

Town of Chelmsford  
Center Village Master Plan Implementation Committee  
50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, MA 01824

MINUTES  
February 10, 2022

**Attending:** Janet Askenburg (vice-chair), Jack Handley, Michael Rigney (chair), Nancy Araway

**Not Present:** Brian Milisci

**Others Present:** Evan Belansky (Community Development Director),

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass. This meeting was hand recorded by the chair.

This meeting was called to order at 6:27PM by the chair.

## **1. Existing projects update**

### **a. Brookwalk and other expression of interest topics**

E. Belansky provided a copy of the expression of interest that the Town submitted to the State as a preliminary step towards funding for local projects. He said further steps will include deciding on specific requests and amounts and that requests could be pooled across different areas in the Town. He believes requests for planning funds will not be funded as well as requests for implementation funds. The deadline is June 3<sup>rd</sup>, so conversations should happen in the next few months. The brookwalk might not be an easy fit in development, but it is well documented, which is a plus. Funding a market analysis of the Center Village area might also be appropriate. The state will look for applications reflecting community consensus and will prefer applications for projects in which the Town has a demonstrated commitment to (i.e. has already put some skin in the game). He believe the state is especially looking for plans addressing housing or economic development. The expected magnitude of the funding is on the order of \$25,000 for the Center Village, perhaps \$100,000 across the entire town.

### **b. Parking in the Center**

E. Belansky reported that an appraisal had been submitted to the Town and Americal for review. The Select Board will consider it at its next meeting in executive session. The draft list of warrant articles contains a placeholder for the town to vote on the acquisition.

N. Araway moved to instruct the chair to speak at the Select Board meeting to remind the Select Board that the Center Village Master Plan identifies a long-term interest in parking in the center. J. Askenberg suggested that the statement also reiterate the goal to support actions to identify, secure, and promote additional municipal parking which was affirmed at the last meeting.

Motion carries 4-0

### **c. Art on the Brook wrap up**

No action was taken on this item, it will be carried over to the next meeting.

### **d. Fiske House**

E. Belansky reported that the Fiske House owner had requested a subdivision of the Fiske House itself from the rear parking lot. There have been multiple parties interested in the Fiske House itself but not in the back lot.

### **e. Other updates**

9 Acton Rd is moving forward after meeting with abutters. The total number of units is now down to 20 units, but the developer probably can't go any lower. Concerns still remain. This committee should be thinking about input on brookwalk access. Current plans only provide a 5' easement on a previous walkway. The lot does not extend all the way to the brook, the land closest to the brook is actually owned by the Grist Mill COA.

## **2. Public input**

No one came forward.

## **3. New Business - future agenda items and to-do summary**

1. MR to ask Lisa for an accounting of income and expenditures for Art on the Brook.
2. MR to speak at the next Select Board public input session to encourage the Select Board to seriously consider the opportunity to purchase parking in the back lot of the Fiske House.
3. The committee to make a formal request to the Planning Board to modify Center Village Overlay, at a short meeting on 17th.

## **4. Minutes approval**

January 13, 2022 - No action taken

## **5. Next Meeting Date**

No date set before the meeting was adjourned.

## **6. Adjournment**

J. Askenburg made a motion to adjourn at 7:14 pm, seconded by J. Handley, motion carries 4-0.

# Section 1.

## Prospective Applicant & Project Information

### 1.1. Primary Location:

*Chelmsford*

|                                 |  |                         |                   |                            |                   |
|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>EOHED Region</b>             | <i>Northeast</i>                                 | <b>MassDOT District</b> | <i>District 4</i> | <b>Rural or Small Town</b> | <i>N/A</i>        |
| <b>MDFA Regional Office</b>     | <i>North</i>                                     | <b>Gateway City</b>     | <i>N/A</i>        | <b>Housing Choice</b>      | <i>No</i>         |
| <b>Regional Planning Agency</b> | <i>Northern Middlesex Council of Governments</i> | <b>MVP Community</b>    | <i>Yes - MVP</i>  | <b>MBTA Community</b>      | <i>Yes - MBTA</i> |

### 1.2. Organization Type (Select from following drop-down options)

- Public Entity
  - Municipality
  - Public Housing Authority
  - Redevelopment Authority or Similar Quasi-Governmental Agency
  - Water or Sewer District

