

## Article 24

### MBTA Communities – Request for \$25,000

Submitted by: Planning Board

#### Intent of Request

The intent of the request herein is to supplement grant funds with local funds should the Planning Board wish to study something specific for which grant funds are not available or awarded. Some potential uses of these funds include but are not limited to: commissioning a fiscal impact analysis (in coordination with the Finance Committee), hiring a civil engineer or Title 5 subject matter expert (in coordination with the Board of Health), hiring a traffic consultant to assess the impacts of higher-density approaches, or hiring an MBTA Communities compliance consultant. The Planning Board and Town Planner, in coordination with the Town's Procurement Officer, would be responsible for seeking quotes and selecting a consultant pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 30B requirements. Approval for use of the funding will be by vote of the Planning Board pursuant to a posted agenda at an open public meeting. It is possible this funding will not be used if there is nothing the Planning Board wishes to study that cannot be funded through grants or free technical assistance.

#### Status of Planning Board MBTA Communities Process

In March 2024, the Planning Board established an MBTA Communities Subcommittee to explore the feasibility of compliance with the MBTA Communities housing law. The Subcommittee included representatives from the Planning Board, Select Board, Board of Health, Environmental Sustainability Committee, Housing Trust, Conservation Commission, and public. The Subcommittee met 26 times between April and December, conducted a survey from June through September, and held two Open Houses in Fall 2024. In December, they submitted a report to the Planning Board.

Since January 2025, the Planning Board has been meeting twice monthly – in open public meetings where public feedback has been welcome – to investigate 4 different approaches to MBTA Communities compliance from several different angles. The Board has held joint meetings with the Finance Committee, Historical Commission, Environmental Sustainability Committee, Conservation Commission, Land Stewardship Committee, and Board of Health to discuss priorities of each stakeholder group. The Board intends to hold additional joint meetings throughout the process as things progress. In addition, the Board is considering hosting open houses and conducting another survey – these outreach opportunities will be broadly advertised throughout Town. For information on the effort, including the approaches under consideration, and a schedule of planned meetings/outreach: <https://www.carlislema.gov/1195/MBTA-Communities>

**Fall Town Meeting is Sunday, November 2nd.**

#### Technical Assistance Received

The Planning Board and Planning staff have been actively seeking and receiving free technical assistance in furtherance of compliance with the MBTA Communities housing law. To date, the Town has been awarded the following funding: \$40,000 through MassHousing Partnership (MHP) for assistance from Bohler Engineering in the form of developing, conceptualizing, modeling and drafting compliant zoning strategies; and \$90,000 through Housing and Livable Communities (HLC) for assistance from Horsley Witten Group in mapping and analyzing local groundwater conditions. Staff also attend HLC's office hours and info sessions and are part of a peer-to-peer technical assistance cohort facilitated by the Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA). The Planning Board and Planning staff will continue to seek out additional grant funds and technical assistance opportunities throughout the duration of this effort.