Center Business district.

A Question and Answer station will be prepared, but consultants and the HONE Working Group will not be taking questions from the public during the presentation.

Members discussed whether they should use FAR rather than lot coverage. FAR is the requirement in three of the districts; stay with the standard.

Will there be guidance for the public about restrictions?

In the presentation, an example will be used to describe the building footprint deducting for levers, open space, and parking requirements.

The overall objective is the minimum number of units per acre. Each district will not have the same rules (one story in one district, four stories in another).

## **VI. Next Steps**

Public Meeting #1, Powers Hall, November 9, 2023, 7:00 pm

**MOTION:** R. Ruth moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm.

**SECONDED:** J. McKnight

**VOTE:** H. Frail, aye; N. Espada, aye; M. Diener, aye; L. Kaponya, aye; K. Keane, aye;  
W. Lovett, aye; J. McKnight, aye; R. Ruth, aye. Unanimous.

**MOTION CARRIES: 8-0**

**Informational** - The Meeting Packet is available at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

- HONE Agenda 10-18-23
- Needham MBTA Meeting 1 Run of Show (RKG Associates, Innes Associates)
- Needham MBTA Communities Process (RKG Associates, Innes Associates)

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud  
Recording Secretary

Town of Needham, Massachusetts  
**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Town Hall, 1471 Highland Ave.  
COMMUNITY MEETING  
Meeting Minutes  
November 9, 2023

**Place:** In-person at Powers Hall or on-line registration to participate via Zoom.  
**Present:** Co-Chair, Heidi Frail; Co-Chair, Natasha Espada; Michael Diener, Liz Kaponya, William Lovett, Jeanne McKnight; Ronald Ruth; Kevin Keane; Joshua Levy  
**Staff:** Amy Haelsen, Director of Communications and Community Engagement; Katie King, Deputy Town Manager; Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development; Alexandra Clee, Assistant Town Planner  
**Guests:** Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates

**Call to Order**

At 7:00 pm., H. Frail called the public meeting to order. The meeting is being video recorded.

**Sign-in and Welcome**

H. Frail thanked Town staff for their commitment to move this process forward. She thanked the audience as well as 200 on-line registrants for their willingness to provide input into the process. Special thanks were given for the heroic efforts of consultants, Emily Innes and Eric Halvorsen to simplify and visualize this incredibly complex subject.

**Introductory Remarks**

The MBTA Communities Law was passed in 2021. It applies to 177 cities and towns that have or are adjacent to communities that have MBTA transit stops. Municipalities need to confirm they have zoning districts of reasonable size where multifamily housing of 3 or more units is zoned for by right.

Needham does not currently comply with this law. We need to change the zoning to comply with this law. Needham has some discretion for how it implements the new zoning. The point of this meeting is to show the community how the levers work, the changes the Town can make and the effects those changes will have.

N. Espanada informed the community what has already been done. With input from many community meetings, the Housing Plan Working Group published a Housing Plan to provide a pathway for creating housing opportunities in Needham. They concluded the Town needs to pursue opportunities to provide housing that is affordable to all residents of different income levels. Implementation of the Housing Plan to preserve and increase both moderate and affordable income housing is critical to maintaining the diversity and economic prosperity of Needham. The Housing Plan presented 17 recommendations in 3 categories for Town Boards and Committees to take advantage of these opportunities.

Zoning - The Housing Plan stressed the need to develop a more holistic, comprehensive orientation toward zoning to avoid having to be reactive on a project by project basis, to be more intentional and look at Townwide opportunities for directing future development. The number one strategy for zoning is to comply with the MBTA Communities guidelines under Section 3A of the State Zoning Act that mandates a certain level of by right multifamily housing zoning in each community within or adjacent to the MBTA service areas. The level in Needham is 15% of its housing stock. Recommendations include expanding the A1 zoning requirements of up to 18 units per acre in areas located primarily along the Highland Ave. and Chestnut St. corridor. These are preliminary views.

