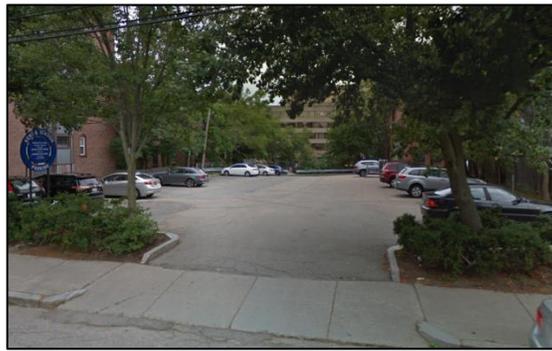


# KENT/STATION STREET TOWN-OWNED PARKING LOT REDEVELOPMENT

## PROJECT INTRODUCTION

At fall 2016 Special Town Meeting, Warrant Article 34 -- a resolution requesting that the Select Board, the Planning Board and the Housing Advisory Board develop a proposal for suitable affordable senior housing over the existing Kent/Station Street Town-owned parking lot -- was favorably voted upon by Town Meeting members. Following the passage of this resolution, the Select Board appointed the *Kent/Station Street Affordable Senior Housing Committee* to explore this proposal – giving the Committee a charge to explore feasibility, to consult with the neighborhood and to report back to the Select Board with recommendations. The Committee has met a number of times since early 2017 working toward these goals.

To assist in the planning process, the Town brought aboard consultants from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) for technical assistance to assess the feasibility of affordable housing at this site and to identify potential opportunities and challenges that could inform the Town's efforts. MHP's analysis showed that a development of approximately 60 units with replacement parking could be feasible if it included Town/public subsidy. To further inform feasibility, the Committee



sought the authorization of the Select Board to issue a Request for Information (RFI). The purpose of the RFI was to solicit feedback from developers related to the redevelopment potential of the

Kent/Station St. site. Developers were asked to consider the Town's requirement that redevelopment proposals must provide high quality, contextual housing that maximizes the number of affordable units available to seniors (62+) and that replaces on-site parking. The Town received five responses to the RFI. Feedback from developers was that a predominantly affordable senior housing project is feasible, and that if the Town issued an RFP there would be interest from the development community to submit proposals.

Most recently, the Committee's work has focused on the issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) that would build on both MHP's work and the responses received via the RFI. Over the past few meetings, the Committee has discussed development criteria that would be included in an RFP, with the overarching goal of attracting an experienced, mission-based developer who could craft a proposal that would complement the character and scale of the surrounding neighborhood. Prior to finalizing recommendations to the Select Board and completing a draft RFP, the Committee will seek input and comments from the neighborhood.

## PROJECT GOALS

As noted, the goals of this project are to develop an attractive, contextual and sustainable rental senior housing project which maximizes the number of affordable units and that enhances the neighborhood. A developer would be required to provide a parking plan that maintains the existing municipal parking spaces onsite and provides additional parking for the housing development program, either on-site or in the immediate vicinity of the site.

The Committee's work in developing a draft RFP included the formulation of threshold requirements that a developer's proposal must meet. The threshold requirements are as follows:

- Retain existing municipal parking spaces on-site
- Provide on-site public pedestrian access between Kent and Station Streets



- All units to be age-restricted for seniors (62 years and up)
- Provide a range of 40 to 65 units
- Provide senior-related services (on-site and/or access to off-site)
- Provide service/support/visitor parking spaces
- Minimize traffic impacts on Kent and Station Streets

## PROJECT SITE

The site, located in the heart of Brookline Village, is a 14,466 square foot parcel that has frontage on both Kent and Station Streets. Driving access to the site is available on Kent Street and the site slopes gently down toward Station Street. A pedestrian stairway to the street is available on the Station Street side, providing access to the Brookline Village MBTA stop on the Green Line’s D Line. The lot currently has 39 parking spaces that are heavily utilized by area merchants during the daytime and by residents for overnight parking.

## ZONING AND REGULATORY PROCESS

The site is currently zoned as General Business with a maximum floor ratio of 2.0. The existing zoning allows for both commercial and residential uses, but not at a density that would allow for a feasible project based on MHP’s analysis and feedback from the development community. In order to allow for an appropriately-scaled senior housing development, Town Meeting may have to approve a zoning change. It is possible that a developer and the Town could agree to pursue a “friendly 40B”, which would preclude the need to re-zone the lot. However, in either scenario, Town Meeting would need to approve the disposition of the property. Regardless of the enabling mechanism, a project proposal will require either a special permit or a comprehensive permit issued by the Zoning Board of Appeals, with the Planning Board and its appointed Design Advisory Team acting in an advisory role to ensure a high quality design.

## PROPOSED PROJECT PROCESS AND GENERAL TIMELINE

Below is a general list of the required steps from the issuance of an RFP through regulatory review that a project would undertake before it is ready for construction:

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|---|---|
| 1. Issuance of Request for Proposals                      | 7. Land Disposition Agreement                             |
| 2. Review of proposals and developer selection            | 8. Developer application/receipt of state/federal subsidy |
| 3. Letter of Intent between Town and developer            | 9. Regulatory review – Planning Board and ZBA             |
| 4. Subsidy review by Housing Advisory Board (HAB)         | 10. Regulatory approvals                                  |
| 5. Approval of HAB subsidy recommendation by Select Board | 11. Building permit application                           |
| 6. Town Meeting for zoning/land disposition approval      | 12. Project construction                                  |

## BROOKLINE AND AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING GOALS

According to population and household projections provided by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, by 2030, Brookline’s population could reach 65,951 with significant growth in two age groups: children under 18 and seniors 75 years and older. With respect to seniors 75 and older, this sub-population is expected to increase by 60%. Demand for housing continues to outpace supply and prices continue to increase, widening the affordability gap for those that wish to move to or remain in Brookline. The Town also recently completed a Housing Production Plan (HPP). During the creation of the HPP, an online needs assessment survey was conducted asking residents to respond to a number of questions related to housing in the Town. About 70% of the residents who responded to the survey said it’s important to stay in Brookline as they age. However, many cited the need for more availability of condominiums and apartments in walkable neighborhoods and pedestrian improvements to help them stay in the community. Additionally, one out of every four residents who responded said it is likely that they will move out of Brookline in the next five years, and most of cited high housing / living costs as the primary reason. There is a strong desire for Brookline seniors to have the necessary infrastructure, including affordable housing options, to enable them to age in place. The Town remains committed to supporting projects that further that goal.

*For more information on this project, please visit The Town’s Kent/Station Street web site:*

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1376/KentStation-St-Affordable-Senior-Housing>