

Dedham Planning Board

**The Impact of Mixed-Use
Development in Dedham,
Massachusetts**

February 2020



BARRETT
PLANNING GROUP LLC



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Prepared for the Dedham Planning Board

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FORESIGHT: DEDHAM'S 2009 MASTER PLAN

So many of the concerns raised during this study of mixed-use development in Dedham have roots in Dedham's last master plan (and the one before that, too). For the most part, what Dedham is wrestling with today is not really new at all. What has changed since 2009 is the real estate market as it responds to household trends and major changes in the way people live and work in the Greater Boston area.

Nevertheless, the seeds were planted in 2009:

Ironically, the Providence Highway figured prominently in Dedham's 1996 Master Plan as a source of frustration for Dedham residents and today, it remains one of the town's most crucial land use policy challenges. (17)

. . . even though the town's general development pattern has not changed dramatically, the constellation of land uses within established areas has shifted and the intensity of use in some areas has increased. This is typical of maturely developed suburbs (16)

Dedham needs to harness the full power of land use regulation so that future development occurs where there are adequate facilities to support it and provides not only economic and fiscal benefits, but also environmental benefits. The future evolution of land uses adjacent to the Providence Highway will present enormous challenges for Dedham – challenges that far surpass contending with comprehensive permits or working through the permitting process for a large development such as Legacy Place. Its present zoning policies will not be enough to address these challenges. (35)

The Zoning Bylaw depends too heavily on ambiguous or non-existent review standards, which increases the applicant's risk that permitting decisions will not be timely or predictable ... The Zoning Bylaw does not encourage a variety of housing choices, particularly near transit. (34)

It's time for Dedham to plan.

SUMMARY

In May 2019, Dedham Town Meeting imposed a moratorium on new mixed-use development projects. The Planning Board requested the moratorium because of the large number of combined residential and commercial developments that have been approved and built since mixed-use zoning took effect in 2004.

A consulting team led by Barrett Planning Group was hired to assess

the benefits and drawbacks of the mixed-use bylaw during the moratorium and assess how well they fit with the Town's economic and housing goals. McMahon Associates assisted Barrett Planning Group by assessing mobility, traffic and parking issues related to mixed use developments constructed in Dedham.



WHAT WE FOUND

Mixed-use development in Dedham has not produced the negative impact that some have contended. During our research, we met people who *dislike* mixed-use projects, but disliking a particular use does not, on its own, justify changing the Zoning Bylaw in ways that might frustrate a type of development that is bringing more benefits than harm to the community. While substantive changes to the Zoning Bylaw and permitting process overall are not recommended at this time, based on the results of our study, the Planning Board may want to propose an amendment to the "Mixed Use Developments" section where consistent requests for waivers by developers have occurred. For example, Section 5.2.2.2 (Lot Interior Landscaping) has been a waiver request for five of the nine projects that McMahon reviewed between October 2012 and September 2018. This suggests to us that the Lot Interior Landscaping section should be revisited.

The Planning Board may also want to consider developing town-wide Design Guidelines as have been created for Dedham Square and East Dedham and revisiting the role of the Design Review Advisory Board (DRAB). Strengthening the DRAB's role

could help to provide additional qualitative input to the Planning Board during the permitting process. In every town or city we have worked in that has adopted some form of design review, the design review board or committee reviews applications *before or as part of* the Planning Board's site plan review or special permit process, not after the fact. A good design review process can go a long way toward addressing some of the worries people have about the visual and aesthetic impact of mixed-use developments.

In addition, Dedham could consider adopting an inclusionary zoning bylaw to require affordable housing in certain types of developments, including mixed-use. For example, it could apply to mixed-use developments and multifamily housing with 10 or more units, and the minimum required percentage could be a sliding scale corresponding to the total number of units in the development, e.g., 10 percent affordable units in developments with 10 to 15 units, 20 percent in developments with more than 15 units. No threshold should be set without consulting with the development community. One reason so many inclusionary zoning bylaws have fallen short of expectations is that the requirements they contain are unreasonable and uneconomic under local market conditions. Where these types of tools work, they are grounded in reality.

Detailed zoning recommendations can be found in Section 4.

EXISTING ZONING

In 2004, Dedham Town Meeting adopted a provision for mixed-use development by special permit from the Planning Board in the Central Business District (Dedham Square and East Dedham), the Highway Business District (Providence Highway), the Research, Development, and Office (RDO) District, and the General Business and Limited Business Districts. Mixed-use development may also be created in the Limited Manufacturing Districts if it is part of a Planned Commercial Development (PCD). In short, the bylaw provides for the same opportunity to create mixed-use projects in all of the business districts and in more limited ways, in the industrial districts.

The mixed-use development bylaw has four stated purposes. These purposes provide guidance for the granting of special permits.

- Encourage and allow a mixture of complementary land uses to create economic and social vitality, and to address the housing needs of the Town.
- Develop mixed-use areas and buildings which are safe, comfortable, and attractive to pedestrians.

Impact Analysis of Mixed-Use Development in Dedham

- Provide flexibility in the siting and design of new developments and redevelopments to anticipate changes in the marketplace.
- Encourage efficient land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land needed for surface parking.

The mixed-use bylaw does not prescribe a maximum density of housing (in number of units per acre or square feet) or a maximum number of dwelling units. It requires all of the housing units to be located above the ground floor in a commercial building, as is fairly common practice in mixed-use zoning today. The bylaw also sets a minimum (400 sq. ft.) and maximum (1,500 sq. ft) floor space requirement per dwelling unit, but it does not regulate the number of bedrooms. The absence of a bedroom count limitation helps to avoid potential housing discrimination complaints against the Town under the federal Fair Housing Act.

There is no minimum requirement for affordable housing units in a mixed-use development in Dedham. In addition, there is no prescribed minimum percentage of commercial space, which is very important for providing the flexibility to design projects on a site-by-site basis and in accordance with market demand. In general, mixed-use projects are subject to the same dimensional standards that apply to other uses in each zoning district, e.g., minimum lot, minimum lot frontage, lot width, maximum build ratio, and so forth. However, the Planning Board has authority to grant a number of waivers, and there are provisions for reduced parking in the Central Business District. Viewed in its entirety, Dedham's mixed-use bylaw was clearly written to enable construction of mixed-use buildings, and it has worked.

In a review of approvals granted by the Planning Board since 2004, we did not find that any applicant's requested waivers were denied by the Board despite the bylaw's unusually broad authority to control this class of use by special permit. Taken together, the language of the bylaw and the Planning Board's history of acting favorably on waivers indicate that the Town has supported these types of projects.

THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS

Today, Dedham has eleven occupied mixed-use developments, ten of which have been approved by the Planning Board since 2004. Others were underway when we finished our research for this report. Of the projects that currently exist:

- On average, commercial tenants occupy about 24 percent of the floor area in the mixed-use buildings.
- There is a combined total of 258 apartments, mainly one-bedroom units.

- Density varies greatly, from 15 units per acre to 107 units per acre.

One local developer built and presently owns and manages most of the existing mixed-use developments in Dedham Square. Two non-local developers have had preliminary conversations with the Town about potential mixed-use projects outside of Dedham Square: one with approximately 200 units on Providence Highway (Dedham Plaza) and the other, also approximately 200 units, off Stergis Way by Legacy Place. While we are aware of these potential future projects, the focus of this study had to be Dedham Square because that is where a majority of the Town's mixed-use projects have occurred. Dedham Square provides a useful opportunity to dissect and quantify the impact of mixed-use development. Although future projects will most likely be built outside Dedham Square, the basic demographic characteristics of the households will be similar and so will the demands they place on municipal and school services.

PUBLIC OPINION

Through interviews conducted face-to-face, "on the street" and by telephone, coupled with a community engagement event and an online survey, the consulting team gathered input almost 550 people about the benefits and drawbacks of mixed-use developments in Dedham. As one would expect, the community engagement process as a whole did not produce a consistent picture of public sentiments about mixed-use development. For example:

- We interviewed eighteen downtown businesses about the impact of upper-story housing on the operation of their establishments. The businesses reported to us that 83 percent of their clientele are local (Dedham residents). About one-fourth reported that having downtown housing had measurably increased business activity for them.
- We interviewed several developers in October 2019. This interview process helped to confirm the likely number of housing units that might be proposed in the two locations outside of Dedham Square: approximately 200 on Providence Highway and 200 off Stergis Way. (Higher estimates had been stated at two Planning Board meetings we observed on Dedham's "on demand" public access television website.) The developer interviews also revealed to us some tension between the local developer who has already received approval for several projects and the non-local developers whose plans have been delayed during the moratorium period.
- Residents have mixed opinions about mixed-use development and development in general. In the online survey in October 2019, respondents identified traffic

congestion and parking as the most common problems in Dedham Square. Respondents did not specifically ascribe these problems to the upper-story housing units, but there seems to be some tension between people wanting to use the Square and people wanting to live there.

- Asked about areas that may be appropriate for future mixed-use development, respondents tended to favor East Dedham, Legacy Place/MBTA Station, and Providence Highway, but the number of respondents favoring Legacy Place was about the same as those who said Dedham already “has enough” mixed-use housing.
- Attendees at the October 2014 Open House said that in Dedham Square, they would favor small mixed-use developments with somewhat deeper setbacks to accommodate landscaping and pedestrian amenities between the street and buildings. Others said Providence Highway is an opportunity to diversify Dedham’s housing stock and provide more affordability.

MUNICIPAL IMPACT

Town departments have reported no adverse impact on their operations from the housing in these developments. Some departments have expressed concerns about the impact of growth overall in Dedham, notably the Fire Department, which remains understaffed. The Police Department reported problems associated with the commercial space (a convenience store) in a mixed-use building. At least one department head reported positive impacts from mixed-use development due to the stormwater management improvements property owners have to make.

In general, families with school-age children do not live in Dedham’s mixed-use buildings. There are some families with infants and preschoolers, and during the last school year, the School Department reported one student in a mixed-use building near Dedham Square. We estimate that the average cost-revenue ratio for Dedham’s existing mixed-use buildings is less than 0.52, i.e., for every \$1.00 of tax revenue generated by the developments, the cost to serve the residents and businesses is less than 52 cents.

The local developer who has already constructed several mixed-use projects kindly shared data about his tenants. The data shed light on the market for housing in mixed-use developments. The tenants range from teachers and school bus drivers to accountants, nurses, security guards, sales clerks and managers, and firefighters, and some retirees.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

McMahon Associates has conducted twelve “peer review” assessments of mixed-use projects proposed to the Dedham Planning Board. Nine are in the Central Business District, two in the RDO district, and one in the LM district.

- Of the projects in Dedham Square, none requested waivers from the Planning Board regarding parking spaces required, parking space dimensions, parking aisle width, reduced parking space dimensions or parking setbacks. Two of the projects (346-350 and 360 Washington Street) requested waivers for driveway curb radii.
- Two projects in East Dedham requested parking space waivers, and one also requested waivers for parking space dimensions, parking aisle width, reduced parking space dimensions and parking setbacks. A third project in East Dedham did not request any waivers.
- In the Legacy Place/Providence Highway area, one project requested no transportation-related waivers related to transportation. The other requested waivers related to driveway curb radius and the other parking setback.

In various community engagement efforts conducted for this study, Dedham residents identified the following items as needing more attention in town (with or without mixed-use development):

- Signage and wayfinding
- Parking, especially in Dedham Square. A number of residents had suggestions for ways to improve parking in Dedham Square, from shared parking to constructing a parking garage. Several also said the town needs to do more to manage parking in Dedham Square. This recommendation is reinforced in a downtown parking report recently prepared by Stantec for the Town of Dedham, i.e., the Town needs a comprehensive parking management plan, not an increase in parking supply.
- Pedestrian infrastructure and amenities
- Bicycle infrastructure and amenities
- Transit
- Signal timings and/or improvements
- Roadway improvements
- “Cut through” traffic

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Multiple areas have been highlighted for improved pedestrian infrastructure and bicycle accommodation such as Dedham Square, Rustcraft Road, Legacy Place, and East Dedham. These needs exist independently of mixed-use developments, as neither Legacy Place nor Rustcraft Road have any mixed-use projects today.

Based on the analysis completed by McMahon Associates, the mixed-use projects that exist today have little to no impact on mobility, traffic or parking throughout Dedham as identified through the minimal request for, and granting of, waivers from the Planning Board.

ANALYSIS

BACKGROUND

In May 2019, Dedham Town Meeting imposed a moratorium on approvals of new mixed-use development projects. The Planning Board proposed the moratorium in response to citizen petition articles that would have required mixed-use developments to provide more commercial space or a minimum percentage of affordable units. As we understand it, these petition articles were prompted by concerns about a proliferation of mixed-use developments in Dedham, for the Planning Board had already granted special permits for several mixed-use projects in Dedham Square and at least two in East Dedham. Town Meeting approved the existing mixed-use bylaw ca. 2004.

The same Town Meeting authorized funding to study the impact of mixed-use development on the Town. In late July 2019, the Town executed a contract with Barrett Planning Group to study the benefits and drawbacks of the existing mixed-use bylaw and assess how well these types of projects fit with the Town's economic and housing goals and meet existing and future community needs. Our team includes McMahon Associates, Inc., for traffic and parking review, and Mark Bobrowski, Esq. Mr. Bobrowski will draft amendments to the mixed-use development bylaw consistent with this report if the Planning Board accepts our recommendations.

In November 2019, the Planning Board asked Town Meeting to extend the moratorium to the Annual Town Meeting in May 2020. The Board reasoned that an extension would allow enough time to consider whether any changes to the existing mixed-use bylaw would be desirable or beneficial to the Town. Although the Planning Board originally hoped to have this report on time to modify the mixed-use bylaw in November, engaging the consultants at the end of July did not provide enough time to analyze the impact of the existing mixed-use projects and prepare zoning amendments (if any) before the Fall Town Meeting warrant closed in early September.

The options available to the Planning Board in November were to request an extension of the moratorium or allow it to lapse. Some people feared that terminating the moratorium would encourage a property owner to file an "Approval Not

Required” or ANR plan and freeze the zoning allowed under the mixed-use bylaw, but there was considerable misinformation about the scope of a zoning “freeze” accomplished through the ANR process. An ANR plan does not lead to a complete zoning freeze; rather, it freezes only the uses allowed (by right or special permit) in the district where the land is located. It is important to understand the difference between the limited freeze under ANR compared with the freeze associated with subdivision plans. This information was not provided to the public.