This is a goal setting session with the community. The planning timeline was outlined:

- September 2023-March 2024 - Planning through community engagement and analysis. We will develop conceptual plans and zoning proposals with our consultants. Consultants will create economic models to be sure they can feasibly be constructed in the future.
- January 2024, March 2024 - Two additional community meetings in January and March before zoning language is finalized
- April-June 2024 - After the conceptual is done, it will go to the State for a 90 day review.
- July-September 2024 - We will finalize the zoning language.
- October 2024 - Town Meeting
- November-December 2024 - Submission of compliance will be sent to the State between.

HONE Group is helping to implement the plan with guidance from RKG Associates and Innes Associates who are helping to conceptualize the plan for the community.

The audience was encouraged to stay engaged from now through March so we are all in agreement for the direction we want Needham to go.

## **Presentation**

Eric Halvorsen of RKG Associates made presentation to the public regarding Needham MBTA Communities requirements, levers, and engagement. He gave an overview of the MBTA Communities Act and the purpose behind the law which is to drive new housing. The State has a housing shortage which is impacting our ability to house people in an affordable manner. It is starting to impact our competitiveness from an economic and business standpoint. He invited the public to ask questions at the activity stations.

The presentation is in the Meeting Packet is available at: <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

## **Activity Stations**

The public present were able to ask questions, express concerns, and provide comment via sticky notes at each activity stations. Emily Innes presented the information from the stations that in-person attendees are experiencing at the in-person meeting to those participating via Zoom. The on-line public were polled under supervision of consultant, E. Innes.

An example of questions polled to online participants included:

Should Needham's Center Business Zoning District be included in the MBTA District?

- Would you change the zoning to allow multifamily by right?
- Would you leave the zoning as it is?

The public were invited to attend HONE meetings on Zoom or view the meeting videos on The Needham Channel on the YouTube platform. The full analysis of public input at activity stations as well as the online public polling will be assembled in professional format by the consultants.

### **Station Report Outs**

Public participants remained to regroup for report outs of public general consensus for each of four activity stations as well as the virtual polling.

H. Frail gave a preliminary analysis of General Residence A-1 according to the public in attendance in the room. Those tabulations are from the public in the room and do not include online polling.

J. McKnight gave a preliminary analysis of Apartment A-1 zone.

R. Ruth and W. Lovett gave a preliminary analysis of Business Zones.

N. Espada gave a preliminary analysis of Industrial zones.

Consultant, E. Innes shared preliminary analysis according to online public polling.

Meeting minutes, presentation, and public polling results will be available online after the meeting.

### **Next Steps**

To learn more and subscribe to updates on the multi-family zoning initiative in Needham, please **visit the project page on the Town's website**.

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Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud  
Recording Secretary



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**Housing Needham Advisory Group (HONE)**  
Public Services Administration Bldg., 500 Dedham Ave.  
Meeting Minutes  
November 15, 2023

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### **IV. Overview of the Schedule Moving Forward - Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates**

| <i><b>Tasks and Schedule</b></i> | <i><b>Nov 15</b></i> | <i><b>Nov16-Dec20</b></i> | <i><b>Dec 20</b></i> | <i><b>Jan 4</b></i> | <i><b>Jan 18</b></i> |
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Consultants stressed the urgency of determining two to three additional scenarios based on public feedback.

K. King suggested planning to the vision and what the community said, not to the compliance model.

E. Halvorsen presented questions for potential scenarios which are listed in the presentation.

Members discussed using the Housing Plan Scenario as a jumping off point. Members decided to include Hersey Station but revisit the conversation. Consultants will work with staff to determine what Hersey Station zoning will look like. Members decided not to add Hillside School to the Housing Plan Scenario. Members decided to leave out the Housing Authority property unless the Town would not comply with MBTA Communities Act and then consider adding it at that time.

Members discussed modeling a scenario that includes the Center Business District. E. Halvorsen explained the mixed-use rules. HONE could choose to model multifamily as of right, with no mandatory commercial on the ground floor in the Center. HONE could choose to keep the Center Business district out. We could create a donut or crescent shape where we have voluntary mixed use in the Center Business district on peripheral streets allowing multifamily on the edges but keep the core mandatory mixed use. There was consensus to model this last option. Where there are commercial store fronts, members prefer to avoid those streets and do a crescent shape if possible. Staff will investigate where the crescent shape would be.

