

PLANNING BOARD

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**TOWN OF DEDHAM
PLANNING BOARD**

**Supplemental Information for Article 13
Historical Context & Timeline**

In response to questions from Town Meeting members and Dedham residents, this handout is to provide context and timeline of the development of Article 7 of Fall 2022 Town Meeting proposed by the Planning Board and approved by Town Meeting 184 to 45. The following timeline shows the Planning Board undertook a transparent and thorough approach toward incentivizing commercial growth of the life science/technology industry in the Town of Dedham.

What is Article 7 of Fall 2022 Town Meeting?

Article 7 allows life science-style campuses on a select group of properties abutting Route 128/95 through a conditional permit by the Planning Board. Article 13 of Fall 2025 Town Meeting seeks to delete the changes that were approved by Town Meeting in Fall 2022.

May 2022

In 2022, the Life Science industry was booming in Massachusetts. Communities such as Burlington, Lexington, Waltham, Watertown, and Woburn were seeing increased growth of the industry and making zoning changes locally to further encourage growth of the industry. As Dedham is continually seeking new sources of commercial tax growth (In Dedham the FY2025 commercial/industrial/personal property tax rate is \$26.20 per \$1,000 of assessed value and residential is \$12.62 per \$1,000 of assessed value), it made sense for the Town to seek growth of life science industry in Dedham. Dedham, at that time and currently, has little to no direct life science industry. Additionally, the March 2022 draft Designing Dedham 2035 Master Plan had two related strategies for the life science industry in its Economic Development chapter, both of which were ultimately adopted by the Planning Board.

- **Goal 4, Strategy 4.5:** Incentive the investment in growing industries such as biotech, medical research, and clean energy, among others
- **Goal 5:** Retain a strategic balance and mix of uses across the Town to respond to future economic trends in industrial or other uses and align growth and changes with the community's vision.

Planning staff developed a list of potential ideas for Fall 2022 Town Meeting for consideration by the Planning Board. Included in the list was to "Assess Dedham's Zoning Bylaw with regard to attracting life science/Tech companies to Dedham." Dedham has stagnant commercial growth (if

not shrinking), and the life science industry could provide additional tax revenue needed for future investments necessary by the Town (schools, park and building improvements, etc.)

The Planning Board's minutes of the May 25, 2022 meeting reference support of the idea by Board members.

June 2022

Staff prepared a memo to the Planning Board in June 2022 providing an overview of Dedham's existing zoning with regard to life science industry and efforts by other municipalities to increase and/or attract the industry. The Town had not made any changes since the late 1990's to keep up with the ever expanding life science and technology industry. Staff also provided Board members a report from the Massachusetts Life Science Center providing life science industry statistics:

- #1 in industry investment in Research and Development per capita.
- University and research institutions receive more than \$1 billion in NIH funding annually
- The highest percentage of adults in the nation with a bachelor's degree and the highest percentage with advanced degrees.
- Best K-12 schools and universities in the U.S.
- 18 of the top 20 biopharma companies in the world have locations in Massachusetts.
- \$13.66 billion in venture capital funding for biopharma companies was invested in Massachusetts.
- MassBio (a non-profit that represents Massachusetts Life Science industry) projected 20 million sq. ft. of bio manufacturing and lab space to be built by the year 2024.
- An estimated 40,000 net-new jobs needed to meet the demands of the industry in Massachusetts.

Board members supported the effort to provide incentives to allow for a larger life science-style campus in demand by the industry and reduced permitting consideration. The Board further stated their support to ensure any impacts of a potential life science campus on existing residential communities be heavily weighed.

August 10, 2022

Planning staff developed a draft zoning amendment for the Planning Board's consideration at their August 10, 2022 meeting. Also provided to the Board were maps of zoning districts and properties near Route 128/95 to be considered. Staff also recommended a more targeted approach of incentivizing the life science industry by allowing such development via the zoning bylaw's Planned Commercial Development (PCD) regulations, which require a minimum of five acres for eligibility. PCD's also provide more permitting considerations, allowing the Planning Board more discretion and control over larger-scale projects. Changes proposed in the first draft were:

- Update the current life science related use "Research and Development Facilities" Zoning Bylaw definition with current industry definitions as found in surrounding municipalities;
- Add a new life science manufacturing use definition;
- Amend the Zoning Bylaw Use Table to update existing and new life science use categories; and

- Amend footnote (19) to allow life science uses to be considered as part of Planning Commercial Developments (PCDs). PCD's must be a minimum of five acres.

The Planning Board requested staff seek to target the Route 128/95 corridor for the life science zoning amendments, which would likely provide the larger properties of interest by the industry and provide better transportation access with less traffic impact to the general public.