Most likely, allowing the moratorium to lapse would have brought about one or both of the delayed mixed-use special permit applications. It may also have allowed a mixed-use project to proceed that was already in the permitting process when the moratorium was imposed in May 2019. As it stands now, the applicant for that project will have waited over a year for a decision about his proposed development.

PROFILE OF DEDHAM’S MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS

Dedham has eleven occupied mixed-use developments, ten of which have been approved by the Planning Board since 2004 when Town Meeting adopted the mixed-use bylaw. In addition, one is under construction on Providence Highway and two are under construction in East Dedham. The Planning Board has approved others that had not moved forward when we completed our research for this report in November 2019.

Of the projects that exist in Dedham today:

- On average, commercial tenants occupy about 24 percent of the floor area in the mixed-use buildings.
- The completed, occupied properties contain a combined total of 258 apartments, nearly all limited to one-bedroom units. The projects constructed since 2004 when Dedham adopted mixed-use zoning are fairly dense, ranging from 15 units per acre to 107 units per acre. These ranges are consistent with what we have found in other Greater Boston submarkets.
- One local developer built and presently owns and manages most of the existing mixed-use developments in Dedham Square.

For purposes of this study, the consultants have focused on the eleven occupied buildings listed on the next page. The Town’s experience with these properties provides the only legitimate basis for estimating the impact of mixed-use development in Dedham.

Two non-local developers have had preliminary conversations with the Town about potential mixed-use projects outside of Dedham Square: one with approximately 200 units on Providence Highway (Dedham Plaza) and the other, also approximately 200 units, off Stergis Way by Legacy Place. These projects have been mentioned to us most often as the catalyst for the mixed-use moratorium the Planning Board proposed in last year.

2.1. Snapshot: Dedham's Existing and Occupied Mixed-Use Buildings (2019)									
Property	Land Area		Units	Built	Floor Area		Comm/Res Ratio	Fiscal Year 2019	
	Acres	Sq. Ft.			Res.	Com.		Assessed Value	Property Taxes
5 Eastern Avenue	0.20	8,712	26	1910	16,336	8,168	50%	\$2,624,100	\$52,448
290 Washington	0.28	12,197	10	2004	13,200	2,130	16%	\$1,848,900	\$30,210
420 Washington	0.44	19,166	26	2006	27,256	8,800	32%	\$5,149,000	\$95,407
439 Washington	0.29	12,632	10	2009	11,294	1,600	14%	\$1,786,300	\$30,584
408 Whiting Ave	0.67	29,185	14	2012	9,587	3,774	39%	\$1,873,400	\$35,885
29 Bridge Street	0.80	34,848	12	2012	11,960	5,980	50%	\$2,367,700	\$45,723
125 Washington	0.75	32,670	45	2012	30,052	2,800	9%	\$4,865,800	\$69,612
321 Washington	0.61	26,572	27	2015	23,898	2,598	11%	\$3,209,500	\$50,434
333 East Street	0.26	11,326	14	2016	18,300	1,455	8%	\$2,072,900	\$30,953
338 Washington	0.56	24,394	60	2018	45,200	6,400	14%	\$7,672,900	\$135,573
360 Washington	0.28	12,197	14	2018	14,312	7,400	52%	\$413,300	\$12,312

Source: Dedham Planning Department, 2019.

ZONING REVIEW

This report includes a review of the regulations that have enabled the Planning Board to approve Dedham's existing mixed-use developments. This is important because the moratorium placed a stay on approvals under the Zoning Bylaw's mixed-use option under Section 7.4. The Zoning Bylaw gives the Planning Board authority to grant a special permit for mixed-use buildings in the following districts:

- Central Business (Dedham Square and East Dedham)
- Highway Business (Providence Highway)
- Research, Development, and Office (RDO)
- General Business
- Limited Business
- Limited Manufacturing if part of a Planned Commercial Development (PCD).

Together, these districts include about 13 percent of the town.

■ Bylaw Requirements

The mixed-use provision in Dedham's zoning is liberal in some ways and limiting in others. Below are the conditions that must be met, together with our comments on them.

Requirement: A special permit is required from the Planning Board.

Comments: Since there seems to be a preference for small projects, the Town could provide for an as-of-right mixed-use option for them. The two-unit limit that applies in the LB district should not require a special permit, but mixed-use could be a permitted use (subject to site plan review) in the CB district, e.g., up to 20 units, leaving the special permit to review mixed-use developments in the HB, RDO, and GB districts where the projects are likely to be larger.

Requirement: All dwelling units in a Mixed-Use Development shall be located above the ground floor, shall have a separate entrance, and shall not share stairs or hallways with commercial uses, except that a fire escape or exit used only in emergencies maybe available at all time to both.

Comments: While mixed-use bylaws often require units to be located above the ground floor of a building with first-floor commercial uses, many communities also allow "horizontal" mixed use or developments with multiple buildings on one lot. An advantage to this approach is that it gives the developer options to design a project with the number of units needed to make a project feasible while keeping the height of buildings relatively low. In addition, "vertical" mixed use buildings often have a street-facing entrance into a lobby that provides a secondary interior access to ground floor businesses (the main entrance to which is on the front façade) and stair or elevator access to the upper-story housing units.

Requirement: Each dwelling unit in a Mixed-Use Development shall have a complete set of sanitary facilities, cooking, and living space that includes sleeping facilities independent from another dwelling unit in a Mixed-Use Development. A Mixed-Use Development may share common storage, laundry facilities, and other customary shared facilities located within a Mixed-Use Development. Each dwelling unit cannot be less than four hundred (400) square feet and not more than one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet in total gross floor area, and must meet all occupancy and Building Code requirements. The maximum number and type of allowable residential dwelling units shall be determined by the Planning Board as part of the Special Permit and site plan review process; provided, however, there may not be more than two (2) residential dwelling units in a Mixed-Use Development in the LB Zoning District.

Comments: While the Planning Board should have approval authority over the project as a whole, the bylaw should give developers a better sense of what they can expect to build in terms of number of dwelling units. If the minimum-maximum floor area standards are acceptable to the Town, the building meets all of the dimensional standards such as setbacks, height, and FAR, the project provides adequate parking, and the site plan provides safe and efficient access to the site, there really should be no need for the Planning Board to set the maximum number of units. That decision should be based on the capacity of the site to support a development, which is a technical determination.

Requirement. All Mixed-Use Development shall provide at least one parking space per dwelling unit. In all zoning districts except the CB Zoning District, Mixed Use Developments shall provide additional parking for the nonresidential uses per the requirements set forth in Table 3 (Dedham Parking Table). Mixed Use Developments in the CB Zoning District shall provide such additional parking, if any, for the nonresidential uses as determined by the Planning Board to be sufficient to meet the needs of such Mixed Use Developments, taking into consideration complementary uses and activities having different peak demands, joint parking arrangements, the availability of on-street and public parking, and such other mitigating factors and measures as may be appropriate.

Comments: Requiring one space per dwelling unit is consistent with requirements in other towns for locations without public transit. For a development within walking distance of commuter rail, the standard should be reduced to 0.80 spaces per unit. However, the Town's existing commercial parking requirements are onerous and should be brought in line with best practices. Requiring one parking space per 200 sq. ft. of retail space or two spaces per five seats of restaurant seating capacity is excessive. This was previously pointed out in Dedham's Master Plan (2009). Especially for a mixed-use project where uses will often share parking, the nonresidential parking requirements should be reduced.

Requirement. A Mixed-Use Development in the RDO or HB Zoning District with twelve (12) or more apartments shall have maximum lot coverage of 80% and a maximum floor area ratio of 1.0. In the RDO Zoning District, there shall not be more than thirty (30) apartments located on any lot or on any abutting lots held in common ownership on the date of the adoption of this provision.

Comments: The genesis and purpose of these standards is unclear. Today, planners rarely advise cities and towns to use requirements such as floor area ratios to control intensity of use. FAR is a bulk standard, but it does not do anything for community design. Especially in locations that are essentially zoned for larger-scale development – e.g., the HB and RDO districts – placing a 30-apartment limit on lots and abutting lots seems to have only one objective, and that is to discourage or prohibit mixed-

use projects. The bylaw needs to be more sensitive to design and less focused on arbitrary dimensional requirements. As suggested by the size of already-approved projects, a 30-apartment limit might work on the small lots found in the CB district. It makes no sense on the Providence Highway and even less sense in areas within walking distance of a train station.

■ Other Comments

Under Dedham’s current zoning, mixed-use development provides the only real option for developing multifamily units in Dedham. Although the Town allows the Board of Appeals to grant special permits for multifamily dwellings in the Single Residence A or B district (SRA/SRB), the zoning requirements that have to be met are uneconomic for multifamily development. (Multifamily dwellings are prohibited in all the nonresidential districts.) For example, under Section 7.3, “Multifamily Residential Complex,” Dedham requires at least six acres of land in SRA or 100,000 sq. ft. in SRB, and a lot with at least 400 linear feet of frontage. The maximum number of units on a lot is six in SRA and 24 in SRB. In short, the Town effectively precludes multifamily residential development, so the mixed-use provision creates the only viable opportunity to create new multifamily units in Dedham. The Town needs to consider the Fair Housing implications of placing so many constraints on housing diversity.

■ Findings from Peer Review Reports

As the Town’s traffic consultants, McMahon has conducted 12 “peer review” assessments of mixed-use applications to the Planning Board. All of the projects reviewed are located in one of three zoning districts: Central Business (9), Research, Development and Office (2), and Limited Manufacturing (1). McMahon conducted peer review assessments of the mixed-use projects either before the moratorium took effect, completed just after the moratorium took effect or are ongoing/pending with the moratorium in effect. These projects are located in three areas: Dedham Square, East Dedham, and Legacy Place/Providence Highway. As the following section demonstrates, the Planning Board has consistently exercised its discretionary powers to grant waivers that enabled mixed-use developments to proceed.

Dedham Square. McMahon has completed four peer reviews for the Planning Board projects in Dedham Square. The projects are located at the following addresses and reviews were completed as follows:

2.2. Mixed-Use Project Name	Review Completed
321 Washington Street	October 2012
333 East Street	August 2013
346-350 Washington Street	September 2015
360 Washington Street	May 2017

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None of these projects requested waivers from the Planning Board regarding parking spaces required, parking space dimensions, parking aisle width, reduced parking space dimensions, or parking setbacks. Two of the projects (346-350 and 360 Washington Street) requested waivers for driveway curb radii. The Planning Board granted the requested waivers for all of these projects.

East Dedham. McMahon completed peer reviews for three projects in East Dedham. These projects are located at the following addresses and reviews were completed as follows:

2.3. Mixed-Use Project Name	Review Completed
243 Bussey Street	April 2018
Delapa Plaza (270 and 290 Bussey Street)	May 2018
20-30 Milton Street	September 2018

Two of these projects (243 Bussey Street and Delapa Plaza) requested waivers from the Planning Board regarding the required number of parking spaces. One of those projects (243 Bussey Street) also requested waivers for parking space dimensions, parking aisle width, reduced parking space dimensions and parking setbacks. The Planning Board granted all the requested waivers for both projects. The third project (20-30 Milton Street) requested no waivers of any kind.

Legacy Place/Providence Highway. McMahon completed peer reviews for two projects in the Legacy Place/Providence Highway area. These projects are located at the following addresses and reviews were completed as follows:

2.4. Mixed-Use Project Name	Review Completed
918-928 Providence Highway (the Dior)	October 2017
1000 Washington Street	December 2017

The project at 1000 Washington Street requested no waivers related to transportation. The Dior project requested two waivers related to transportation: one for driveway curb radius and the other parking setback. The Planning Board granted the waivers requested for the Dior project.

Based on the analysis completed by McMahon, the mixed-use projects previously reviewed have had little to no impact on mobility, traffic, or parking throughout Dedham as identified through the minimal request for, and granting of, waivers from the Planning Board.

MUNICIPAL AND SCHOOL IMPACTS

■ Municipal and School Services

We met with Dedham department heads as a group and in some cases, individually. We also interviewed several current and former town officials, both elected and appointed, in order to get the broadest possible perspective about community reactions to development in general and mixed-use development in particular.

Department heads told us, almost universally, that the mixed-use developments in Dedham have had no adverse impact on their operations. Some departments *did* express concerns about the impact of growth overall in Dedham, mainly the Fire Department, which remains almost as understaffed now as it was when the last Master Plan was prepared over a decade ago. Still, the Fire Department did not report disproportionately greater demands for service from the mixed-use developments than any other type of land use in Dedham. The Police Department reported problems associated with the commercial space (a convenience store) in a mixed-use building.

Some Town staff and officials have raised concerns about what they believe is driving the opposition to mixed-use development. We heard, for example, that objections still linger, both inside and outside of Town Hall, about the two Chapter 40B developments that were built on Rustcraft Road near (and prior to) Legacy Place. One staff member told us that years ago, a fence had been installed to block tenants at Jefferson at Dedham Station and Avalon Station 250 from walking to the commuter rail station. The fence is no longer there, but anxiety among the general public and town officials about renters, especially lower-income renters, endures in Dedham today. We heard similar comments at the October 2019 open house (see next chapter). Based on all that we heard and observed as we worked on our research, it seemed to us that Dedham would benefit from a public education program on household demographics and housing market trends in the Greater Boston area, and Dedham's submarket in particular.

People often assume that housing is inherently a fiscal "negative," i.e., a land use that costs more in town and school services than the revenue it generates. Some types of housing *do* generate high service costs, including the residential use most common in Dedham: the detached single-family dwelling. In our review of Dedham's mixed-use developments, we found that families with school-age children do not live in them, and this is true even for the developments with two-bedroom units. Most families do not find upper-story apartments or condominiums desirable places to raise young children except in densely settled urban neighborhoods, which are invariably mixed-use environments with a wide variety of households. In general, families tend to look elsewhere for what they consider suitable housing. Of course, mixed-use developments can house some families, and this could easily be the case in Dedham

someday. The fact is, the Zoning Bylaw's upper limit on unit floor area in mixed-use buildings is large enough to accommodate a family, so the Town must have been anticipating a variety of household types, including families with pre-school and school-age children.

The local developer who owns several mixed-use projects in Dedham sent us information about his tenants. The data shed light on the market for housing in mixed-use developments. The average age of the tenants in his buildings varies a bit, but the tenants are generally in their forties. In two-person households, the second household members tend to be in their thirties. Some of the developer's tenants are older adults. The tenants range from teachers and school bus drivers to accountants, nurses, security guards, sales clerks and managers, and firefighters, and some retirees. There are some children listed in the developer's database, but not by age. According to the School Department, there was one school student in Dedham's mixed-use buildings in the past. It appears that no school students live in the buildings this year. The developer's database indicates that overall, the average household size in his buildings is 1.38 people. This is very consistent with mixed-use development demographics in other communities.