One member felt one scenario should be the minimum to meet the 1,784 units required by law while not changing the layout of the Town affording the least disruption to residents' way of life.

Members discussed whether to model the Housing Plan with or without General Residence.

- Connect GR blocks to Apt. A-1 blocks.
- The community expressed some support for increasing density in the GR district.

Note the Housing Plan map with recommended changes.

- For the GR highlighted areas, do we include for contiguity alone with no zoning changes?
- Or do we want zoning changes to allow three or four families as of right in the GR area?

Members agreed General Residence would need to be changed or get rid of it.

Members discussed how the number of parking spaces impact the number of units. The consultants will run a proposal for 1 parking space per unit and for 1.5 parking spaces per unit.

Members determined scenarios for the consultants to model.

**Scenario 1** - Housing Plan

**Scenario 2** - Modified Housing Plan plus Hersey area plus downtown Center crescent minus the General Residence district.

**Scenario 3** –Modified Housing Plan plus Hersey area plus downtown Center crescent plus the General Residence district.

**Scenario 4** - Minimally compliant district. The consultant will draw this.

Consultants will work with staff to use their discretion on any unanticipated decision points that come up during the modeling.

**Informational** - The Meeting Packet is available at <https://www.needhamma.gov/Archive.aspx>

**MOTION:** K. Keane moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 pm.

**SECONDED:** L. Kaponya

**ROLL-CALL VOTE:** M. Diener, aye; H. Frail, aye; L. Kaponya, aye; K. Keane, aye; J. Levy, aye; W. Lovett, aye; J. McKnight, aye; R. Ruth, aye. Unanimous.

**MOTION CARRIES: 8-0**

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Michaud  
Recording Secretary

**From:** [Lee Newman](#)  
**To:** [Alexandra Clee](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: HONE Housing group MBTA  
**Date:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 11:12:33 AM

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Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

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**From:** Heidi Frail <heidi.frail@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 8:20:38 AM  
**To:** Lee Newman <LNewman@needhamma.gov>  
**Subject:** Fw: HONE Housing group MBTA

Hi Lee,  
Can you include Rebecca's emails in the mail to the committee? Thank you.

Thanks, Heidi

(She/Hers)

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** Heidi Frail <heidi.frail@yahoo.com>  
**To:** Rebecca Young <rebeccayoung04@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 at 08:19:24 AM EST  
**Subject:** Re: HONE Housing group MBTA

Hi Rebecca,

Will do. I need to understand this better as well. Just want to clarify that no existing housing counts towards the plan, as the plan assumes empty space everywhere in order to count only the number of units allowed by zoning. I will share your concerns with the group. Thank you for being involved!

Thanks, Heidi

On Nov 16, 2023, at 7:27 AM, Rebecca Young <rebeccayoung04@gmail.com> wrote:

Good morning Heidi and Kevin,

Thank you for your work on the HONE committee, below are some questions and comments that I would appreciate understanding better. Please share with the larger group and consultant, I do not have the correct email for the planning group.

Micheal Diner is sharing on Facebook that the overlay concept would allow the heights to count existing housing complex's towards the 1700+ number of new units and I would like to understand this better. As I am thinking about the feel/look and culture of the heights.

Thank you again.

Rebecca Young

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Rebecca Young <rebeccayoung04@gmail.com>  
**Date:** November 16, 2023 at 6:28:26 AM EST  
**To:** planning@needham.ma.gov  
**Subject:** HONE Housing group MBTA

Thank you for the work that you are doing for the town. I have several questions that I hope to have answered by a member of HONE or the consultants.

When members are communicating about certain areas for example Hersey or the heights they often refer to places and their existing zoning. We know that zoning can change in a variety of neighborhoods across Needham and it is important that our language reflects that. The whole point of this exercise and planning to is consider all options for making these MBTA requirements while considering the health of the town and equity of these changes.

Transportation working group: Are you communicating with the people who are working on the possible additional bus lines or bike lanes... again thinking about how the town is considering so many changes that disproportionately change the Heights.