August 24, 2022

At the Planning Board's August 24, 2022 meeting, staff provided a second draft zoning amendment targeting the life science industry. The second draft had been reviewed by the Town's legal counsel. The primary changes to the second draft recognized life science industry development trends have been toward more "campus" like settings that would not be able to occur in Dedham except for the Single Residence A (SRA) Zoning District along Route 128/95. As such, changes proposed in the second draft were:

- Allow life science uses in parcels in the Single Residence A (SRA) Zoning District that provide at least 10 acres of land and that abut Route 128/95.

October 12, 2022

The Planning Board held the initial advertised public hearing for Article 7 on October 12, 2022. Planning staff provided additional revisions and comments from Town Counsel to the Planning Board. More specifically:

- Specifying that only properties abutting Route 128/95 and that are ten acres could be in conflict with state zoning laws regarding "uniformity". The "uniformity" clause stipulates that permitted uses in a zoning district should be uniform across a zoning district. As Article 7 sought to only allow properties abutting Route 128/95 and at least ten acres, the Attorney General may have questions on such language.

Planning Board members noted that life science campus-style projects involve additional facilities and uses, such as residential, restaurants, and other commercial uses. To support a campus type use, the Board supported additional language that any eligible project provide at least 60% of the net floor area be occupied by a use that met the proposed updated definitions of "Laboratory, Research and Development" and "Laboratory, Research and Development (Manufacturing)". As such, the Board voted 5-0 to recommend the Article 7 as amended to Town Meeting.

October 26, 2022

On October 26, 2022, the Planning Board took a reconsideration vote of Article 7 after reviewing a list of the potential six (6) properties provided by Planning staff that could be eligible for a Planned Commercial Development in the Single Residence A zoning district. Chairman Bethoney recused himself on the reconsideration vote due to a professional relationship with one of the property owners. Therefore, the Board voted 4-0 to recommend as amended Article 7 to Town Meeting.

As is customary for Town Meetings, the Planning Board provides a report and recommendations of all zoning articles to Town Meeting members. On October 31, 2022, the Planning Board mailed to all Town Meeting members its Fall 2022 Town Meeting Report. Specifically, the Planning Board provided the following report on Article 7:

Article 7 Purpose

Article 7 is a zoning amendment that seeks to increase the life science industry within Dedham.

Background Summary

Massachusetts is a global leader in the life science industry. Whether it is the number of leading academic medical centers, universities, corporate headquarters, emerging biotech companies, and government support, the greater Boston area is seen as the epicenter of the life science industry. Due to the unmet demand of the life science industry for space, there is significant opportunity for municipalities to develop their own footprints for the life science industry.

Life science developments provide a municipality with beneficial short (construction) and long term employment opportunities, significant real estate tax revenue, and other benefits. While the Town of Dedham is ranked “Silver” on MassBio’s list of “BioReady Communities”, unlike Needham, Waltham, Burlington, and other communities along Route 128/95, the Town has not seen any substantial life science developments.

The Town of Dedham has made a concerted effort to become more attractive to the life sciences industry. In 1995, Town Meeting approved the establishment of the Research, Development, and Office Zoning District (RDO). As part of the approval, the new use, “Research, experimental, or testing laboratory” was established. In addition, Dedham is categorized as a “Silver” Bio-Ready community by MassBio as already stated. However, the Planning Board is seeking to make updates to the Dedham Zoning By-law to further encourage expansion of the life science industry in Dedham. The Planning Board has analyzed surrounding communities and heard from industry professionals to understand current trends and needed updates. As such, the following is a summary of the proposed zoning amendments before Town Meeting:

- Update the current life science related use “Research and Development Facilities” Zoning Bylaw definition with current industry definitions as found in surrounding municipalities.
- Add a new life science manufacturing use definition.
- Amend the Zoning Bylaw Use Table to update existing and new life science use categories and allow life science uses to be considered as part of Planning Commercial Developments (PCDs).
- Expand use of PCDs to allow life science uses in SRA Zoning Districts that provide at least 10 acres of land and that abut Route 128/95.
- As current life science industry development trends on larger properties have been toward more “campus” like settings with multiple uses, allow life science developments as part of a PCD flexibility of providing multiple uses.

Planning Board Recommendation

The Planning Board held the required public hearing regarding Article 7 on October 12, 2022. At the meeting on October 26, 2022, the Planning Board voted unanimously (4-0) to recommend approval as amended to Town Meeting.

November 2022

Due to formatting issues with a zoning table (Table 2 use table ran across multiple pages) as part Article 7 in the 2022 Fall Town Meeting warrant book, the Planning Board provided to mini-Town Meeting and Town Meeting a handout that corrected the formatting issues