



Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

2018-07-16 LAG

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Finance Committee

Date: 2023-07-26

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Agenda:

Purpose: General Business

Meeting Called By: Jacquelyn LaVerde on behalf of Chair Ed Ross

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting will be held in the Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room and remotely via Zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89475867060>

Meeting ID: 894 7586 7060

One tap mobile

+16465189805,,89475867060# US (New York)

+16465588656,,89475867060# US (New York)

Dial by your location

• +1 646 518 9805 US (New York)

• +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kcnWDJyDXF>

AGENDA:

- Liaison Reports
- Vote to Reorganize Finance Committee
- Discuss Liaison Assignments
- Presentation by Community Development Staff regarding MBTA Communities
- Discuss BOLT Library Landscape Committee
- Approve Prior Meeting Minutes

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.

TOWN OF READING FINANCE COMMITTEE LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS - FY24 (DRAFT)

<u>NAME</u>		<u>LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS</u>
Ed Ross ('22-'25; '28)	Chair	Audit Committee Select Board <u>Public Safety</u>
		<u>Schools & School Committee</u> <u>Administrative Services</u>
Joseph Carnahan ('24; '33)		Select Board RMLD <u>Public Works</u> <u>Facilities</u>
Geoffrey Coram ('21-'24; '32)		<u>Schools & School Committee</u> Reading ARPA Advisory Committee
Marianne Downing ('23-'26; '32)		Select Board <u>Public Services/Community Development</u> Reading ARPA Advisory Committee
Endri Kume ('24; '33)		
Joseph McDonagh ('22-'25; '31)		RMLD <u>Library & Library Trustees</u> Reading ARPA Advisory Committee
Emily Sisson ('22-'25; '31)		<u>Public Services/Community Services</u> Killam School Building Committee <u>Public Safety</u>
John Sullivan ('23-'26; '32)		
Mark Zarrow ('23-'26; '29)		Audit Committee Permanent Building Committee

To contact the Finance Committee, email: finance@ci.reading.ma.us

<u>Administrative Services</u>	1
Audit Committee	2
<u>Facilities</u>	1
Killam School Building Committee	1
<u>Library & Library Trustees</u>	1
Permanent Building Committee	1
<u>Public Safety</u>	2
<u>Public Services/Community Development</u>	1
<u>Public Services/Community Services</u>	1
<u>Public Works</u>	1
RMLD	2
<u>Schools & School Committee</u>	2
Select Board	3

*Departments are underlined

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MBTA COMMUNITIES & READING

JULY 2023



WHAT IS THE LAW?