Other Public Entity please specify:

Non-Public Entity

### 1.3. Applicant Organization Name:

*Town of Chelmsford*

### 1.4. Applicant Organization Legal Address:

*50 Billerica Road*

**1.5. City/Town:**

**1.6. State:**

**1.7. Zip Code:**

*Chelmsford*

**1.8. CEO Name:**

*Massachusetts*

*01824*

**1.9 CEO Title:**

*Virginia Timmins*

**1.10. CEO Tel.:**

**1.11. CEO Email:**

*Chair of the SelectBoard*

*(978) 250-5201*

*vtimmins@chelmsfordma.gov*

**1.12. Project Contact Name (if different)**

*Evan Belansky*

**1.13 Project Contact Title**

*Director of Community Development*

**1.14. Contact Tel.:**

**1.15. Contact Email**

*(987) 250-5231*

*ebelansky@chelmsfordma.gov*

**1.17. Describe applicant, including organizations structure and primary economic development goals .**

*The Town of Chelmsford is a professionally staffed organization characterized by a strong Town Manager by Charter, full time professional Community Development Director and a Business Development Director. In addition to an elected Planning Board, town staff provides technical support to the Economic Development Commission, Housing Advisory Board, and two village master planning committees.*

*From the 2020 Master Plan update the general economic development goal states "Revitalize the Chelmsford economy by addressing the COVID-19 impacts through new businesses, resolving the sewer capacity issues, redeveloping aging vacant and for sale properties, utilizing the Economic Development Commission to market the community and attract "growth" businesses which enhance the town's tax base and create well-paying jobs in a manner that balances job creation with the quality of life.*

*Specific goals are:*

- 1 Address the COVID-19 impact by attracting distribution and fulfillment centers, ghost kitchens, and dark kitchens, while also supporting at home workers.*
- 2. Develop a Five-Year Plan to address the sewer capacity issue and work with NMCOG and the Greater Lowell communities to increase capacity for the economic future of the region.*
- 3. Encourage the redevelopment of aging vacant and for sale properties into small-scale neighborhood businesses that achieve higher and better uses.*
- 4. Utilize the Economic Development Commission to support and expand local businesses and market the Town to expand employment opportunities.*
- 5. Target economic investment in the following areas: Center Village, the Route 129 Technology Corridor, Drum Hill, Vinal Square, Route 3/ Route 40 Interchange, Route 110/Littleton Road and Chelmsford Street.*

## SECTION 2.

Describe up to top priority projects or initiatives that the applicant intends to submit in a One-Stop application for grant consideration. Describe the projects, areas, and/or sites and indicate the types of funding sought, even if unsure about the specific sources. This section is meant to provide state reviewers with insight into the prospective projects.

### Priority Projects/Initiatives

Describe up to five top priority projects or initiatives that the applicant intends to submit in a One-Stop application for grant consideration. Describe the projects, areas, and/or sites and indicate the types of funding sought, even if unsure about the specific sources. This section is meant to provide state reviewers with insight into the prospective projects.

#### Project/Initiative One

##### P1.1 Name of Project/Initiative:

*Water Infrastructure Upgrades in Support of Private development of the Umass West Campus (255 Princeton Street)*

**P1.2 If applicable, list the name and contact for any additional partner organizations. If this is a regional application, list other communities involved in the project:**

*Trammel Crow Residential*

*North Chelmsford Water District*

*Town of Chelmsford*

Click here to see how the One Stop programs fall on the Development Continuum.