I am concerned that as a group you were looking at the community responses as voting. As it was acknowledged in the meeting last night, there was a fair amount of confusion regarding how people were putting their "dots" so I hope that you will be working to have a public comments and input before the groups decisions get to far down one particular path due to timelines.

What role does town meeting and the select board play in moving this forward? There has been huge push back for the Needham garden center planning, I hope that you will continue to alert and invite the community to all of your meetings the way you did outreach for last week's well attended information session.

Again thank you and I am eager to hear from the committee on these important questions and concerns.

Rebecca Young  
1072 Highland Ave  
617-759-6576

Sent from my iPhone

**To:** HONE  
**Subject:** FW: MBTA Communities Zoning

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**From:** Dan Matthews <[mattlaw@comcast.net](mailto:mattlaw@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 22, 2023 6:19 PM  
**To:** Katie King <[kking@needhamma.gov](mailto:kking@needhamma.gov)>; Heidi Frail <[heidi.frail@yahoo.com](mailto:heidi.frail@yahoo.com)>; N. Espada <[nespada@studioenee.com](mailto:nespada@studioenee.com)>  
**Subject:** MBTA Communities Zoning

Dear HONE Committee Members and Staff:

Thank you for your work on this important project.

This is to offer input on **Framing Questions** considered by your committee on November 15, and some additional comments about this work.

**1. Should the Housing Plan Scenario be the committee's collective jumping off point?**

Yes, with emphasis on "starting point." The Housing Working Group (HWG) 2022 Plan includes some two dozen specific recommendations and additional detail. It's important for committee members understand each in deciding what to include, modify, or add in developing its own final recommendation.

**2. General Residence**

As discussed, Needham's General Residence Zones are not countable as multifamily by right, although in some respects were relied on for contiguity and unit count in the 2022 Plan.

This suggests three options:

**A. Allow three family housing by right on conforming lots in General Residence zones.**

This a least disruptive approach that would improve contiguity, add unit capacity, and add a helpful multifamily option to Needham's housing mix.

**B. Mark some GR areas for A-1 apartments if needed for contiguity or other priorities.**

**C. Develop a revised scenario with no changes to general residence.**

**3. Include Multifamily Housing by Right in Center Business District? (and Avery Square and Chestnut Street)**

**Yes, by right.** Planning for the Center, Avery Square, and Chestnut Street Business areas should allow multifamily housing at 18 units per acre by right. This should be basically under the A-1 standards, but with 10,000 square for lot minimums and adjusted rules for frontage, setbacks, FAR's, etc. consistent with recognized best practices.

**Allow mixed use by special permit**, including possible incentives. But note: the core of the MBTA Communities program is to establish as of right housing. Provisions involving special permits can be complex and may be best deferred for future consideration.

**4. Affordability**



Public discussion of Affordable Housing issues is complicated by conflation of two subjects-

A. **Subsidized Affordable Housing** -regulated, means-tested housing included in the State Subsidized Housing Inventory (**SHI**), and

B. **Market Affordable Housing**- moderately priced non-SHI housing available on the open market.

The MBTA Communities Act is primarily a **Market Affordability** program- with a goal of reducing zoning barriers and increasing the regional housing supply to better balance demand.

But it has an **SHI inclusive component** which should be included in scenario planning to facilitate public discussion and understanding at every stage.

One approach would be to require that:

for any development of more than six units enabled under the town's MBTA community zoning, 10% of all units be required to be SHI countable.

There are other approaches, but this would be consistent with the Act's guidelines for SHI requirements

-

Again, thank for your continuing efforts and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dan Matthews  
Town Meeting Member  
Precinct I  
339-225-1677

**From:** [Emily Meyer](#)  
**To:** [Alexandra Clee](#); [Elisa Litchman](#)  
**Cc:** [Myles Tucker](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Questions/Comments for HONE  
**Date:** Friday, November 17, 2023 2:48:10 PM

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Good afternoon Alex and Elisa,

Below is an email sent to the Select Board with comments/questions re: the 11/9 HONE workshop. I will also forward this to the Select Board and Cc you Alex for visibility.