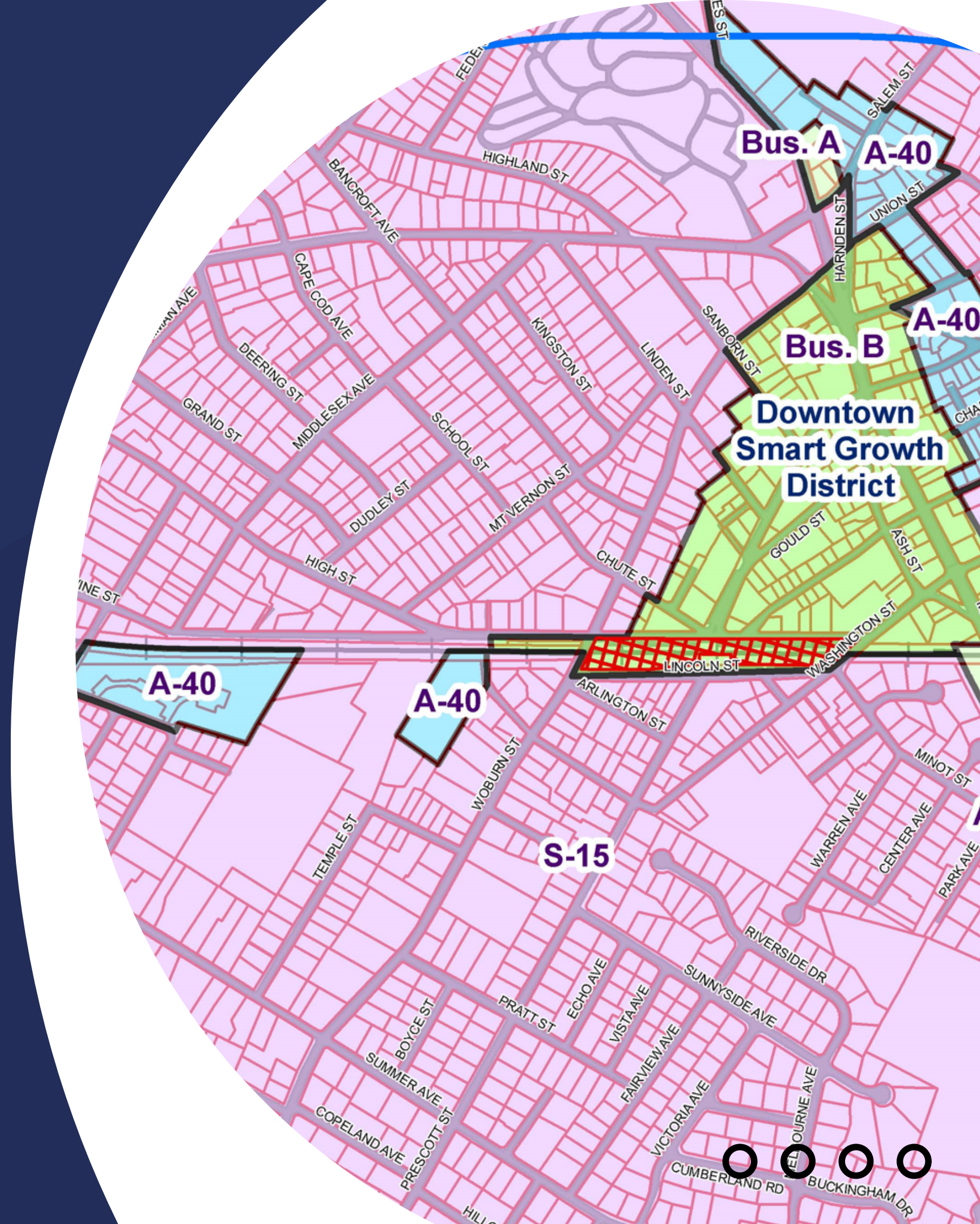
The MBTA Communities law (3A), was passed in 2021 at the state level.

It requires the 177 municipalities in the Boston metro to confirm that they have a district of *reasonable size* where multifamily housing (3+ units) is zoned for by-right at a specified density, determined by each municipalities' characteristics.



WHAT IS ZONING?

- Zoning is the rulebook for future development.
- Each municipality creates its own rulebook, which are the Zoning Bylaws.
- Zoning embeds our values into the built environment and provides longer-term direction.
- By-right zoning means that a proposed project can move through the normal approvals process without requiring any discretionary approvals such as special permits or waivers.



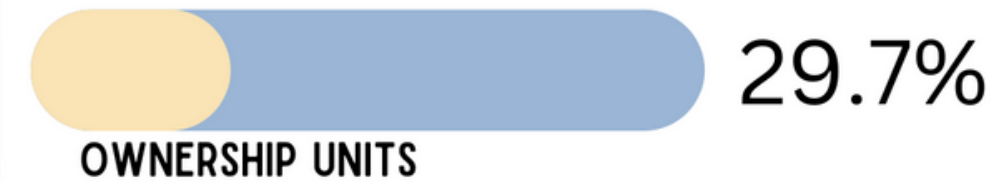
WHY NOW?



