

**Planning Board Joint Session with Select Board  
Meeting Minutes**

**April 20, 2022**

**MEETING HELD IN PERSON IN MEETING ROOM 3A/B  
AND VIRTUALLY USING GOTOWEBINAR PLATFORM**

RECEIVED  
CLERKS OFFICE

2022 MAY 26 P 2:17

MANSFIELD  
MASSACHUSETTS

Present: Beth Ashman-Collins, Chair; Diana Bren; Sharon Friedman; Michael Feck; Michael McClanahan; Brendan Roche (remote), Alternate

Shaun P. Burke, Director of Planning and Development

Absent: Joseph Cerretani, Clerk; Ralph Penney; and Adrian LeCesne, Alternate

**I. Planning Board Attended the Select Board Meeting at 5:58 p.m.**

The Planning Board attended the Select Board meeting for a discussion of Draft DHCD Guidelines for MBTA Communities and Compliance.

Mr. Burke introduced the staff and consultants that were in attendance. He stated that the discussion is for the MBTA Communities Housing Initiative program, which was adopted into law in 2021 for MBTA communities to create zoning that would allow development of multi-family housing by right within one half mile of the train station. Mr. Burke noted that the Planning Board will be asking the Select Board to vote to direct the Town Manager to complete the one-page participation document which would be filed with the Department of Housing and Community Development by May 2, 2022. This will give Mansfield conditional conformance to the MBTA regulations and will allow planning time for conformance of the overlay zone by the 2023 deadline. The overlay zone will vary in density and locations.

Chris McDermott, Economic Development Manager, provided background information for BETA Group relating to previous projects that they have worked with the Town.

Arek Galle and Bill McGrath of BETA Group were present. Mr. Galle apprised the Board of BETA Group's recent two years of work with the Town of Mansfield and outlined the current MBTA initiative economic development program. The goal is to create a district of by right housing, which will allow the Town to be eligible for grants and funding opportunities. He further outlined the steps for the initiative process and noted that if communities opt out, they would become ineligible for certain State grant funding. The density required for the Mansfield overlay district would be minimum gross housing density of 15 units per acre and the established district's housing unit capacity established at 15 percent of the overall housing stock, which equates to about 1,300 units within one half mile of the train station with a minimum of 50 acres of land.

Mr. Aptowitz inquired if the overlay would be 50 acres total. Mr. Galle responded that the 50 acres would be an approximate overlay district around the train station, not size specific, but a footprint that zoning would be applied to. Mr. Aptowitz inquired as to the Town's cost. Ms. Ashman-Collins replied that the Town is very well positioned to comply but there are some details to work out. The Master Plan sets the Town up very well for this. She further noted that there would be no reason to exclude Mansfield for eligibility for State grants. She said that getting the boundary right to allow building by right ability to areas that are not yet developed and not allowing and subjecting single-family historic neighborhoods to tear downs and development at a higher density is very important.

Mr. DelVecchio asked about recent COVID impact and fewer commuters, would transit oriented development become less desirable. Mr. Galle spoke of recent market observations in other communities with no decrease in downtown desirability for walkability and housing. Mr. DelVecchio confirmed that the Town has a year and a half to refine and have community input. Mr. Galle also noted compliance thresholds during the process which could allow for communities to opt out if they decide it is not a good fit. The decision for Mansfield is to confirm interest with submission by the May 2<sup>nd</sup> deadline.

Mr. Rhein confirmed that the final decisions would be voted at Town Meeting. Mr. Dumas reiterated that if the Town decides to not move forward with the MBTA initiative, the Town would lose ability to apply for grant funding which would include MassWorks, which is one of the largest grants opportunity that the Town has had, the One Stop Grant for infrastructure programs, and Housing Choice initiative programs. In recent years these grants have provided three to four million dollars to the Town.

Mr. Rhein asked about the MBTA suggested area map. Mr. Galle noted that the MBTA map is only a suggested 50-acre area and presented three conceptual draft maps with a most recent fourth draft hybrid overlay map with an approximate 100-acre footprint which does cross underlying zones. This could create sub-districts to allow greater density in some areas.

There were no public comments.

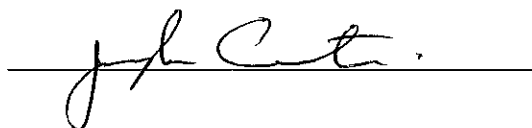
Motion by the Select Board: To authorize the Town Manager to complete and submit the one-page form to DHCD stating Mansfield's intent to participate in the MBTA Communities Housing Initiative. (Mr. DelVecchio-Aptowitz) 3-0-0 PASSES

## 7. Adjournment

The Planning Board session ended at 6:28 p.m.

Date of Next Planning Board Meeting: May 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

**Signature of Clerk**



**Date of Approval**

