

TOWN OF DEDHAM

In Re:

DEDHAM TOWN MEETING

DATE: Monday, November 17, 2025

PLACE: Dedham High School Auditorium
140 Whiting Avenue
Dedham, MA

COMMENCING: 7:05 p.m.

P R O C E E D I N G S

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MR. LAHEY: For those of you who don't know me, my name is Mike Lahey. I live in District 5. I am the chair of the public service recognition committee, and I'm proud to be here tonight to officiate the awards ceremony for those award recipients who are going to come to the stage in a few minutes. We have 25 nominations this year, which is great.

We thank everybody out there who nominated folks for this very, very important award. Public service is -- like I said last year, it's something that people kind of like maybe don't pay much attention to until such time as they see who has been put forth as a nominee. So all of that being said, I am going to ask that Ann Stephens comes forth to give us the student award for this year. Thank you.

MS. STEPHENS: Hello. Welcome. So the Public Service Recognition Committee, for anyone that is not aware, we are tasked with

1 choosing one adult and one student in Dedham
2 that has gone above and beyond to make our
3 community a better place. What a treat, first
4 of all, to get to read about all of the things
5 that Dedhamites are doing to make our town
6 proud. I feel like it's an exercise everyone
7 should get to enjoy, and the committee was so
8 appreciative of all of the submissions -- of
9 these submissions.

10 We know that these women are busy,
11 and so it's even more of a testament to the
12 worthiness of the nominees that folks took the
13 time to send in nominations. So thank you so
14 much to anyone that sent in any nominations.
15 And I think all of the people in this room
16 especially realize the importance of public
17 service. Donating your time and effort to
18 make your community a better place is
19 admirable.

20 You know what demographic, though,
21 is often less focused on the betterment of
22 their community, and sometimes it's portrayed
23 as being a little bit more self-involved, I
24 would think (inaudible), and that really made

1 reading about the amazing contributions our
2 Dedham students are putting out there even
3 more special.

4 So this year's student winner of
5 the public service recognition award is Dedham
6 High School senior Chris Figueroa. Chris was
7 nominated by Greg Cabral for the Dedham Youth
8 Commission. There were about a dozen examples
9 of Chris's leadership, his determination, his
10 work ethic, his passion, and his dependability
11 in the nomination.

12 Greg then wrote up another email
13 after Chris was chosen as the award recipient,
14 citing even more examples of what a fair
15 leader Chris has proven to be. Greg wrote,
16 "Chris embodies the spirit of service. He
17 pays forward every kindness, and he does it
18 with humility, generosity, and a genuine
19 desire to make his community better."

20 (Inaudible.)

21 Principal Forrest at Dedham High
22 also praised Chris, saying he has a huge
23 heart. Chris was the senior captain of the
24 unified basketball team at Dedham High last

1 season. Unified basketball is a program that
2 brings together individuals with and without
3 intellectual disabilities on the same sports
4 team to train and compete together.

5 Principal Forrest just talked about
6 what a tremendous leader Chris was on the
7 team, and Coach Sara Centofanti was also phone
8 copied to here because he was chosen for this
9 award, saying that he was a huge part of the
10 team and that they were really going to miss
11 him next year.

12 So let's talk quickly about his
13 stats. Chris completed more community service
14 hours than any youth via the Dedham Youth
15 Commission, donating over 145 hours of his
16 time to our community. His record is
17 impressive, volunteering at the antique car
18 shows, dressing up as a turkey for the
19 Thanksgiving turkey trot, he assisted with the
20 holiday kitchen program, and helped with
21 events to benefit Dedham senior citizens.

22 Another thing Greg said about Chris
23 is that he leads by example, he brings others
24 with him, and he never hesitates to take on the

1 toughest assignments. We can always count on
2 him. He arrives early, stays late and
3 approaches every task with pride and purpose.
4 We are honored to celebrate him tonight.
5 Chris, we truly appreciate your commitment.
6 Congratulations. You have earned this
7 recognition, and Dedham is lucky to have you.

8 **MR. FIGUEROA:** (Inaudible) Pretty
9 much thank you for the award.

10 **MR. LAHEY:** Congratulations, Chris.
11 It's a great, great pleasure now to introduce
12 somebody who everybody in this town probably
13 knows, Peter Springer, who hates to talk
14 publicly, but we have forced him to do this,
15 so give him a little love.

16 **MR. SPRINGER:** Chris,
17 congratulations. So my name is Peter
18 Springer. I'm a former Precinct 4 and 5 town
19 meeting member and a current member of the
20 Public Service Recognition Committee. I do
21 ask if we can move this question. No, sorry.
22 I'll get to it.

23 So I'm going to announce the winner
24 of the adult public service recognition award,

1 and another person who needs no introduction
2 I'll introduce anyway, Bob LoPorto, is our
3 adult recognition recipient. I only have
4 about two minutes to speak, so I'm going to --
5 Bob got a lot of nominations, so I'm going to
6 go through a few of them just so we can hear
7 what Dedhamites have to say about Bob.

8 Bob LoPorto's (inaudible) of Dedham
9 consistently impacts our community year after
10 year. Not only does he make Dedham beautiful
11 by organizing with cleanups and picking up
12 hundreds of bags of trash, but he is also
13 bringing the community together, which is so
14 needed today.

15 Next one. Have you ever driven
16 around Dedham and seen trash laying on the
17 curbs? If yes, then this nomination speaks to
18 you. If not, then this nomination also speaks
19 to you. Bob LoPorto has worked tirelessly to
20 literally clean up Dedham.

21 Bob has created a page on the town
22 website where volunteers can sign up to go to
23 a designated spot on the third Saturday of
24 each month and clean up trash around town. He

1 coordinates with the Dedham Public Works
2 Department to get supplies, trash bags,
3 etcetera, and then picks up piles of bags of
4 trash that are accumulated after each event.

5 He advertises through email
6 distribution lists and on a separate Facebook
7 account. He coordinates with the town
8 employees at each event listed on the town's
9 social media platforms to get more volunteers.
10 On the website, you'll see images of past
11 events and the amount of trash that has been
12 picked up this year. Keep in mind that this
13 was all Bob's initiative, and he made this
14 happen.

15 He's been doing this for two-plus
16 years, and the website and the social media
17 pages were created last year to assist with
18 the sign-ups. These events happen monthly,
19 but they take a lot of planning, advertising,
20 coordinating among groups, and he is always
21 the first to arrive and the last to leave
22 after these cleanup events.

23 Last point. Bob has shown great
24 leadership with the organized cleanups that

1 have taken place throughout the year. He has
2 coordinated these with town officials and
3 communicated with and rally volunteers for the
4 effort and has committed much personal time
5 and effort into this very worthwhile project.

6 Cleaning up locations in Dedham is
7 not easy, and the litter problem is vast and
8 perpetual. It is dirty business to be sure
9 and does take a lot of physical labor. To
10 lead this effort and contribute to the effort
11 shows an enormous amount of pride in our town.
12 Many Dedhamites have joined Bob in many of
13 these cleanups, which are well organized, and
14 the work is significant.

15 Not many people want to do this
16 type of work, but it is necessary, and it is
17 important to build this culture of no
18 littering within the community. Creatures big
19 and small will benefit from a cleaner town and
20 land. I am very proud of Bob, and I'm
21 grateful for his leadership, his inspiration,
22 and his efficacy for a better town for all to
23 enjoy.

24 Bob also has been a town meeting

1 member, and still is, for many years, a former
2 member of the open space committee, and is
3 currently associated as the president of the
4 Dedham Basketball Association. I'm sure I've
5 forgotten other ways he's contributed to the
6 town, but ask around, and you'll see that he's
7 deserving of this award. In closing, Bob has
8 done so much to deserve this award. As one
9 nominee wrote, "Dedham needs more Bobs."

10 **MR. LOPORTO:** Thank you. Bob
11 LoPorto, P5. Thank you to my wife and my
12 children, and also to the committee for
13 approving the nomination and for the people
14 that did nominate me, and also to my cleanup
15 crew that is here.

16 We have about 90 people in the
17 cleanup crew annual distribution list, but we
18 do have a core -- kind of a core four that the
19 sites want to say thank you to. Yes, if you
20 would like to clean up, please reach out at
21 cleanupdedham.com.

22 **MR. LAHEY:** Thank you all, and
23 welcome to town meeting 2025.

24 **THE MODERATOR:** The town clerk

1 meeting over the course of 81 annual and
2 special meetings spread over 68 nights.

3 When town meeting time comes
4 around, there isn't a week that goes by that
5 we are not on the phone multiple times sorting
6 out issues, procedures so we'll know what to
7 expect, which will help the meetings run
8 smoothly. I've come to rely on Cherylann for
9 her deep intellect and her understanding of
10 what makes Dedham tick based on a lifetime of
11 living and working in our town.

12 I'm also very grateful to my wife
13 Sheila, who has been present for 79 of those
14 81 town meetings over 33 years, sitting
15 quietly in the back, listening and observing.
16 She has been a wise and honest giver of
17 feedback for me, as well as a source of
18 support and sometimes consolation.

19 There are many people to thank, but
20 we're here for business tonight, but in the
21 interest of time, I'll mention those people
22 that I have leaned on the most, or most often.
23 First, I want to thank the many members of the
24 finance and warrant committee that I've had

1 the privilege of working with over the years.

2 In the town meeting form of
3 government, there are citizens and some
4 community members who are sitting in the same
5 room with town officials that important
6 decisions are being made. They are your eyes
7 and ears, since we can't all be there, and
8 they do not hesitate to speak up.

9 They do their best to see things
10 through your eyes, while at the same time
11 trying to understand the complexity of what
12 our town officials and town meetings face and
13 trying to do the best for the town. This is
14 not the level of openness that you will see in
15 any other form of government in the United
16 States, certainly not state level, not federal
17 level, and not in cities, by the way. We
18 should be very appreciative of that level, and
19 we should be very skeptical of any proposal
20 that would change that form of government.

21 Speaking of town officials, I'm
22 very appreciative for the cooperation and
23 trust that's been extended to me in my role as
24 moderator by many members of the select board,

1 including Jim and Demetra and Erin and
2 Michelle and Dennis, and I'm --

3 I want to give a special thanks to
4 Jim. Those of you who have been around for a
5 little bit of time remember three really rogue
6 town meetings during Covid: one outside, one
7 in the Dedham Health and Athletic Club, and
8 one online, which about halfway through the
9 meeting, one-third of the town lost
10 electricity, so that was a little difficult.

11 And as far as the one at the Dedham
12 Health and Athletic Club, they had a sign
13 posted that said, and I have to believe this
14 isn't true, please be careful. There is a
15 large multi-winged pterodactyl free in the
16 Dedham Health and Athletic Club. Luckily, we
17 did not see that during town meeting.

18 Leon Goodwin and Nancy Baker have
19 been both patient and very willing to share
20 their experience and insights, and our new
21 finance director, Brady Winsten, has been open
22 to all of my questions and inquiries and ideas
23 and has really brought (inaudible) to the
24 finance department. Amanda Smith has helped

1 me to use new ways of getting information
2 transmitted to the town meeting community and
3 to the public at large.

4 Lauren Goldberg, our town counsel,
5 has been a source of wisdom and support based
6 on her extensive experience in town meetings
7 all across Massachusetts. And, of course,
8 Dedham's favorite town clerk, Paul Munchbach.
9 Paul has been both a friend and a partner. We
10 have navigated Covid, electronic voting, and
11 you might have noticed that there's sometimes
12 some controversial town meeting articles that
13 need to be handled.

14 On the school side, I found a good
15 colleague and friend in the school
16 superintendent, Nan Murphy, and in working
17 with Nan, I've also had a chance to meet Dr.
18 Ann Kelly and Stephen Acosta, the current
19 chair of this committee, so thank you very
20 much.

21 But most of all, my thanks is to
22 you, the members of town meeting, who have
23 extended to me your courtesy, patience, and
24 respect and your willingness for at least two

1 nights a year to listen to me. You are the
2 true heroes of the town meeting form of
3 government of Dedham.

4 As moderator, I believe the process
5 works best when there can be trust and
6 cooperation between the legislative branch of
7 the town meeting and the executive branch, the
8 town hall, and the school department. It's
9 been a goal of mine to try to promote this as
10 a partnership and not a competition.

11 I've learned to listen more than I
12 speak, although that, of course, was more true
13 in the beginning and less so now perhaps, but
14 I'm trying to understand the challenges that
15 they face that we don't necessarily see. I do
16 speak up, but I prefer to keep my
17 disagreements in private because I think we
18 get things done (inaudible.)

19 As you may know, under the
20 tradition -- the Massachusetts tradition, the
21 moderator does not take a position on any
22 issue that comes before town meeting. This is
23 to preserve a sense of fairness and openness,
24 and any town meeting representative speaking

1 will be treated the same as any public member,
2 and if any member of the community wants to
3 speak, you'll be allowed to speak and will be
4 treated fairly. It's important to be open to
5 all sides and all potential points of view.

6 I have to tell you, I've been
7 strongly influenced about what happened on my
8 first night as moderator in April of 1993. So
9 I was really pretty excited. I came into the
10 auditorium. There was nobody here. So I said
11 to the custodian where is everyone. He said
12 oh, they're down in the cafeteria. They're
13 not happy.

14 So I went down, and as it turns
15 out, this was a tea party type revolution
16 among young town meeting representatives, and
17 I listened as they explained their frustration
18 in trying to get information that they needed
19 from town hall to make their decisions. I've
20 always remembered that and tried to work as
21 best I can to make sure that doesn't happen
22 again.

23 I was very lucky. Ted Woodland
24 from Green Launch -- some of you old timers

1 may remember Ted -- he finally got up and said
2 okay, we've had our say. This guy is new.
3 He's got nothing to do with this, so let's go
4 upstairs and get back to work, and I had my
5 first town meeting.

6 I'd like to leave you with one
7 story. I was buying a car, and I negotiated
8 the best deal I could. You know, we all go
9 online, and we have all those numbers, and I
10 was all set to sign the papers to purchase the
11 car. The salesperson had to double check with
12 his manager, of course, came back, and just
13 before I signed it, he said would you like
14 some floor mats, those new handsome floor
15 mats. I said yeah, how much, and he said, oh,
16 they're free.

17 Great. He said the guy who traded
18 it in has got some pin striping on it. Do you
19 want to put some pin striping on the new one?
20 I said no, that's okay. After I signed the
21 papers, I said why were you so willing to give
22 me the extras, and he said it's my last day.
23 This is my last day, and I'll do my best not
24 to do anything crazy, unexpected, or out of

1 the ordinary. Please allow me to introduce my
2 friend Cherylann Sheehan.

3 **MS. SHEEHAN:** Thank you, Mr.
4 Moderator. I get a little less time, so this
5 will be a little bit shorter. Good evening,
6 Mr. Moderator, elected town officials, town
7 meeting representatives, residents, and
8 guests.