P1.3 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), what is the primary funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative: (Check up to two)

Community Capacity Building

Planning and Zoning

Site Preparation

Building (vertical construction)

Infrastructure (horizontal construction)

Other:

Not sure

**P1.4 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), are there other type(s) of funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative? If not, please type "N/A".**

N/A

**P1.5 Brief Description of Project/Initiative. Indicate if project is phased and progress made to date:**

*MassWorks funding to support off site water infrastructure upgrades in accordance with the requirements of the North Chelmsford Water District for the redevelopment of a 32 acre site into a 394 unit multi- family development.*

*Project Timeline:*

*Summer 2019-Site auctioned after being surplusd by Umass Lowell and DCAM*

*Summer 2019-site purchased at auction for 3.2 million*

*Calendar year 2000 - existing buildings abated and demolished for 1.3 million*

*Spring 2021-Trammel Crow Residential (TCR) engages with the Town.*

*Spring-Summer 2021 - TCR partners with the Chelmsford Housing Authority*

*August 2021- "eligible location" per advisory letter from EOHEd*

*Fall-winter 2021-TCR engages with SelectBoard and Planning Board to craft project based zoning overlay*

*January 2022-Planning Board, Fin Com and Selectboard all vote support for zoning overlay.*

*February 24, 2022 - a special Town Meeting is scheduled. to vote on zoning overlay.*

P1.6 How much funding do you anticipate requesting from the One Stop for Growth?

Less than \$100,000

\$100,000 to \$500,000

\$500,000 to \$1,000,000

Over \$1,000,000

**P1.7 What would you use the One Stop funding for? If possible, indicate specific scope of work.**

*in December 2021, TCR and the Water District entering into an agreement to conduct a Water Impact Study to evaluate the adequacy of the NCWD capacity to supply the proposed dwelling units, review of the project demands relative to the NCWD's existing Water Management Act Permit, existing production capacity from NCWD's existing water supplies, and the potential effects of PFAS contamination on future demands.*

*Based upon the scope and scale of the proposed project and the best available information to date off site water infrastructure upgrades in accordance with the North Chelmsford Water Districts requirements are anticipated. Based upon preliminary analysis it appears as though existing water mains that would serve these 394 multifamily developments will need to be upgraded. In addition, the Water District has expressed an interest / desire to have a new inter-municipal water connection with the City of Lowell for emergency backup.*

**P1.8 Please describe your timeline for your project and timing of the use of the One Stop funding. (Note that award decisions will not be public until fall 2022).**

*February 24, 2022 - Special Town Meeting for adoption of Zoning Overlay*

*April 2022 – submission of MEPA filing*

*June 2022 - approval by the State AG's office*

*Fall 2022 - submission of development permits (zoning, conservation)*

*Fall 2022 - submission to North Chelmsford Water District*

*Fall 2022 – submission of Mass DOT filing*

*Fall 2022 - award of Masswork funding*

*Winter 2023 – all permits in hand*

*Spring 2023 – commencement of construction*

*Spring 2023 - Fall 2023 - utilization of MassWorks funding*

P1.9 Would you like to add a second project?

Yes

No

**Project/Initiative Two**

**P2.1 Name of Project/Initiative:**

*Village's Master Planning (North and Center)*

**P2.2 If applicable, list the name and contact for any additional partner organizations. If this is a regional application, list other communities involved in the project:**

[Click here to see how the One Stop programs fall on the Development Continuum.](#)

P2.3 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), what is the primary funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative: (Check up to two)

Community Capacity Building

Planning and Zoning

Site Preparation

Building (vertical construction)

Infrastructure (horizontal construction)

Other:

Not sure

**P2.4 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), are there other type(s) of funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative? If not, please type "N/A".**

*Yes.....advancing mobility and public access specific to a brookwalk concept. this may include Site Preparation activities such as a feasibility / engineering studies.*

**P2.5 Brief Description of Project/Initiative. Indicate if project is phased and progress made to date:**

*Chelmsford has two village centers, North and Center. Both Villages were focal points of the 2010 Master Plan which led to villages having Committees for purposes of working with consultants to draft dedicated Master Plans. Both Plans were completed in 2013. Over the last 9 years the committees have transitioned from master planning to implementation highlighted by the adoption of mixed use flexible zoning overlays.*

*Center completed a wayfinding branding project via the MDI program and has since completed installation of signs and street furniture. A Massworks grant in the amount of \$370K has been completed in support a 32 unit multifamily development. More recently a vacant historic structure was approved as a 100 seat restaurant and 6 rental apartments.*

*North has also completed a wayfinding branding project and will be advancing fabrication and installation this year. A traffic/ped streetscape design project has been initiated for the square.*

P2.6 How much funding do you anticipate requesting from the One Stop for Growth?  Less than \$100,000