IN THE BOSTON REGION, FAIR MARKET RENT FOR A 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT INCREASED FROM \$1,740 IN 2018 TO \$2,635 IN 2023, A 51.4% INCREASE IN 5 YEARS

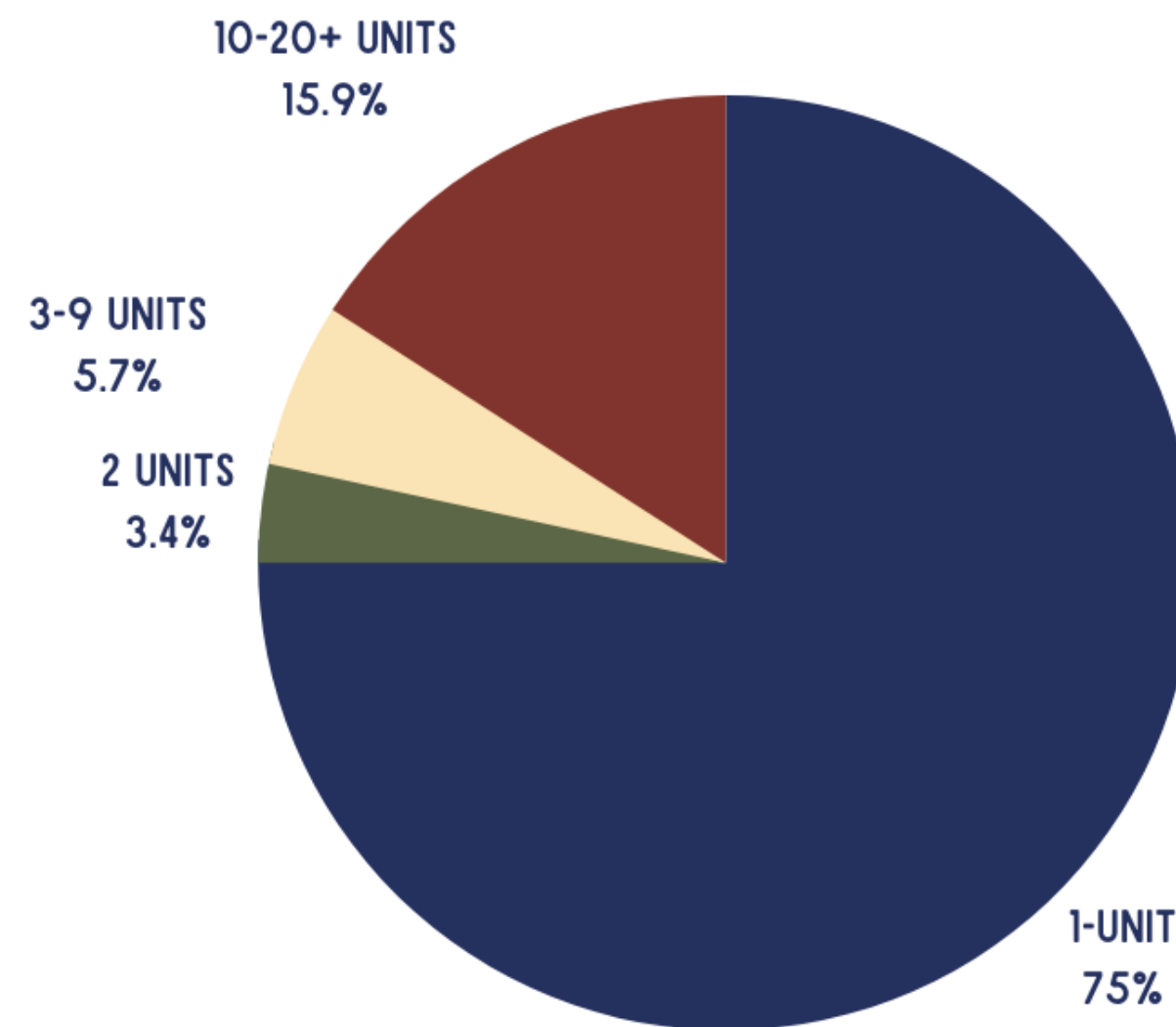
FAIR MARKET	EFFICIENCY	1 - BEDROOM	2 - BEDROOM	3 - BEDROOM	4 - BEDROOM
2018 RENT	\$1,253	\$1,421	\$1,740	\$2,182	\$2,370
2023 RENT	\$2,026	\$2,198	\$2,635	\$3,207	\$3,540
% CHANGE 2018 VS 2023	61.6%	54.7%	51.4%	47%	49.4%

COST-BURDENED - PAYING MORE THAN 30% OF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING



A HOUSEHOLD WOULD NEED TO EARN APPROXIMATELY \$235,000+ TO AFFORD THE MEDIAN HOME PRICE OF \$815,000

2020 HOUSING STOCK BY STRUCTURE TYPE





MBTA COMMUNITIES & READING

Reading does NOT currently comply with the law and although we do have multifamily zoning, we will have to make changes to our zoning to comply.

