

**Needham Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting of October 28, 2019**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Chair Tom Jacob at approximately 6:35 pm at the Needham Town Hall.

Present from the Finance Committee:

Tom Jacob, Chair; Carol Smith-Fachetti, Vice Chair

Members: Barry Coffman, John Connelly, Joshua Levy, Richard Lunetta, Garrett Parker, Richard Reilly

Others present:

David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

**Citizen Requests to Address Finance Committee**

No citizens requested to speak.

**October 28, 2019 Town Meeting Warrant Articles: Discussion and/or Vote**

Article 6: Zoning - Map Change Highway Commercial 1

Mr. Jacob stated that he has been informed that the Select Board intends to support Article 6 even if Article 5 does not pass. Mr. Connelly stated that the map in Article 6 places the zoning provisions in Article 5 into the district, and specifically requires terms that are established in Article 5. Therefore, it does not make sense for Article 6 to go forward if Article 5 does not pass and create the zoning. Mr. Lunetta agreed that there is not a reason to make a map of a district that does not exist. Ms. Fachetti stated that the proposed Article 6 could be amended to define any needed terms. Mr. Levy raised the question of whether there could be a zone with no restrictions if Article 5 failed and then Article 6 passed.

The Committee discussed whether it made sense to vote on Article 6 conditionally, or to vote on Town Meeting floor depending on what happens. Mr. Davison noted that if Town Meeting decides to discuss both articles together, there cannot be additional arguments after someone moves to vote. The Committee could vote but not offer additional arguments. Mr. Connelly stated that it would be best to see what happens. Mr. Reilly stated that if Article 5 fails, it will be important to see if there are amendments.

Green Communities Application

Mr. Connelly stated that he is concerned that the Finance Committee has not had a clear discussion or opportunity to express an opinion before the Green Communities application is submitted. The Select Board plans to vote on November 12. There is no information about what the Town will get by seeking this designation or what the potential grants are, so there is no way to analyze it or measure the potential benefit. Ms. Fachetti noted that the Green Communities designation has no teeth since there are more than 200 communities that have received the designation and have not met the criteria. Mr. Connelly stated that if the Town seeks the designation, it should be done with the goal of meeting the criteria. Mr. Lunetta asked where there is information about available grants. Mr. Davison stated that the state has a website on the

initiative. He stated that it does require a commitment, but there is no penalty except that the community would not qualify for grants that they would be barred from applying for without the designation. Mr. Jacob stated that there is not much of a commitment, so there does not seem to be much downside. Mr. Connelly noted that the Town has stated that there is \$1.6 million of potential grants, but a quick review shows that \$600K is for a new roof and windows on the Emery Grover building which has no planned renovation.

### **Finance Committee Updates**

The Committee agreed to meet next on November 6, 2019 to discuss the Green Communities application.

### **Adjournment**

MOVED: By Mr. Lunetta that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned to attend the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0 at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Documents: October 28, 2019 Special Town Meeting Warrant

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Mizgerd  
Staff Analyst

*Approved November 6, 2019*