9 As you can imagine, after 33 years
10 of being in the position of deputy moderator,
11 there are many, many people to whom I owe
12 thanks for their counsel, understanding, and
13 support, but there's not enough time tonight
14 to thank each and every person who's been
15 there for me over the years.

16 There are, however, three people I
17 must thank for their constant support,
18 knowledge, and understanding because these
19 three people have been instrumental in my
20 success in this role. The first, of course,
21 is the Moderator, Dan Driscoll. Thank you,
22 Dan, for offering me this opportunity 33 years
23 ago. At the time, I had no understanding of
24 the road ahead or the role I would play

1 because you told me you wanted the role of
2 deputy moderator to be something more than it
3 had been in the past. It's been busy and
4 enlightening and, for the most part, fun.
5 Dan, you've been such a strong mentor,
6 advisor, and friend in this journey. Thank
7 you for including me.

8 One other person I want to thank is
9 Paul Munchbach. Paul and I have had a lot of
10 great adventures on the stage at times, and
11 Paul has always been the epitome of
12 professionalism and thoroughness. Thank you,
13 Paul, for teaching me the ropes and working
14 with me.

15 I think you all know this, but the
16 Town of Dedham is very fortunate to have two
17 such dedicated and professional people in the
18 roles of moderator and town clerk. Town
19 meeting has run smoothly and efficiently, in
20 large part because of these two people.

21 Finally, I want to thank my husband
22 Dave, who is not here, but during the past 33
23 years has kept our home base running smoothly
24 when I've attended the many meetings as a town

1 meeting member and deputy moderator. Thank
2 you, Dave, from a distance. You've made it
3 much easier to walk out that door (inaudible).

4 And thank you, town meeting
5 members, past and present. You've made this
6 journey educational and very interesting. I
7 wish the best of luck to the future moderator
8 and deputy moderator. I hope your road is as
9 enjoyable as mine has been. Thank you.

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Now, Cherylann and
11 I have (inaudible) to get through this town
12 meeting, including Article 13, which I'm
13 feeling the same way about as (inaudible.)
14 We're ready to begin our deliberations. Let
15 me quickly review our rules.

16 Remember, only elected town meeting
17 members are allowed to vote. This is a
18 representative town meeting. Please do not
19 take your clicker out of the room with you.
20 You can't vote from the ladies' room or the
21 men's room. Please leave them behind if you
22 need to go.

23 Upon any article, the body or the
24 moderator may direct that no person speak more

1 than ten minutes. It's extended by a vote of
2 the body. In the case of complex articles or
3 articles involving significant sums of money,
4 the moderator may allow speakers who are
5 responsible for the sense of critical
6 information to speak more than ten minutes,
7 and that would be the case this evening on
8 Article 13.

9 All orders will be deliberated in
10 the order in which they are printed in the
11 warrant, except that a member may move that
12 that article be taken and placed in a
13 different order.

14 Dedham makes use of what's called a
15 consent calendar, which means that we will go
16 through all of the articles. We will say the
17 numbers of each of the articles. If you want
18 to discuss, question, or amend that article,
19 you simply have to call out the word "pass."

20 You don't need to be recognized.
21 You don't have to stand up. We can frankly
22 without paying too much attention (inaudible),
23 but we make note of it. Any article which has
24 not been passed will be voted in one lump sum

1 motion called an omnibus motion so that those
2 issues that people are not interested in
3 discussing or debating the original motion for
4 those articles will be voted, and that saves
5 us a tremendous amount of time. Are there any
6 questions?

7 Please remember that when you're
8 speaking on a warrant article to focus your
9 remarks on the pros and cons of the article
10 and to not engage in comments which are
11 disparaging people who do not agree with you.
12 We're really talking about the articles and
13 not the people who presented the articles.

14 So we're ready to begin our
15 deliberations. Please silence your cell
16 phones, remove your hats. We now move to the
17 warrant book. This book is compiled for each
18 meeting by the assistant town manager, Nancy
19 Baker. As we desired, this book is designed
20 by our public information officer, Amanda
21 Smith. It incorporates many suggestions you
22 have given us over the years to make the book
23 more readable. Town meeting has voted to
24 conduct its business by use of electronic

1 voting. I'm going to ask our town clerk, Paul
2 Munchbach, to quickly review for you how these
3 devices work.

4 **MR. MUNCHBACH:** Thank you, Dan.
5 Every town meeting representative is assigned
6 a town meeting electronic voting device, or we
7 call it a clicker. It's very simple. The
8 moderator will open up the voting for any one
9 of the articles that he calls for electronic
10 vote on that article.

11 Once the article is opened up, it
12 will be -- the remote control clicker will be
13 available for you to vote. It's very simple.
14 You vote 1 for yes, 2 for no, or A for yes, B
15 for no, or yes is green, red is no. So those
16 are your only two options. Your third option
17 would be is you don't vote at all. It will
18 just be a blind clear vote, and we'll pull the
19 records on that. If by any chance you feel
20 that your clicker is not working, when you
21 vote, it will say okay, you can vote up until
22 the Moderator closes the vote.

23 Very quickly, we're just going to
24 test everyone's clickers. We put it up on the

1 screen, and you can just click onto your
2 electronic device. So what happens is that
3 will be -- what you see there is what we call
4 a roll call vote. So if there are any votes
5 that are a roll call vote, that's where your
6 screen is located (?). If not, we're just
7 going to show the cumulative vote that is up
8 on the screen, whether it's a majority vote or
9 a two-thirds vote will show up on the screen.

10 The electronic voting devices are
11 conducted by radio frequency, so there is no
12 internet involved. And then, like I said,
13 it's A or B, 1 or 2. You can vote up until we
14 close the vote. You can change the vote.
15 Once the vote is closed, if you have not
16 voted, you will miss out on your vote. Voting
17 usually lasts about 15 to 20 seconds. On some
18 of the warrant articles that there's a little
19 bit more engagement, we might keep it open a
20 little bit longer.

21 Has everyone at least tried their
22 clicker? It takes a second for it to record.
23 Just look at the screen. It will say okay.
24 We tested all 273 of the electronic voting

1 devices about an hour ago, and they all seem
2 to be working, so we're pretty confident
3 unless -- and we apologize for the bad angle
4 for everybody on the right. Remember to use
5 3C (?). That's your (inaudible). A is for
6 yes, B is for no. Does everyone feel
7 comfortable? Okay, then we'll move on. Thank
8 you for your patience. I appreciate it.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Everyone received a
10 warrant book. You received these in the mail.
11 We're now going to proceed to the warrant
12 book, and I'm going to call the number of each
13 article, and again, if you'd like to question,
14 discuss, amend, just call out the word "pass."
15 If you even think you might want to, you
16 should call out "pass."

17 Again, we don't know who did it,
18 and when we go back to talk about the ones
19 that were passed, if you decide that you don't
20 have a question or your question has been
21 answered, you can just remain silent, and
22 we'll just move on. So err on the side of
23 passing something.

24 We're going to start on Page 3,

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Article 1.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: Article 2.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: Article 3. Article
3. On Page 10, Article 5. Article 6.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: Pass on 6. The
Chair is going to pass on any article that
requires a two-thirds vote, so that is 7,
moving up to Page 19, 8, 9 -- passed by the
Chair -- 10, 11, 12, passed by the Chair. 13.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: 13 is passed. 14,
15.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: 15 is passed. 16,
17.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: 17 is passed. And
18.

(Pass.)

THE MODERATOR: 18 is passed.

So I'm going to read the numbers of

1 the articles that have been passed because
2 remember, what we're going to do is basically
3 accept everything that has not been passed, so
4 it's an important distinction. So listen
5 closely as I get a list from my colleague over
6 there.

7 So the following are passed, which
8 means they will be discussed individually: 1,
9 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, and 18.
10 Is there any other article that somebody would
11 like to have passed that's not on that list?

12 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Article 4.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Article 4.

14 Anything else?

15 The Chair will entertain a motion
16 to accept the original motion on all articles
17 not passed. Is there such a motion? Is it
18 seconded? We can try for a voice vote. All
19 those in favor, say aye.

20 (Aye.)

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
22 ayes have it. Thank you very much.

23 We'll go back to Article 1.

24 Article 1 is on Page 3. Is there anybody who

1 would like to discuss Article 1? Mr. Maher.

2 **MR. MAHER:** Jim Maher, Precinct 5.
3 Can you guys hear me okay?

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, sir.

5 **MR. MAHER:** 500,000 is a
6 substantial amount of money being transferred
7 from one article to another, something that
8 I've never seen as a town meeting member or as
9 an elected official, that type of money. Did
10 we somehow get under bid, did we get it over
11 bid? Did we cut something out of the
12 development of Veterans Park for the field?
13 Why is there such a substantial amount left
14 over?

15 **THE MODERATOR:** Brady Winsten.

16 **MS. WINSTEN:** Thank you, Mr.
17 Moderator. Brady Winsten, Director of
18 Finance. So I believe this project was
19 originally bid as one package project, and
20 when it was completed, they had bought the
21 materials and contracted for labor separately
22 and saw, as you say, a significant savings.

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Mr.
24 Maher, any further questions?

1 **MR. MAHER:** Yes. So nothing was
2 cut from the original design plan for the
3 field, the track, or improvements at the park
4 of the funding that we voted for?

5 **MS. WINSTEN:** No, nothing was cut.

6 **MR. MAHER:** And I know that I
7 remember seeing school committee meetings
8 where Mr. Kelly was giving updates to the
9 school committee -- Dr. Kelly -- updates on
10 it. So why aren't we hearing from Dr. Kelly?

11 **MS. WINSTEN:** I think as the
12 project is completed, it sort of becomes an
13 overall town financing issue, so the town
14 manager's office works on the addition (?) of
15 capital funds. So I think that's why you're
16 hearing from us.

17 **MR. MAHER:** Thank you. Thank you,
18 Mr. Moderator.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Any other questions
20 on 1? The vote comes on the original motion.
21 We'll try for a voice vote. By the way, if
22 you don't agree with a voice vote on any vote,
23 it only takes seven people standing up, and
24 we'll go to the electronic voting, but if

1 articles are not controversial, a voice vote
2 is quicker than the electronic voting. All
3 those in favor of the original motion, which
4 is printed on Page 3 in that black box, all
5 those in favor, please say aye.

6 (Aye.)

7 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It is
8 a vote. Article 2. Article 2 involves line
9 item transfers for the current fiscal year,
10 and you'll see on Page 5, there's a box which
11 explains what the transfers are, where they're
12 coming from and where they're going to. Who
13 would like to speak on Article 2?

14 **MS. BASS:** Good evening. Nakita
15 Bass, Precinct 4. I'd like to thank the chief
16 for speaking and answering questions at the
17 meeting about the transfer, but I have a
18 follow up question. I presume he's here this
19 evening?

20 **THE MODERATOR:** They're always
21 here.

22 **MS. BASS:** I was curious what the
23 transfer of funds means to the department, the
24 12,143 from clerical and admin, and the 1,000

1 for uniforms, and how does that look for the
2 department to move those funds over, if that's
3 clear?

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Chief d'Entremont?
5 Thank you, Ms. Bass.

6 **CHIEF d'ENTREMONT:** Good evening.
7 Mike d'Entremont, chief of police. So the
8 funds that are being transferred are available
9 because we budgeted for one administrative
10 position this year, the business manager, that
11 person transferred over to town hall, and the
12 person that we hired came in at lower steps --
13 that's what made those funds available -- and
14 the uniforms was a budget for anticipating
15 hires, which were going to be less than
16 anticipated. So those funds won't be needed
17 for anyone to go to the police academy this
18 year.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Chief.
20 Further questions on Article 2? If not, the
21 vote comes on the original motion printed on
22 Page 4. All those in favor, please say aye.

23 (Aye.)

24 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The

1 ayes have it. Thank you. Article 4, Page 7.
2 Ms. Martin.

3 **MS. MARTIN:** I have a question.
4 Thank you. Marianne Martin, Precinct 5. I
5 have just a gut feeling on any article like
6 this. I kind of wonder why we don't have
7 internal (inaudible) for something like this,
8 but the true question has to do with
9 originally I know the ask was 350,000, and yet
10 you compromised to go down to 250. I'm
11 wondering what you've given up, what you've
12 sacrificed. Is this going to be a Plan B
13 coming down the road?

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
15 Martin. Deputy Kelly, Deputy Superintendent
16 of Schools.

17 **MR. KELLY:** Thank you, Mr.
18 Moderator. Ian Kelly, Deputy Superintendent.
19 The reduction to 250,000 will require a
20 reduction in the scope of services. So once
21 the proposals come in, we'll have to look at
22 the scope of what we would pull back out to
23 ensure that we can get it in at that dollar
24 amount.

1 As far as the expertise, the in-
2 house expertise, is concerned, I would suggest
3 a couple things, one, we do have expertise in-
4 house. Superintendent Murphy and I, we are
5 experts in operating a school system and
6 making sure that all students are getting what
7 they need. The reason for a proposal to have
8 a consulting firm come in is because those
9 firms have expertise and work all over the
10 country and all over the state to design an
11 educational model for the purposes of creating
12 22 (?) education. So they bring a breadth of
13 experience than a superintendent --

14 We have experience all over the
15 State of Massachusetts, but we do not have
16 experience all over the country. So it is
17 important to us, and we believe it's important
18 for the community to have a broad perspective
19 and an objective perspective on this work.
20 Superintendent Murphy and I would be
21 proponents of new schools for our students
22 today.

23 So I don't think that we bring an
24 objective perspective to this work. This is

1 also work that when these proposals are
2 reviewed, it is my expectation that you will
3 see proposals that reflect teams of three,
4 five, or seven consultants. This is not the
5 work of one individual expert. This will be a
6 team of folks who have expertise in all types
7 of areas that involve the educational models.
8 So we do have in-house expertise to answer the
9 question, but a project of this scope and
10 magnitude goes beyond the expertise that we
11 have in the district. Thank you.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, sir.
13 Acting Chair of the Finance and Warrant
14 Committee, Michael Leahy.

15 **MR. LEAHY:** Hello, everybody.
16 Michael Leahy. Anyway, I wanted to speak to
17 this particular article because during our
18 deliberations, the initial request of \$350,000
19 was entertained, and it was voted down
20 unanimously because of the amount. And
21 thankfully, one of our members, Mike Emory,
22 who spoke to this in detail about the fact
23 that consultants in this particular area might
24 not be as expensive as the school committee

1 put forth, we decided that the \$250,000 was a
2 better amount, based on the physical cliff (?)
3 that the town is in right now.

4 And honestly, speaking for myself,
5 this town is really kind of heavy on studies,
6 and study fatigue is what it is, and the
7 timing for this is just not great, but in the
8 interest of the students and the school
9 department, it makes total sense for us to
10 move forward with this particular endeavor.
11 So I just wanted to make that clear to
12 everybody in town meeting as, you know, we
13 move to vote for this. Thank you.