As most members of the Dedham Planning Board know, our firm specializes in demographic projections and socioeconomic impact analysis. We have been following trends in multifamily housing and mixed-use developments in Eastern Massachusetts for over two decades. Whether in cities, middle-class suburbs, lower-income communities, or small town centers, housing in mixed-use buildings tends to appeal to single people, young couples, and roommate households, and sometimes older adults. When the housing units are in separate multifamily structures on a mixed-use lot, i.e., a horizontal mixed-use development, the tenant mix is more like that of any other multifamily dwelling. If one of the Town's goals is to keep Dedham a family-oriented community, more thought should be given to aligning the mixed-use regulations with that goal.

■ Fiscal Impact

Estimating the fiscal impact of a mixed-use building is complicated because the property generates demands from both types of land uses, and the demands must be allocated fairly. In towns like Dedham with a split tax rate, the revenues must also be allocated fairly. Using the same methodology we applied to our fiscal impact analysis of the then-proposed Legacy Place over a decade ago, we found that in a given year, Dedham spends approximately \$14.9 million on nonresidential services and \$29.7 million on residential services, *excluding schools*. Table 2.5 summarizes this analysis.

We estimate that the average cost-revenue ratio for Dedham's existing mixed-use buildings is about 0.52, i.e., for every \$1.00 of tax revenue generated by the

developments, the cost to serve the residents and businesses is less than 52 cents.¹ The basis for this assessment is shown in Table 2.6. We would expect the residential service costs to be higher in a new multi-story building, but the tax revenue from new “luxury” apartments would be significantly higher than what the town currently receives from mixed-use and multifamily property owners. Even if the entire assessed value of an existing mixed-use building were based on the building’s residential area alone, the average value per unit would only be one-half to one-third the value of new apartments in the Dedham submarket.

2.5. What does Dedham currently spend to provide residential and nonresidential services?			
		Amount	Data Source
A	Total General Fund Budget	\$113,402,300	Town Budget FY 20
B	Less Education Budget	\$46,393,900	Town Budget FY 20
C	Less School Facilities Budget	\$3,823,100	Town Budget FY 20
D	Less Education Debt Service	\$7,848,400	Est. debt service allocation
E	Less Education Fixed Costs	\$10,634,100	64% fixed costs budget
F	Total Municipal, Net of Schools	\$44,702,800	A – B – C – D - E
G	Non-Residential Real Property Value	\$788,986,100	DOR FY20
H	Total Real Property Assessed Value	\$4,942,121,100	DOR FY20
I	Ratio	0.1596	G / H
J	Non-Residential Parcels	429	DOR FY 20
K	Total Parcels	8621	DOR FY 20
L	Average Value: Non-Residential Parcel	\$1,839,100	G / J
M	Average Value: All Parcels	\$573,300	H / K
N	Ratio	3.21	L / M
O	Cost Refinement Coefficient	2.1	CUPR
P	Non-Residential Expenditures	\$14,986,800	F * O * I
Q	Total Residential Expenditures	\$98,415,500	A - P
R	Residential Municipal (Net Schools)	\$29,716,000	F - P
Sources: Town of Dedham Finance and Warrant Committee Report & Recommendations, Spring Annual Town Meeting, May 2019; Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Municipal Data Bank; and Barrett Planning Group. Numbers may not total due to rounding.			

¹ The average cost of municipal services for intensive uses such as retail and restaurant space is about 75 cents per sq. ft. of floor area, and the per capita cost of municipal services (excluding schools) ranges from \$700 to \$1,200 depending on population age and residence location. We assumed \$1,100 per person in our study because the mixed-use households are small

2.6. What does it cost, on average, to serve mixed-use developments today?						
Property	Units	Ratio: Comm-Res	Residential Tax	Commercial Tax	Cost of Services	Revenue Ratio
5 Eastern Avenue	26	50%	\$27,300	\$25,100	\$32,900	\$0.63
290 Washington	10	16%	\$21,800	\$7,400	\$12,000	\$0.41
420 Washington	26	32%	\$59,300	\$36,100	\$33,300	\$0.35
439 Washington	10	14%	\$24,200	\$6,400	\$11,600	\$0.38
408 Whiting Avenue	14	39%	\$20,700	\$15,200	\$17,300	\$0.48
29 Bridge Street	12	50%	\$23,100	\$22,700	\$16,700	\$0.36
125 Washington	45	9%	\$57,800	\$11,900	\$49,300	\$0.71
321 Washington	27	11%	\$41,400	\$9,000	\$30,200	\$0.60
333 East Street	14	8%	\$26,300	\$4,400	\$15,700	\$0.51
338 Washington	60	14%	\$100,200	\$35,300	\$67,600	\$0.50
360 Washington	14	52%	\$8,100	\$4,000	\$19,700	\$1.63
Average	24	27%	\$37,300	\$16,100	\$27,800	\$0.52

■ Environmental Impact

Department heads and the officials with expertise in natural resources and sustainability all reported *positive* impacts from mixed-use development due to the stormwater management improvements property owners have had to make. We have heard similar comments from conservation and public works officials in other built-out towns where redevelopment and infill have become the main drivers of new growth. From all that we heard, the mixed-use developments in Dedham have had a beneficial environmental impact, not a negative one.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The Planning Board asked us to seek public opinions about the impact of mixed-use development in Dedham. Accordingly, this study includes input obtained through the following means. These opportunities for public input supplemented the information we received from Town staff and officials (present and former), and developers.

- October Open House
- Community Survey
- Intercept Surveys
- Interviews with Dedham Square businesses

OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE

On Tuesday October 22, 2019, the Dedham Planning Department, Barrett Planning Group, and McMahon Associates hosted an Open House in the Dedham Middle School Cafeteria. The Open House consisted of eight stations that sought feedback on strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities associated with mixed-use development in Dedham. Each station had an open-air design, with the opportunity for dialogue with a professional staff member from one of the host organizations. The staff at each station discussed the purpose and objectives of the station, and reviewed instructions. They also answered questions about the study and how the input gathered will be utilized.

Attendees were asked to take part in different types of interactive activities at each station to provide their input. Over the course of the three-hour event, there were thirty-nine recorded attendees, in addition to the eight staffers. Among the attendees were Planning Board members, long-time residents of the town, new couples/families to Dedham, business owners, and local officials. Some individuals attended the Open House but did not sign-in. Attendees had varying knowledge of the ongoing study being conducted by the Planning Board, and some requested further information or clarification. The opportunity to engage further with the project was given by posting

the QR code to the Dedham Mixed-Use Development Survey on a poster at the entrance/exit to the event.

The average length of time to visit each station was twenty minutes. The stations were as follows:

- What is Mixed-Use Development?
- Demographics
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- Familiarity
- Traffic
- Design
- Social Issues
- Economic Development

■ Station 1

Station 1 was designed to provide supportive information to the Open House attendees. An informational board was placed adjacent to the sign in table, signifying where the stations began. This board explained the concept of mixed-used development and the purpose of the Open House for those who may not know. The board read “Mixed-use developments are typically buildings with ground floor retail stores/offices, shops, or restaurants with housing located on the upper floors. There are a variety of mixed-use developments in and around Dedham Square today, and additional mixed-use developments may be proposed in the future. Mixed use is one of the ten principles of Smart Growth, a planning strategy that promotes great places with excellent community design and development that serves the economy, community, public health, and the environment. Please help us understand your thoughts about mixed-use development in Dedham. Do you want to see more? Is there already enough or too much? What are the benefits and drawbacks? Visit the topic stations and this open house and share your ideas.” There were no staff members at this station due to lack of need.

■ Station 2

Station 2 served the purpose of gathering demographic data of attendees. The questions asked where participants lived, how long they have lived there, if they own a home vs. rent, if they work in Dedham, and their age. Dots were provided to answer each question. Feedback from Station 2 is outlined below:

1. Where do you live in Dedham?

- 42% lived in Area 1
- 5% lived in Area 2
- 25% lived in Area 3
- 25% lived in Area 4

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPEN HOUSE

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE OPEN HOUSE STATIONS



WHERE: Dedham Middle School Cafeteria

WHO: Town of Dedham Planning Department, Barrett Planning Group LLC, & McMahon Associates

WHEN: October 22, 2019

WHY: As part of the public outreach process for the mixed-use development study, an Open House was held to seek feedback about strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities associated with mixed-use development in Dedham today, and to establish future goals

OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK



39 RECORDED
ATTENDEES

57% LIVED IN
DEDHAM FOR
20+ YEARS

100% WERE
HOMEOWNERS

55% WORKED
IN DEDHAM

65% WERE 55
AND OLDER

STATION HIGHLIGHTS

STATION 3: 18 identified strengths, 24 identified weaknesses, 26 identified opportunities

KEY TAKEAWAY: Retail centers are transforming, providing opportunities to diversify the housing stock and incorporate multi-modal transportation.

STATION 4: 43 areas/places in Dedham defined as working, 30 areas/places in Dedham defined as not working, 30 total survey responses submitted

KEY TAKEAWAYS: Retail areas are visited frequently but traffic and parking are setbacks. Consider starting a shuttle bus service between the large commercial centers to offset this issue.

STATION 5: 44 total comment submissions

KEY TAKEAWAYS: Infrastructure/sidewalk improvements, wayfinding and pedestrian/cyclist safety were top issues. Dedham Square was identified as needing the most attention, with proposals for a parking garage.

STATION 6 KEY TAKEAWAYS: There is a preference for mixed-use development that is smaller-scale, has diversified facades, is set back from the street, integrates quality landscaping, and is pedestrian friendly.

STATION 7: 12 responses to question 1, 19 responses to question 2, 19 responses to question 3

KEY TAKEAWAYS: Dedham needs to diversify its housing stock to be multi-generational, affordable for those at low/moderate incomes, accessible to those with disabilities, and available for those downsizing or just starting out.

STATION 8 KEY TAKEAWAYS: More types of uses could be incorporated in the Providence Highway corridor.

2. How long have you lived in Dedham?

- 5% less than 1 year
- 10% have lived in Dedham from 1 to 5 years
- 10% have lived in Dedham for over 5 years but less than 10 years
- 13% have lived in Dedham for 10-20 years
- 57% have lived in Dedham for over 20 years
- 2% did not live in Dedham

3. For Dedham Residents, Do You Own, Rent, or Have Another Living Arrangement?

- 100% owned a home

4. For Everyone, Do You Work in Dedham?

- 55% work in Dedham
- 45% do not work in Dedham

5. Tell Us Your Age!

- 2.5% were under 18
- No one was between 18 and 24
- 2.5% were between 25 and 34
- 15% were between 35 and 44
- 15% were between 45 and 54
- 25% were between 55 and 64
- 40% were 65 and older

■ Station 3

Station 3 was the strengths and weaknesses station. This station was used to identify where attendees believe there is potential to grow and improve in Dedham, and where there are existing issues. Two separate exercises were used to accomplish this. The first exercise was a displayed map of the town, on which participants used blue dots to indicate key transformation areas. Transformation areas, or areas where they thought change is likely to occur, could be areas of opportunity or potential problems.

As seen in the image above, blue dots were prominent along the entirety of Providence Highway, with clusters in Dedham Square, East Dedham, at the Dedham Mall and at Legacy Place. Participants voiced concerns about the traffic near Sprague Street due to people using the route as a cut-through to get to and from Readville. Concern stems from the development of over two-hundred new housing units by the Readville commuter rail station. An identified area with potential was the land adjacent to the northern portion of Route 109, leading to West Roxbury. The route

Impact Analysis of Mixed-Use Development in Dedham

was described as highly trafficked and would be a great opportunity to economically expand, capturing retail sales leakage and enhancing the tax base.

The second exercise was writing specific strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities on query cards for placement on a large display board with separated columns. The query cards were color-coded based on if they were a “strength,” “opportunity,” or “weakness.” There were eighteen strength query cards, twenty-four weakness query cards, and twenty-six opportunity query cards. Summaries of each column are outlined in Table 3.1.

3.1. What We Heard at Open House Station 3		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Accessibility – commuter rail, highway access ○ Affordable first homes ○ Architectural fabric ○ Current mixed-use development in Dedham Square ○ Dedham Square ○ Different and distinct neighborhoods ○ Diverse base of uses ○ Families ○ Free parking in Dedham Square ○ Great residential community ○ History ○ Involved citizens ○ Job opportunities ○ Legacy ○ Location ○ Natural resources/open space ○ New businesses opening ○ Proximity to Boston ○ Proximity to employment/housing ○ Schools ○ Strong community pride ○ Walkability in Dedham Square ○ Willingness to change/improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Aging buildings ○ Congestion and traffic ○ Decreasing population ○ Difficult crossing Providence Highway ○ Fewer bedrooms in mixed-use apartments ○ High taxes – more projects will exacerbate ○ Hostility to new residents/ideas ○ Inadequate snow removal ○ Issues with Town Hall being built ○ Lack of affordable housing for all, particularly seniors ○ Lack of low/reasonable rental and condominiums ○ Lights from new development in the evening ○ Mentality that change is bad/can be stopped ○ Need higher standard for new development quality and design ○ Need increased public transportation ○ New developments lack parking ○ No comprehensive planning ○ No diversity in housing product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Commit to complete sidewalks in all neighborhoods ○ Create better signage to direct cars ○ Creating protected bike lanes along the river’s side of Providence Highway to West Roxbury near Bridge Street ○ Develop new policies/laws to protect town character ○ Develop stronger rules/regulations around housing ○ Development along the Charles River ○ Diversifying the housing stock – supportive senior housing/middle housing/mixed-use to allow young families and older people to live in Dedham ○ East Dedham business zone, 4-corners and an arts overlay district ○ East Dedham in need of transformation ○ Embracing the good and bad of Dedham’s history ○ Improve schools ○ Improve town buildings and services