Thank you and have a great weekend!

Emily

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**From:** Michael Normile <[mnormile@comcast.net](mailto:mnormile@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2023 10:36 PM  
**To:** Selectboard <[Selectboard@needhamma.gov](mailto:Selectboard@needhamma.gov)>  
**Subject:** Questions/Comments for HONE

(I could not find an email address for the HONE board, so I am sending to this one).

Firstly, thank you for the very thorough and informative public meeting last week (my wife and I were Zoom attendees).

A few follow-up questions, comments, and suggestions:

1. The Zoning map. On Zoom, it was REALLY tough to understand the location and boundaries of the various zoning areas being discussed (center business, etc). We wish we could have been able to look at a map of the various areas as we were voting on our preferences. Perhaps you could make available some maps on the HONE web page. Perhaps a .pdf file with one zoning area per page (NOT the whole zoning map, which is, shall we say, a bit unwieldy).
2. If I heard correctly, one of the speakers said that the MBTA Communities Law says that a town may "allow, but not require" first-floor retail in a new zoning district created to comply with the law. But a Globe article on the recent zoning changes in Brookline seemed to say something different: "The state also reversed its position in August and allowed towns like Brookline to keep commercial mandates, such as first-floor retail, already in place in business districts like Coolidge Corner." Perhaps the key words here are "already in place". How might Needham take advantage of this?  
([https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/11/15/metro/brookline-overwhelmingly-accepts-plan-rezone-its-major-commercial-corridor-allow-multifamily-housing/?p1=BGSearch\\_Overlay\\_Results](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/11/15/metro/brookline-overwhelmingly-accepts-plan-rezone-its-major-commercial-corridor-allow-multifamily-housing/?p1=BGSearch_Overlay_Results)).
3. How does or can the Linden-Chambers redevelopment project fit into the picture? Can that

area help us meet our requirements under the law?

4. How about the old Muzi property? I've read that, due to changes in the demand for office space, the developer's plans are now up in the air. Maybe there is opportunity in that. Can that property help us meet our requirements? I know the property is just a little more than 0.5 miles from the Heights station, BUT ...
5. Here's an (perhaps off-the-wall) idea: Extend the MBTA line up to the Muzi property. The right-of-way is there. And it used to support trains running on it. Yes, the tracks would have to be replaced, but it wouldn't be like building a rail line from scratch.

Thank you

Michael Normile  
[mnormile@comcast.net](mailto:mnormile@comcast.net)  
5 Larkspur Rd  
Needham

**Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group**

**Wednesday December 20, 2023**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Charles River Room**

**Public Services Administration Building, 500 Dedham Avenue**

**AND**

**Virtual Meeting using Zoom**

Meeting ID:

**834 7583 6726**

(Instructions for accessing below)

To view and participate in this virtual meeting on your phone, download the “Zoom Cloud Meetings” app in any app store or at [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us). At the above date and time, click on “Join a Meeting” and enter the following Meeting ID: **834 7583 6726**

To view and participate in this virtual meeting on your computer, at the above date and time, go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) click “Join a Meeting” and enter the following ID: **834 7583 6726**

Or to Listen by Telephone: Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 Then enter ID: **834 7583 6726**

Direct Link to meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83475836726>

- I. Welcome and Meeting Goals, *Heidi Frail and Natasha Espada, Co-Chairs*
- II. Approval of Minutes from HONE Meetings of September 7, 2023, October 5, 2023, October 18, 2023, November 9, 2023 and November 15, 2023
- III. Review of Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Compliance Modeling Results for Studied Scenarios, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- IV. Review of Alternative Affordability Percentage Thresholds Analysis, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- V. Review Strategy for January 18 Community Meeting, *Eric Halvorsen, RKG Associates; Emily Innes, Innes Associates*
- VI. Next Steps

**Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group**

|                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Heidi Frail     | Select Board (co-chair)   |
| Natasha Espada  | Planning Board (co-chair) |
| Kevin Keane     | Select Board              |
| Jeanne McKnight | Planning Board            |
| Joshua Levy     | Finance Committee         |
| Ronald Ruth     | Land Use Attorney         |
| William Lovett  | Real Estate Developer     |
| Liz Kaponya     | Renter                    |
| Michael Diener  | Citizen at Large          |

To: HONE Advisory Group  
From: Susan Herman, Needham Heights  
Date: November 28th, 2023

I hope you are all well and enjoyed the Thanksgiving Holiday.