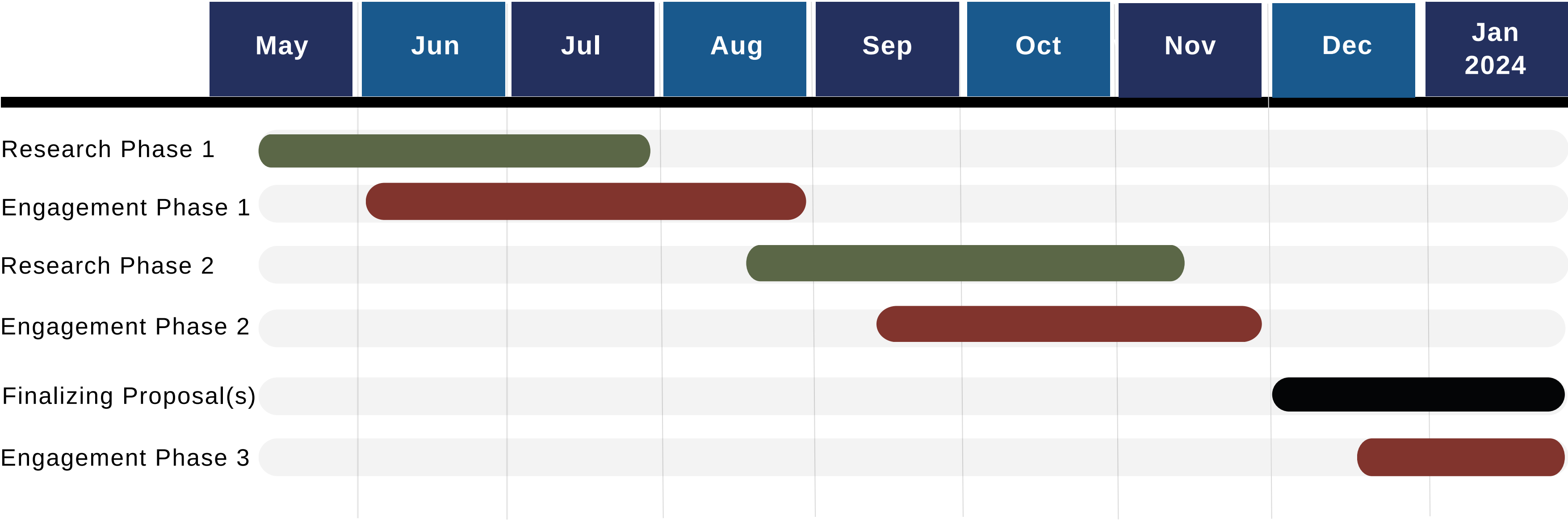
In Reading, the MBTA commuter rail train station is the anchor of our "district of reasonable size" and at least half of the multifamily units that are being zoned for must be within a 1/2 mile of the train depot.

The deadline to comply is December 2024. We plan to have a final proposal ready for Town Meeting in April 2024.



Reading's MBTA Communities

2023 Engagement & Research Timeline



ENGAGEMENT

Results from our survey will provide direct advice to staff as to the preferred types and locations of future multifamily development in Reading while we build broad awareness of the process.

In Phase 2 we'll present a series of forums where the public is encouraged to dig into the details. Results of those forums will determine the final proposal.

Phase 1

Launch of website, flyers
Survey

Meet people where they are:

- Board & Commission Meetings
- Public Event Tabling

Phase 2

Series of forums will cover law and detail proposals for discussion.

Iterative process to determine details of final zoning changes.



Survey

www.surveymonkey.com/r/MBTACR

Join the
discussion!