3.1. What We Heard at Open House Station 3		
Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Not enough walkable sidewalks ○ Overburdened school system ○ Overcrowding, particularly in Dedham Square ○ Poor usage of tax dollars ○ Poor walkability/bikeability ○ Too many apartments – too much too soon ○ Town departments do not collaborate ○ Trash issues ○ Weak leadership ○ Weak partnerships with Noble and Greenough and other private schools ○ Zoning – outdated/lax/bad/one-size-fits-all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase pedestrian/bike safety ○ Increase tax revenue to support local programs and services, including services for low income and handicapped individuals ○ Installing pedestrian-controlled infrastructure along Providence Highway ○ Intergenerational programming ○ Location of police station once new station is built ○ Manage development ○ Manor Fields ○ More housing in Dedham Center, particularly for seniors ○ More parks/open space and making it more available to the public ○ New builders and new, innovative design ○ Opportunity to create a rail trail/access to trail around Wigwam Pond on private road off Eastern Avenue, putting in benches/furniture there ○ Tax revenues from new commercial development ○ Traffic improvements ○ Transparency/communication ○ Utilizing tax revenues to highlight the historic fabric and pursue open space activities

■ Station 4

Station 4 focused on familiarity, likes and dislikes in Dedham today. Participants were asked to provide this feedback via two exercises. The first exercise involved indicating areas on a large map that they believed were working and/or not working in town. Areas that were working were indicated with green dots, and areas that were not working were indicated with red dots. For clarification purposes, the person was asked to write the specific place, area, or item that they liked or disliked on the dot. For those comments that could not fit on the dot, comment sheets were provided. Following this exercise, participants were then asked to complete a brief survey of how often they visit certain areas in Dedham and how they get there. There were thirty completed surveys. The results from the dot exercise are outlined below.²

Locations in Dedham that are working and specific areas/places/reasons why they are working:

3.2. What's Working Well in Dedham, and Why?	
Dedham Mall: 1 green dot	East Dedham: 4 green dots
○ DSW	○ Mother Brooks Art and Community Center
○ Dick's Sporting Goods	○ Rail Trail
Dedham Plaza: 4 green dots	○ Mixed-use development (finally)
○ Gym	Legacy Place: 14 green dots
○ Keldara Salon	○ Diversity of stores
○ Strong residential market	○ Entertainment
○ Strong retail market	○ Job opportunities
Dedham Square: 15 green dots	○ Lunch options
○ Architectural history	○ Movie theater
○ Coffee shops	○ Restaurants
○ Community theater	○ Walkable
○ Farmer's Market	○ Whole Foods
○ Lots to do/options	○ Yoga
○ Restaurants/Variety of restaurants	Northwest Dedham: 3 green dots
○ Walkable	○ Open space
○ North Dedham: 2 green dots	○ Wilson Mt.
○ Cutler Park	

² Note: repeated items were consolidated.

Locations in Dedham that are not working and specific areas/places/reasons why they are not working:

3.3. What is Not Working Well in Dedham, and Why?	
<p>Dedham Square: 14 green dots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Must walk to ○ Light pollution ○ Needs more variety ○ Overly constructed ○ Parking ○ Poor new building design ○ Traffic <p>East Dedham: 4 green dots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of diverse store ○ No gun shop 	<p>Legacy Place: 5 red dots Need sidewalks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic ○ Parking <p>Providence Highway – 4 red dots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need sidewalks ○ Ugly corridor <p>Rustcraft Road – 1 red dot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cannot take left <p>East Street – 1 red dot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotary over intersection at Eastern Avenue <p>Wigwam Pond– 1 red dot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve access

There were twenty-nine comments that did not fit on the dots, and they are outlined below in Table 3.4.

3.4. Other Ideas – Positive and Negative – about Dedham Today	
<p>Green Dots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Architectural history throughout Motherbrook ○ Gonzalez Park next to Staples ○ Legacy Place is walkable and store choices, but the traffic is bad ○ New Early Childhood Education Center ○ Oakdale Square is very walkable and has good parking ○ Pay Park <p>Red Dots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Affordable housing near the town center ○ Dedham is not walkable and needs to be more pedestrian-friendly ○ Dedham Plaza does not have a lot to go to ○ Dedham Square could have more and higher density ○ Divisiveness of Route 1 hurts the town ○ Employee parking needed in Dedham Square ○ Local bus would be helpful 	<p>Red Dots (con't)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More wayfinding for getting around, particularly to Dedham Square ○ Need for more senior housing ○ Need local shuttle or more frequent MBTA ○ Need more services to facilitate ○ Need places for people to live and walk near Dedham Square ○ Parking should be free in Dedham Square ○ Poorly designed by the rotary ○ Riverdale is not walkable and has rundown sections ○ Shuttle bus from Keystone parking lot to the commuter rail, Legacy Place, etc. with greater frequency ○ Signage, parking and getting in/out of Dedham Square ○ Simultaneous construction in close areas by Rustcraft and High Streets ○ Too much building

3.4. Other Ideas – Positive and Negative – about Dedham Today	
<p>Make the High Street crosswalk safer for pedestrians (when cars turning off Washington Street)</p> <p>More diversity needed in East Dedham</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic back up from Rustcraft Road to Route 1 ○ Traffic in the Square coming down Route 135 ○ Traffic is a nightmare. It diminishes the quality of life and makes it undesirable to go out ○ Walkability of train stations ○ Would like more open space

■ Station 5

Station 5 gave attendees the chance to discuss their thoughts on issues and opportunities regarding traffic in Dedham, focusing on the principal areas in which mixed-use development can/is likely to occur under current zoning. To do this, a large map and a flip chart were provided to write on with markers. A summary of the comments provided on the flip chart and the topics discussed are outlined below.

- Signage and Wayfinding
- Parking
- Pedestrian infrastructure and amenities
- Bicycle infrastructure and amenities
- Transit
- Signal timings and/or improvements
- Roadway improvements
- “Cut through” traffic

Signage and Wayfinding. Comments received in this category focus on improving wayfinding in Dedham, particularly in Dedham Square. The comments received focus on directing to drivers to underutilized or “hidden” parking areas that require more walking once parked and general wayfinding improvements for all users, particularly pedestrians.

Parking. Parking issues was a common theme discussed at the open house, and most of the parking issues discussed focused on Dedham Square. Parking capacity improvements were heard and suggestions included:

- Building a new underground parking garage at the Dedham Community House field and constructing a new field on top of the parking structure.
- Constructing dedicated employee parking to open up parking for customers who shop in Dedham Square
- Making parking in Dedham Square cost free
- Creating shared parking in mixed-use zoning areas

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- Assure enough parking spaces for each unit of new mixed-use buildings (currently 1/unit)
- Old police station site – make it a park with underground parking garage (two check marks)

In addition to parking capacity issues, some open house attendees commented that improved parking management, possibly through the use of a public/private partnership as much of the parking in Dedham Square is privately owned, is what is needed. With development remaking Dedham Square over the last decade, they highlighted that has brought success, as well as congestion, to Dedham Square.

- The Zoning requirement of 5 spaces per 500 square feet of development in a “retail zone” is too high

Pedestrian infrastructure and amenities. Accommodations for pedestrians were discussed by many attendees as lacking throughout Dedham. Multiple areas were highlighted for improved pedestrian infrastructure such as Dedham Square, Rustcraft Road, Legacy Place and East Dedham. Specific suggestions included:

- Add a pedestrian crossing at Spring St. and VFW Highway to get to Bridge St.
- Add functional pedestrian crossing lights town-wide
- Dedham Square signals are not synced for pedestrian crossings
- The Brick House Restaurant exit and Moseley’s have difficult pedestrian/auto crossings – improve with lighting or signals
- Better sidewalks/retrofit in Legacy Place and require in all new developments in town in future to build sidewalks
- Add sidewalks in the following locations: Commuter Rail Station to General Dynamics and Commuter Rail Station to ball fields and playground
- Creating multiple pedestrian crossings over Route 1 (Providence Highway)
- Creating safe pedestrian access to the Charles River and Dolan Center
- Sidewalks in East Dedham need revamping in the neighborhoods. Make East Dedham Sq. walkability connections a priority – to Mother Brook Apartments and the Community Center
- Improved lighting for pedestrian access town-wide

The suggestions provided by those who attended have merits and drawbacks. Merits include thinking beyond automobile only transportation access, incorporating urban design into projects and addressing perceived feelings of safety concerns. While many of these suggestions would require major capital infrastructure investments, the Planning Board could enact a policy requiring new sidewalks to be built in all new developments that would help address several pedestrian infrastructure and amenity needs identified. This policy would be a start to incorporate elements of Complete Streets Design, ensuring safe and connected facilities are provided for all travel modes for people of all ages and abilities.

Bicycle infrastructure and amenities. Accommodations for bicyclists, similar to accommodations for pedestrians, were discussed by many attendees as lacking throughout Dedham. Multiple areas were highlighted for improved bicycle infrastructure such as Dedham Square, Rustcraft Road, Legacy Place and East Dedham. Specific suggestions included:

- More bicycle lanes throughout town, particularly on roadways connecting to neighboring towns
- Install more bicycle racks/parking in Dedham Square
- Rustcraft Road is not safe for biking now to Legacy Place – bicycle infrastructure should be prioritized here
- Creating safe bicycle access to the Charles River and Dolan Center
- Add a sidewalk connecting the Papa Gino’s plaza to Eastern Ave – add benches/overlook to pond
- Install bicycle lanes on High Street
- People have to drive to the Rail Trail that is being built. Why? Improve bicycle infrastructure so people can bike to and from the Rail Trail
- Extend Rail Trail from Dedham Square to Legacy Place via a new trail

Again, residents showed an affinity for improved bicycle infrastructure in Dedham. From the suggestions received, the Planning Board could enact a policy requiring bicycle lanes to be constructed/striped on prioritized streets to provide safe and connected bicycle facilities. In the longer term, capital infrastructure improvements, like extending the Rail trail from Dedham Square to Legacy Place with a new trail, would require significant coordination with local landowners and capital funding.

Transit. Transit accommodations were discussed by some attendees. Transit comments focused on improved connections to various places that were too far to walk or bike to. Areas desired to be served with improved transit included Providence Highway, Legacy Place, MBTA commuter rail stations and Dedham Square. Specific suggestions included:

- Add bus shuttle to Dedham Square expansion parking lot - too far away to walk
- Utilize Dedham’s local bus to Legacy Place for work trips (town owned bus, not MBTA)
- Establish bus shuttles (Keystone lot and new public safety building areas) to meet up with specific commuter rail trains into and out of Boston and Providence
- Work with the MBTA to improve service on the Walpole bus to 15-20 minute headways from existing 30 minute headways and extend to Legacy Place.

Improved transit accommodations could provide vehicle congestion relief while improving mobility for those persons who do not drive. The Town could provide local transit service using existing Council on Aging/Senior Center vans during “off hours” from their regular service or could work with business owners to subsidize bus

shuttle(s). Implementing transit service would require partnerships with the MBTA, a local RTA, private bus operators and the Town.

Signal timings and/or improvements. Some attendees discussed improvements to traffic signal timings for automobiles to help relieve congestion/traffic. Specific suggestions included:

- Make the timing of traffic signal at Eastern Avenue, Bryant Street and East St./Rte. 1 (at the Gulf Station) quicker. Long delay at this location.
- Make signal timing adjustments/improvements at Rustcraft Road.
- Make traffic signal improvements in the afternoon period (4-6pm) at East St./Vincent Road, as well as Dedham Plaza.
- Add traffic signal or create a roundabout at East Street, Eastern Avenue and Whiting Avenue.

Adjusting signal timings can improve traffic flow as long as they are coordinated with other signals in a corridor. Some timing adjustments can be made for specific times of day depending upon signal equipment in place. Installing new signals would require additional capital investment and, depending upon its location, may require coordination with MassDOT.

Roadway improvements. Some attendees suggested a number of roadway infrastructure improvements throughout Dedham. Specific suggestions included:

- Redirect traffic in Dedham Square to other “main” traffic corridors like Pine Street, Bridge Street, Ames Street and Route 135)
- High to Main St. (specific improvements not identified)
- Better roadway connection to Washington St. without using Dedham Plaza
- Follow a “Complete Streets model” when making roadway improvements

Redirecting traffic from Dedham Square to other roadways in town could require additional roadway widening or construction of new connecting streets in other neighborhoods and would “shift the problem” to a new location. Since the Town already participates in the Massachusetts Complete Streets Funding Program and has a \$454,300 roadway project approved for construction in FY 2020 on Eastern Avenue, Whiting Avenue and East Street, applying Complete Streets design features to future roadway improvements could enhance walking, biking and help with traffic calming.

“Cut through” traffic. This topic was discussed by a few attendees and specific suggestions included:

- Focusing on reducing cut-thru traffic throughout Dedham
- Colburn Street, between Dedham Square and High Street, should be looked at for traffic calming techniques because of driver who speed

- Reducing “choking cut through” traffic at the following locations:
 - East Street to Exit 14 in I-95/Route 128
 - Greenlodge Street to Vincent Road

One of the most frequent concerns from residents in any community is traffic congestion. While difficult to eliminate completely, congestion can be managed through multiple techniques. These techniques include traffic calming measures on roadways, improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure both on and off road, and improved access to additional transportation modes like local buses and commuter rail. The Planning Board, working with other Town Departments through its Complete Streets policy, could work to improve traffic congestion in specific locations through the implementation of the techniques described above.

Lighting/Landscaping. While not specifically a transportation issue, lighting was discussed by a number of attendees to the open house in an effort to increase visibility of vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians and potentially improve safety/personal comfort:

- Light pollution in Dedham Square is bad; lighting should dimmed between Rotary and High Street

Street lighting is important as it typically promotes a feeling of safety at night for pedestrians. Lighting effects can change based on the type of equipment installed and having “pedestrian scaled” lighting fixtures can promote both a feeling of safety and reduce light pollution into other neighborhoods.

■ Station 6

Station 6 was purposely designed to concentrate on the physical components and styles of mixed-use development, rather than opinions on current conditions and general questioning about Dedham. A visual preference survey of fifteen differing images was used to elicit input on preferred building types, architectural styles, and public amenities from attendees. They were asked to vote for the images they liked and disliked with green and red dots, then answer two specific questions on query cards about pattern and design. Before moving onto the next station, participants were asked what images they liked and disliked, and why. Many of those who participated in the visual preference survey did not complete all of the query cards. The results of the Visual Preference Survey are reported in Table 3.5.

