



# *Update From The MBTA Communities Advisory Committee*

*Presented by:*

*Roy Epstein, Select Board Member and*

*Rachel Heller, Belmont Housing Trust Co-Chair*



# MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

Prepared for 2023 January Special Town Meeting  
Roy Epstein, Select Board Member  
Rachel Heller, Belmont Housing Trust Member

# The Basic Mandate

- ▶ Result of new state law MGL c. 40A, Section 3A
- ▶ New multi-family zoning districts “as of right”
- ▶ Belmont designated a “Commuter Rail” community
- ▶ Belmont must create districts that allow at least 1,632 units in multi-family buildings
- ▶ Goal to promote “transit-oriented” housing

# Key Zoning District Requirements

- ▶ Minimum density 15 units per acre
- ▶ At least 27 acres of such districts, at least 14 acres not more than 0.5 miles from a commuter rail station (Waverley and/or Belmont Center)
- ▶ Allow at least 1,632 dwelling units in multi-family buildings

# District Design is a Local Decision

- ▶ Smallest area for district(s) is 27 acres
  - ▶ Implies zoning of 60 units/acre (given 1,632 units)
- ▶ Largest area for district(s) is 109 acres
  - ▶ Using minimum zoning of 15 units/acre and 1,632 units
- ▶ Belmont has roughly 1,700 acres eligible for the zoning districts

# Opportunities and Penalties

- ▶ Compliance makes Belmont eligible for state infrastructure grants
  - ▶ Housing Choice
  - ▶ Local Capital Projects Fund
  - ▶ MassWorks Infrastructure
- ▶ Not eligible if zoning not created
- ▶ Potential further penalties—could be significant

# MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

- ▶ Created by Select Board to lead development of the new 3A zoning districts
- ▶ Co-chairs are Roy Epstein and Rachel Heller
- ▶ Committee membership:
  - ▶ Select Board (Roy Epstein)
  - ▶ Housing Trust (Rachel Heller)
  - ▶ Board of Assessors (TBD)
  - ▶ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (Julie Wu)
  - ▶ Economic Development Committee (Paul Joy)
  - ▶ Historic District Commission (Drew Nealon)
  - ▶ Planning Board (Thayer Donham)

## Team and Community Effort

- ▶ Belmont MBTA Communities Advisory Committee
- ▶ Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- ▶ Community Development and Planning Board
- ▶ Residents



# Timeline

- ▶ Jan 2023—"Action Plan" sent to state; Scope of Work agreement with Metropolitan Area Planning Council
- ▶ 2023 to February 2024—development of zoning language
- ▶ May 2024—vote by Belmont Town Meeting on zoning
- ▶ Dec 2024—deadline for compliance

# Process: How We Will Get This Done Together

- ▶ Get started with webpage, newsletters, and tour of possible district areas
- ▶ Establish study areas and conduct zoning analysis
- ▶ Community visioning
- ▶ Compliance analysis
- ▶ Zoning recommendations
- ▶ Community engagement to shape zoning recommendations
- ▶ Draft zoning proposal
- ▶ Planning Board hearing(s)
- ▶ Town Meeting