\$100,000 to \$500,000

\$500,000 to \$1,000,000

Over \$1,000,000

**P2.7 What would you use the One Stop funding for? If possible, indicate specific scope of work.**

*the 2020 Master Plan calls for both Village Master Plans to be revisited and updated accordingly. While updates are expected to be fairly straight forward, both village committees are interested in revisiting strategic goals and more importantly advancing implementation via strategic action plans.*

*Specifically, center is interested in revisiting the overlay with a focus on encouraging commercial and mixed use and an examination of parking needs and requirements and advancing the brookwalk concept but after an unsuccessful Mass Trails grant application and changes to the center due to development is not certain howto proceed.*

*North is interested in customizing the overlay to meets the specific needs / desires for its village and advancing its brookwalk concept and a parking needs examination.*

*Both villages express an interest in a market study to determine what kinds of businesses are needed / wanted.*

**P2.8 Please describe your timeline for your project and timing of the use of the One Stop funding. (Note that award decisions will not be public until fall 2022).**

*Fall 2022 - award of state grant funding*

*early winter 2022 - issue proposals - contact with consultants*

*Late Winter / Spring 2023 - commence process*

*spring / summer 2023 - stakeholder / process engagement*

*October 2023 - advance zoning related items for Fall Town Meeting*

*One stop funding would be used for Community Capacity Building and Planning & Zoning per the Development Continuum. Specifically for Technical Assistance for Improving a Downtown or Commercial Center, Zoning and Parking Review & Updates, Market Feasibility Studies? and Mobility studies specific to advancing the brookwalk concepts.*

*Based upon prior experience with MDI and State Planning Grant programs and the nature of tasks; a total budget in the amount of \$75,000-\$100,000 is projected to be needed. This would cover tasks for both villages.*

P2.9 Would you like to add a third project?

Yes

No

**Project/Initiative Three**

**P3.1 Name of Project/Initiative:**

*Drum Hill - Master Planning*

**P3.2 If applicable, list the name and contact for any additional partner organizations. If this is a regional application, list other communities involved in the project:**

[Click here to see how the One Stop programs fall on the Development Continuum.](#)

P3.3 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), what is the primary funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative: (Check up to two)

Community Capacity Building

Planning and Zoning

Site Preparation

Building (vertical construction)

Infrastructure (horizontal construction)

Other:

Not sure

**P3.4 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), are there other type(s) of funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative? If not, please type "N/A".**

NA



**P3.5 Brief Description of Project/Initiative. Indicate if project is phased and progress made to date:**

*Drum Hill Exit 32 off of Route 3 is a 137 acre mixed use / mixed zoned area highlighted by a large commercial shopping area with many national / regional retailers such as Walmart, Hannaford supermarket and a number of fast food establishments, with adjacent office condominiums and a mixed use office park including a large number of senior housing units. This exit also abuts the City of Lowell. A master Plan was conducted back in 2000 by the NMCOG. since then limited progress on implementation has been made and much of the physical built environment has remained unchanged. in 2019 the Town received a State Planning grant to Develop a comprehensive real estate market analysis to Understand market potential and how the Town could begin proactively planning for future changes that may come as a result of market shifts or landowner/developer efforts. The April 2021 the final report made a series of recommendations for next steps.*

P3.6 How much funding do you anticipate requesting from the One Stop for Growth?  Less than \$100,000

\$100,000 to \$500,000

\$500,000 to \$1,000,000

Over \$1,000,000

**P3.7 What would you use the One Stop funding for? If possible, indicate specific scope of work.**

*Funds would be used to advance recommendations contained in the 2021 Market study. These include hiring consultants for Community Capacity Building and Planning and Zoning services. Generally, to reconvene the stakeholders from the 2021 Market study, with a particular emphasis on the private property owners. Specifically, to conduct a review of the zoning (uses / dimensions/ parking) to ensure flexibility for re-tenanting and adaptive re-use, infill development within large parking fields, potential for parcel consolidation and mobility improvements.*

*The above is within the context of a changed and changing market conditions and consumer expectations as it relates to traditional land uses and consumer experiences.*

**P3.8 Please describe your timeline for your project and timing of the use of the One Stop funding. (Note that award decisions will not be public until fall 2022).**

*Fall 2022 - award of state grant funding*

*early winter 2022 - issue proposals - contact with consultants*

*Late Winter / Spring 2023 - commence process*

*spring / summer 2023 - stakeholder / process engagement*

*October 2023 - advance zoning related items for Fall Town Meeting*

*Based upon prior experience with the State Planning Grant programs and the nature of tasks; a total budget in the amount of \$75,000-\$100,000 is projected to be needed.*

P3.9 Would you like to add a fourth project?