I am writing as a resident of the Heights who has lived in 02494 for several years and previously in a 2 family on Warren Street (which has since been torn down). I have concerns regarding the application of the MBTA Zoning Act in Needham. Perhaps some of the items below have been discussed at the public meetings. Or some of them will be. I have read the compliance guidelines dated August 17th, 2023 and listened to every public meeting of the Advisory Group.

### **Compliance Guideline Issues**

A district must be of "reasonable size" and is not fixed in the guidance. Has the committee discussed the size of each district? Because at least two if not three of Needham's districts overlap there may need to be a determination of the proposed size of each district. Is it the intention of the committee to make all of the districts "by right", thereby eliminating some of the need to look at the overlap of districts? If not, there will be a need to delineate the district boundaries.

At the meeting of 11/15 was the first I heard the Industrial Park mentioned as a site. I was not aware that it was a "voting station" for input at the November 9th public meeting and I missed it. I was surprised that it did not receive any discussion on 11/15. In further research, the state requires 90% of the required 1,784 to be near stations, meaning 10% or 178.4 units can be located elsewhere. I am not sure the public knows this information. The predecessor committee to HONE, Town of Needham Housing Plan, identified several parcels for additional housing. Will the committee be discussing locating 178.4 units in other sections of Needham?

This will reduce the number of units to 1,605.6 for the areas around the commuter rail stations.

Regarding the Industrial Park for 10% of the units noted above. With the opening in 2025 of the Boston Children's surgery center, many citizens may actually believe this is a good place for multifamily housing. Day surgery centers can be employee intensive and transportation costs would be non-existent for employees. There is already multi-family housing in the Industrial Park so this would not be unique or be displacing single family housing. I can not think of the reason this did not receive discussion at your meeting - perhaps it is a consideration for the fiscal analysis which we have not heard discussed as of this date.

### **90% of Units Within Station Areas**

Regarding the state stipulation that 90% of the units must be located around the stations. There are four other commuter rail communities at 90%. They are Norwood, Wellesley, Beverly



and Brockton. It may be worth exploring alternatives to the 90% with the Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities. A check with the other four communities may be helpful in this regard. The equity behind the MBTA law is that communities such as Needham have benefitted from having the commuter rail stations. The community clearly has benefitted as single family homes flourished. But it has been the entire community that has benefitted, not just the Heights, or the Junction. One could argue that the area around the Birds Hill Station has benefitted the most. This is the entire town's responsibility which I believe will resonate with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities should you seek modification of the 90% rule having to be in the districts.

### **Land along Highland Avenue from Fire Station to Library and Exclusions and Single Family Residences**

The "Excluded land" Compliance may raise two issues relevant to Needham.

There are at least four private rights-of-way along Highland Avenue. (The committee may want to see where there are any other private ways in any of the districts contemplated for re-development so they can be excluded.)

Privately owned land used for education or institutional uses such as hospital, prison, utilities, museum, private school, college or university. The published list does not include churches which can be considered institutional and/or educational. State guidance for the rezoning of church land needs to be clarified at a public HONE meeting. Further the Compliance Guidelines state ``such as"; so a complete list of privately owned land uses may be useful for the committee.

We have included several photos in an additional email of the single family homes and churches from the Fire Station to the Library along Highland Avenue. Nearly all of these homes are more attractive and graceful than "new builds". They are cultural. While I have listened at every meeting I have been confused on where the committee stands on single family residences. I am not sure if it depends on which of the four districts the single family homes are in.