3.5. The Visual Preference Survey

1: 12 green dots, 2 red dots
2: 12 green dots, 1 red dot
3: 11 green dots
4: 3 green dots, 15 red dots
5: 1 green dot, 13 red dots

6: 17 green dots, 1 red dot
7: 8 green dots, 5 red dots
8: 11 green dots, 1 red dot
9: 4 green dots, 12 red dots
10: 8 green dots, 5 red dots

11: 10 green dots,
12: 4 green dots, 5 red dots
13: 14 green dots, 1 red dot
14: 2 green dots, 12 red dots
15: 3 green dots, 18 red dots



Several patterns can be seen in the survey responses:

- Avoid becoming too dense, overly high building and creating unsafe traffic conditions
- Landscaping buffers
- Look to energy efficiency
- Look to the historic fabric, utilizing designs from historic buildings to blend old and new
- Fewer dormers, widow peaks, and “nods to the past”
- Need to break up monolithic facades
- Not too many stories high
- Pedestrian-friendly development
- Preference for variation/difference in styles in larger forms
- Fear of scale and a preference for New England residential styles, i.e. dormers

What design principles we can identify for future development?

- Age friendly, universal design
- Benches, landscaping, and trees should be part of the projects
- Do not need to protect historical buildings – new is not bad
- Ensure appropriate building height
- For school-aged children
- Maximize housing over retail
- Mixed income
- Net zero
- Pedestrian-friendly
- Prioritize affordable housing units, particularly for workers in Dedham
- Protect and reuse historic buildings
- Setbacks
- Solar for new buildings/solar panels
- Wide sidewalks for landscaping/walking

Which image did you particularly like? Why?

- Number 13; there is a mix of facades and places to sit
- Those that were low-rise with outdoor seating and green space
- Those that were smaller-scale, had green space, and design features on the façade
- Those with a quaint look

Which images did you particularly not like? Why?

- Number 13; it looks like small-town USA
- Number 4; looks like the soulless buildings in the Square
- Those that were bulky, monolithic, not set back from the sidewalk, and that have driveways/garages on the street
- Those that were high rise, with no retail at the street level
- Those with flat rooves or are too tall

■ Station 7

Station 7 was slated for comprehending the underlying social issues and the quality of life of Dedham residents today. Before any style of development can exist in a community, it is important to evaluate if/how that development will enhance the quality of life for residents. Station 7 was designed to learn from participants how mixed-use development will play a role in improving the town, where affordable housing and social equity will be incorporated, and what the desired community uses/amenities are in specific neighborhoods, as well as the town at large. To gather this information, a land use map of Dedham was provided for participants. Using the map as a point of reference, those visiting the station had to answer three questions covering social issues were separate query cards. The query cards were color-coded based on the question. Once the query cards were filled out, they were placed in a specific column on a display board (similar to Station 3). The query card questions and answers are documented below.

How does mixed-use development support or conflict with other Town priorities?

Support

- Create housing product and generate tax revenue. Reduce traffic impacts by encouraging walkable development
 - Housing should be added in communities that need students i.e. Riverdale
 - It is part of the priorities
- Mixed use is great, particularly for Dedham Square
- Need green/sustainable buildings
- Promotes diversity
 - So seniors do not have to go far for their needs
- Support to have a place for retirees and younger adults to live
- Supports aspects of current town Master Plan and satisfies housing needs identified in studies commissioned by the town
- There is a shortage of affordable housing – we need to embrace more density
- They conflict with people’s perceptions about traffic and parking, when those issues are actually driven by other issues
- Vitality of downtown and diversity
- Would like to see mixed-use aligned with town goals

Conflict

- Adds car towing
- Amend zoning laws to allow for multi-unit housing over mixed
- By tearing down older buildings and replacing them, we destroy Dedham’s historic character
- I do not see effective planning to accommodate this growth
- More traffic/traffic is already bad
- Parking issues
- Strain on resources and services
- There is tension to grow responsibly without raising taxes
- We are overbuilding, especially in Dedham Square

Other

- Does not make a difference to me
- Mixed use is great but with better traffic flow, parking issues addressed, and being more pedestrian/bike friendly
- Unless it is nice to look at, do not do it. The current ones in Dedham are ugly

What are Dedham's housing needs?

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's)
- Affordability
- Building economies of scale
- Community-based housing
- Density
- Diversity
- Downsizing options
- Extending transit
- Family housing
- Handicap/disability accessible
- Housing for the missing middle/middle-income
- Housing for those starting out
- Housing for those with low-to-moderate incomes
- Housing for those with moderate incomes
- Mixed-age/multigenerational
- Mixed-use development to offer rental and condominiums options for younger and older people
- More 3-bedroom options
- More condominiums
- More rental properties
- Multi-family housing
- Pedestrian/Cyclist-friendly
- Senior housing
- Single-family homes
- Smaller developments with smaller affordable homes
- Updated housing stock
- Walkability
- Workforce housing

How can mid-use development meet some of Dedham's housing needs?

- If regulations are rewritten, it can support affordable housing onsite or help pay into linkage funds. This also applies with ADU's. We can zone the whole town multi-family
- It can allow young families, aging residents, and those who are "house rich but cash strapped" to stay, invest and/or own in Dedham
- It can be age-friendly and employ universal design
- It can be larger than just one-bedroom units!
- It can be smaller scale with interesting, small design features such as 2-bedroom units. It can also have incorporated green space, targeted/specialized stores, and small groceries as retail options.
- It can create proximity for extended families
- It can create more affordable housing in a community that is not isolated
- It can create more condominiums and an overall broader mix of housing options
- It can help singles and small families come into Dedham without needing down payment money for a home
- It can increase diversity, expand inventory, and increase the vitality of downtown
- It can provide a variety of shopping opportunities and businesses for people to use
- It can provide smaller, affordable units for younger people and older residents looking to downsize and age in place
- It can provide young people with more options

■ Station 8

Station 8 focused on economic development in Dedham. A large part of this topic is knowing where future development and/or reinvestment would be most beneficial to the community, what currently developed areas could evolve as Dedham moves forward, and what the community's overarching economic goals for new commercial and industrial uses are. Station 8 prompted the participant to think about how future mixed-use development could be used to promote Dedham. As with the other stations, visitors were asked to complete a map exercise to provide us with this information. A base map of Dedham was provided with highlighted mixed-use districts. Participants were asked to place different types of commercial development game pieces on the districts they believed were the best fit or most appropriate. The game pieces covered office, industrial, retail, restaurant, research, and mixed-use development. The consensus from the station was that more types of uses, including mixed-use, can go in the Providence Highway corridor. As the purpose of this station was verbal discussion, no additional activities were included. There was reported lower attendance at this station, as it was the last station before the end of the event.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The second public outreach activity to gather feedback was a survey on issues and opportunities associated with current and potential mixed-use development in Dedham. A poster with the survey's QR code was displayed at the entrance/exit to the October Open House and the survey link was shared with the Town distribution through the website and other means, beginning with the date of the Open House. The survey closed on November 8, 2019. By the time the survey was deactivated, 372 people had responded, with an overall completion rate of 76 percent. The question set included basic demographic items, content questions specifically focused on Dedham Square, and broader questions about mixed-use development regardless of location. Detailed reporting of responses and skip rates per question are outlined below.

Do you currently live in Dedham?

- 97% of respondents lived in Dedham, or 360 people
- 3% of respondents did not live in Dedham, or 12 people



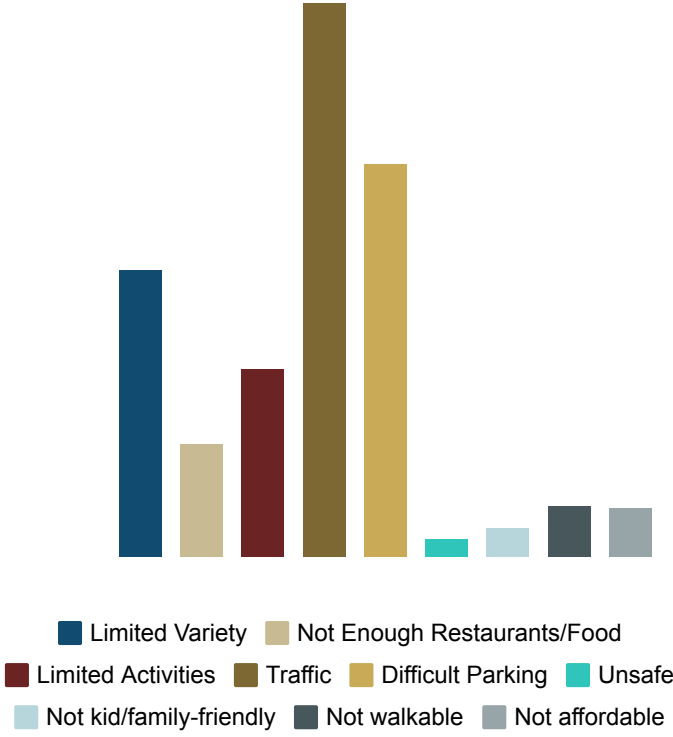
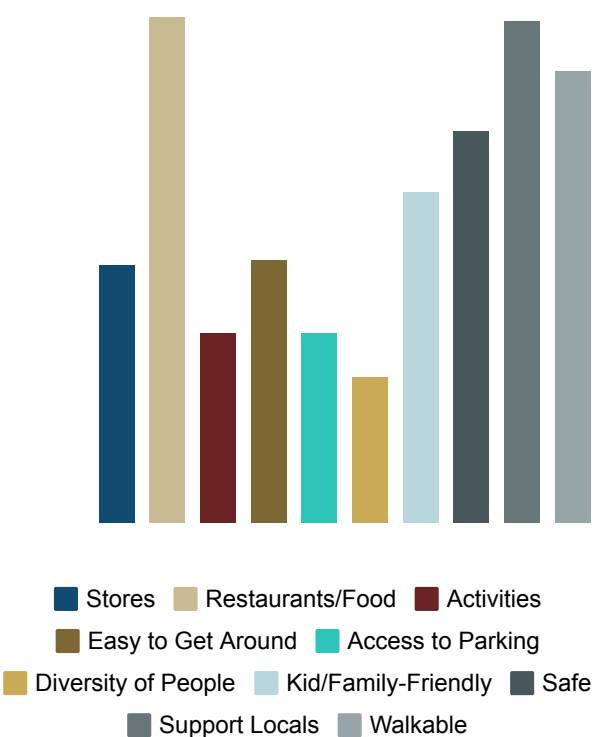
DEDHAM MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE ONLINE SURVEY DISTRIBUTED FROM OCTOBER 22ND - NOVEMBER 8TH 2019



WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT DEDHAM SQUARE?

WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE ABOUT DEDHAM SQUARE?





