



## **Town Administrator's Report Select Board Meeting for September 11, 2023**

Matthew Coogan

### **Roundtable Discussion at September 11<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting**

Chairs of the Town's 28 Boards and Committees have been invited to attend a roundtable discussion at the September 11<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting. This will be an opportunity for boards and committees to provide updates and spur communication between the various boards and committees.

### **Waste Stream Task Force Update and Resident Survey**

The Waste Stream Task Force released a [Trash and Recycling Resident survey](#) that is available on the town website. The survey solicits Boxford residents' current trash and recycling habits, as well as input on the size of potential new, standardized trash and recycling containers and the frequency of collection under a new automated collection program. There will also be a postcard mailing to every household in mid-September that includes a QR code to access the survey. Responses are due by the end of September.

Additional information on the work of the Waste Stream Task Force can be found on their [project webpage](#). The Task Force's next meeting is Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 2PM.

### **Suspension of online trash sticker sales**

At its meeting on August 30<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Health voted to suspend online trash sticker sales starting September 5<sup>th</sup>. An announcement was put on the [town website](#) and Facebook page.

### **Appointment of Members to Permanent Building Committee, DPW Facility Schematic Design**

Per By-Law and by vote of the Permanent Building Committee (PBC), the Select Board is prepared to appoint up to four temporary members to serve on the PBC for the next phase of the new DPW Facility, schematic design. The Select Board has discussed appointing DPW Superintendent/ Town Engineer Chris Olbrot, a representative of the Select Board, a representative of the Finance Committee, and a resident with experience in engineering, project management, and construction. Chuck Costello and Phil McManus have stepped forward to represent the Select Board and the Finance Committee, respectively. Former Select Board Chair Al Vaz has expressed interest as the at-large member. The Board can appoint all four members Monday night, for a term to expire on June 30, 2024.

Town Meeting appropriated \$250,000 for the schematic design phase, and Chris Olbrot has been working with my office to draft a RFP for designer services, to be reviewed by the PBC at its next meeting on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Medal of Fidelity Presentation September 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Veterans Services District Director Joseph LeBlanc has informed me that On September 22nd, at 10:00am the Massachusetts National Guard will be sending a General Officer to North Andover Town Hall to present the Medal of Fidelity to surviving family members of veterans who died due to their service-connected disabilities from their service to our country. The Medal of Fidelity was signed into law by Governor Baker in October 2022 in the SPEED ACT.

The Medal of Fidelity will be presented to eight families in the North Andover/ Boxford Veterans Service District, including Mrs. Karen "Suzy" Feirman of West Boxford, who is the wife of Lance Corporal Frank Feirman, USMC, Purple Heart, Vietnam.

### **Paving Update**

Lockwood Lane was paved the week of August 28th. Ipswich Road between Kelsey Rd and Spofford Rd was paved on September 7<sup>th</sup>. The paving of Forest neighborhood (King Richard, etc.) starts Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> and should conclude on Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup>. Information on this fall's paving is available on the [Town website](#).

### **Glendale Road Culvert Emergency Repairs**

DPW has been addressing and making repairs to washout areas and other damage as a result of two major rain events in August. DPW was out on Glendale Rd last week making emergency repairs to the culvert. This included resetting the fieldstone sides of the culvert, slipping in a PVC pipe to allow for flow, and building a riprap slope to stabilize the area and allow DPW to patch the road. The good news is that the repairs will prevent shutting the road down. Chris Olbrot is currently permitting the new culvert at the Conservation Commission, so it will be replaced with a more permanent infrastructure in 2024.

### **MBTA Communities (Section 3A) and Technical Assistance Update**

On August 17th, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities announced revisions to the Compliance Guidelines for Multi-Family Districts under Section 3A of the Zoning Act (MBTA Communities). The revision that most affects Boxford is the specific state grant programs that communities would not be eligible for if they fail to comply with Section 3A. If Boxford does not comply with 3A and create a MBTA zoning district, we would be ineligible for programs we recently utilized, including Brownfields Redevelopment, Real Estate Technical Assistance, Land Use Planning Grants, Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Grants, and Municipal Preparedness (MVP) Planning and Project Grants. The last 2 in particular are programs the Town has relied on, for open space land acquisition and culvert work.