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
15 Leahy. Other speakers? If not, the vote then
16 comes on the original motion. We'll try for a
17 voice vote. All those in favor, say aye.

18 (Aye.)

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

20 (No.)

21 **THE MODERATOR:** We'll go to the
22 electronic vote devices. Vote yes or no on
23 your device. Does everybody need a quick
24 refresher on which is which? Green is yes,

1 red is no, just like in life. You may proceed
2 to click. Vote is closed.

3 231 members having voted, 174 in
4 favor, 57 against, the article -- the original
5 motion of the article passes as is printed in
6 your book. Thank you.

7 We're now moving to planning board
8 articles. Revolving fund spending limits.
9 This was passed. Is there somebody who wishes
10 to ask a question about 6? Seeing no speakers
11 reciting (?) themselves, the vote comes on the
12 original motion on Page 11, the recommendation
13 of the finance and warrant committee. All
14 those in favor, please say aye.

15 (Aye.)

16 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
17 ayes have it. Thank you. Thank you for the
18 unanimous vote.

19 We now come to the planning board
20 articles. Most of the planning board articles
21 require a two-thirds vote, so that's why they
22 were passed by the Chair. 12 was passed by
23 Ms. McDermott. The Chair recognizes Hope
24 McDermott.

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MS. McDERMOTT: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'd like to request and make a motion to take Article 13 out of order and have it appear first just to discuss the planning board articles.

THE MODERATOR: That is a motion any town meeting representative can make. Does anybody want to say anything before we go to vote on that? If not, all those in favor of putting 13 ahead of the other planning board articles, please say aye.

(Aye.)

THE MODERATOR: Anybody opposed?

(No.)

THE MODERATOR: We'll do a clicker vote again. Yes vote simply means 13 -- sorry? Voting is open. Voting is closed.

161 town meeting representatives having voted in favor of moving the place of warrant Article 13 have voted yes, and 63 have voted no, we will move Article 13 to the beginning of the planning board section. Does everybody understand what we've done now?

So this is a planning board

1 article, and under our own by-laws and
2 Massachusetts state law, the planning board is
3 required to get what's called a report of the
4 planning board. It's not a discussion of the
5 merits, but it's a foundation of the proper
6 procedures followed and advertising, holding a
7 public hearing, taking a vote, whether it's
8 (inaudible). So the Chair calls on vice chair
9 of the planning board, Jessica Porter.

10 **MS. PORTER:** Thank you, Mr.
11 Moderator. So Article 13 was proposed by a
12 group of town meeting members and residents of
13 Dedham. On October 8, the planning board held
14 a duly noticed public hearing for Article 13.
15 We heard testimony from the public. We
16 ultimately closed the public hearing that
17 night.

18 On October 22, the board
19 deliberated and voted three to one to
20 recommend town meeting indefinitely postpone
21 Article 13, with the Chair, John Bethoney,
22 recusing himself and member Michael Podolski
23 serving as the defending vote. Thank you.

24 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. This is

1 a confusing article, so I'd like to take just
2 a few minutes to discuss some of the points of
3 confusion that Cherylann and I picked up when
4 attending planning board meetings, many town
5 meetings, and talking at town meetings.

6 So the first thing to remember is
7 that you are always voting on the
8 recommendation, not the wording of the article
9 itself. And why this is important in this
10 particular case is because the article says to
11 do something, and the original motion
12 recommends that we don't do it.

13 So as things stand right now,
14 you're voting on the original motion, which
15 says indefinitely postpone the idea as
16 enunciated in Article 13 so that you --

17 **MS. McDERMOTT:** Mr. Moderator, I
18 have a clarification, please.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes.

20 **MS. McDERMOTT:** I have submitted a
21 substitute motion for Article 13.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, I realize
23 that. We'll get to that.

24 **MS. McDERMOTT:** Thank you.

1 **THE MODERATOR:** So the motion
2 that's printed in the book is always what's on
3 the table. Now, as Ms. McDermott has pointed
4 out, any member of the town meeting can amend
5 that, and you'll hear the term "substitute
6 motion." A substitute motion is actually an
7 amendment. So in this case -- well, why don't
8 we (inaudible.) Go ahead.

9 **MS. McDERMOTT:** I've submitted a
10 substitute motion that Article 13 be so voted.

11 **THE MODERATOR:** So the motion
12 that's in the book of indefinite postponement,
13 in other words, don't do this idea, is now
14 amended to read that it be so voted. So even
15 though that's kind of a complete reversal,
16 that is technically an amendment. So this
17 requires two votes.

18 So let me give you an example. If
19 there was an article that said let's build a
20 baseball field at Paul Park, and the Park and
21 Recreation Commission agreed that might be the
22 original motion, or the finance committee
23 might make an original motion, somebody could
24 get up and offer an amendment that says well,

1 build a ball park, but build bleachers, too.

2 So that is an idea that's been
3 tagged on, amended to the original idea. So
4 what we do in that case is we vote on whether
5 or not you want to put the amendment on top of
6 the original idea. If we vote yes on that,
7 then we vote on the package as amended.

8 So in the case of Paul Park, the
9 motion that you would vote on first is do you
10 want to add bleachers to the idea of a
11 ballpark at Paul Park. If you vote yes on
12 that, then we would take a second vote that
13 said okay, now what's in front of you is a
14 ballpark with bleachers. Are you in favor of
15 that.

16 You might say, well, why do we have
17 to do two votes. Well, there are people who
18 like the idea of a ballpark, but don't want to
19 spend the expense of bleachers, so we have to
20 do two. What makes it even a little more
21 complicated with the zoning article is that
22 when you change the zoning article, it
23 requires a two-thirds vote. To put an
24 amendment only requires a majority vote.

1 So let's look at this. Can you put
2 that on the screen? So we're not going to
3 vote on this until you're sure you understand
4 it, so don't get too nervous yet. So we came
5 to Article 13. That's the circle on the left.
6 A substitute motion was offered by Hope
7 McDermott, and we're going to debate that
8 substitute motion, which will then be so
9 voted.

10 So what the amendment, the
11 substitute motion, is saying is please ignore
12 the suggestion that we indefinitely postpone
13 -- and I think as you know, indefinitely
14 postpone is a polite way of saying say no,
15 kill the idea -- and instead, we want to have
16 the wording of the article actually
17 implemented.

18 So to be specific, Article 13 calls
19 for changing the zoning ordinance, and
20 reverting to the way the zoning ordinance was
21 before a vote in 2022. That's what the
22 proponents want to do. The planning board
23 does not agree with that, which is why they
24 put in an original motion, which, by the way,

1 is their prerogative. There are two groups
2 that generate original motions, the finance
3 and warrant committee on most articles, and on
4 planning and land use related articles, the
5 planning board. So the planning board's
6 original motion is that it be indefinitely
7 postponed.

8 So if you go to the second row,
9 you'll see the words "vote to accept the
10 substitute motion." So this is a vote to
11 accept putting the idea of moving forward with
12 the wording of Article 13; in other words,
13 reverting the zoning back to the way it was in
14 2022. If you are in favor of that idea,
15 you're in favor of putting the substitute
16 motion, you'd vote on it favorably.

17 If a majority votes that way,
18 because it is a planning article, a zoning
19 article, it requires by state law a two-thirds
20 vote. So first we decide whether we want to
21 amend it, and if you do decide to amend it and
22 to actually implement that amended idea, it
23 requires a two-thirds vote. If you vote no,
24 we don't want to amend what the planning board

1 has recommended, which is indefinite
2 postponement, then you would vote no, and then
3 that would be the end of the idea, and then we
4 would take a motion -- we would take a vote on
5 the original motion that it be indefinitely
6 postponed, yes, a second time. I understand.
7 That would be yes, and then the discussion
8 would be over.

9 So we're going to open the floor
10 for debate so that the people who want to
11 amend the original motion can give their
12 reasons, and then the planning board will have
13 an equal amount of time to explain their
14 thinking on why they said we do not want to
15 proceed with the thoughts that are behind
16 Article 13. We do not want to revert the
17 zoning back to the way it was in 2022.

18 As I think as you know by now, the
19 article was passed in 2022. It allowed for
20 more flexible professional and commercial
21 uses, and there are members of our community
22 who do not like the idea of doing that because
23 they've seen a particular proposal that could
24 be done under that.

1 So before I invite the -- and the
2 proponents of the amendment get to speak
3 first. That's just the way it works. Let me
4 stop there and let you riddle me with
5 questions. We aren't taking any vote just
6 yet. We're going to hear the pros and cons of
7 the original motion versus the group of people
8 who say please do not keep the original
9 motion.

10 Without seeing anybody that says
11 I'm not sure -- but I'm pretty sure that
12 there's somebody out there who's not sure but
13 maybe just doesn't want to -- believe me, if
14 you are not sure, there's a half dozen other
15 people who are more than sure.

16 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** I'm not
17 sure.

18 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Susan.
19 There's an original -- there is an article.
20 The article says repeal the zoning that you
21 approved in 2022. That's what the article
22 says, and that was put forth by a group of
23 town meeting representatives and a resident of
24 Dedham.

1 It went to the planning board for
2 review because the planning board reviews all
3 of those kinds of articles, and they said we
4 don't like that idea, we do not want to repeal
5 it, so we're voting against it -- against that
6 idea, and that's probably going to get
7 postponed.

8 So the people who proposed the idea
9 are saying, well, we don't -- we're not going
10 to accept that idea. We want it to go to town
11 meeting to see if town meeting feels we should
12 advance this idea. If there's anybody out
13 there who doesn't understand it, then just say
14 so. There's a question in the back. You need
15 to come to the microphone, sir, and state your
16 name and your district.

17 **MR. DOLAN:** Sean Dolan, Precinct 4.
18 Could the person who proposed the substitute
19 amendment tell us or summarize the purpose?

20 **THE MODERATOR:** She is. She's
21 going to do that, and then the planning board
22 --

23 **MR. DOLAN:** Is it simply a wording
24 change in terms of --

1 we need to take your votes. You don't need to
2 have it ingrained in your memory how this all
3 works because I will explain to you exactly
4 what yes means and what no means when it comes
5 time to vote. My suggestion is put the chart
6 aside, and listen to see which side you agree
7 with, and then when it comes time to vote,
8 we'll explain again. If you agree with Hope,
9 vote yes; if you agree with Jessica, vote no,
10 or whatever the case is. Is that all right?

11 So you're willing to suspend this
12 hot (inaudible) discussion about the
13 parliamentary procedure, and we can just get
14 into the substance. I think that's a good
15 choice. Is there another question? Yes?

16 **MS. LIDER:** Hi, I'm Jess Lider of
17 Precinct 2. So after the planning board
18 presents their -- you click Y if you said no?

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Yep.

20 **MS. LIDER:** Do we then get to also
21 ask questions, or do the other proponents come
22 back and tell us?

23 **THE MODERATOR:** Oh, yeah, this will
24 be a back and forth discussion. So the

1 proponents will give their idea. The planning
2 board will help with those discussions, and
3 once those two sensitive views have been well
4 established, then it's up to you, and you can
5 ask questions, you can demand more
6 information, you can do what you need to do or
7 what you need to learn before voting. At the
8 end of the day, you will know what you're
9 voting for. So the Chair recognizes the
10 proponents of Article 13, Beth Gauthier, town
11 meeting representative, Michael Butler,
12 resident of the town.

13 **MR. BUTLER:** Good evening,
14 everyone. My name is Mike Butler. I'm one or
15 the sponsors, of the article. I've formally
16 served as a member of the select board from
17 2007 to 2019, previous to that six years on
18 the school committee. I'm a resident of
19 Precinct 7.

20 **MS. GAUTHIER:** Good evening,
21 everyone. Becky Gauthier, Precinct 2, town
22 meeting representative, less extensive resume
23 as Mike. I'm a parent of the Riverdale Ravens
24 and (inaudible).

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MR. BUTLER: Thank you for your time this evening. Like many residents, I was surprised about how large the campus 128 proposal unfolded and how large the 128 proposal is. Before we begin, I just want to say Article 13 is not about stopping development. It is about learning from what happened since the language was changed in 2022. I'm working for the next couple of years with two zoning bylaws so it works for all of Dedham.

Just for background, I know because there are some town meeting members who were there in 2022, in the middle of 2022, the planning board held several public meetings to discuss zoning changes in a good faith effort to attract life science in advanced technology businesses to the town, which is viewed as a way to improve and increase the commercial tax base.

They focused on re-zoning the single residence A or SRA area along I-95 and 128. However, the term "SRA" did not appear on a planning board agenda until October 12,

1 2022, only one month before the November town
2 meeting, which in my mind couldn't give
3 residents of SRA any sufficient notice so they
4 could speak up and let their voices be heard.
5 Not only was this very aggressive, but SRA
6 residents were never notified that re-zoning
7 was under consideration.

8 In addition, the warrant book was
9 correctly -- incorrectly formatted, so it was
10 difficult on the night of town meeting to
11 understand the proposed changes. Yes,
12 corrected information was handed out at town
13 meeting, but not everyone received it, and the
14 map showing the affected areas was extremely
15 vague. Town meeting went on to approve
16 Article 7. It was also reported here that no
17 maximum size for the project was considered.

18 Last May, when the developer
19 presented the campus at 128, many residents
20 did realize (inaudible) the true scope of what
21 the 2022 bylaw allowed, and some of those
22 residents have brought forward this article.
23 A few weeks ago at the planning board, member
24 Mike Podolski, who was the one dissenting

1 vote, did say in his remarks that he believed
2 a second look at the article that we passed in
3 2022 was valid, especially in terms of
4 limiting the scope of developable land around
5 the 128 corridor.

6 Article 7 fundamentally changed
7 what could be built in the SRA. You can see
8 some of the criteria that was used. It opened
9 the door to large commercial projects as long
10 as these four conditions were met. For those
11 of you who may not be familiar with it, the
12 60-40 rule means they plan for professional
13 (?) developments may be allowed with 60
14 percent of that floor area was accepted or was
15 occupied by a use meeting the definition of
16 laboratory research and manufacturing. The
17 other 40 percent of the net floor area could
18 be used for other types of developments,
19 including such things as retail or residential
20 or hotels.

21 Many town meeting members believe
22 development would be limited to the original
23 24 acre parcel owned by the primary plant
24 holder. That's the orange area shown on the

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map on the left.

What people expected, I believe was modest and contained, what emerged was very different, and what you have on the right-hand image is the proposed development, which is 50-plus acres, so quite a change from what was originally considered. It's 1.5 million square feet, 1,800 parking spaces, with only one way in and out. So Legacy Place is half that size and has three accessible entrances compared to only one. And Costco, where many of us shop, has fewer than 400 parking spaces. So the proposal has more than four times that amount.