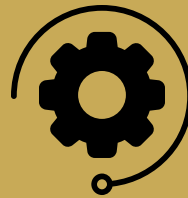
96% LIVED IN DEDHAM



40% LIVED IN DEDHAM FOR 20+ YEARS



34% OF RESPONDENTS WERE 35-44

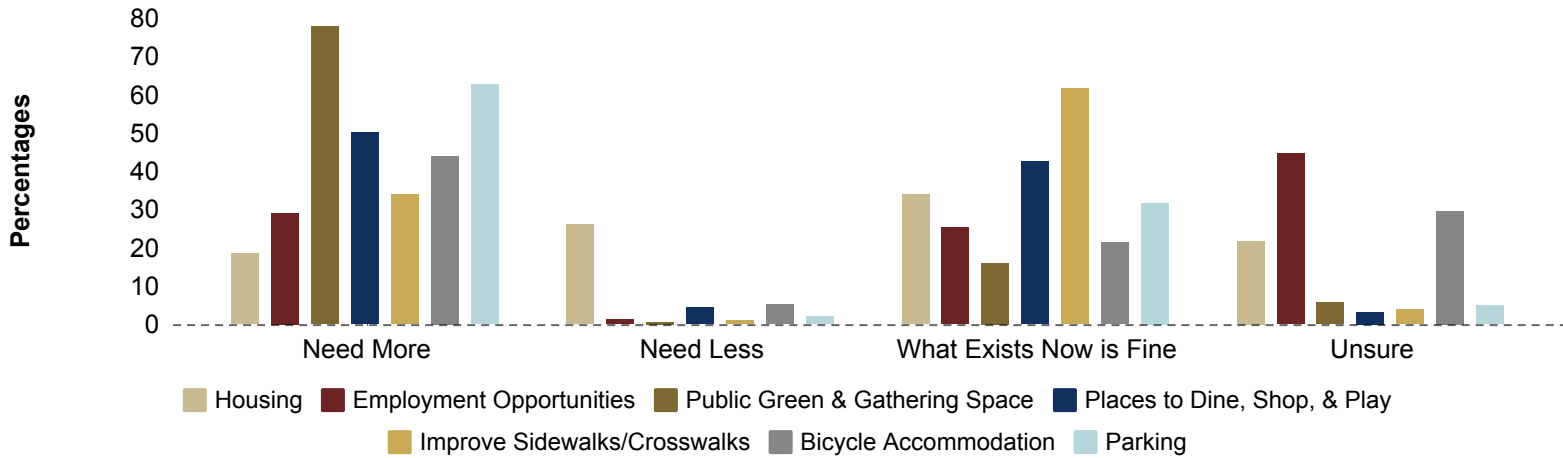


26% WORKED IN DEDHAM

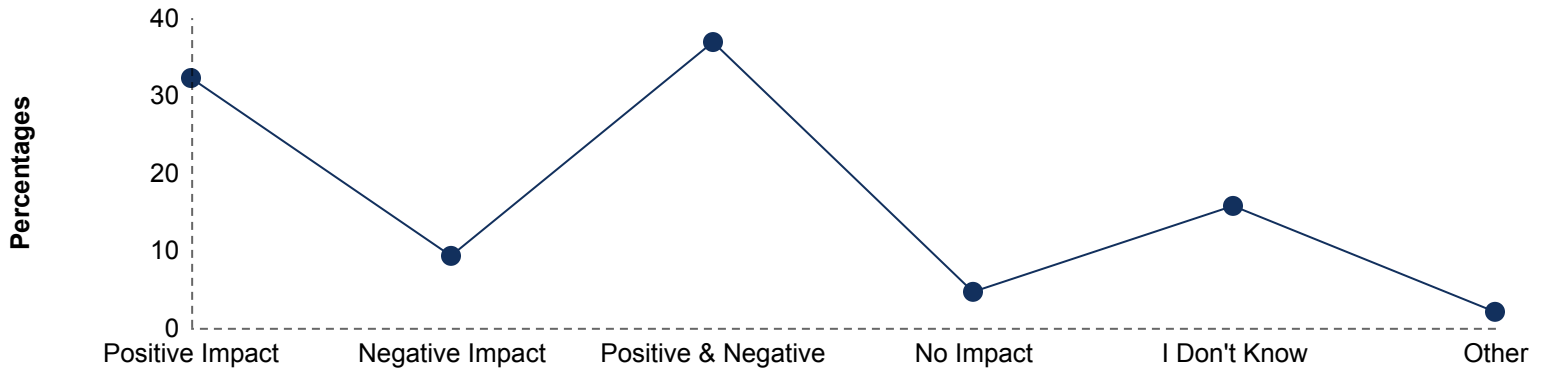


49% VISIT THE SQUARE 1-2X/WEEK

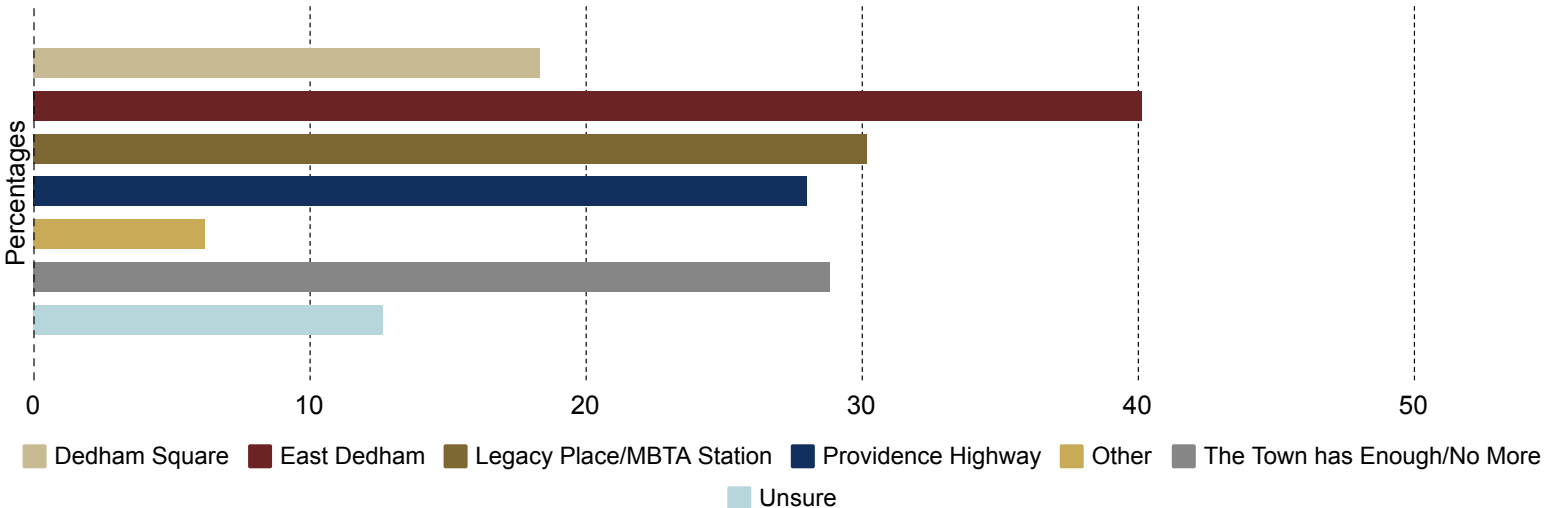
WHAT DOES DEDHAM SQUARE NEED?



HOW HAS MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IMPACTED THE SQUARE?



WHERE SHOULD MIXED-USE GO IN DEDHAM?



How long have you lived in Dedham?

- Less than one year: 2.5% of respondents, or 9 people
- 1-2 years: 4% of respondents, or 16 people
- 3-5 years: 13% of respondents, or 47 people
- 6-10 years: 18% of respondents, or 64 people
- 11-20 years: 23% of respondents, or 83 people
- 21-39 years: 23% of respondents, or 83 people
- 40 or more years: 17% of respondents, or 63 people

Please use the dropdown menu to indicate the area you live in according to the map.

- Section 1: 24% of respondents, or 87 people
- Section 2: 13% of respondents, or 46 people
- Section 3: 41% of respondents, or 147 people
- Section 4: 21% of respondents, or 76 people

What is your age?

- Under 18: .27% of respondents, or 1 person
- 18-24: 1% of respondents, or 4 people
- 25-34: 8% of respondents, or 28 people
- 35-44: 34% of respondents, or 126 people
- 45-54: 23% of respondents, or 86 people
- 55-64: 21% of respondents, or 77 people
- 65+: 13% of respondents, or 49 people

Do you work in Dedham?

- Yes: 26% of respondents, or 96 people
- No: 74% of respondents, or 74 people

How often do you visit Dedham Square?

- Every day, I live or work there: 16% of respondents, or 60 people
- Once or twice a week: 49% of respondents, or 181 people
- A few times a month: 26% of respondents, or 95 people
- Sometimes/infrequent: 6% of respondents, or 23 people
- Rarely or never: 3% of respondents, or 11 people

Overall, how would you describe the impact of the existing mixed-use developments on Dedham Square? (Reminder: Mixed-use developments are typically buildings with ground floor retail stores/offices, shops or restaurants with housing located on the upper floors.)

- Overall, they have had a positive impact: 32% of respondents, or 119 people
- Overall, they have had a negative impact: 9% of respondents, or 34 people
- They have had some positive and negative impacts: 37% of respondents, or 136 people
- There has been no impact at all: 5% of respondents, or 17 people
- I do not know/do not have enough information: 16% of respondents, or 58 people
- Other (please specify): 2% of respondents, or 7 people

The seven "Other" responses were as follows:

- "There is too much density in Dedham Sq. The traffic is ridiculous."
- "I feel it is overcrowded and there is an attempt to be all things to all people which is a difficult thing to do. One recent example - sitting in the sun enjoying a cup of coffee conflicted with loud thuds and noises from the boxing club. There are other examples. I am elderly so that could be the problem."
- "I had no idea these existed in Dedham Square."
- "Who lives in them? not the people who work there, not families, so it's a negative impact."
- "I don't go to this area because of the traffic congestion."
- "Higher buildings have removed Dedham from the remaining New England towns with charming quaint feel to them."
- "I am not sure I have enough information. In general, I like the idea. I do not know what the negative effects are! So, I would appreciate more information."

What do you like about Dedham Square? (Choose as many items as you wish.)

- Variety/number of stores: 38% of respondents, or 140 people
- Variety/number of restaurants and other food establishments: 75% of respondents, or 275 people
- Variety of activities/things to do: 28% of respondents, or 103 people
- Dedham Square is easy to get around: 39% of respondents, or 143 people
- Access to parking: 28% of respondents, or 103 people
- Diversity of people in Dedham Square: 22% of respondents, or 79 people
- Kid/family-friendly environment: 49% of respondents, or 180 people
- Safe: 58% of respondents or 213 people
- Supporting local businesses: 74% of respondents, or 273 people
- Walkable: 67% of respondents, or 246 people

And the most frequently mentioned "other" comments:

town love great variety used new
restaurants square stores parking Dedham
restaurants people need Dedham Square
business

What do you dislike about Dedham Square? (Check as many items as you wish.)

- Limited variety of/not enough stores: 36% of respondents, or 130 people
- Limited variety of/not enough restaurants: 14% of respondents, or 51 people
- Limited choices in activities/ things to do: 24% of respondents, or 85 people
- Traffic congestion: 70% of respondents, or 251 people
- Too hard to find a place to park: 49% of respondents, or 178 people
- Unfamiliar with the area today: 0% of respondents
- Unsafe: 2% of respondents, or 8 people
- Not kid/family-friendly: 4% of respondents, or 13 people
- Not walkable: 6.4% of respondents, or 23 people
- Not affordable: 6.1% of respondents, or 22 people

Respondents also said ...

shop cross good businesses go street restaurants hard
lights small parking
buildings drive see activities traffic way
love needs many walk

What does Dedham Square need? Please review the list of items below and tell us what you think.

	Needs More	Needs Less	What Exists Now is About Right	Not Sure
Housing Options	19%	26%	34%	22%
Employment Opportunities	29%	1%	25%	45%
Public Green Space	78%	.5%	16%	6%
Places to Dine, Shop, Play	50%	4%	43%	3%
Sidewalk/Crosswalk Improvements	34%	1%	62%	4%
Bicycle Accommodation	44%	5%	21%	29%
Parking	63%	2%	32%	5%

Respondents also said ...

apartments enough traffic love Dedham
 square problem make public
 one need crossing parking see
 square Dedham
 restaurants place lot think spaces
 small time



MIXED USE IMPACT STUDY PUBLIC OUTREACH

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM DEDHAM SQUARE'S INTERCEPT SURVEYS AND BUSINESS INTERVIEWS

INTERCEPT SURVEY FEEDBACK



**85% of Respondents
Visit Dedham
Square Often**



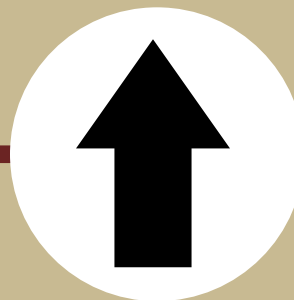
**55% of
Respondents Live
in Dedham**



**29% Liked
Apartments in the
Square**



**38% Want Dedham
to Consider Mixed-
Use in the Square**

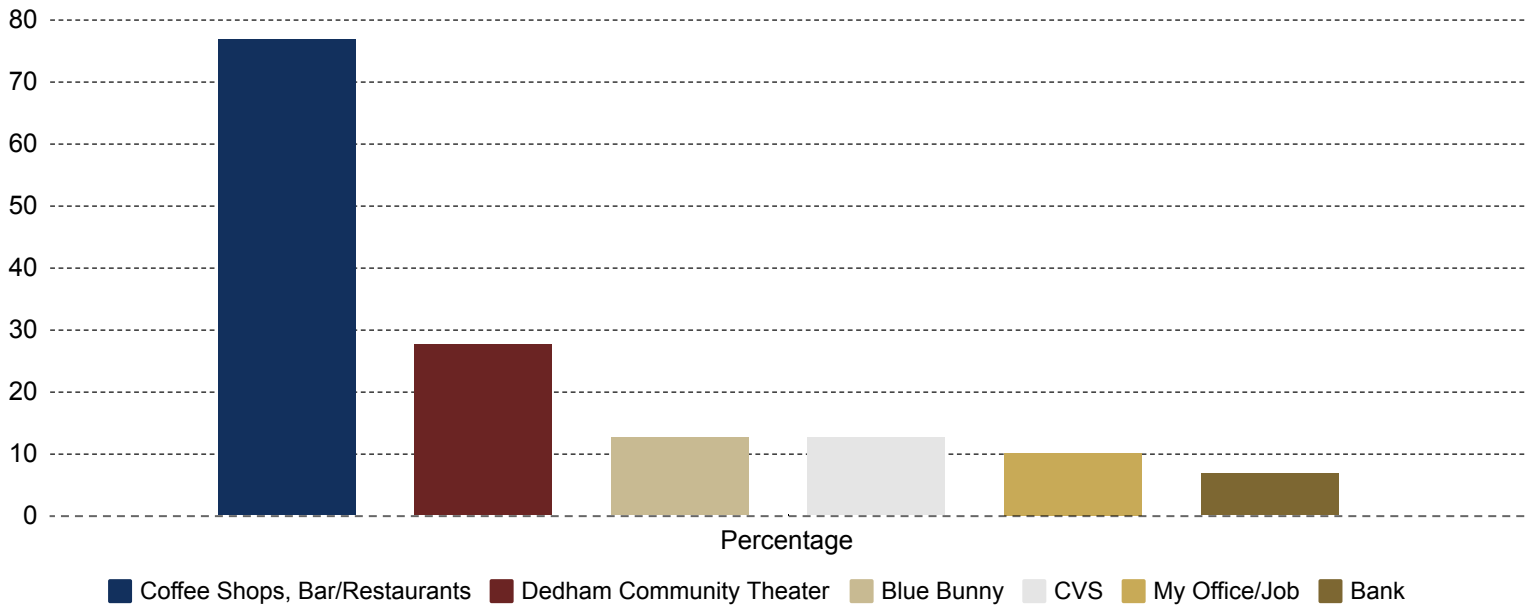


**36% Saw Potential for
More Apartments in
the Square**

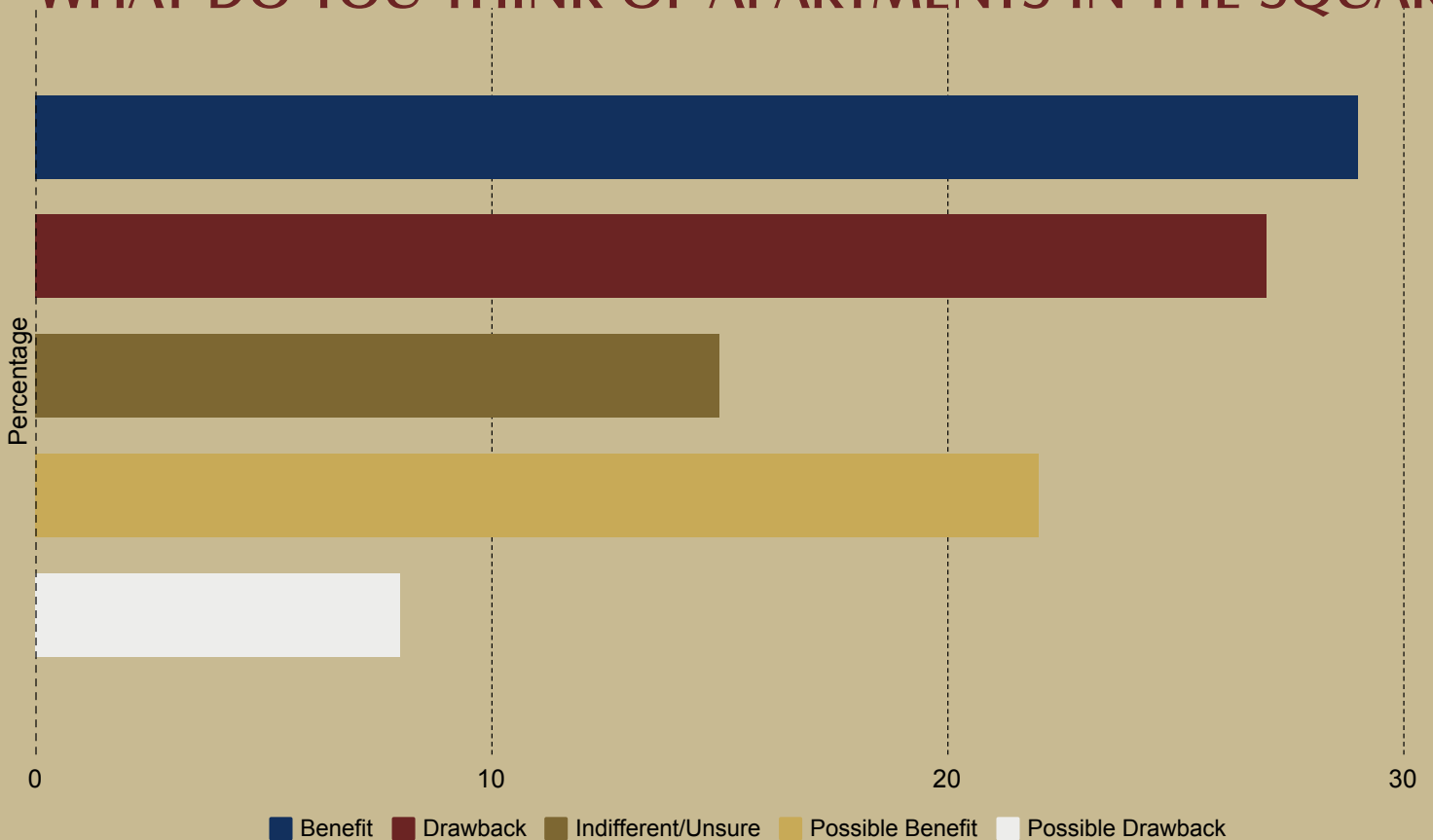
INTERCEPT SURVEY FEEDBACK



BUSINESSES VISITED DURING SURVEYS



WHAT DO YOU THINK OF APARTMENTS IN THE SQUARE?





