

# Warrant Article Questionnaire Non-Standard Town Agency Articles

## Section III – Questions with Response Boxes – To Be Completed By Petition Sponsor

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Article #3   | Date Form Completed: 9/19/20  |
| Article Title: Amend Zoning Bylaws: Setbacks in Downtown Mixed Use (DM) District |   |
| Sponsor Name: Select Board   | Email: <a href="mailto:mhickey@natickma.org">mhickey@natickma.org</a><br><a href="mailto:jfreas@natickma.org">jfreas@natickma.org</a> |

| Question | Question  |
|----------|---|
| 1        | Provide the article motion exactly as it will appear in the Finance Committee Recommendation Book and presented to Town Meeting for action.   |
| Response | <p><b>Move to amend Section III-E Downtown Mixed Use District of the Natick Zoning Bylaws by the following:</b></p> <p><b>Section 3. Dimensional and Density Requirements</b></p> <p>In subsection b – Minimum Yard Dimensions, re-organize the existing text into sections and, in the first section “Front Yard”, replace, the words “if less, the smallest front yard existing on any abutting lot having frontage on the same side of the same street, upon the issuance of a Special Permit by the SPGA based on a finding that such lesser setback will not be detrimental to the neighborhood” with the words “any lesser amount by special permit provided that the SPGA finds that the following criteria have been met: i. Adequate sidewalk width is available to support the anticipated level of activity and <b>usage</b>; ii. the placement of the building is generally consistent with that of other buildings on the streets; and iii. the placement of the building supports a walkable pedestrian area” so that the section now reads:</p> <p>b. Minimum Yard Dimensions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Front Yard – fifteen (15) feet or any lesser amount by special permit provided that the SPGA finds that the following criteria have been met:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Adequate sidewalk width is available to support the anticipated level of activity and <b>usage</b>;</li> <li>ii. the placement of the building is generally consistent with that of other buildings on the street; and</li> <li>iii. the placement of the building supports a walkable pedestrian area.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Side Yard – ten (10) feet where premises abut a residential district, otherwise none required.</li> <li>3. Rear yard - Twenty (20) feet.</li> </ol> |
| 2        | At a summary level and very clearly, what is the proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the accompanying Motion?  |

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| Response       | The article and motion offer a greater degree of flexibility for the Planning Board to work with an applicant in the downtown district to set the front setback line for a project consistent with the objectives of the Natick 2030+ Comprehensive Plan.   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
|----------------|---|---------------|--------------|--|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|-----------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|-------|--|--|--|
|                |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| 3              | Has this article or one of a very similar scope and substance been on a previous Warrant Article and what have been the actions taken by the Finance Committee, other Boards or Committees and Town Meeting?  |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| Response       | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Warrant Period</th><th style="width: 25%;">Other Committees</th><th style="width: 25%;">FinCom Action</th><th style="width: 25%;">Town Meeting</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>SATM 2020</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>FTM 2019</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>SATM 2019</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>FTM 2018</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Prior</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Comments: No</p>   |               |              |  | Warrant Period | Other Committees | FinCom Action | Town Meeting | SATM 2020 |  |  |  | FTM 2019 |  |  |  | SATM 2019 |  |  |  | FTM 2018 |  |  |  | Prior |  |  |  |
| Warrant Period | Other Committees  | FinCom Action | Town Meeting |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| SATM 2020      |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| FTM 2019       |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| SATM 2019      |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| FTM 2018       |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| Prior          |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
|                |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| 4              | Why is it required for the Town of Natick and for the Town Agency sponsor(s)?   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| Response       | <p>The current DM District offers two choices for where the front of a building may be located – at a minimum of 15 feet back from the front lot line or, by special permit, in line with the an abutting building. The proposed amendment follows the same approach as the existing requirements, with the 15-foot minimum, but allowing any reduction in setback by special permit as long as certain criteria are met. The criteria are derived from the objectives for Natick Center of the comprehensive plan. This amendment will give the Planning Board the ability to work with applicants to properly place their building relative to the sidewalk despite the variation found downtown in the placement of buildings and lot lines relative to the street, essentially allowing for the best design solution for a given set of circumstances. The amendment will also allow the creation of small parks, plazas, and similar spaces that would contribute to the attractiveness of downtown and accommodate seating areas, outdoor dining, and other uses.</p> |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
|                |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| 5              | Does this article require funding, how much, from what source of funds and under whose authority will the appropriation be managed and spent?   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| Response       | No  |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
|                |   |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| 6              | <p>Does this article act in any way in concert with, in support of, or to extend any prior action of Natick Town Meeting, Massachusetts General Laws or CMR's or other such legislation or actions?</p> <p>Does this article seek to amend, rescind or otherwise change any prior action of Natick Town Meeting?</p>  |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |
| Response       | No  |               |              |  |                |                  |               |              |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |           |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |       |  |  |  |

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| 7        | How does the proposed motion (and implementation) fit with the relevant Town Bylaws, financial and capital plan, comprehensive Master Plan, and community values as well as relevant state laws and regulations?  |
| Response | This article supports the Natick 2030+ Master Plan's goals of supporting an active and dynamic Natick Center, specifically <b>Goal 4.1</b> , "Support a safe and active street life in Natick Center by investing in sidewalks, crosswalks, bike facilities, signage improvements, and promoting sidewalk cafes and outdoor spaces."  |
| 8        | Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion?   |
| Response | (Type response here)<br>Community & Economic Development Department<br>Planning Board   |
| 9        | What steps and communication has the sponsor attempted to assure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interested parties were notified in a timely way and had a chance to participate in the process</li> <li>Appropriate Town Boards &amp; Committees were consulted</li> <li>Required public hearings were held</li> </ul>                                       |
| Response | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community &amp; Economic Development staff conducted extensive outreach with the Natick Center business community.</li> <li>At its public hearing on Sep 16, 2020, the Planning Board voted Favorable Action (4-1-0).</li> <li>Natick Center Associates and the Economic Development Committee (EDC) support the article.</li> </ul> |
| 10       | Since submitting the article have you identified issues that weren't initially considered in the development of the proposal?   |
| Response | No  |
| 11       | If this Warrant Article is not approved by Town Meeting what are the consequences to the Town and to the sponsor(s)? Please be specific on both financial and other consequences?   |
| Response | The Planning Board will remain limited in its ability to work with potential development projects downtown to optimize the location of the street facing sides of buildings to promote walkability, successful retail and restaurant uses, and the overall vibrancy of the district.  |

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