So how did this happen? We believe there was some major oversights. The 2022 amendment never set a maximum size limit of the footprint or the cap on the number of buildings. So without a size limit, the development zone created in 2022 remains open-ended.

For problem number 2, although the amendment to the bylaw says minimum of ten acres, that ten acres can grow, as you just

1 saw on one of the previous slides. Bay
2 Bridge, adjacent to the ten acre properties,
3 can be assembled into even larger parcels, so
4 over time, the parcels could continue to grow,
5 and, as a result, the projects can expand
6 deeper into residential areas potentially
7 consuming large swatches of neighborhoods.

8 While Campus 128, as I said
9 (inaudible) 23 acres, it's more than 50 acres.
10 There is no maximum size. That was a big
11 oversight. Number 3, unclear safeguards. The
12 60-40 provision is actually hard to monitor
13 and hard to enforce. We have -- we believe
14 there's some unfair rules that we can
15 negotiate the position, and this is why
16 further clarity is needed and why the language
17 should be revisited over the coming two years.

18 Finally, before I turn it over to
19 Bethany, Article 13 does not block the campus
20 at 128. We hope everybody understands that.
21 So we acknowledge that the planning board
22 acknowledges it, and the developer
23 acknowledges it. The project will go through
24 a very rigorous special permitting process in

1 the year ahead, so you'll see special permits.

2 So this does not block the campus
3 at 128. The zoning has been legally frozen,
4 and the developer retains its rights to move
5 forward under the 2010, 2022 rules. I'll now
6 turn the presentation over to Bethany
7 Gauthier.

8 **MS. GAUTHIER:** Thank you, Mike.
9 This updated map provided by the planning
10 board shows every parcel eligible for a large
11 scale partial campus (inaudible) 2022
12 language. So those are the properties that
13 are marked in blue.

14 And you might be able to note that
15 there are seven unique parcels, including the
16 campus at 128. If the campus at 128 is 1.5
17 million square feet, imagine what it would
18 look like to have six more projects of that
19 size on Route 128 outside of Dedham -- on the
20 edge of them. This would fundamentally
21 reshape Dedham, and quickly Dedham would
22 become -- it would turn from a town into a
23 much, much more denser area.

24 So again, I just want to remind you

1 where the campus 128 project is and (someone
2 coughs) provided by the developer of a 1.5
3 million square foot project twice the size of
4 Legacy Place. I actually feel like it looks
5 smaller in this rendering than if you actually
6 imagine 1,800 parking spaces, four times the
7 number of parking spaces as what you see at
8 Costco.

9 It's one thing to think of that as
10 a single development in Dedham, but if we're
11 talking about having that seven times over,
12 you can imagine how this will change the shape
13 and feel of Dedham. Article 13 would stop
14 this without having -- well, stop this from
15 moving forward without having more time to
16 consider what zoning bylaws should be in place
17 to really allow us to have a voice in the
18 shaping of these bylaws.

19 Sorry, it wasn't -- what I'm seeing
20 is not what you're seeing. I do apologize.
21 So we have to ask ourselves, do we want Dedham
22 to become a city with so many commercial
23 campuses without more input from our town.
24 Imagine the traffic that we see already in

1 some parts of the city backing up along Route
2 135 and 128, in addition to thinking about the
3 traffic that would be coming through our
4 neighborhoods as they reach these different
5 projects.

6 I want to note that Dedham is an
7 outlier to our neighboring towns. Lexington,
8 Needham and Wellesley all restrict labs and
9 large commercial uses to commercial districts.
10 They pivot research and development and loads
11 of city residential zones that require strong
12 buffer areas when they are developed.

13 Newton requires that there's a
14 community benefit agreement before projects
15 move forward. In this case, the previous
16 article that was approved in 2022 makes Dedham
17 an outlier, not a leader, in terms of allowing
18 large commercial uses in single residential
19 areas.

20 Article 13 is not just about a few
21 neighborhoods. The impact of the zoning that
22 was passed earlier affects all of Dedham
23 because the impacts will not stop at
24 (inaudible) A 1.5 million square foot

1 development raises townwide questions.

2 Can our roads handle the traffic
3 that would be introduced? Do our water and
4 electrical systems have capacity? What about
5 storm water and environmental impacts? How
6 will the scale of activity impact our schools
7 and our safety systems? These concerns would
8 affect every family in Dedham, and Article 13
9 is a townwide issue that has townwide
10 consequences.

11 Article 13 gives us a chance to
12 increase -- Article 13 gives us something
13 incredibly valuable, the chance to pause and
14 plan responsibility. This article allows us
15 to learn from the Campus 128 hearings about
16 the process, the impacts and the realistic
17 revenues that would generate from such a
18 project.

19 This article will allow us to close
20 the loopholes that were created in 2022 and
21 refine our zoning language over the next
22 months to match what the town wants for future
23 projects. This article allows us to align
24 future development with our master plan and

1 ensure that our infrastructure can handle the
2 project activity.

3 Finally, this article gives us a
4 chance to restore credibility, transparency
5 and public trust in these projects. And while
6 we do that, Article 13 prevents additional
7 large scale commercial projects from
8 (inaudible) and other residential
9 neighborhoods.

10 Above all, Article 13 is about
11 precedent. How we handle this moment sets the
12 tone for future zoning decisions of Dedham.
13 If this article fails, we will lose our
14 negotiating leverage. Developers will fight
15 the 2022 bylaw to justify larger footprints
16 and broader uses. Environmental risks will
17 increase, and our town begins to look forward
18 and function much more like a city than the
19 small town that we are currently. A yes vote
20 on Article 13 does not stop progress, but it
21 protects Dedham while we are guiding
22 responsible growth.

23 I want to end with a quote from
24 planning board member Mike Podolski, who said

1 as he was making his decision around this
2 article's proposal, "There's no doubt in my
3 mind that I never anticipated when we passed
4 the zoning change in '22 the proposed size and
5 scope of Campus 128 would ever occur.

6 "I believe that taking a second
7 look at the article we passed in 2022 is valid
8 to see if we can limit the size and scope
9 developing the land and the town better along
10 the Route 128 corridor.

11 "Perhaps it brings forward a better
12 and new bylaw that will be much easier for us
13 to comprehend and for the citizens who support
14 it. Perhaps reading the article from 2022
15 will prevent a second or third project in the
16 size and scope of the campus at 128 from being
17 brought forward in the future."

18 His words capture exactly why this
19 article is so important. And so respectfully,
20 we ask town meeting members to vote yes on the
21 substitute motion for Article 13. We thank
22 you for your thoughtful attention and for your
23 dedication to Dedham's future. Thank you.

24 **THE MODERATOR:** The Chair

1 recognizes Jessica Porter, the vice chair of
2 the planning board, to present the planning
3 board's rationale for their original motion.

4 **MS. PORTER:** Hi, everybody. My
5 name is Jessica Porter. I'm the vice chair of
6 the planning board. Thank you for this
7 opportunity to talk about the science campus
8 zoning history and the benefits for Dedham.
9 As I said at mini town meeting, I sincerely
10 believe that reasonable people can look at the
11 same facts and reach different opinions.

12 But I do think it's important that
13 we have a shared fact base, and that's
14 essential to the process. I want to make sure
15 that all of you town meeting members have
16 those facts when you're reaching decisions
17 based on the reality of the zoning and the
18 reality of the impact of the zoning, as
19 opposed to innuendo and hypotheticals.

20 I'm going to be as brief as
21 possible, and I'm going to try to not let the
22 time clock run out. So just quickly, just a
23 brief history. So the planning board, twice a
24 year, we have a meeting where we talk about

1 potential zoning articles to plan for the
2 future. This idea for a -- at the time, we
3 called it life science campus zoning came
4 forward at one of those was proposed by our
5 planning director, Jeremy Rosenberger, and our
6 then assistant town planner, Michelle Tinger.
7 The board really jumped at the idea for many
8 reasons.

9 One of those is that it was very
10 consistent with the master plan goal, the 2035
11 master plan. This also is making it very
12 clear that the RFM (?) development needs were
13 kind of increasing, that the town had not been
14 doing enough in terms of commercial growth and
15 diversification.

16 And then at the time, if you'll
17 recall, just driving up and down 95, we saw
18 kind of technology campus after technology
19 campus. At the time, Needham was getting a
20 new on ramp for new economic development
21 there. So it seemed like a good time to
22 really be thinking about how to use that
23 corridor.

24 We follow the same process that we

1 do for all of our zoning articles, so we go
2 through a period of research, looking at
3 neighboring towns, understanding industry
4 needs. Over the course of that process, we
5 really refined this into single residence A
6 zoning. The reason it didn't appear on any
7 agendas before October was it was at our
8 October -- sorry, our August 24 meeting that
9 we decided to focus on the single residence A
10 district. So it had not appeared on agendas
11 because -- prior to that for that reason.

12 The reason we did that is because
13 single residence A is the only place in town
14 where there are parcels large enough for this
15 type of development, so we were really focused
16 on that.

17 So why would we look at SRA? So
18 we've actually had zoning in place for over 20
19 years to allow science and research type of
20 campuses or developments. Those are in other
21 parts of the town. We simply have not had
22 those projects before. Generally what we find
23 is that the science and tech industry is
24 looking at -- for campus developments, they

1 want to have kind of a combination of housing,
2 restaurants, maybe some retail.

3 I mean, it may not be -- I was
4 going to say it may not be for the best
5 reasons, but if you think about large
6 companies, they want to keep you on campus.
7 They do not want you to leave early or leaving
8 to go for lunch. They want to have it all
9 right there. So that's how the industry is
10 evolving, and that's why they've really been
11 looking for larger properties close to the
12 highway, easy to kind of get in and out.

13 And they're also looking for simple
14 ownership. They're not looking to assemble a
15 lot of parcels together to try to create
16 things. They're looking for existing big
17 parcels and for projects -- or properties that
18 don't have to be redeveloped. Ideally,
19 they're looking for space that doesn't -- it's
20 not already covered in concrete.

21 So that's why when we look at all
22 the properties along 95, it was the single
23 residence A, or SRA, the spaces which were
24 really adjacent to 95 that were the most

1 desirable to developers, and also the least
2 impactful to the town because we could get
3 people right on and off the highway, not on
4 most of our interior roads.

5 So where does this campus zoning
6 apply? We're talking about basically a
7 stretch along 95 from Atrius Health to the
8 north and then just south of 109, which is the
9 old Exit 16. As we saw from that earlier map,
10 the area really hugs 95. It's -- one of these
11 spaces has since been developed as a
12 subdivision, so that's 1 Rocky Ridge. It
13 represents about one percent of the property,
14 about five percent of the land mass for a
15 single residence A zone.

16 And I just want to check a little
17 bit of facts because -- so basically we're
18 talking about zoning. I don't want to talk
19 too much about proposed campus at 128 project
20 because that's really not what's in front of
21 you as to the decision, but I do feel like we
22 need to be honest about the facts of the size.

23 So the proposed campus at 128, the
24 existing parcel, which has proposing, is 52

1 acres. Legacy Place, not including Costco or
2 the apartment buildings, that's 42 acres. So
3 we're talking about a slightly bigger land
4 mass, 20 percent larger land mass.

5 Legacy Place -- sorry, the campus
6 at 128 also has approximately nine acres of
7 wetlands, which would have buffers. So in
8 terms of the amount that would actually be
9 built, we're looking at very close to the same
10 amount of massing. I would encourage you not
11 to look at any -- with any project that's
12 proposed to the planning board, I would not
13 look at the developer's initial drawings and
14 assume that that is what the project is going
15 to look like when it's over.

16 We just last week had someone in
17 for the third time after twice sending them
18 back to make the project smaller. So I would
19 not go by -- I think looking at square footage
20 of parking spaces on a very early proposal is
21 not actually an accurate way to judge the size
22 of what we're talking about. What we're
23 talking about is something where the amount of
24 buildable space is roughly the size of Legacy

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Place for that campus at 128 project.

So I do want to talk a little about the planning board process to understand what's involved in applying for a special permit. Any of these spaces -- and I think the reason that, in general, the planning staff and the majority of planning board members are not concerned about a sea of campus -- science campuses built overnight is because it's so unrealistic that that would happen. For one, the campus zoning -- the science campus zoning allows the planning board the most amount of authority of any type of zoning that we have.

The planning board has to balance what's good for the community, with the people who are living nearby. We look at impacts on traffic, the environment, circulation, public safety, utilities, infrastructure, the architecture, how things -- how it impacts town finances. The list is very long.

Any project would probably take at least a two-year review period, which is a public hearing, and so the community is an

1 active part of that process and would be
2 involved for the entire process, and then
3 there's third-party peer reviews where the
4 planning board actually causes the developer
5 to hire additional reviewers who we choose to
6 go over and double check everything.

7 It's a very, very extensive project
8 -- or extensive process, and I will say the
9 list that the proponents put up -- I don't
10 have time to go through all of those, but I'll
11 say there's nothing different between -- my
12 understanding is there's nothing different
13 between what we look at in terms of community
14 benefits and impacts from what Newton does as
15 an example. That's a kind of spurious, I
16 think, comparison.

17 So the planning board then can
18 impose any number of conditions. I don't -- I
19 think maybe you have these slides, but just to
20 give you a sense of the size of the other
21 buildings, landscaping buffers. We can do
22 mitigation. So if it turns out we're
23 concerned at all about the ability of our
24 roads to take on extra growth, then we would

1 be looking at asking mitigation in terms of
2 dealing with existing traffic problems,
3 anticipating potential traffic problems. All
4 of that is part of the project, particularly a
5 project of this scale.

6 We also would be looking for the
7 ability to have preference for Dedham
8 residents, both in terms of construction jobs,
9 permanent jobs, and affordable housing, and
10 then public amenities, such as trails or
11 playgrounds. It's a very, very strict
12 threshold for approval. So in the end, the
13 planning board has to determine whether the
14 benefits of a project outweigh any negative
15 impacts. If the negative impacts are larger
16 than the benefits, they do not get a special
17 permit.

18 So all of this -- I think I just
19 want to make sure you understand this is not a
20 haphazard process. This is very, very serious
21 and deliberate. For those of you who were
22 around -- the town hasn't really done a large
23 scale development since Legacy Place, but for
24 those of you who might remember that, that was

1 a very, very kind of intense and detailed
2 process that the planning board went through.

3 I also want to just point out that
4 these types of projects do help us address
5 other issues in town. So for instance -- I
6 mean, just because I mentioned Legacy Place as
7 a last major commercial development, I did go
8 back and look, and in 2006, the estimate was
9 that Legacy Place would bring \$2.3 million of
10 revenue to the town. It wasn't built right
11 away, so it's kind of hard to see, but by
12 2014, it was at about \$4 million of revenue,
13 of tax revenue, and in 2025, it was \$5.2
14 million. So these projects more than pay for
15 themselves in terms of the services that they
16 provide.