BUSINESS INTERVIEW FEEDBACK



43% of Businesses
Have Been in the
Square for 20+ years



83% of Those
Interviewed Have
a Local Customer
Base

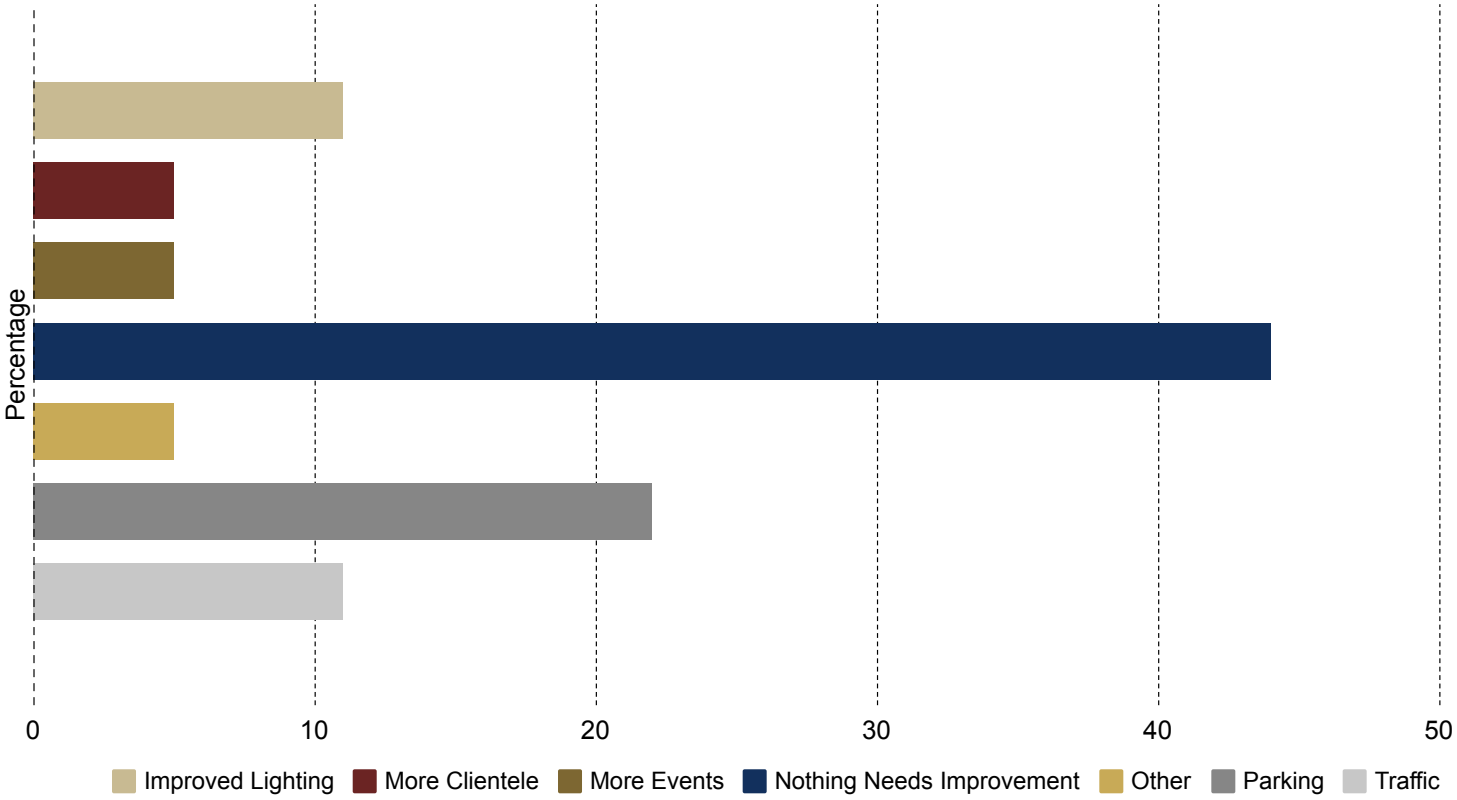


22% Believe Upper-
Story Apartments have
Positively Impacted
their Business



72% Said the Square
is a Good Place for
Their Business

WHAT WOULD MAKE DEDHAM SQUARE BETTER?



■ What We Learned

1. Do you live in Dedham?

- 55% of respondents live in Dedham
- 45% of respondents do not live in Dedham

2. Do you come to Dedham Square often?

- 85% of respondents come to Dedham Square often
- 12.5% of respondents do not come to Dedham Square often
- 2.5% of respondents said they come to the Square sometimes



3. Which Dedham Square businesses do you plan to visit while you are here today?

76% of respondents were visiting a coffee shop, restaurant, or bar when they took the survey. The recurring establishments visited were:

- Big Bear Café
 - Café Fresh Bagel
 - Dedham House of Pizza
 - Dedham Square Coffeehouse
 - Deli After Dark
 - Grateful Dedham Diner
 - Horse Thieves Tavern
 - Kouzina
 - Oscar's
 - Pancho's Taqueria
 - Ron's Ice Cream
 - Salem Food Market
 - Vincenzo's
-
- 27.5% were visiting the Dedham Community Theater
 - 12.5% were visiting CVS
 - 12.5% were visiting the Blue Bunny and Mocha Java
 - 10% of interviewees were going to/leaving work or a business they owned in the Square

Each of the other businesses visited used during the surveys include:

- Courthouse Cigar
- Courtyard Florist
- Dedham Travel
- Dedham Women’s Exchange
- DeSario Training Systems
- Emily and Addie Children’s Boutique
- Gopen Optical
- La Luce Pastry Shop
- Mac and PC Guys
- Mimi’s II News
- Nail Salons (Various)
- Nest
- Physical Therapy
- Staples
- The Court House
- Various Dentists
- The JamZone
- The Library
- The Post Office
- The Senior Center
- Town Hall
- Various Banks
- Various Hair Salons
- Yoga Now

4. What do you like most about Dedham Square? The most popular responses were as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ○ All It/Many Things – 4% | Parking – 11.6% |
| ○ Businesses, Bookstore, Theater – 35% | Feeling/Atmosphere – 17.5% |
| ○ Convenient – 9% | The Look/Character - 16% |
| ○ Diversity/Options – 25% | The People – 11.6% |
| ○ Easy to Get to/Accessible – 11.6% | The Square’s Growing |
| ○ Events – 4% | Success/Improvements Over Time – 9% |
| ○ Outdoor Seating – 4% | Walkable – 15% |

Other less common and more specific responses were (each were 3 % or less of total responses):

- Affordability
- Different Than Other Areas
- Familiarity with Dedham Square
- Grew up in the Area
- I Do Not Like the Square
- Location
- Maintenance of the Area
- Services There
- The Family Environment
- The Historical Society
- The Layout
- The Library
- Unsure/I do not know

5. What do you dislike most about Dedham Square? The most popular responses were as follows:

- Charging for Parking – 4%
- Dangerous Intersections/Crosswalks – 9%
- Lack of Variety – 5%
- Nothing – 37%
- Parking Availability and Access – 26%
- Parking Machines/Meters – 4%
- Traffic – 14%
- Traffic Lighting and Signage – 4%

Other less common and more specific responses were (each were 3 % or less of total responses):

- Business I Frequent is Gone/Business Turnover
- Lack of accessibility
- Lack of Green Space
- Lack of Pedestrian/Cyclist-Focuses Strategies
- New Apartments and Businesses
- No Dunkin Donuts
- No Public Restrooms
- Noisy/Too Loud
- Not Affordable
- Not Enough Opportunities for People to Meet
- Older Buildings
- Smoking in the Square

- Speeding
- Trash
- Underutilized Space
- Vacant Storefront

6. Do you think having apartments in Dedham Square is a benefit to the area or a drawback?

- 29% of respondents thought that having apartments in Dedham Square would be a benefit to the area
- 27% of respondents thought having more apartments in Dedham Square would be a drawback
- 22% believed they were a possible benefit, dependent upon the approach and/or if certain design standards and traffic remediation measures were taken during the process
- 15% were indifferent or unsure
- 8% believed they were a possible drawback and that other changes in Dedham Square had to be made before considering future development

7. Do you think the Town should consider allowing mixed-use buildings in other parts of Dedham, such as East Dedham or Providence Highway? Why or why not?

- Allow in Dedham Square – 38%
- Allow in the Square with Parking/Traffic/Transit Improvements – 4%
- Allow in the Square with Specific Design Standards in Place – 5%
- Consider Outside of Dedham Square – 40%

Specific areas outside of Dedham Square that were suggested as locations for mixed-use development:

- Anywhere in Town Other Than the Square – 1 mention
- By University Station – 2 mentions
- Dedham Mall – 2 mentions
- East Dedham – 11 mentions
- Just Outside the Square Limits – 2 mentions
- Legacy Place – 6 mentions
- Oakdale – 1 mention
- Precinct 1 - 1 mention
- Providence Highway/Route 1 – 2 mentions
- The Manor – 1 mention
- Hold Mixed-Use Development for Now – 3%
- I Do Not Know/Unsure – 11%

- Not at All – 2.5%
- Outside of the Town of Dedham – 5%
- Worth Evaluating in the Square – 8%

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS INTERVIEWS

To gain a stronger understanding of the community's thoughts on mixed-used development in Dedham Square, we conducted phone interviews with local business owners in the area. In coordination with Dedham Square Circle, businesses were asked five short questions focusing on doing business in the Square and the impacts of mixed-use development thus far. Input from this portion of the Square's population was critical in understanding both the direct and indirect results of the newer mixed-use development that has already been constructed.



The phone interviews were conducted over the course of three days: October 30, 2019, November 15, 2019, and November 18, 2019. We asked 52 businesses for interviews. Eighteen businesses agreed to participate. The interviews took an average of two-to-three minutes to complete.

The businesses that were interviewed were chosen based on information posted on Dedham Square Circle's website. The second day of interviews was the most successful, with seventy-seven percent of total responses collected. Business owners that were interviewed did not inquire as to the reason for the interviews, and none requested further information. Some interviewees were familiar with the concept of mixed-use development; however, the majority were not. Fifty-five percent of those interviewed have been in business in the Square for over fifteen years.

The interview questions were as follows:

1. How long have you been in business in Dedham Square?
2. Where do your customers come from?
3. Overall, do you think having upper-story apartments in Dedham Square has had a positive or negative impact on the businesses here, or no impact at all? Please describe.

4. Overall, do you find Dedham Square to be a good place for your business? What would make it better?

5. Based on your experience, what other parts of Dedham should be considered for mixed-use developments in the future? Any?

■ What We Heard

1. How long have you been in business in Dedham Square?

- 22% of interviewees have been in the Square between 1 and 5 years
- 22% of interviewees have been in the Square between 31 and 40 years
- 16% of interviewees have been in the Square between 6 and 10 years
- 16% of interviewees have been in the Square between 11 and 20 years
- 11% of interviewees have been in the Square for 80 years or longer
- 5% of interviewees have been in the Square between 21 and 30 years
- 5% of interviewees have been in the Square between 61 and 70 years

2. Where do your customers come from?

- 83% of interviewees reported that their customers came from or were local
- 55% of interviewees reported that their customers came from/also came from surrounding towns. Some of the towns mentioned were:
 - Canton
 - Hyde Park
 - Medfield
 - Milton
 - Needham
 - Norwood
 - West Roxbury
 - Westwood
- 22% said areas outside those specified above or did not say
- 11% of interviewees stated their customers came from all over Norfolk County

3. Overall, do you think having upper-story apartments in Dedham Square has had a positive or negative impact on the businesses here, or no impact at all? Please describe.

- 27% believe there has been little-to-no impact on the businesses
- 22% of interviewees believe the upper-story apartments have had a positive impact
- 22% have reported there has been only a slightly positive impact
- 16% of interviewees said they did not know or were unsure
- 5% reported that there was both positive and negative impacts on businesses
- 5% of interviewees believe they have had a negative impact on the businesses
- 5% have reported there has been a slightly negative impact

4. Overall, do you find Dedham Square to be a good place for your business? What would make it better?

- 72% of those interviewed said that Dedham Square is a good place for their business
- 16% said that the Square is sometimes a good place for their business
- 16% said that the Square is a good place for their business, but it does need certain improvements

The following issues were reported as needing improvement or were stated as what would make Dedham Square better:

- Improved lighting – 11%
- More Clientele – 5%
- More events – 5%
- Nothing Needs Improvement – 44%
- Other – 5%
- Parking – 22%
- Traffic – 11%

5. Based on your experience, what other parts of Dedham should be considered for mixed-use developments in the future? Any?