MBTAC Webpage

www.readingma.gov/mbtac



Contact Reading's Planning Staff

Andrew MacNichol
Community Development Director
amacnichol@ci.reading.ma.us
781-942-6670

Mary Benedetto
Senior Planner
mbenedetto@ci.reading.ma.us
781-942-6648

Library Landscaping Committee (LLC)

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June 2023

Library Landscaping Committee (LLC) Volunteers

Cherrie Dubois - LLC's Vice-Chair; Library Trustee

Andrea Hogan - Senior Library Associate, Reading Public Library

Gena Pilyavsky - LLC's Chair; Climate Advisory Committee Member

Jake Soucy - LLC's Secretary

Elaine Stone - Reading Community Garden Member

Walter Talbot - Conservation Commission Member

Desirée Zicko - Communications Specialist, Reading Public Library



Figure: Reading Public Library

LLC Objective: Completion of the RPL's Landscape Vision

Engage with the community and stakeholders

- Meet with BOLT and the Library Staff
- Guide public survey(s)

Conceptualize outdoor environment

- Improve for learning activities & aesthetics

Guide future development plans

- Raise funding for the effort
- Work with landscape architectural firms



Figure: Garden outside the Sahara West Library and Fine Arts Museum (NV)

Current State

No dedicated stage or power source

- E.g., extension cords used during Edgar Allan Poe event

Limited seating for small groups

- Single picnic table and three granite blocks

Steep slope limits accessibility

- Visitors must provide their own seating
- Lawn is in subpar state and requires maintenance

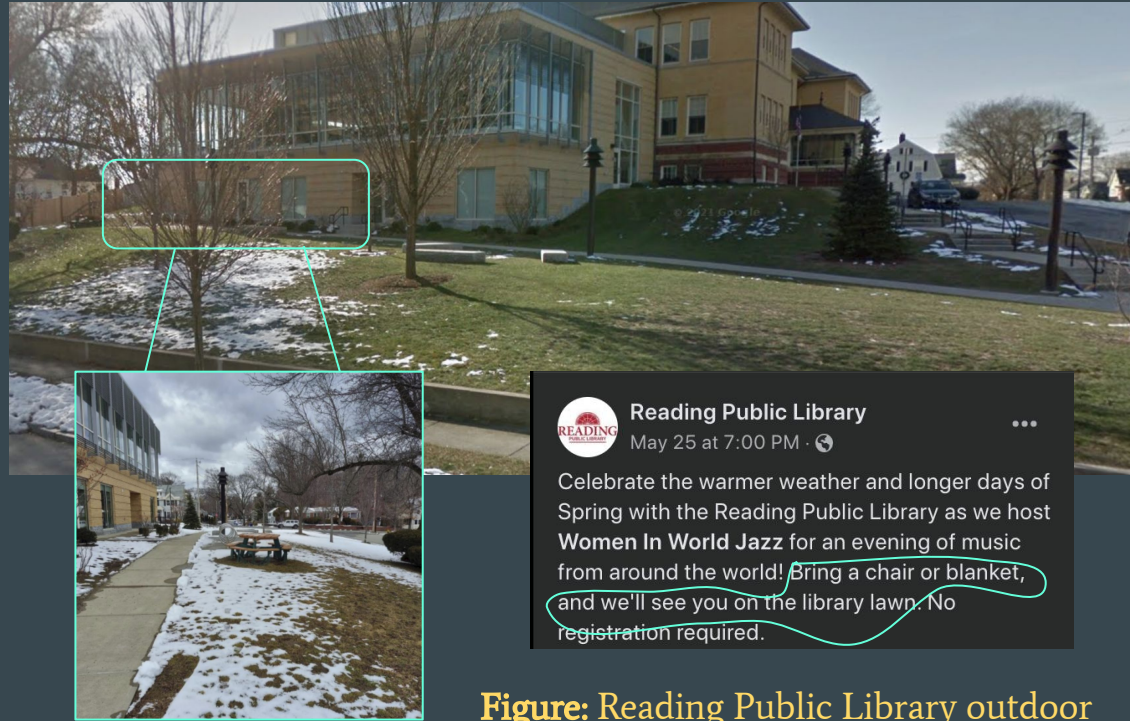


Figure: Reading Public Library outdoor event space

Supporting RPL's Core Mission:

Dedicated outdoor space for learning & engagement

- E.g., educational events about nature, plants & gardening, outdoors storytime, and other programs and events for all ages

Space for small groups

- Study sessions, book clubs, discussions
- Improved accessibility

...A center and resource for learning and civic engagement. We provide a place and platform of, by, and for the people who can benefit as individuals as well as contribute to the well-being of the community.