17 The other thing that I think the
18 proponents mentioned, which I just found out
19 and disagree with, is that there's loopholes,
20 and it's hard to enforce. There's actually a
21 lot of ongoing mechanisms for oversight and
22 accountability, both through the planning
23 board, the planning department, and then other
24 departments, so the building department,

1 engineering department, department of public
2 works.

3 Basically, as I talked about, with
4 the special permitting, the planning board can
5 set up any number of conditions. Once a
6 project is approved, if a project is approved,
7 it then becomes -- the whole town basically,
8 all the town departments, are looking to make
9 sure that we're enforcing those provisions.

10 So as an example of a current
11 provision, we will -- if there's a current
12 development that starts to -- maybe their
13 parking lot is no longer striped or the
14 landscaping is dying, things like that, we
15 actually have the ability then for the town to
16 intercede and make sure that they're keeping
17 the plans up into what they promised. In the
18 case of the 60-40 mix for a like campus --
19 assigned campus, that also is -- would be
20 enforced by a combination of the building
21 department or actually town meeting.

22 So if there was something that
23 happened to -- let's say there's -- let's say
24 a project started, and it was 60 percent

1 robotics, and then in ten years, it turns out
2 robotics is a little bit less hot than fuel
3 cells. That's just a decision for the
4 planning board -- I'm sorry, for the building
5 department. If it turned out that they wanted
6 then to look into a different type of use,
7 maybe to not a science use, that would be a
8 question for town meeting. Nothing could
9 change without town meeting taking a vote.

10 So one of the questions about these
11 parcels that I think is particularly difficult
12 to think about is that when we're talking
13 about zoning and just in general development
14 in town, the decision is -- the choice is not
15 actually between keeping something the way it
16 is and developing it in a certain way.

17 So I think this is kind of being
18 framed as all of these blue spots on the map,
19 we can keep them open green space, or they can
20 -- or we're going to have a sea of science
21 campuses. Neither of those extremes are true.
22 They just -- the only way to preserve the open
23 space is for someone to purchase it and deed
24 it as conservation land. So it's easy, I

1 think, to fall into this kind of false
2 dichotomy.

3 And then right now, one one the
4 things about single residence A is it already
5 has a number of large scale developments and
6 institutional uses. In part, that's because
7 Dedham's bylaws and the Commonwealth requires
8 a certain number of uses that are allowed by
9 right.

10 The by right use means that the
11 owner can do a development without a special
12 permit. If it meets all the zoning rules, it
13 has much less oversight from the town and
14 generally much less benefit to the town,
15 particularly in terms of tax revenue. So the
16 types of things that can be done by right are
17 educational uses, universities, preschools,
18 private schools, churches, and that's true of
19 every residential district in town and then in
20 the SRA district also renewable and
21 alternative energy facilities.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Ms. Porter, it's
23 time to sum up, please.

24 **MS. PORTER:** I'm so sorry. I was

1 just getting to the fun stuff. So just
2 quickly, we did future proof the zoning to
3 make sure that it's accessible for many types
4 of science technology, robotics, sustainable
5 technology.

6 I think what's really important is
7 that people understand the importance of
8 having a multi-pronged economic development
9 strategy. So I understand -- I've seen on
10 Facebook I think last week they talked about
11 Legacy Place was going to solve all our
12 problems.

13 I think it's very important
14 everybody know there is no one development
15 that is ever going to solve the town's
16 problems, right? What is important is that
17 the town has a strategic economic development
18 plan. We're constantly looking at ways that
19 we can encourage new growth, encourage
20 redevelopment of spaces that are not being
21 adequately utilized, and also that we're
22 looking at diversification.

23 So right now, Dedham has quite a
24 lot of retail space, if you look at Legacy

1 Place, Dedham Plaza, Dedham Mall. It's not
2 really smart for us to put all of our kind of
3 eggs in one basket because all we need -- we
4 can see as retail patterns change, that leaves
5 us vulnerable.

6 So Article 13 does not prevent
7 large development. It does, however, reduce
8 the flexibility to protect the neighborhood.
9 So it's harder to add buffers with the
10 specific campus at 128 project. What it would
11 do is basically freeze the ability of that
12 project to use only the 52 acres that they
13 have frozen, and it means that they would not
14 have the flexibility to add new parcels for
15 buffers for the neighborhood or roadways,
16 etcetera.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
18 Porter. Before we open the floor for the
19 debate, I would ask you to go to Page 27 in
20 your warrant book, make it a little more rapid
21 with the question that's before you.

22 So you see on Page 27 under
23 "article language," what the article proposes
24 to do is to remove the paragraph that is in

1 yellow in the strike through box, and what
2 that would do is it would remove the ability
3 to do the planned commercial development that
4 we're talking about this evening.

5 So what the planning board has said
6 quite clearly is we do not agree with that, so
7 that's why they amended it, and the proponents
8 are in favor of striking that language. The
9 result of striking that language is that we
10 would not be doing -- planning community
11 developments -- I'm sorry, planning commercial
12 developments, and the only example that we
13 have in town right now is the proposed but not
14 yet fully defined campus at 128. The floor is
15 now open. The Chair recognizes Vivian Daly.

16 **MS. DALY:** Vivian Daly, Precinct 2.
17 So I normally stand up to ask questions.
18 Today I just have a short-ish statement I'll
19 be reading. I'm not an abutter to any of the
20 impacted properties, but I do have a young
21 child who will be going to Dedham Public
22 Schools, and so I'm invested in seeing the
23 town with better financial health and better
24 school buildings.

1 If you haven't had a chance to
2 watch the 2022 town meeting regarding Article
3 7, on your request because you were there, the
4 presentation in Article 7 starts out with a
5 statement from the planning board presenter,
6 and I quote, "Obviously, we're not looking for
7 this to go into residential areas." The
8 presenter then goes on to say they're looking
9 to build an area to live, work, and play, a
10 tag line I've also heard from local
11 developers.

12 I want Dedham to grow. I want us
13 to have lively businesses, a rich community,
14 new schools, and town services for all
15 community members. I don't think the footnote
16 added to the zoning bylaw in 2022 is how we
17 get there, and I'm in favor of striking that
18 language as proposed in Article 13.

19 This bylaw gives the planning board
20 five individuals in the town the ability to
21 permit commercial development in a
22 residentially zoned area through special
23 permits. I've heard of these properties that
24 we see in blue on our maps referred to as

1 former residential zones, but that's not the
2 case. They are still zoned as residential.

3 Our residential zone just has a
4 footnote permitting commercial development in
5 certain scenarios. Does that make sense to
6 everyone? It doesn't make sense to me. The
7 bylaw was intended to be a select number of
8 parcels, those in SRA districts abutting 128
9 and over ten acres, but with recent project
10 ideas, we've already seen that neighboring
11 residential parcels have been or may be
12 purchased to expand a potential project.

13 How far do these commercial
14 developments expand? The bylaw was updated in
15 2022 on the tail end of the Covid pandemic
16 when biotech and pharmaceutical manufacturing
17 was booming. Now you can find multiple Boston
18 Globe articles from this year about available
19 lab space and the downturn in biotech.

20 If we shouldn't put all of our eggs
21 in one basket, does writing the required
22 industry into our bylaw when booming
23 industries will shift make sense over time.
24 The bylaw was intended to bring in more

1 commercial development and revenue for the
2 town, but who absorbs the cost of adding
3 infrastructure: roads, police, fire, water,
4 schools?

5 How does creating a new commercial
6 corridor impact our existing commercial
7 corridor? Our town square has not been
8 reinvigorated since I was in high school.
9 Could this all be negotiated by the planning
10 board and special permitting, sure, but that's
11 five individuals in an elected seat with a
12 term end date. Who will be in those seats for
13 the future?

14 Our bylaws should be as future
15 proofed as possible. I ask other town meeting
16 members who (inaudible) the language added to
17 the zoning bylaw 2022 vote yes and then yes.
18 I ask the planning board to please come to us
19 this spring with a new proposal on how to
20 encourage commercial development through
21 zoning changes.

22 Can the expansion of these parcels
23 during multiple purchases be limited? Can we
24 require certain concessions like direct access

1 to 128 (inaudible). Restrict property
2 assessment abatement ability, require a
3 percentage of tree coverage be maintained, not
4 through special permitting decided by five
5 individuals, but written into our bylaws, and
6 if passed, agreed upon by two-thirds of town
7 meeting to withstand the test of time.

8 Can we look at zoning adjustments
9 to existing commercial properties that
10 encourage those properties to be filled? We
11 can all picture the commercially zoned
12 properties along Route 1, and we can all
13 picture a handful of vacant or partially
14 vacant properties along that stretch. I
15 remind everyone this is not a vote for a
16 particular project, for our town's budget, or
17 for our schools. This is about how our zoning
18 bylaws are made.

19 High-rise developments, such as
20 nonprofit schools or hospitals, is not limited
21 by this footnote. Right down the road next to
22 the Trip Advisor building in Needham, a
23 community noted as one of life science
24 development, a nonprofit hospital, Boston

1 Children's, just filled a vacant lab space, a
2 tenant that would not be required to pay
3 property taxes.

4 The well intentioned Article 7 in
5 2022 leaves too much ambiguity in our zoning
6 bylaws. It wrote into law that we have
7 certain parcels that are zoned both
8 residentially and commercially. This is
9 business (?) planning. So please join me in
10 voting yes and then yes.

11 To close, we are the town's
12 legislative body. This is probably the most
13 democratic form of government we'll ever
14 participate in. It's town meeting's
15 responsibility to ensure our bylaws are in a
16 way that are as future proofed as possible and
17 not allowing developers to cut red tape.
18 Thank you.

19 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you.

20 **MS. MCDERMOTT:** Mr. Moderator,
21 could I speak at the podium?

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Sure, yes. By the
23 way, any speaker who would like to speak at
24 the podium, you're certainly welcome to do so.

1 **MS. MCDERMOTT:** Good evening. I'm
2 Hope McDermott, 580 Bridge Street, Precinct 1.
3 I just want to take a second to recognize your
4 incredible service, Dan, for 33 years. Were
5 my husband here tonight, he would say all
6 kinds of glowing things about you, and we are
7 very grateful for your leadership and your
8 service for such a long extended time and your
9 sense of humor that keeps us going during
10 these long evenings.

11 So I will not try to test your
12 patience. If you could indulge me, I would
13 like to speak on this subject, which I think
14 has tremendous importance to our town.

15 So Mr. Moderator, fellow town
16 meeting members, neighbors, friends, and those
17 watching at home on Dedham television, tonight
18 we're not here as factions. We're here as
19 stewards of the town we love.

20 And I want to make something very
21 clear from the start. Article 13 is not anti
22 development. It is pro Dedham. It is pro
23 neighborhood. It is pro common sense. It is
24 about restoring balance and transparency and

1 the guardrails that have served this town for
2 decades. This article is simply about keeping
3 large scale commercial development where it
4 belongs, in commercially zoned areas, not
5 dropped into the center of our residential
6 neighborhoods.

7 Let's say it plainly. Article 13
8 does not stop the proposed campus at 128. The
9 planning board itself has said that. The
10 developer has already frozen the zoning under
11 preliminary subdivision filing. That project
12 will rise or fall based not on -- excuse me,
13 based on the natural limitations of the site
14 and the planning board's process, not on
15 Article 13.

16 But what Article 13 will do is
17 prevent other surprise mega projects from
18 being dropped into the neighborhoods where our
19 families live, because once you open the door,
20 it does not close itself again; a development
21 nobody ever envisioned, and while we are not
22 debating the campus at 128 tonight, we cannot
23 ignore the reality that this developer has
24 been loudly advertising a project coming soon,

1 long before submitting any application, a
2 project that while more than twice the size of
3 Legacy Place -- and we are speaking in square
4 feet, not acres -- the density is mind
5 boggling.

6 Ask yourselves honestly is this
7 what town meeting members imagined when they
8 voted on the 2022 zoning change. Many thought
9 we were voting for a pony, we ended up with a
10 Clydesdale, and the information we just
11 received from the planning board, pages and
12 pages of explanations, diagrams and details,
13 where was all of this in 2022 before we made
14 the decision that dramatically reshaped Dedham
15 zoning? Transparency after the fact isn't
16 transparency, it's damage control.

17 To our newer members, our new and
18 younger members of town meeting, welcome. We
19 welcome you here tonight, and truly, I'm glad
20 you're here. We need your voices, your
21 curiosity, your energy. You care deeply about
22 our schools, our fields, our recreational
23 spaces, and so do I.

24 This body has supported a new

1 middle school, a new Avery School, and the
2 ECEC because schools reflect our values.
3 Schools say we believe in our kids, and we
4 believe in our future. Cannibalizing (?) our
5 residential neighborhoods is not how we build
6 better schools. Thoughtful planning is,
7 responsible planning is, the long view is. We
8 must be thoughtful, not reactive.

9 Dedham has spent years chasing the
10 pot of gold at the end of every commercial
11 rainbow: malls, big box stores and Legacy
12 Place. Every one of them promised to fix our
13 fiscal needs, and every time we learn the same
14 lesson. Gross revenue is not net revenue,
15 because development comes with costs, as
16 you've heard, police, fire, water, sewer,
17 traffic infrastructure, and yes, schools.

18 The pot of gold is never as shiny
19 as a developer's brochure would suggest. So
20 how does Dedham's commercial and industrial
21 area compare with others? Waltham to which
22 we've been -- which has been held out as a
23 place with lots of laboratory space and
24 whatnot, has 22.5 percent of their area. It

1 is a city.

2 Dedham has 17 percent. We've been
3 told it has not a lot as compared with other
4 towns. Needham has less. It has 13 percent,
5 Westwood 13 percent, and Milton four percent.
6 If the big developments haven't solved our
7 fiscal problems by now, then we must ask are
8 our commercial properties being accurately
9 assessed, is our tax revenue being effectively
10 managed, and why are we not aggressively
11 planning redevelopment for aging soon to be
12 obsolete box stores already zoned for
13 commercial use?

14 The 2009 master plan laid out a
15 vision for transit oriented development at the
16 corporate center 16 years ago. Where is that
17 forward thinking? Why are we not pursuing it?
18 The concern isn't unintended consequences,
19 it's the consequences we can already see.

20 Some members of the planning board
21 opposing Article 13 warned about unintended
22 consequences, but friends, those consequences
23 are already staring us in the face. The
24 problem isn't Article 13. The problem is now

1 guardrails.

2 And what I haven't heard from the
3 planning board is any reassurance to the
4 residents whose lives and property values will
5 be impacted, no commitments to buffers, no
6 commitments to limiting the height, no
7 commitment to limiting the scale, no
8 commitment to minimizing harm. That silence
9 speaks volumes, but a lot of talk about
10 flexibility for the developer.

