



TOWN OF NEEDHAM
TOWN HALL
Needham, MA 02492-2669

2024 Annual Town Meeting
Information on Needham Housing Authority's Linden Chambers Project
Interrelationship Between Articles 18, 19, 22 and 41

The 2024 Annual Town Meeting Warrant includes four warrant articles related to the Needham Housing Authority's (NHA) Linden/Chambers project. The Housing Authority has determined that passage of all four articles is required in order for the Authority to be eligible and/or competitive for outside funding.

Article 18

Article 18 would amend the Zoning-Bylaw to allow multi-family housing for occupants earning no more than 80% of the Area Median Income. The proposed zoning supports the height, density, and design of the project proposed by the Housing Authority – to replace 152 existing units and build 95 new units, for a total of 247 units. In accordance with State law, no residents will be displaced, and any residents temporarily displaced during construction will be provided alternative housing, and relocation assistance at no cost, and will have a right to return to the new units.

Article 19

Article 19 contains the map that would implement the zoning change.

Article 22

Article 22 seeks an appropriation of \$5.5 million for construction of the proposed Linden/Chambers project. The funds are part of a larger pool of funding necessary to complete the project – currently estimated to be approximately \$84 million. The grant, recommended by the Community Preservation Committee through CPA funds, is based on a reimbursement model and will not be distributed until the total project financing is secured and construction is underway.

The CPC, Town Counsel and the Town Manager will develop and execute a grant agreement between the Town and the Housing Authority. The Grant Agreement will include a timeline for a funding status update. By September 30, 2027, the Housing Authority and CPC will meet to discuss the status of the entire financing of the project, and if the complete financing is not secured, discuss a possible extension if financing is likely, or if there is a good cause for the delay. The goals of this meeting would be to:

- Ensure that the appropriated CPA funds will not sit indefinitely without being spent;
- Ensure that the NHA has sufficient time to secure project funding in its entirety before CPA funds are at risk of being rescinded;
- Require that NHA provide a formal update on the project to the CPC; and

- Ensure that parties have an understanding of the status of the project, the status of the financing, and the updated timeline.

The grant agreement will also require that the NHA provide an affordable housing restriction that will be held by the Town, for the purpose of securing the affordability of all units within the project. The affordability restriction will include an affordability level consistent with NHA's representation about the programming for the project, which is: That most of the units will be rented to tenants at "deeply affordable" income levels, with some smaller number of units available for rent to tenants whose annual incomes are up to 80% of area median income, such that the affordability levels of project as a whole will average no more than 60% of area median income. The affordable housing restriction will be memorialized in a separate, free-standing document from the grant agreement, will be executed by the Select Board and the Housing Authority, and will be recorded at the Registry of Deeds. The affordable housing restriction will be in effect in perpetuity.

Article 41

The purpose of Article 41 is to remove previous deed restrictions on the NHA property. The Linden/Chambers development is located on parcels that were conveyed to NHA through a series of Town Meeting votes and deeds in 1957, 1960, and 1967, each of which provided that use of the property was limited to housing for the elderly. The removal of the deed restrictions is intended to allow NHA to:

- Serve both elderly and disabled residents consistent with applicable Massachusetts General Laws and regulations, Federal statutes and regulations; and
- Provide the Authority with some flexibility to serve other qualifying tenants as operational needs require from time to time.

The Housing Authority and the Select Board intend to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement in which the Housing Authority will agree that, notwithstanding the release of restrictions limiting the use of the Property to housing for the elderly, NHA will prioritize the assignment and leasing of dwelling units at the Linden Street Redevelopment to qualifying elderly residents to the greatest extent possible, consistent with NHA's ability to serve disabled tenants and NHA's need to locate other qualifying tenants at the Property based on operational needs from time to time.

Information about the Linden/Chambers Project is available at <https://linden-chambers-needham.com/home>.