For the Heights in particular it is important that you know Heights residents have already experienced a great deal of development. I am not aware of any Heights input on the HONE or the predecessor committee in this regard. Committee members may remember that Wingate was built on a large lot with one single family home, the Suites on the corner of Hunnewell Street and Highland Avenue was a truly magnificent New England single family home, Putnam Street and the surrounding streets were single family and West Street and Dale Street housed more single family homes than they do today. And we know more development is on the way for the Heights exclusive of this zoning change.

### **Parking Requirements**

While this was an input station at the 11.9 public forum, I did not hear follow up at the meeting on 11.15.



If on street parking is eliminated in any portion of any of the districts to be rezoned this needs to be considered in parking requirements. Further, the compliance guidance indicates there can be no limit on the number of occupants - so it is conceivable units will have more than one vehicle. This needs to be taken into consideration in the zoning. To not do so, will place an additional burden on the businesses and single family housing in one or more of the four districts.

As an example, right now for the Heights, residential side streets are utilized when there is a commercial need and/or Memorial Park is filled to capacity. This may be happening in other districts. It is definitely happening in the Heights, and serves to point out that parking requirements are crucial.

### **Fiscal Analysis**

Any fiscal analysis will be marked by positives and negatives for Needham. Elimination of on street parking needed as a result of development might be a negative. Multifamily housing of this density and acreage where single family abuts may be mixed as single family homes could decline in value relative to the community. While an entirely different point was made at a recent meeting, logically it will depend on what the multifamily development is replacing. Single family homes abutting distressed properties and blighted downtowns in Gateway cities likely have benefitted from new multifamily development. This is not the case in Needham.

### **Timing**

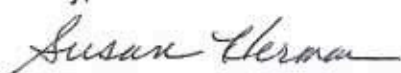
The plan must be approved by the second set of localities by December 31st 2024. Municipalities with due dates of December 2023 are in the process of approving their plans just now. My understanding from this is that there is still a reasonable amount of time to work on this plan so it is best for the entire community.

### **Summary**

The Heights zip code -02494- was not one of the top 25 zip codes in Massachusetts while 02492 was included in the top 25 most desirable codes. I know the Heights and this is not the aspiration. Yet, it speaks to the point that the commuter rail has been a benefit to the entire community and that the entire community should participate in all the ways which are available.

Residents on all the streets in Needham Heights continue to invest in and improve their residences. I am confident that they are not prepared for the intense redevelopment the MBTA Communities Act currently dictates. Nor will they see it as fair since it is all of Needham which has reaped the benefit of commuter rail access. Consequently it is important that HONE apply 90% or 1,605.6 units in the four districts on an equal and fair basis.

Respectfully,









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**From:** [Gary Ajamian](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Questions for HONE Committee - Thank you  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 29, 2023 6:08:21 PM

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Dear Hone Committee,

1) Does the recently unveiled legislation to fund Healey's \$4 Billion Affordable Homes Act. shed more light on the intended usage of this "MBTA Communities Act"?

<https://www.mass.gov/news/healey-driscoll-administration-unveils-4-billion-affordable-homes-act-to-increase-production-and-lower-costs>

2) How can Needham residents be assured that the HONE MBTA consultants are acting as independent and impartial advisors, with the best interest of Needham, vs their observed focus on compliance milestones that fit into their quoted contract obligation?

3) Has HONE reached out to other MBTA communities who are concerned with the effect this mandate will have to A) enable developers, and B) effectively eliminate community engagement over zoning concerns?

4) Assuming rezoning is enacted, with approximately 1800 units with an average of 3 occupants per unit, has anyone assessed the financial impact on the town's infrastructure, traffic, roads, sewers, water supply, town services, schools, along with the potential tax impact on average single family home owners? Should an independent municipal impact study be performed and presented to the Town in advance (30 to 60 days) of any Article put forth to Town Meeting?

5) Regarding Public Safety; Recently, a 38 year old man convicted of murder in Venezuela, came in through eagle pass, they processed him, sent him along, and he ended up residing at joint base Cape Cod. Is this the type of (unvetted) individual or individuals we want residing in Needham, either in the downtown, or on Linden Street, across from High Rock Elementary school?

Thank you for your leadership,  
Gary Ajamian, TMM Precinct F & 60+ year Needham Resident