Yes

No

**Project/Initiative Four****P4.1 Name of Project/Initiative:**

*Rt. 129 Crossroads - Multi-year Strategic Implementation to Reposition Office Park*

**P4.2 If applicable, list the name and contact for any additional partner organizations. If this is a regional application, list other communities involved in the project:**

[Click here to see how the One Stop programs fall on the Development Continuum.](#)

P4.3 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), what is the primary funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative: (Check up to two)

Community Capacity Building

Planning and Zoning

Site Preparation

Building (vertical construction)

Infrastructure (horizontal construction)

Other:

Not sure

**P4.4 Based on the descriptions outlined for the One Stop's [Development Continuum](#), are there other type(s) of funding you would like to explore for this project/initiative? If not, please type "N/A".**

NA

**P4.5 Brief Description of Project/Initiative. Indicate if project is phased and progress made to date:**

*The rt. 129 Crossroads is a 600 acre 1st generation office park located at the interchange of rt. 3 and rt. 495. Over the last 20 years it has experienced incremental market challenges. In 2019 a Massdevelopment Site Readiness grant in the amount \$100K was awarded to conduct a Market and Feasibility study to reposition this area. In 2019 the Town hired a full time Director of Business Development. Spent last two years implementing the recommended action items and hired Camion Associates, an economic development consultant, produced a marketing video, installed wayfinding signage and several working groups have been meeting.*

*At this point, coming out of Covid, two goals remain: 1) Establish a District Management Coalition / Consortium and 2) Develop a public investment action plan. These two action items serve as a continuation of providing direct services to the stakeholders.*

P4.6 How much funding do you anticipate requesting from the One Stop for Growth?  Less than \$100,000  
 \$100,000 to \$500,000  
 \$500,000 to \$1,000,000  
 Over \$1,000,000

**P4.7 What would you use the One Stop funding for? If possible, indicate specific scope of work.**

*The funding would be used for Capacity Building and Planning. Specifically capacity building for the purpose of hiring consultant services to assist town with engaging the stakeholders to meet to discuss options/ interest in forming some type of formal coalition / consortium/ management entity in partnership with the Town to provide coordinated, continuing and comprehensive communications, marketing and strategy implementation. Funding would also be used for planning to hire a consultant to work with the Town and stakeholders to develop a "Public Investment Action Plan" for the rt. 129 area which would focus on traditional public infrastructure improvements such as roadway, mobility (sidewalks, crosswalks, bike amenities), bus stop shelters, placemaking (pocket parks), additional wayfinding and non - traditional investments such as public - private partnerships. These funding requests are mutually beneficial and serve to support the continued multiyear implementation.*

**P4.8 Please describe your timeline for your project and timing of the use of the One Stop funding. (Note that award decisions will not be public until fall 2022).**

*This project is the next strategic action item in a continuation of a multiyear implementation effort that dates back to 2019/2020. The last two years of covid created a break in the momentum the Site Readiness process provided. The hiring of full time Director of Business Development and the hiring of Camion Associates to provide dedicated technical assistance and support have allowed the effort to continue and more importantly be ready to proceed with the proposed funding projects. we have been in routine contact with the stakeholders over the last years and had individual engagements, but all have expressed a desire to re-convene as a larger group to get back to business.*

*Upon award of the funding in Fall 2020:*

- 1. winter 2022-issue proposals-contact with consultants*
- 2. Late Winter/Spring 2023-commence process*
- 3. spring/summer 2023-stakeholder/process engagement*
- 4. Fall 2023-project completion*
- 5. April 2024-see funding at Town Meeting to advance implementation*

P4.9 Would you like to add a fifth project?

Yes

No