11 And let's address another comment.
12 The idea that the devil you know is better
13 than the devil you don't, that's not an
14 appropriate comment for a town official to
15 say. It shows a fundamental misunderstanding
16 of zoning, because zoning doesn't attach to
17 the developer, it attaches to the land.

18 This developer can sell to any
19 other developer any day. He can also sell to
20 any by right organization -- development
21 organization, educational, churches or
22 nonprofits. Who do we trust? I trust
23 developers to look out for two things, their
24 own self interest and their profit margins,

1 and I don't blame them for that, it's their
2 job.

3 But there is someone I trust,
4 someone who has spent 37 years serving this
5 town meeting, someone who helped shape the
6 charter for professional town management,
7 Dedham's award winning 2009 master plan,
8 protection of Wilson Mountain and the town
9 hall campus we are all so proud of, someone
10 who never asks for credit, just results, and
11 that is my husband, Shaw McDermott, the author
12 of Article 13.

13 He would be here tonight. There is
14 no place he would rather be than here with us
15 tonight, but he is in the hospital being
16 treated for lymphoma, and there's no place I
17 would rather be than at his side, but here we
18 are tonight because we love this town. We
19 love every neighborhood, every street, and
20 every family, and because we believe Dedham
21 deserves thoughtful planning, honest
22 leadership, and zoning that protects people,
23 not just projects.

24 I also would be remiss if I did not

1 acknowledge Mike Podolski as a member of the
2 planning board for his vote in favor of
3 Article 13. What Article 13 actually does is
4 one simple crucial thing. It restores the
5 decades long zoning bylaws that existed before
6 the 2022 change. It gives us time to pause,
7 reflect and plan better. It positions Dedham
8 to encourage strong commercial development in
9 commercial zones, while protecting our
10 neighborhoods from massive unanticipated build
11 outs. This is not extreme. This is not
12 reckless. This is responsible government.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you.

14 **MS. MCDERMOTT:** So tonight -- thank
15 you, Mr. Moderator. I'll finish. So tonight
16 I'm asking you to vote for Article 13 because
17 our planning should be thoughtful, not
18 accidental. Our neighborhoods deserve
19 protection, not surprise, our towns deserve
20 forward thinking, not we missed the vote
21 again, and our residents deserve transparency,
22 not footnotes that reshape our zoning
23 overnight.

24 Dedham is worth fighting for. Our

1 neighborhoods are worth fighting for. Our
2 future is worth fighting for. Let's take a
3 breath, let's take a pause, let's take back
4 control of our planning, and let us do it
5 together. I respectfully ask for your vote in
6 favor of Article 13. Thank you for your
7 indulgence.

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. The
9 Chair recognizes Mr. Mike Podolski from the
10 planning board.

11 **MR. PODOLSKI:** Thank you, Mr.
12 Moderator, town meeting members. I think this
13 is my speaker over here. Let me start where
14 I'll end up, which is what I try to do a lot
15 of times.

16 The quotes that you were shown are
17 accurate, and I continue to support Article 13
18 and ask that you consider supporting Article
19 13. I gave reasons -- I promise, I won't
20 exceed the limit, Mr. Moderator.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, sir.

22 **MR. PODOLSKI:** We deliberated -- we
23 held public hearing on this article, I believe
24 it was two weeks later, then voted. During

1 that two weeks, I had the opportunity to
2 really consider after listening to a lot of
3 testimony from citizens as to what the
4 proposal that's not getting filed could do to
5 the Town of Dedham.

6 I have every faith that our board
7 will properly control it because it's not
8 going to be, except from this article, but
9 what I think, and the reason that I voted the
10 way I did is that if we don't go back and
11 revisit -- repeal is what I call it -- we
12 don't repeal the zoning article of 2022,
13 what's to stop another developer, what's to
14 stop another compiler of land putting another
15 huge development somewhere in that blue
16 corridor? I think that it's time we go back.
17 I think, with all due respect to my planning
18 board members -- by the way, this is the first
19 time I've ever voted probably against the plan
20 (inaudible) in my career, as we call it.

21 Why won't we think about going
22 back, repeal the zoning commitments in '22,
23 and start over? I see a lot of issues that we
24 should be able to address if we do that.

1 We're not going to stop development on that
2 corridor anyway, but we're going to put it in
3 better context. Size and scope is what scares
4 me when I saw what the present proposal brings
5 before this town.

6 When I hear 1,500,000 square foot
7 project, it scares me for the Town of Dedham,
8 and that's why I decided I have to go back,
9 look at -- repeal the 2022 zoning, and let's
10 have another look at it, and that's why I did
11 that. Thank you for your attention.

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
13 Podolski. Anybody that's wishing to speak?
14 Mr. Harrington.

15 **MR. HARRINGTON:** Will Harrington
16 from Precinct 1. I just want to first note
17 that I was not a member in 2022, so I'm just
18 going to go to the original debate here. I
19 would state that my reading this, I do not
20 feel like I have any particular issue with
21 this, particularly as we think about moving
22 forward.

23 In my two years so far, I mean,
24 every conversation ends up being about tax

1 revenue and property tax revenues and how
2 we're spending that and what that is costing
3 residents of Dedham. I understand that
4 potentially there may be some differences
5 between promises and realities, but I do not
6 believe that development will cost the town.

7 If I was (inaudible), we wouldn't
8 let people build anything. And so I actually
9 will ask someone maybe for some more insight
10 into any estimates about potential revenue
11 from these sites or how we consider a match
12 between actual revenue and cost to the town in
13 terms of services calculated.

14 But I think I will note also to the
15 presentation we had from the proponents of
16 this that it (inaudible) protecting Dedham. I
17 feel some responsibility even protecting
18 Dedham to protect its taxpayers might help to
19 alleviate the burden and shift it from
20 residential taxpayers who make this town what
21 it is, the businesses, which provide places of
22 employment for residents, but then also again
23 shifting that burden to some extent or at
24 least perhaps lowering the rate of (inaudible)

1 increases for existing properties.

2 And then I think I would also -- in
3 thinking about -- listening to one of the
4 previous speakers thinking about future
5 proofing, I -- Dedham has changed a lot since
6 I've been here. I've lived here for something
7 like 30 years, (inaudible) before I can
8 remember that, and Dedham has changed.

9 We have new development, we built
10 new buildings. I remember Legacy Place before
11 it was -- it was the parking lot the size of
12 probably half the Town of Dedham -- and making
13 sure that this seems to be a reasonable thing
14 as it's written that doesn't protect Dedham
15 from change, but instead opens us to
16 conscientious growth.

17 If you've ever gone to a planning
18 board meeting, I've never seen a design come
19 out the way it went in, and it's always
20 smaller, it's always a floor shorter or it's
21 always a little bit narrower building, and
22 they're taking up less of that volume. That
23 is very much the design of the architecture.

24 So I do think our planning board

1 meeting representatives are thoughtful. I
2 trust in the people of Dedham to be elected
3 moving forward, thoughtful, judicious members
4 of the planning board. We may not always
5 agree with all of their decisions, but I trust
6 them all, and I trust the residents of Dedham.

7 I also think this is relatively
8 wrong. We happen to be getting life sciences
9 at the campus at 128 right now, but the way
10 this appears to be written doesn't limit it to
11 that. There's lots of other Boston -- there's
12 a center for robotics. There's other
13 industries in the area. We don't know what
14 industry that will take.

15 Laboratory research and development
16 is relatively broad to me, but not perhaps too
17 broad. We don't want to say we have a coal
18 plant next to our ECEC, and it doesn't seem
19 like we're going to get that. So that to me
20 seems like a reasonable balance, and I just
21 want to voice that as a resident.

22 And then I also approve of this
23 generally as a balance. This is what
24 government does. It doesn't build things. It

1 allows other people to build things that we
2 talked about, other properties that are
3 already zoned commercial, and maybe we're
4 wondering why those aren't being redeveloped
5 first. That's the nature of the free market,
6 I guess, is how I see it.

7 People have chosen not to transform
8 those buildings or knock them down or put up
9 something new. So government rather than
10 building something itself is creating
11 opportunities. Someone has taken this up.
12 Maybe there were areas that were previously
13 zoned or intended for something that no one
14 has taken up.

15 That's, I don't know, just how it
16 is. That's capitalism. That's America. We
17 let people do something, they have a choice to
18 do it or not, and this seems reasonable to me
19 on that front. The Town of Dedham is not
20 taking out loans to build a large building
21 (inaudible). Someone else is taking that
22 risk. It's their money. So I guess there are
23 limits to my knowledge.

24 I would again restate my question,

1 that is in terms of this question of revenue,
2 maybe you can give a little insight into what
3 we project is a potential for these lots, if
4 that's something we have or maybe the match
5 between the services and revenue -- the
6 service cost and revenue and taxes as it looks
7 like (inaudible) or is expected to look like
8 at these sites. Thank you.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. The
10 Chair recognizes Jessica Porter.

11 **MS. PORTER:** Thank you. Instead of
12 talking specific, I do have this one kind of
13 idea of a proposal. Instead of talking about
14 the specific proposal, what I'd like to do is
15 just answer based on the data that we have.

16 So one of the other zoning
17 articles, which I'm sure you all have studied
18 at great length, in front of you tonight is to
19 rescind some old language when we had a
20 moratorium on mixed use developments so that
21 we could study how successful they have been,
22 what we could learn from them, and think about
23 whether we wanted to tweak our mixed use
24 development policy in Dedham.

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And at that time, we did a study. We hired a three-prong consultant team to look at the impact of the mixed use developments. What we found with that was that with mixed use developments which tend to be 90 percent residential and ten percent commercial, for every dollar that the town received in tax revenue, 50 cents of that, so 50 percent of the tax revenue, was going into the general fund, was not in any way going towards services.

That's for the most intense kind of use in terms of town services of any kind of use. So residential, you end up with more fire, police, school impacts, roads, etcetera. So the most intense use we have we saw the town is getting 50 cents on the dollar that's going to the general fund to fund things like schools, roads, snow plowing, etcetera.

The planning board -- when we go through any special permit exercise, we ask the developer to prepare a physical -- community and physical impact statement where they actually have experts who come in, and

1 they interview the chief of police, the fire
2 chief, they interview the superintendent.
3 They look at existing uses that are similar
4 and calculate what the tax revenue is versus
5 the actual cost.

6 So this is all not hypothetical
7 data. It's really grounded. And that's why I
8 actually brought up Legacy Place earlier. So
9 Legacy Place -- if you look at Legacy Place,
10 for instance, if you look at -- the 2025
11 Legacy Place property tax income was 5.2
12 million. That's not including any benefit in
13 terms of the meals tax. So 5.2 million.

14 If you look at the police blotter,
15 which is probably the most active services
16 that are going to Legacy Place, it's not
17 coming anywhere near \$5.2 million. So what I
18 would suggest is that without a Legacy Place
19 development, we would not have been able to
20 afford to have built an ECEC, a new public
21 safety building.

22 So all of that is to say the
23 additional income to the town, that does cover
24 the cost of roads, the cost of utilities, the

1 cost of schools, the cost of police, fire,
2 etcetera. That's all the work the planning
3 board does in any sort of review, and a
4 project that didn't meet that threshold would
5 not qualify for a special permit. Thank you.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. The
7 Chair recognizes Carmen Delloiacono.

8 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** Mr. Moderator,
9 looking quite dapper tonight.

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Carmen.
11 It's not a complete night unless you say those
12 words.

13 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** And that's pretty
14 much why. Thirty-three years, sir. I have to
15 say thank you very much for your service.
16 You've been an absolute gentleman to my mom
17 and my siblings. Each one of us has been at
18 town meeting, and we definitely thank you so
19 much and appreciate your service.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Carmen.
21 I appreciate that.

22 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** You're not the
23 only one, sir --

24 **THE MODERATOR:** You can only speak

1 ten minutes, Carmen. I'm not going to charge
2 you for the time (inaudible.)

3 **MR. DELLOIACONO:** You're not the
4 last tonight because tonight we also have for
5 their last town meeting Mr. Spillane -- Chief
6 Spillane. This is his last town meeting.
7 He's had an unbelievable career with the town
8 protecting all the residents of the town
9 (can't hear-people clapping.)

10 Finally, there is one more person,
11 Ken Cimeno, the building commissioner. He has
12 put his life and his heart into this town
13 making sure that everything is developed the
14 proper way, and his knowledge will be missed.
15 Ken, thank you so much (people clapping.)

16 Ladies and gentlemen, my name is
17 Carmen Delloiacono. I am in Precinct 4 and an
18 employee of the town. And at this point, I'd
19 like to move the question. Thank you.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. A
21 motion to move the question is not debatable.
22 It must be voted on right away, and what it
23 means is no more discussion. It will go right
24 to a vote. It does, however, require a two-

1 thirds vote, so it's a high barrier to cutting
2 off debate. So a yes vote is a vote to cut
3 off debate. A no vote is a vote to allow
4 others to speak.

5 Are we all clear? We're going to
6 do electronic voting on this. If you are in
7 favor of cutting off debate, vote yes. If you
8 are not in favor, vote no. Any questions on
9 yes versus no? Voting is open.

10 Voting is closed. 184 people
11 having voted in favor of cutting off debate,
12 and 41 opposed to cutting off debate, that is
13 a two-thirds, so the debate is over.

14 So now we go back to, well, what am
15 I voting on. You're going to take two votes.
16 The first vote is whether you agree with --
17 and I'm going to keep this very simple --
18 whether you agree with Mike Butler and Hope
19 McDermott. That's a yes vote. If you agree
20 with the planning board, representative
21 Jessica Porter, you vote no, and what you're
22 voting on is do we attach this amendment to
23 the original motion. Is that clear? Does
24 everyone know what they're voting for without

1 looking at the chart?

2 **UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:** Mike Podolski
3 is part of the planning board, just for the
4 record.

5 **THE MODERATOR:** I'm sorry? Mike
6 Podolski is a member of the planning board,
7 yes. He identified himself as such.

8 **UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE:** You said
9 voting with the planning board. Just to
10 clarify (inaudible.)

11 **THE MODERATOR:** I said if you vote
12 -- if you agree with the majority of the
13 planning board position as represented by
14 Jessica. Mr. Podolski made it clear that he
15 was a minority vote. So yes, if you agree
16 with Mr. Podolski you'll be voting with Hope.
17 If it's for Jessica, you can vote it with
18 Jessica. So voting for Hope is a yes; voting
19 for Jessica is a no.

20 So we're voting on whether you're
21 going to amend the motion, which is what --
22 any more questions? Yeah. We can't debate
23 whether -- you can ask the question, but we
24 can't debate whether we are going to

1 (inaudible.)

2 **MS. MARCELLO:** I understand. I
3 just wanted to clarify something.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Go ahead, please.

