



CITY OF NEWBURYPORT
PLANNING BOARD
60 PLEASANT STREET • P.O. BOX 550
NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950
(978) 465-4400 • (978) 465-4452 (FAX)

April 2, 2015

William E. Reyelt, Principal Planner
Smart Growth Programs
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Housing & Community Development
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Reyelt:

The Newburyport Planning Board is in full support of the City's proposed Smart Growth Village District (SGVD). This district will concentrate development around our commuter rail station, which will encourage compact, though appropriate, infill development. The mixed-use structures created through the new district will promote an attractive, sustainable, walkable and vibrant new neighborhood.

The land surrounding the commuter rail station is ripe for redevelopment. The provisions within the SGVD will ensure that the new development is appropriate in terms of scale and density, includes a significant percentage of affordable housing units (25%) and fosters a sense of community through pedestrian connections within the subject parcels as well as to other neighborhoods in the City.

Adoption of the SGVD will aid the City is accomplish multiple components of the Master Plan, including creating affordable housing, utilizing transit-oriented development principles and promoting compact, efficient, walkable neighborhoods that cater to the pedestrian rather than the single-occupant vehicle.

Sincerely,



Jim McCarthy, Chair



CITY OF NEWBURYPORT
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
60 PLEASANT STREET • P.O. Box 550
NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950
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April 2, 2015

William E. Reyelt, Principal Planner
Smart Growth Programs
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Housing & Community Development
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Reyelt:

As Chair of the Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust, I would like to express the Trust's support of the City's proposed Smart Growth Village District (SGVD). The City of Newburyport has an obligation to ensure that its housing stock remains affordable to the entire community, including its young families and senior population. The adoption of a 40R district is one way in which to fulfill this obligation.

Newburyport's Housing Production Plan highlighted both the City's increasing housing costs and the trend of converting rental housing into condominiums thereby greatly reducing the housing stock available for working individuals and families. The housing development within the proposed district will help the City address these disturbing trends through the incorporation of affordable rental opportunities within the mixed-use structures. Equally important, the affordable units created through the provisions of the SGVD will help the City fulfill its obligation to offer at least 10% of its housing stock as affordable to those individuals and families with a moderate income.

Sincerely,

Judy Tymon, Chair



April 22, 2015

Honorable Mayor Donna D. Holaday,
President Thomas O'Brien and Members of the Newburyport City Council
Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Mayor Holaday, President O'Brien and Members of the City Council:

On behalf of the Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce & Industry Board of Directors I submit this letter of support for the proposed 40R Smart Growth District to be established near Route 1 and State Street adjacent to the Newburyport MBTA Train Station. We believe that this project is not only in keeping with the Mission and Goals of our Chamber but also is consistent with the City of Newburyport's Master Plan and would be a benefit to our members and community as a whole.

The Chamber's Mission is to support the success of our Members and lead in sustainable economic development, while doing so in harmony with our members. We believe the proposed 40R Smart Growth District supports this Mission as follows:

- **Stimulate Economic Development.** This area of the City is one of the few remaining areas of the City with enough land to generate potentially significant tax revenue for the City. In addition, this area is an important gateway to the City and could benefit from a 'facelift' that could come as a result of this initiative -- the MINCO project being only the first of hopefully other such projects. Proximity to the Newburyport Business and Industrial Park could also benefit companies within the Park by offering those employees affordable housing options, as well as access to basic services such as food and other amenities.
- **Affordable Housing = Ability To Attract A Qualified Workforce.** The high cost of housing in this area is often a factor that inhibits local employers from attracting a quality workforce. Unlike 40B, 40R will allow the City to increase its stock of affordable housing while maintaining control over its design to ensure the new homes complement existing structures and tie into the overall housing plan of the community. And while the state mandates a minimum of 20% affordable housing, the City is proposing 25%--even better!
- **Smart Growth and Shared Workspaces.** The concept of shared workspaces is one that could benefit sole proprietors and small businesses just starting out. Sole Proprietors make up 20% of

the Chamber's membership. Additionally the District's Smart Growth requirements – appropriate density consistent with the existing environmental conditions, affordable housing for a range of populations including those with children, 'green' building practices—are very much in keeping with our goal of 'sustainable economic development.'

- **Transportation.** There is little dispute that the MBTA system has been under stress as of late, and will no doubt be pressured to 'streamline' its systems in the near future. Enhanced housing and business opportunities adjacent to the Newburyport MBTA Train Station could energize and potentially even save train service to and from Newburyport -- extremely critical for local residents and employees who use the train to get to and from work.
- **Financial Benefit.** The Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides direct cash payments to cities and towns that create zoning overlay districts that meet all the requirements of the statute. Besides a zoning incentive payment of up to \$600,000, localities qualify for a density bonus of \$3,000 per unit, which to date has amounted in some municipalities receiving as much as \$2 million in incentives. The payments come with no strings attached, enabling the municipality to allocate the money as it sees fit. There is no doubt that these funds could greatly benefit the City and if used for infrastructure such as improved roads and services, would have a direct impact on businesses as well.

We believe that establishing a 40R Smart Growth District could truly revitalize this gateway to the City, encourage private investment, bolster affordable housing, and provide much needed funding and tax revenue to the City. Accordingly, we enthusiastically endorse this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Gobbi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kim Gobbi
Chair, Board of Directors