The Boxford Planning Board will get an update from the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) at their next meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The MVPC is serving as the Town's MBTA technical assistance consultant to guide us through the state's compliance model. It appears that the four parcels on northern tip of Boxford that front Barker Rd identified by Land Use Director Ross Povenmire to potentially be rezoned as a 3A district would comply with the state's compliance model. Ross and I have planned on having him and the Planning Board attend the Select Board's October 23rd meeting to discuss MVPC's technical assistance findings, the revised guidelines, and next steps for the Town.

### **Housing Production Plan**

Land Use Director Ross Povenmire has been working with the MVPC on updating the town's Housing Production Plan. The [current plan](#) expired in 2022. Planning Board Chair Bob Gore, Building Inspector/ADA Coordinator Peter Delaney, CPC Chair Natasha Grigg, and Housing Partnership Committee members Joe Hill, and Jim Barnes are also part of the update. They are planning two public workshops this fall, the first being a virtual meeting on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup> at 6PM. The second workshop will be in person, at a date to be determined. According to the state, a Housing Production Plan is a community's proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing by: creating a strategy to enable it to meet its affordable housing needs in a manner consistent with the Chapter 40B statute and regulation.

### **Municipal ADA grant**

Our office is preparing to submit [ADA grant program](#) applications by the September 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Town will be applying for ADA improvements at Stiles Pond, including the restroom facilities and accessible docks, and for addressing MAAB violations at the Cole School. The Town is partnering with the Boxford Athletic Association for the Stiles Pond application. For the Cole School, DPW Superintendent/ Town Engineer Chris Olbrot developed a scope of work to specifically address the AAB violations on campus. The estimate for this project, including paving, concrete work, and engineering oversight, is \$100,000. The Elementary School Committee met on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and vote to approve Chris's plan to address the MAAB violations at Cole School.

### **Adaptive Reuse of Buildings Advisory (ARBA) Committee**

StudioLuz's public presentation of their [final report](#) is scheduled for [Wednesday, September 13 at 7PM at Town Hall \(with a Zoom hybrid option\)](#). The final report includes recommended future uses for 188 Washington Street and 4 Middleton Rd, as well as next steps. The recommendations are based on site visits, community engagement, and a market study. All public documents, including the final report and the market study are posted on the project website, [boxfordma.gov/villagecenters](http://boxfordma.gov/villagecenters).

### **Spofford School Electrification Feasibility Study**

Tri-Town School Administration received 11 responses to the [Request for Proposals \(RFP\)](#) for professional architectural and engineering design services to assess the feasibility of electrifying the HVAC system at Spofford School. Select Board Chair Barbara Jessel, Sustainability Committee Chair Gary Martin, and myself are working with the School Administration and School Committee Chair Carol Hubbard on this effort. We will be undergoing the selection process in the coming weeks.

### **Municipal Aggregation**

Good Energy informed me that DPU shared draft guidelines for Municipal Aggregation Proceedings and opened up a comment period. The guidelines are intended to reduce the time required for DPU review of aggregation plans and amendments. Good Energy's legal team is reviewing the guidelines and plan on submitting comments on behalf of their municipal clients. We expect to have draft comments from Good Energy prior to the September 18<sup>th</sup> submission deadline. The Town submitted an aggregation plan in October 2022, which is available on the project website, [BoxfordElectricity.com](http://BoxfordElectricity.com).

### **Report on Investments**

As required by state law, Treasurer/Collector Ellen Guerin has issued an annual report to the Town that lists cash account balances, investment types, earnings and compliance with the terms of the town's Investment Policy. The Report on Investments, included in the [September 11<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting materials](#), provides information for the \$24,922,838 held by the town on June 30, 2023. Comparative data is also provided for the previous fiscal year, including a brief explanation of significant changes.

### **Preliminary Revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps**

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has published preliminary revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and a Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report for Boxford. The FIRM and FIS documents are often used to determine what regulations may apply to a particular piece of property, whether the property is in a flood hazard area, and whether flood insurance is required. The FIRM and FIS documents, and related notices, can be found on the Town of Boxford website, [town.boxford.ma.us/flood-maps](http://town.boxford.ma.us/flood-maps).

An appeal period relating to the preliminary FIRM and FIS documents will expire on or about October 30, 2023. Persons wishing to appeal the preliminary FIRM or FIS documents should contact Ross Povenmire ([rpovenmire@town.boxford.ma.us](mailto:rpovenmire@town.boxford.ma.us)) with scientific or technical data indicating that the preliminary FIRM or FIS documents are incorrect.