5 **MS. MARCELLO:** Marcy Marcello, P4.
6 The vote that we are currently voting on, the
7 majority vote to accept the substitute motion,
8 I think the way that it's been described is
9 agreeing with the planning board (inaudible).

10 **THE MODERATOR:** (Inaudible.)

11 **MS. MARCELLO:** I'm sorry, agreeing
12 with --

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Agreeing with Hope
14 McDermott is a yes vote.

15 **MS. MARCELLO:** Correct, correct.
16 My understanding is that you would represent
17 the planning board (inaudible) on accepting
18 the substitute motion or not, which --

19 **THE MODERATOR:** No, they cannot.
20 They have a position. It's no.

21 **MS. MARCELLO:** Correct, but I'm
22 saying that there is a difference between the
23 vote to accept the substitute motion, which
24 would lead us to the two-thirds majority vote,

1 versus the vote not to accept, which would
2 lead us just to a two-thirds -- sorry, just to
3 a majority vote.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** That's right, but
5 right now, we're only taking the first one.

6 **MS. MARCELLO:** Correct, and it was
7 represented, I think, in the first one the
8 planning board has a yes or no position on it.

9 **THE MODERATOR:** They do. Jessica,
10 could you, so I'm not speaking for you?

11 **MS. PORTER:** To accept the
12 substitute motion.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** No, the planning
14 board does not want you to accept the
15 substitute motion.

16 **MS. PORTER:** Right. So the
17 planning board voted three to one to
18 indefinitely postpone. So I would suggest
19 that if people agree with the planning board,
20 your vote would be no on accepting the amended
21 substitute motion because that brings us to
22 the original motion by the planning board.

23 **MS. MARCELLO:** On which a two-
24 thirds vote is required to pass.

1 **THE MODERATOR:** Yes, but we're not
2 there yet. If the amendment isn't accepted,
3 then we go back to the original motion. I
4 suggest we just try to take it one vote at a
5 time. So this vote is whether to accept the
6 amendment, and a vote in favor of accepting
7 the amendment would put you in agreement with
8 Michael Butler, Bethany Gauthier and Hope
9 McDermott. That's a yes.

10 If you don't agree with what they
11 said, and you agree with what Jessica Porter
12 said, you will vote no on this vote. Then
13 we'll have another discussion after that.

14 **MS. MARCELLO:** I understand. I'm
15 just thinking about a consideration as a
16 majority versus a two-thirds vote.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** This is a majority
18 vote.

19 **MS. PORTER:** A two-thirds vote is
20 if you accept the town -- the body accepted
21 the substitute motion, and we went to the
22 original Article 13, which is the zoning.
23 That is a two-thirds vote because it changes
24 everything. Everything else is a majority

1 vote.

2 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you for
3 asking a question. If you have a question,
4 you're probably not (inaudible). So the vote
5 comes -- we'll open the vote. So I think you
6 know what a yes is, and I think you know what
7 a no is, but if you're still questioning, you
8 can ask. Meanwhile, the vote is open.

9 The vote is closed. 65 people
10 having voted yes, 165 no, the substitute
11 motion fails. The vote now comes on the
12 original motion. The original motion is the
13 one printed in the book recommended by the
14 planning board after a proposal from the
15 opponents we heard from not be accepted. Yes,
16 I know, you're voting on the same thing twice.
17 That's because the first vote was for an
18 amendment. You probably don't need to hear
19 any more about this.

20 So if you are in favor of the
21 planning board's position, this time you vote
22 yes, and if you're in favor of the Hope
23 McDermott position, you vote no. Now you're
24 being asked to accept what's written in the

1 book. If you accept what's written in the
2 book, what you do is you vote yes. Is there
3 any question? A no vote on accepting the
4 original motion? Well, if it was -- if it
5 turned out to be a majority, there would be no
6 action. They have the same consequence.

7 I mean, don't try to make this into
8 a problem if there isn't any. If you agree
9 with the planning board, vote yes, if you
10 don't, vote no, and whoever gets the most
11 votes wins. I'm pretty sure of that. Been
12 that way for 33 years. It's not going to
13 change tonight. I don't mean to be flip, sir.
14 You're hitting on something that is, you know,
15 a little bit of a black box. No vote means
16 that it is not adopted. That doesn't mean
17 someone couldn't stand up and propose
18 something else on the same article, but I
19 think we've pretty much run the gambit of what
20 the options are on this article, and I think
21 the body is open.

22 Now we need to formalize it so the
23 attorney general will accept our vote. You
24 need to vote on the original motion. The

1 original motion says do not accept the ideas
2 presented by Mr. Buckley (?) and Ms.
3 McDermott, which is the same question you just
4 voted for. So if you agree with Jessica
5 Porter, now you're voting yes. If you agree
6 with Hope McDermott, you're voting no. Is
7 there any question? Voting is open.

8 163 voting in the affirmative and
9 57 in the negative, the original motion
10 printed on Page 27 is approved. Thank you.
11 Remember that we moved Article 13 ahead of the
12 other planning board articles, so now we go
13 back to the other planning board articles.
14 The reason that they were passed is they were
15 passed by the Chair because they required a
16 two-thirds vote.

17 Now Massachusetts law allows a
18 unanimous vote to be counted as a two-thirds
19 vote. So I would ask for a voice vote on
20 these. I'm not going to step on your toes.
21 If you (inaudible), you vote no on your
22 clicker. I'm going to ask the vice chair of
23 the planning board to give us a report on the
24 planning board, and I'm going to ask her to do

1 it for all of the planning board articles
2 because they were all handled in the same
3 manner (inaudible.) Ms. Porter.

4 **MS. PORTER:** Thank you, Mr.
5 Moderator. I hope -- I don't know. I do,
6 however, want to take credit for the idea that
7 we take them all together.

8 **THE MODERATOR:** That was your idea.
9 Did I neglect to mention that?

10 **MS. PORTER:** You did not mention
11 it. So we're going to take these all
12 together, at least for the report, because I
13 want to respect all your time. Articles 7, 8,
14 9, 10, 11 and 12 were all proposed by the
15 planning board. On October 8, we held a
16 public hearing for each one of those. We took
17 testimony and ultimately closed the public
18 hearing.

19 On October 22, the board
20 deliberated and voted unanimously to recommend
21 that town meeting approve Articles 7, 8, 9,
22 10, 11 and 12. I'd be happy to take any
23 questions that you have when reading these
24 articles. I know that you've studied them

1 diligently. They cover issues, such as
2 parking, landscaping requirements and dealing
3 with (inaudible) with over two (inaudible.)
4 Thank you.

5 **THE MODERATOR:** So the report of
6 the planning board for all the articles, we
7 are required to vote on them one at a time.
8 So Article 7 was first. The Chair recognizes
9 Mr. Jim Maher.

10 **MR. MAHER:** Jim Maher, Precinct 5.
11 So Article 7 -- going through it, it kind of
12 struck me that we're lessening the
13 requirements for parking needed for
14 development in this town, whether it be
15 residential, commercial, or anything else in
16 this town.

17 I was looking at all of that. If
18 you go to Dedham Square every day, the town
19 parking lot is full. Why is it full? All the
20 apartment complexes are moving their second
21 and their third car over to the town lots. It
22 used to be just the town's main lot, which was
23 old. Now if you go to the lower square,
24 you'll see that that lot is full every night.

1 If you drive by at 11:00, guess
2 what, there's no soccer games going on up
3 there. There's no one else walking up around
4 there. These are residents that are expanding
5 into public parking, and if we're going to do
6 that, we're going to end up having people
7 expand to residential neighborhoods when those
8 parking lots are full. We're adding more
9 people to downtown or to our neighborhoods,
10 but we're not accommodating enough parking for
11 their vehicles.

12 I know that the planning
13 department, every developer, every
14 sustainability group is going to tell you that
15 oh, people are riding their bikes to work,
16 people are taking the train. Guess what, I'm
17 not seeing that. I'm seeing cars parked in
18 the streets in neighborhoods abutting major
19 buildings, and lessening the requirements is
20 not a good idea. Thank you.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
22 Maher. Anybody else wishing to speak on
23 Article 7, parking requirements? There being
24 none, we're going to go to a clicker vote

1 because we know it's not going to be
2 unanimous.

3 The vote comes on the
4 recommendation of the planning board, which is
5 printed on Page 18, essentially that it be so
6 voted. The voting is open. Yes is a vote in
7 favor of the recommendation of the planning
8 board. No is a vote not in favor of the
9 recommendation of the planning board.

10 The vote is closed. 171 in favor,
11 41 opposed, it is a two-thirds vote.

12 Article 8 on Page 19. The original
13 motion is printed over on Page 20, and the
14 planning board recommends that you accept the
15 change to the building codes and lot coverage
16 provisions of the zoning bylaw. Are there any
17 questions on Article 8? We can try for a
18 unanimous vote. All in favor, please say aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

21 (No.)

22 **THE MODERATOR:** We'll go to
23 electronic voting. All those in favor, please
24 vote yes on your voting device. Those

1 opposed, vote no.

2 Voting is closed. 189 voting yes,
3 five no, it is a two-thirds vote. The
4 original motion is accepted.

5 Let me just make an editorial
6 comment here. We're not far from the end. If
7 enough people leave, and we don't have a
8 quorum, and somebody questions the quorum, we
9 have to come back again, and nothing that we
10 have voted is final. So hold in there. I
11 only rented this jacket for one night.

12 Article 9, voting bylaw amendment,
13 landscaping requirements. Questions? Mr.
14 Maher.

15 **MR. MAHER:** Jim Maher, Precinct 5.
16 At a recent past town meeting, we voted a
17 revolving fund associated with tree
18 replacement in the Town of Dedham. I don't
19 see anything in this article which ties any
20 type of waiver of a developer on tree
21 replacement or coverage to go into that
22 revolving fund.

23 The reason why I bring it up is we
24 had a developer in the Manor neighborhood who

1 took down over 200 full grown trees, and they
2 plant a lot, and then the developer went belly
3 up, and any of the promises that he had
4 supposedly made, the neighbors were not gone
5 (?).

6 So I, myself, think that there
7 should be a tie to the revolving fund as part
8 of this amendment; that if for any reason the
9 planning board chooses to waive the
10 appropriate coverage that's needed to do space
11 limitations, that there should be a
12 requirement that the revolving fund is
13 replenished. Thank you.

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
15 Maher. Any other questions or comments on the
16 article? Let's try for a unanimous. All
17 those in favor of the planning board's
18 original motion, please say aye.

19 (Aye.)

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

21 **MR. MAHER:** No.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Could you say that
23 again, Jim? I didn't quite get it.

24 **MR. MAHER:** No.

1 **THE MODERATOR:** All right, get out
2 your clickers. Unanimous is unanimous. All
3 those in favor of the original motion of the
4 planning board, please click yes on your
5 voting device.

6 The vote is closed. 109 people
7 voting yes, eight voting no, that is
8 definitely a two-thirds. The original motion
9 on Article 9 is accepted.

10 Article 10 on Page 24. The
11 recommendation of the planning board is on
12 Page 24 in the black box. Are there questions
13 on Article 10? Mr. Gallagher.

14 **MR. GALLAGHER:** William Gallagher,
15 Precinct 6. I won't keep anyone long at all,
16 but Mr. Moderator and Ms. Deputy Moderator,
17 thank you very much for your service. It's
18 very much appreciated. Excellent example for
19 future folks in those roles. Thank you.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. That's
21 a hell of a roll call. Thank you, Mr.
22 Gallagher. Any other -- any comments on
23 Article 10? The vote comes on the original
24 motion. Let's try for a unanimous. All those

1 in favor, please say aye.

2 (Aye.)

3 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
4 ayes have it. It is a two-thirds vote.
5 Article 11 on Page 25. This deals with split
6 block (?) zoning, something we discussed
7 before. Any questions or comments on Article
8 11? If not, we will try for a unanimous vote.
9 All those in favor, please say aye.

10 (Aye.)

11 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. The
12 ayes have it. It is a two-thirds vote.
13 Article 12 is a zoning law bylaw amendment.
14 This is removing the development moratorium,
15 one we used to have but do not need any longer
16 in the opinion of the planning board.
17 Questions? Yes, sir?

18 **MR. DONOVAN:** Rob Donovan, P2. So
19 this expired in 2019. I was just curious as
20 to why it's been on the books and why it
21 wasn't presented at the earlier town meeting.

22 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you.
23 Planning board?

24 **MS PORTER:** It's just a

1 housekeeping thing, so I think it was on there
2 for a while. I think they focused on other
3 things, and now we're trying to also just get
4 everything right.

5 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Other
6 questions? Vote on the original motion, which
7 is on Page 26, that the moratorium be removed.
8 All those in favor, please say aye.

9 (Aye.)

10 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no. It is
11 a unanimous vote. It is a two-thirds vote.
12 Article 15, another bylaw amendment. Mr.
13 Heaslip.

14 **MR. HEASLIP:** Steve Heaslip. My
15 precinct is 3. But more importantly, my
16 pronouns are "they, them, Z year it hears, gee
17 gem, cur occurs, fair fairs, and EM fairs." I
18 find Article 15 incredibly offensive because
19 the result would be to enforce gender binary
20 stereotypes. Support of this article is not
21 woke, but, in fact, upholds biased principles
22 established by the patriarch.

23 The truly woke realize that there
24 are not only two genders, as bigoted

1 scientists have proven, but that there are
2 exactly infinity genders, genders fluid. So
3 if we stick the letters M, A, N together in a
4 word, and you want to eliminate those letters
5 because it sounds like the word "man," and you
6 want to protect people from that kind of
7 offensive language, then you're part of the
8 problem.

9 You are advocating for a gender
10 binary system that declares that there are
11 only two genders and that one can define what
12 each gender is, which we know we can't define.
13 The only rational approach is to ignore words
14 like those, just like we ignore old fashioned
15 indicators of gender. Gender is fluid and
16 changing and can't be defined by some group of
17 boomers who can't keep up with what current
18 list of offenses is in fashion at the moment.
19 Thank you.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
21 Heaslip. Any other comments on Article 15?
22 The vote -- the recommendation of the planning
23 board is that it be so voted. This is a
24 majority vote. All those in favor of the

1 original motion, please say aye.

2 (Aye.)

3 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

4 (No.)

5 **THE MODERATOR:** The ayes have it.

6 Article 17. Discussion? Hearing no
7 discussion, the vote comes on the original
8 motion of the finance and warrant committee
9 that it be indefinitely postponed. All those
10 in favor, please say aye.

11 (Aye.)

12 **THE MODERATOR:** Opposed, no.

13 (No.)

14 **THE MODERATOR:** The ayes have it.

15 Thank you. Article 18.

16 **MR. DRISCOLL:** Jim Driscoll,
17 Precinct 4. Last week, I was at the mini town
18 meeting, and I asked about the details of this
19 program run by the state, and I was interested
20 to know if it's going to not allow the town to
21 have diesel powered vehicles, such as the fire
22 apparatus, the plows, the street sweepers,
23 things like that.