Figure: Camden Library Amphitheatre, Maine

Funding Sources and Activities

Funding Goal: Undertake the project without placing additional tax burden on the residents

Explore outside funding

- Nonprofits, grants, plaques, etc

Funding long-term maintenance (examples)

- Adopt an “island”, landscape maintenance
- Use low-maintenance, native plants for sustainability
- Establish an endowment



Figure: Outdoor seating at University of Newcastle

What's Next?

- Introduce Library Landscaping Committee and our objectives to the Board of Library Trustees
- Compile funding opportunities
- Solicit (free) presentations from landscape architects firms, including firms that submitted proposals for other town projects
- Allocate funding for a full study, community survey, and engagement
- Evaluate results and make recommendations on the next steps in the project



Figure: Amphitheater at the Walterboro Discovery Center, SC

Photo By Paul Cheney Photography

Library Landscaping Committee (LLC)



Thank you
Questions?

Cherrie Dubois, Andrea Hogan, Gena Pilyavsky, James Soucy , Elaine Stone, Walter
Talbot, Desirée Zicko



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

2016-09-22 LAG

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

Finance Committee

Date: 2023-06-28

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: Reading Town Hall

Location: Select Board Meeting Room

Address: 16 Lowell Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Draft

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Chair Ed Ross, Joe Carnahan, Geoffrey Coram, Endri Kume, Joe McDonagh (remote), Marianne McLaughlin- Downing, Emily Sisson, John Sullivan

Members - Not Present:

Mark Zarrow

Others Present:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez, DPW Director Jane Kinsella (remote), Assistant DPW Director Chris Cole (remote), Karen Gately Herrick (remote)

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Jacquelyn LaVerde

Topics of Discussion:

This meeting was held in-person in the Town Hall Select Board Meeting Room, and remotely via Zoom.

Chair Ed Ross called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm, and introduced and welcomed new members: Endri Kume and John Sullivan.

Liaison Reports:

Marianne McLaughlin-Downing reviewed topics from the last Select Board meeting. The Select Board had a discussion on Grove Street Lot 5. After much discussion, they approved new tiered water rates by a vote of 3-2. Because there was significant resident concern on multi-unit housing and larger families, the Board will continue discussion over the coming year ahead of next year's water rates.

Ed Ross shared that he was on the Screening Committee for the new School Department Director of Finance. Dr. Derek Pinto was the recommendation of the screening committee and the School Committee voted to appoint him last week.

Mr. Ross also reported that the Killam School Building Committee went through the process of selecting the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) in May and June. There were four firms interviewed by a smaller steering committee. The first-ranked firm selected had to withdraw. The Town is now going through the process with the second-ranked firm. Right now, the Town is waiting to finalize the contract with the OPM and get on the MSBA schedule. At this point, the town is on target with the dates set out at the start of the project.

Vote on FINCOM Reserve Transfer Request: Forestry Bucket Truck:

DPW Director Jane Kinsella explained that the forestry truck was a FY22 purchase. There was \$275,000 allocated for the truck that had a one-year build cycle. The purchase order

was created for the amount of the quoted price, instead of the full \$275,000, releasing \$16,000 back into the general fund. Somewhere close to the one-year mark, the vendor notified the town that they were having issues with getting some parts for the same pricing. The truck, which was originally expected back in February, is now expected by the end of summer. Town Manager Fidel Maltez noted that they considered legal recourse they could take with the vendor not honoring the quote, but none of the possible outcomes were favorable. But they opted to settle, as the vendor agreed to cover a majority of the overages, and the Town could still get the truck it wanted.

The request is for a \$10,000 transfer from Finance Committee Reserves to cover some of the cost difference. The vendor is absorbing an additional \$30,000 in cost overages.