- 44% were unsure/did not know
- 27% said that no other parts of Dedham should be considered and/or that Dedham has enough already
- 27% said that anywhere in Dedham would be suitable if parking is provided
- 16% of interviewees said East Dedham should be considered
- 11% of interviewees said Dedham Square should be considered
- 5% of interviewees said Riverdale should be considered
- 5% of interviewees said outside of Dedham Square, but did not specify where

RECOMMENDATIONS

DEDHAM ZONING

When we began working on this project, we turned to the statement of purposes in Section 7.4. It seemed to us that if our job was to evaluate the impact of development that has occurred under Dedham’s zoning, the outcomes – the existing projects – should be viewed against the regulatory framework that produced them. We encourage everyone with an interest in mixed-use development in Dedham to do the same. These are the purposes listed in Section 7.4.1:

1. Encourage and allow a mixture of complementary land uses to create economic and social vitality, and to address the housing needs of the Town.
2. Develop mixed-use areas and buildings which are safe, comfortable, and attractive to pedestrians.
3. Provide flexibility in the siting and design of new developments and redevelopments to anticipate changes in the marketplace.
4. Encourage efficient land use by facilitating compact, high-density development and minimizing the amount of land needed for surface parking.

We did not find any evidence that the mixed-use projects built under Section 7.4 conflict with these purposes. There are ways that future developments could be improved in terms of urban design. In addition, there are ways that Dedham’s dimensional and density regulations could be revised to provide for the “compact, high-density development” contemplated in the Bylaw and envisioned in Dedham’s award-winning 2009 Master Plan. However, we do not think the existing Bylaw needs a comprehensive rewrite at this time. A town that wants to promote mixed-use development would remove some of the shackles imposed by Section 7.4, but Dedham’s “controlled encouragement” has worked and it can continue to work substantially as-is.

■ Recommended Amendments

7.4.3 Conditions, Restrictions, and Requirements

Existing:

1. *All dwelling units in a Mixed-Use Development shall be located above the ground floor, shall have a separate entrance, and shall not share stairs or hallways with commercial uses, except that a fire escape or exit used only in emergencies may be available at all time to both.*

Recommendations:

- In districts other than Central Business and Limited Business, allow *horizontal* mixed-use development, i.e., where a project's mix of uses may be located in separate structures on the same site, subject to all of the following:
 - At least one building on the lot must be a vertically mixed structure, with housing or offices on upper floors and pedestrian-oriented commercial and civic uses on the ground floor facing the street (or the primary or frontage street for corner lots). Entrance to a lobby or common access to the upper-story units may also be located on the front façade. For purposes of this provision, the vertically mixed building shall be considered the primary building in the project.
 - The main entrance to the primary building must be on the front façade.
 - The front façade of primary building must be parallel to the public right-of-way.
 - Developments with multiple buildings may have more than one building facing the street or buildings arranged in a courtyard or other configuration. Two or more buildings facing the street shall be set back uniformly.
 - No parking will be allowed between the front building line of the primary building and the public right-of-way. In a development with multiple buildings, off-street vehicular parking may be located at grade at the rear of each building, in a courtyard serving multiple tenants, in a structured parking facility (parking garage), in an offsite parking area with safe pedestrian access within 500 feet of the site, or any combination of the above.
 - On the rear elevation of any building in the development, the ground floor may be used for at-grade parking to serve residential or nonresidential tenants. The ground floor may also be used to provide residential units with universal access.

- There should be minimum requirements for bicycle parking in addition to vehicular parking.
- There should be minimum design standards for pedestrian walkways, including texture/composition, landscaping, lighting, and amenities.
- Free-standing residential buildings could include townhouse-style buildings (with each unit having at-grade access) or multifamily buildings.
- For purposes of determining compliance with the FAR of 1.0, floor area shall be the sum of the floor area in all buildings in the development.
- The bylaw needs to authorize the Design Review Board to establish basic design guidelines for mixed-use development in the various districts where this class of use is allowed, and for a design review process with the Planning Board that includes architectural peer review.
- A large project (say, 25,000 sq. ft. or more) should provide public space or amenities, i.e., for the mutual enjoyment of a development's residential tenants and patrons and employees of the development's businesses. Amenities may include facilities such as a pedestrian plaza, landscaped green space, benches, public art, and so forth. Locating outdoor restaurant seating adjacent to this kind of public space can create a very desirable environment both for residents of the development and other patrons of the restaurant.

Existing:

2. *Each dwelling unit in a Mixed-Use Development shall have a complete set of sanitary facilities, cooking, and living space that includes sleeping facilities independent from another dwelling unit in a Mixed-Use Development. A Mixed-Use Development may share common storage, laundry facilities, and other customary shared facilities located within a Mixed-Use Development. Each dwelling unit cannot be less than four hundred (400) square feet and not more than one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet in total gross floor area and must meet all occupancy and Building Code requirements. The maximum number and type of allowable residential dwelling units shall be determined by the Planning Board as part of the Special Permit and site plan review process; provided, however, there may not be more than two (2) residential dwelling units in a Mixed-Use Development in the LB Zoning District.*

Recommendations:

- Consider eliminating the minimum floor area of 400 sq. ft. per unit.
- If the Planning Board still wants authority to decide how many units will be allowed in a mixed-use project, the Bylaw needs objective criteria to guide these decisions so that applicants can reasonably anticipate what they will be allowed to do. As for the type of units to be allowed, that should be a function of market demand

and the physical capacity of the site to accommodate all the uses an applicant proposes to build. In any town, there is a potential slippery slope with public boards deciding whether to allow units with multiple bedrooms, for example. Best to eliminate the hazard of a federal Fair Housing Act violation. Existing:

3. *All Mixed-Use Development shall provide at least one parking space per dwelling unit. In all zoning districts except the CB Zoning District, Mixed Use Developments shall provide additional parking for the nonresidential uses per the requirements set forth in Table 3 (Dedham Parking Table). Mixed Use Developments in the CB Zoning District shall provide such additional parking, if any, for the nonresidential uses as determined by the Planning Board to be sufficient to meet the needs of such Mixed Use Developments, taking into consideration complementary uses and activities having different peak demands, joint parking arrangements, the availability of on-street and public parking, and such other mitigating factors and measures as may be appropriate.*

Recommendations:

- The Town’s off-street parking regulations are excessive and need to be overhauled. Standards like a minimum of one space per 200 sq. ft. of retail floor area or two spaces for 5 seats of restaurant seating capacity are completely at odds with the kind of “compact development” called for in Section 7.3. For mixed-use developments, it would be better to have an alternative (reduced) table of parking requirements that recognizes the benefits of shared parking.

Existing:

4. *A Mixed-Use Development in the RDO or HB Zoning District with twelve (12) or more apartments shall have maximum lot coverage of 80% and a maximum floor area ratio of 1.0. In the RDO Zoning District, there shall not be more than thirty (30) apartments located on any lot or on any abutting lots held in common ownership on the date of the adoption of this provision.*

Recommendations:

- If we were revising and updating Dedham’s Zoning Bylaw, we would discourage the use of floor area ratios (FAR). That goes beyond our charge, however. To be consistent with the Town’s established approach to regulating intensity of use, we think it is fine to maintain the maximum FAR of 1.0 and maximum lot coverage of 80 percent in the RDO or HB districts for projects with 12 or more units.
- The cap of 30 apartments per lot seems arbitrary and should be eliminated. If the goal is to regulate the size of an individual multifamily building, that would make

more sense. A standard of anywhere from 24 to 36 units per building could be considered as long as there is a waiver provision allowing the Planning Board to approve larger structures in order to promote compact form.

Comments on Dimensional and Density Regulations

Dedham could use better dimensional regulations, coupled with design standards, to provide much more successful approaches to placemaking. This is especially true for mixed-use development in the larger commercial districts where there may be very little “sense of place” and no human-scale development today. The suggestions listed below are, in our view, fairly basic steps toward a better bylaw.

- Establish a maximum front setback in addition to the existing minimum. However, if the Board is reluctant to do this, prohibiting off-street parking between the front building line and ROW will likely accomplish the same outcome. The minimum should not exceed the existing 30’ setback requirement.
- If the Board is open to setting a maximum front setback (which we recommend in all districts), there needs to be some flexibility for extending the setback to accommodate amenities such as a plaza, square, courtyard, recessed entrance, sidewalk, multi-use path, raised terrace, façade offsets, or outdoor dining (but not for automobile use).
- If the Board opts for a maximum front setback approach, the Bylaw should allow a deeper setback for buildings located toward the rear of a lot in a courtyard-type configuration, i.e., multiple buildings on one lot, as long as the forwardmost buildings on the lot comply with the minimum-maximum front setbacks listed here.
- A single building with a large flagship tenant, such as a theater, should be allowed to have a deeper setback if the entrance to the large tenant is wrapped with liner shops that comply with the front setback requirement.
- Maximum building height for this type of project should be 45 feet, not 40. In the Central Business or Limited Business district, consider requiring an upper-story façade step-back on a building exceeding two stories or 35 feet.
- For vertical mixed-use buildings (and also for free-standing commercial buildings), there should be a minimum and maximum first-floor height. Consider 14 feet for the minimum and 18 for the maximum.
- The Bylaw conspicuously omits basic design standards such as fenestration and transparency (windows), a cap on the length of a blank wall, and maximum separations between ground-floor entrances.

Other Comments

- In reviewing the special permit decisions for recently approved mixed-use projects, McMahon Associates found that some sections of the Zoning Bylaw generate many requests for waivers. An example is Section 5.2.2.2 (Lot Interior Landscaping), which has been the subject of waiver requests for five of the nine mixed-use projects that McMahon reviewed for the Planning Board between October 2012 and September 2018. If a provision consistently appears in waiver requests, it is a problem and should either be revised or eliminated.
- The Planning Board should commission an urban design study and adopt design guidelines for development along the Providence Highway and other areas of town similar to the design guidelines that Gamble Associates prepared for Dedham Square. We heard comments from several current and former town officials who expressed disappointment with the quality and appearance of most of the existing mixed-use buildings. We agree.
- It is unfortunate that the Design Review Advisory Board does not have a more prominent role in permitting in Dedham. Dedham may want to leave the overall structure of permitting as-is, but if so, we recommend that the Planning Board engage a peer review architect during the special permit process for mixed-use developments over a certain size (e.g., 20 or more units).

■ Housing Affordability

Several people we interviewed at town hall, in Dedham Square, and elsewhere, as well as attendees at the open house, told us that Dedham should require affordable units within mixed-use developments. We agree, to a point. Many Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) bylaws and ordinances in New England have fallen short of hoped-for affordability because the regulations are excessive, “boilerplate” copied from one type of housing market to another, or written to solve problems that IZ is not really designed to address. The latter problem is more pronounced in Massachusetts than any other state we have worked in. The reason is that communities see IZ as a way to block unwanted Chapter 40B comprehensive permits, but it is rare ifor an IZ-covered project to deliver a project large enough to fill a Chapter 40B “gap.”

If the Dedham Planning Board wants zoning that can create affordable housing – not because of Chapter 40B but rather, to address actual gaps between market-rate production and area incomes – it makes sense to explore IZ as a *separate* activity. We recommend uncoupling the subject of zoning for affordable housing from the near-term conversations the Board needs to have to improve the mixed-use development bylaw. IZ is more complicated than many people realize. From our years of experience with IZ ordinances and bylaws, we offer the following recommendations as a “path forward” for determining what will work best in Dedham:

- Focus on getting an IZ bylaw that developers can actually use to create affordable housing.
- Provide for an as-of-right density bonus for multifamily projects that include affordable units.
- Consider a flexible approach to defining “affordable” and quantifying the developer’s obligation. For example, a bylaw could require multifamily developments of 20 or more units to include 15 percent affordable units at 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) or 8 percent at 50 percent of AMI (giving developers the option to decide). This type of approach allows for a broader mix of incomes and helps a wider range of tenants.
- Adopt an approach to IZ that leaves the “mechanics” or bylaw administration to staff. An affordable housing requirement should not fall within the purview of the specula permit granting authority. If a project has to comply, it has to comply – i.e., there is no need for discretionary approval. An exception would be if an applicant wanted to request any waivers of the IZ bylaw, the waivers would need to be handled at the special permit stage.
- Set “triggers” that are realistic. Exempt single-family homes and small multifamily projects, or allow the developers of small multifamily projects to pay a fee in lieu to an affordable housing trust fund. The class of developer that builds small projects is not the same as the group that builds larger ones. One of the biggest problems we have found in IZ bylaws and ordinances is the failure to connect feasibility with the capacity of developers who develop different types of housing.
- Allow the developer to do some off-site affordable units as long as some of the required affordable units are also on-site. Sometimes the ability to work with a couple of sites makes it feasible for the developer to comply.
- Consult with developers in Dedham, both those working at a small scale and a large scale, to get their input about what might make IZ successful. Chances are most developers will balk at the idea of an affordable housing requirement, but they usually have good ideas that would never occur to town boards and staff.

MOBILITY, TRAFFIC, PARKING

Based on the completed analysis, the mixed-use projects reviewed and described previously have little to no impact on mobility, traffic or parking throughout Dedham as identified through the minimal request for, and granting of, waivers from the Planning Board.

■ Stantec Parking Study

In December 2018, Stantec completed for the Town of Dedham's Economic Development Department the *Dedham Square Parking Study*. The goals of this study were to:

- Use existing infrastructure more effectively, creating shared parking opportunities for
- county, town, and business employees
- Improve enforcement to ensure availability
- Identify opportunities for better signage and wayfinding
- Identify more user-friendly parking payment technology
- Identify more business-friendly, flexible parking
- Determine applicability of a Parking Benefit District
- Assess adequacy of current supply to support proposed development

The study reviewed existing inventory and regulations, analyzed parking utilization, conducted a zoning review and examined multimodal conditions. The seven recommendations from the results of the study were:

1. Streamline and simplify parking regulations
2. Restructure parking pricing to better match demand
3. Designate enforcement role and enforce
4. Identify potential shared off-street parking lot(s)
 - Designate employee parking lot
5. Create a unified downtown Dedham parking system
 - Enhance user-experience/information
 - Add wayfinding & signage
 - Streamline payment systems
6. Reduce car trips: add walk, bike, car share amenities
7. Plan for long-term re-development, including additional downtown density

The Town needs to adopt and act upon Stantec's recommendations because they have the potential to address (if not eliminate) many of the frustrations people have expressed about parking in Dedham Square.

■ Reduce the Need for Waiver Requests

While changes to the entire Zoning Bylaws or Permitting Process are not recommended, the Planning Board should consider making changes to portion(s) of the "Mixed Use Developments" section where consistent requests for waivers by developers are occurring. For example, Section 5.2.2.2 (Lot Interior Landscaping) of the Zoning Bylaws has been a consistent waiver request for five (5) of the nine (9) projects that McMahon reviewed between October 2012 and September 2018 (See Table 2.2-2.4 for analysis of waiver requests). Because of these consistent requests for waiver, the Planning Board should propose amendments this section.

APPENDIX

CASE STUDIES