24 And I did get an answer from a

1 person from the town hall that said yes, there
2 is an exemption in that lot. But I asked
3 after the meeting for the literature that
4 would show that, and I never received it. So
5 again, is there somebody from the town hall
6 who can verify that diesel -- every diesel
7 powered vehicles are exempt?

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
9 Driscoll. The Chair recognizes Rana Mana-
10 Doerfer.

11 **MS. MANA-DOERFER:** Good evening.
12 Rana Mana-Doerfer, assistant finance director.
13 Hello again. I did email you last week. I'm
14 not sure if you got it or not, but no worries,
15 I'm happy to connect with you again. But yes,
16 there is an exemption for the fire department
17 and all of their equipment is enough, and also
18 they don't make hybrid fire apparatus at the
19 moment.

20 So yes, they are exempt. They do
21 not have to comply with that policy, which is
22 yet to be adopted. And this article is for
23 decarbonization committee, so it's separate
24 from that policy.

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THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Mr.

Maher?

MR. MAHER: Jim Maher, Precinct 5.

At a recent Precinct 5 meeting here at town hall, the members of the sustainability advisory committee made a presentation to the Precinct 5 seven town meeting members, and one of the questions I had for them was what is the associated added cost this article is going to add on to purchasing services and converting existing buildings, you name it, and there was no answer.

We all know that a Tesla, all electric, is a little bit more expensive than a Honda, and I think we also know that our 100 percent green buildings are far more expensive than a gas fueled building. So what is the overall town impact of us voting this in to the overall expense to the town? Thank you.

MS. MANA-DOERFER: Thank you, Mr.

Maher.

THE MODERATOR: Ms. Doerfer.

MS. MANA-DOERFER: So you bring up

a great question. The answer is certainly

1 multi-layered. One is we continue in the
2 upgrade of our equipment, and we do that for
3 the upgraded equipment that is usually
4 electrical, just due to the nature of the
5 equipment that's out there. We are always
6 continually trying to de-carbonize our
7 buildings, and we do that because we're a
8 green community. We have the stretch code and
9 just general building codes currently in the
10 State of Massachusetts. That's just the
11 reality of the state that we live in.

12 This grant -- this program will
13 allow us access to funding that is currently
14 not available to other communities, which
15 would help us with the ongoing repairs and
16 replacements that we already do as part of our
17 capital planning process that the facilities
18 department has for both the schools and the
19 town.

20 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Ms.
21 Butler.

22 **MS. BUTLER:** Yes, hi, Susan Butler,
23 Precinct 6, and I'd also like to echo all the
24 kind words that were said earlier to you, Mr.

1 Moderator, and Deputy Moderator. We wish you
2 peaceful, quiet days ahead.

3 **THE MODERATOR:** I'd settle for this
4 one, but thank you.

5 **MS. BUTLER:** So Jim just really did
6 voice my concern. We just voted \$250,000 for
7 the master facilities plan, and what type of
8 impact will this warrant article have on
9 future bills in terms of costs?

10 Since 2020, we've been hearing
11 fiscal cliff, fiscal cliff, fiscal cliff, and
12 since that, honestly, we really haven't made
13 any changes to (inaudible). So I would ask
14 you -- I would ask members to maybe put a
15 pause on this and maybe just for a few years
16 until a better off financially.

17 And I think we can all say we all
18 want to leave the planet earth in a much
19 better place for generations to come. We
20 already did net zero last year. It just seems
21 like we're really rushing everything to go
22 electric when we're at this fiscal cliff.

23 I really don't understand why we
24 can't pause. The State of New York is going

1 in this direction, and they're also stopping
2 new builds to have gas stoves, and I've been
3 following that closely, as well. I don't
4 understand why we're going this route. I
5 don't understand why we even purchased an
6 electric fire truck (inaudible). And lastly,
7 I'd like to know how the select board voted on
8 this.

9 And again, we're all for
10 sustainability. We all want change. We love
11 the planet earth. We all want to keep it
12 better. I'm just saying it just seems like
13 we're really pushing this electric thing a
14 lot, and maybe it's something we can revisit
15 in a couple of years, since all we hear is
16 that we're on a fiscal cliff.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Ms.
18 Butler. Mr. Goodman, town manager.

19 **MR. BUTLER:** Good evening, town
20 meeting. I feel like I haven't spoken to you
21 all night. Leon Goodwin, town manager, happy
22 to be here this evening. A couple of points
23 that I just want to take the opportunity to
24 address.

1 First, I just want to remind
2 everyone that this is a resolution. It is --
3 and the town counsel will correct me if I'm
4 wrong, but the sense of the meeting is
5 encouraging town government to move in a
6 direction relative to our environmental
7 sustainability goals.

8 It's a zero overtime approach. It
9 means that as we have large decisions to make,
10 the town would follow the statewide policy,
11 which is net zero by 2050 goal to implement at
12 a local level. It does not mean that we are
13 going to electrify everything tomorrow. It
14 doesn't mean that within five years it will be
15 -- as things start to get replaced, we would
16 take an approach that we would look at it, and
17 say okay, is it possible to replace this with
18 a compartment control for electric type of
19 apparatus instead.

20 We acknowledge through the various
21 policies that we adopted on electric fire
22 trucks that are sufficient for us right now.
23 Ten or 15 years -- and this policy would allow
24 for that over time.

1 Ms. Butler's second question was to
2 ask how the select board voted. The select
3 board voted three to two to not concur with
4 this recommendation from the finance and
5 warrant committee, and I don't know if anyone
6 from the select board wants to speak to that,
7 but that was their vote this evening.

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you, Mr.
9 Goodwin. Yes, Ms. Butler.

10 **MS. BUTLER:** I just have one follow
11 up. I'd like to hear from the select board
12 why they voted three to two to not support
13 this resolution. Thank you.

14 **THE MODERATOR:** Mr. Teehan -- Dr.
15 Teehan.

16 **DR. TEEHAN:** Thank you, Moderator,
17 and thank you, Susan, for your question. I
18 voted against it because, very simply, cost.
19 I'm concerned about the financial impact that
20 it could have. I think it's very uncertain.

21 I voted for the stretch code last
22 year. I believe in supporting the
23 environment. I believe in supporting the
24 earth. I think it's a great idea to look at

1 something like this, but right now, we're
2 facing financial challenges like we've never
3 faced before, and I just feel like there was
4 only a few communities in the state that even
5 adopted this. How many, Leon -- 29 out of
6 365.

7 I just feel like right now, we're
8 dealing with issues like how are we going to
9 keep everyone's job, how are we going -- at
10 the last town meeting, there was an article
11 looking at maybe removing the police, firemen,
12 public works positions, all roads. These are
13 very basic fundamental things, and I just feel
14 right now that we're taking on too much as a
15 community. And I know it's a non-binding
16 resolution, but I think we need to really be
17 focused right now on the bread and butter
18 stuff before we put ourselves at the forefront
19 of something.

20 And then in a couple of years when
21 we fix some of these financial challenges that
22 we have and we're in a better position, we can
23 reexamine this. It probably will be a great
24 idea. We just did the stretch code. That was

1 a big thing we did. I think it was a huge
2 step in the right direction. Let's focus on
3 the bread and butter stuff while we face the
4 financial challenges and then come back to
5 this in a couple of years. Thank you.

6 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Ms.
7 Butler -- oh, I'm sorry, Ms. Bowles from the
8 select board.

9 **MS. BOWLES:** Good evening,
10 everyone. Yes, I voted to support finance and
11 warrant's vote, that it be so voted. This is
12 a resolution, and I think it's important to
13 clarify the difference between a resolution
14 and something like what was passed a few years
15 ago with the stretch code.

16 The stretch code is a specific set
17 of actions to take a tour, and then the
18 resolution is do we want the town to consider
19 de-carbonization when making decisions in the
20 town, and I think that's really important to
21 understand.

22 Yes, we have a lot before us. We
23 are dealing with our budget issues. We have
24 buildings that we need to consider. We have a

1 lot on our plate. We also know that we have
2 impending climate needs and that with any
3 decision that we make there will be -- and the
4 wheels are set in motion, but there are
5 climate impacts to our budget that would be in
6 the future.

7 This is a resolution that sets a
8 direction for how we want to think about
9 decision making, and it is not a set of
10 actions to take toward a specific goal, and
11 that is why I supported the finance and
12 warrant committee's recommendation.

13 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Thank
14 you for your patience.

15 **MR. COSTELLO:** Hello, there. I'm
16 David Costello, Precinct 4, also chair of the
17 sustainability committee. This is a
18 fundamentally simple decision. There's \$55
19 million out there for communities to get from
20 now until February 2027.

21 If you are not a member of that
22 prime leadership committee, you're not
23 eligible to get that money. We're not saying
24 you have to commit to buying certain vehicles,

1 doing certain things. We're saying you need
2 to commit to examining the opportunity that
3 this provides.

4 There are 19 communities that have
5 done it. As we mentioned before, 19 divided
6 into 55 million is an X number. You start
7 getting 20, 30, 40, 50 communities in there,
8 that number gets smaller. This is not a time
9 to take a step backwards. This is a time for
10 Dedham to take a step forward.

11 We're not committing to doing
12 anything, except saying we are still following
13 the process that Dedham committed to following
14 the 2050 plan, the zero emissions, our
15 emissions plan by 2050. This is just falling
16 in line with that. I get nervousness about
17 going green too fast.

18 This isn't about green or not
19 green. It is. But it's about the financial
20 opportunity that this town has afforded itself
21 if it passes this measure. So the board, the
22 select board's notwithstanding the vote
23 tonight, I would urge you to think about the
24 financial benefits for Dedham in moving

1 forward with the recommendation to this
2 carbonization -- de-carbonization plan. So
3 thank you.

4 **THE MODERATOR:** Lauren Goldberg.

5 **MS. GOLDBERG:** Mr. Moderator,
6 through you. I just want to make clear that
7 what you're being asked to vote on tonight is
8 a non-binding resolution. It doesn't mandate
9 that the town take any particular action, and
10 unlike with the stretch code, it's not self-
11 effectuating. The appropriations for these
12 types of vehicles will come back before town
13 meeting, and in order for it to be
14 implemented, the executive branch, the select
15 board and the town departments would be
16 responsible for bringing it forward.

17 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Ms.
18 Butler, then Mr. Donati.

19 **MS. BUTLER:** Sure. Just one last
20 point. While I do agree, of course, with
21 sustainability, I'd just like to add sometimes
22 it's not worth it when we have to spend
23 \$200,000 in order to get a \$50,000 grant, and
24 I hope moving forward with the master

1 facilities plan that we can really weigh out
2 any type of future green technology that is
3 put into the building, and maybe somehow meet
4 in the middle in the future to make it even
5 more green, because right now, taxpayers are
6 really being overwhelmed with their property
7 taxes. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

8 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you. Mr.
9 Donati?

10 **MR. DONATI:** Josh Donati, Precinct
11 4. Thank you Mr. Moderator, and Deputy
12 Moderator, for your service. I'm just going
13 to, I guess, express general frustration as a
14 town meeting member that so often we're asked
15 to vote after having a discussion like this,
16 which is basically if I vote in favor of this,
17 it's been suggested that I would either save,
18 get the town some money, or cost the town some
19 money, and I vote against this. I will either
20 save the town some money or cost the town some
21 money.

22 And it's really hard sometimes to
23 not have an agreed set of facts here. My
24 understanding coming into tonight was that

1 this was, first of all, just a resolution, but
2 also that the opportunities would be to let us
3 possibly get money and save money over the
4 long term. I really appreciate Ms. Butler
5 bringing up fiscal concerns.

6 I think we should all be bringing
7 up fiscal concerns as often as possible
8 because we are in a crisis, but then I'm also
9 hearing that this could be potentially really
10 helpful to us financially as a town. So as a
11 town meeting member, I'm just asked to pick
12 kind of which set of facts I'm supposed to go
13 along with, and I wish that town leaders could
14 help us a little bit understand better is this
15 something that could result in savings to the
16 town, or is this something that is going to
17 affect the town financially. Otherwise, we're
18 just kind of picking based on who we agree
19 with based on personalities or something else.
20 Thanks.

21 **THE MODERATOR:** Thank you.

22 **MR. GOODWIN:** Thank you for that
23 comment, Mr. Donati. Again, I just want to
24 remind everyone that this is a resolution.

1 This is actually one of six steps that has
2 required the town to becoming climate leader
3 communities. So even if this resolution
4 passes this evening, the town would have to do
5 several other things in order to become a
6 climate leader community, which would then
7 just allow us to apply for grants through the
8 state if we were so inclined.

9 So I guess the most direct answer
10 to Mr. Donati's question is the vote tonight
11 won't cost the town any money, and there are
12 additional decisions that will have to be made
13 on a local level about whether or not we will
14 adopt the policies that would allow us to
15 become a climate leader community.

16 This is simply a sense of town
17 meeting about whether you want your elected
18 officials and town government officials to
19 move in that direction or to not move in that
20 direction. But this evening, there will be
21 nothing resolved because there are additional
22 steps that still need to be taken at the
23 elected official level in order to effectuate
24 becoming a climate leader community.

1 And then just because I have the
2 podium, and I feel like I really need to pump
3 up some of the good work that the town has
4 been doing, we have been having discussions
5 around the deficit. Can we come up with a
6 deficit reduction strategy? We gave you a
7 briefing of that at the mini town meeting and
8 a briefing of that a couple of weeks before
9 that.

10 This coming select board meeting
11 November 20, we'll be presenting on the
12 national community survey, which 3,000
13 households were surveyed across the town to
14 get a pulse of what Dedham residents want for
15 services and what they're willing to pay for.
16 So these are important issues that the town is
17 working on to solve the deficit.

18 So when I hear things
19 misrepresenting and saying that the town is
20 taking no steps to talk about the deficit and
21 how we're going to solve this problem
22 together, in a sense that's driven away is
23 inaccurate, and I just wanted to point out
24 that we implore all of you to participate in

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We got seven, that's good. So a yes vote is a vote in favor of the finance and warrant committee's recommendation that it be so voted. No vote is opposed.

Over 200 people still here and voting, even though it's getting late in the evening, the town clerk tells me that Dedham has one of the highest town meeting participation rates, attendance rates, in Massachusetts. Congratulations.

It has been an honor to serve as your moderator for another 90 seconds. All set. (I can't hear because they're clapping.)

The fall annual town meeting is closed. All in favor, say aye.

(Aye.)

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

NORFOLK, ss.

I, ARLENE R. BOYER, a Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify:

That the proceedings herein was recorded by me and transcribed by me; and that such transcript is a true record of the proceedings, to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and notarial seal this 19th day of December 2025.

Arlene R. Boyer, CVR
Notary Public
My Commission Expires
November 5, 2032