On a motion by Emily Sisson, seconded by Joe Carnahan, the Finance Committee voted 8-0-0 to transfer \$10,000 from the FINCOM Reserve Fund for additional expenses for the forestry bucket truck as presented.

Roll call vote: Joe McDonagh – Yes, Marianne McLaughlin-Downing – Yes, Emily Sisson – Yes, Joe Carnahan – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Endri Kume – Yes, John Sullivan – Yes, Ed Ross – Yes.

Discussion on Grove Street Parking Lot on Lot 5:

Town Manager Fidel Maltez reviewed the purchase of the parcel known as “Lot 5” on Grove Street at November 2021 Town Meeting for \$450,000, with the intention of making it a parking lot to allow access to the Town Forest and remove some parking from Grove Street. The Town received an earmark from the Commonwealth for \$150,000 towards the purchase or development of the property. Engineering firm Weston & Sampson worked on the design of the parking lot, with the layout requiring a lot of environmental approvals by both local Conservation and the state. The project is fully designed and ready for construction.

At their last meeting, the Select Board approved parking restrictions on Family Circle, which is frequently used for parking for Town Forest. That began a discussion of moving faster to construct the parking lot on Lot 5. The Select Board suggested approaching FINCOM to request funding for the parking lot. The project has not yet gone out to bid, but the preliminary cost estimate of the project is \$175,000. Mr. Maltez stated that it will be going out to bid soon, and he should have a firm number in about four to six weeks. Then the Committee can discuss whether to use Reserves to be replenished at November Town Meeting, to get the project moving sooner, or just wait to fund the project at Town Meeting without using Reserves.

The Finance Committee expressed a reluctance to approve such a significant amount of reserves, which would leave little help for other unforeseen things that might arise before reserves can be replenished at November Town Meeting. Mr. Maltez explained the safety concerns and benefits of completing the project sooner, rather than waiting for funding at Town Meeting. But the Committee asked to learn more about other sources of funding and other options for discussion at their next meeting.

Discuss FY24 Meeting Schedule:

The Committee reviewed the proposed FY24 meeting schedule and agreed to it.

Future Agenda Items:

Future meeting topics will include: update on Grove Street Lot 5, a preview of year-end financials, BOLT Library Landscape Committee, reorganization of the Committee, reassessing liaison assignments, an update from RMLD, and an introduction to the new School Finance Director.

Approve Meeting Minutes:

Emily Sisson moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 8, 2023, seconded by Marianne McLaughlin-Downing.

Joe Carnahan moved to amend the liaison reports for clarity. He then moved to accept the proposed changes, seconded by Emily Sisson.

On a motion by Marianne McLaughlin- Downing, and seconded by Emily Sisson, the Finance Committee voted 6-0-2 to accept the meeting minutes of March 8, 2023 as amended, with Endri Kume and John Sullivan abstaining, as they were not yet members of the Committee at that meeting.

Roll call vote: Marianne McLaughlin-Downing – Yes, Emily Sisson – Yes, Joe Carnahan – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Joe McDonagh – Yes, Endri Kume – Abstain, John Sullivan – Abstain, Ed Ross – Yes.

On a motion by Emily Sisson, seconded by Marianne McLaughlin-Downing, the Finance Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes of March 15, 2023, with a friendly amendment by Joe Carnahan by a vote of 6-0-2, with Endri Kume and John Sullivan abstaining, as they were not yet members of the Committee at that meeting.

Roll call vote: Marianne McLaughlin-Downing – Yes, Emily Sisson – Yes, Joe Carnahan – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Joe McDonagh – Yes, Endri Kume – Abstain, John Sullivan – Abstain, Ed Ross – Yes.

On a motion by Emily Sisson, seconded by Joe Carnahan, the Finance Committee voted 8-0-0 to adjourn at 8:25 pm.

Roll call vote: Marianne McLaughlin-Downing – Yes, Emily Sisson – Yes, Joe Carnahan – Yes, Geoffrey Coram – Yes, Joe McDonagh – Yes, Endri Kume – Yes, John Sullivan – Yes, Ed Ross – Yes.