

Warrant Article Questionnaire
Non-Standard Town Agency Articles

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

Article # 24	Date Form Completed: 04.01.2022
Article Title: Regional Center (RC) Overlay District	
Sponsor Name: Planning Board	Email: aloomis@natickma.org

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><i>Move to amend Section 323 (Use and Other Zoning Regulations) of the Natick Zoning Bylaw as follows:</i></p> <p>At the end of Section 323.1.5, after the <u>last</u> sentence <u>which ends in</u> “such shopping mall use.” <u>insert a new sentence that reads:</u></p> <p><i>All uses permitted or allowed in the Table of Use, 27A. “Administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices and establishments for research and development” shall be permitted without restriction in the RC Overlay District.</i></p> <p>So that the <u>amended</u> Section <u>323.1.5</u> shall read as follows):</p> <p>323.1.5 All uses permitted or allowed in the underlying zoning districts (including the RC Overlay District) shall still be permitted or allowed respectively on land in the MC Overlay District. In addition, hotel and motel use (including serving of food and/or permitted beverages), as well as shopping mall use, shall be permitted in the MC Overlay District. “Shopping mall use” shall include those uses customary in shopping malls, e.g., retail stores, service establishments, restaurants, and entertainment uses, in multiple stores in a building or group of buildings containing no less than two (2) levels (each of which levels is principally devoted to selling or providing service or entertainment to customers), and in which access to the majority of stores is via an enclosed pedestrian mall or malls, and in which no less than thirty-five (35%) percent of the gross floor area leased to tenants is devoted to individual stores having a floor area of less than 15,000 square feet. Access drives and parking facilities serving such buildings, whether such facilities are below or above ground or below such buildings or in separate structures, located on the same lot or an abutting lot shall also be permitted as an accessory use to such shopping mall use. All uses permitted or allowed in the Table of Use, 27A. Administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices and establishments for research and development shall be permitted without restriction in the RC Overlay District.</p>

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2	At a summary level and very clearly, what is the proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the accompanying Motion?			
Response	The Golden Triangle, an area of significant economic development opportunity for the Town, has a series of different zoning districts and zoning overlays. Several parcels are split zoned, and certain uses are limited to only portions of the Golden Triangle. The Amendment proposed in Article 24 would allow administrative offices, clerical offices, statistical offices, and establishments for research and development throughout Regional Center (RC) Overlay District. The RC Overlay District and the Industrial-I Zoning District would allow the Golden Triangle to allow office and research and development uses throughout, providing Natick with a competitive edge for establishing a live, work, play environment.			
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	Section 323.1.5 of the Natick Zoning Bylaw was last updated at Special Town Meeting in 2002			
	Warrant Period Ex: 2021 SATM	Other Committees Ex: Planning Bd refer	FinCom Action Ex: Referral	Town Meeting Ex: Referral
	2002 STM (12/03/2002): Article 1	Favorable Action of Article 1 by the Planning Board	11-0-0 vote Favorable Action	Unanimous Vote in favor of Article 1
4	Why is it required for the Town of Natick and for the Town Agency sponsor(s)?			
Response	Article 24 was prepared to ensure that the Golden Triangle can meet the current and future needs of the Town as an economic hub. Such expansion of uses would allow consistency throughout the Golden Triangle for a future opportunity where the face of retail is ever-changing.			
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	Funding is not required for Article 24. Article 24 was developed to support the future growth of the tax base through an expansion of uses that are currently allowed within areas of the Golden Triangle.			
6	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?			
	Does this article seek to amend, rescind or otherwise change any prior action of Natick Town Meeting?			
Response	The proposed article complies with MGL, CMRs, and other legislations since it's just the addition of a category of use allowed in like zoning districts.			

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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natick 2030+ (Natick Master Plan) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Encourage business retention and expansion, reducing or removing barriers to redevelopment, and making it possible for existing businesses to grow in Natick</i> • <i>Support redevelopment opportunities of large-scale and underutilized sites and areas across Natick to strengthen and diversify the Town's employment and tax base.</i> • <i>Encourage new and expanding businesses to take advantage of redevelopment and infill opportunities near existing transportation infrastructure, public services, and utilities.</i> • <i>Review and revise the current zoning in the Golden Triangle to encourage new uses, including mixed-use, entertainment, and multi-family housing.</i> • Golden Triangle Planning Study, November 2018 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support existing uses that should remain: retail, professional or business office, medical office, hotel/motel, restaurants, R&D/Lab space</i> • <i>New development and redevelopment in The Triangle is likely to increase the overall square footage of built space over time. It is estimated that 10 percent growth would generate between \$3.5 and \$3.7 million in additional tax revenue for the two municipalities over time. It is estimated that 20 percent growth would generate between \$7.2 and \$7.4 million in additional tax revenue.</i>
8	Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion?
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the site plan review and special permit reviewing authority, the Planning Board will be in charge of reviewing applications. • The private landowners and development community are responsible for utilizing the zoning to support future economic growth.
9	What steps and communication has the sponsor attempted to assure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested parties were notified in a timely way and had a chance to participate in the process • Appropriate Town Boards & Committees were consulted • Required public hearings were held •
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal ad for the March 16th public hearing was published in the Metro West Daily Newspaper on February 25th and March 4th • Legal mailers were send to the abutting communities and required parties of interest prior to March 4th • Public hearings for Article 24 were held on March 16th and March 23rd
10	Since submitting the article have you identified issues that weren't initially considered in the development of the proposal?

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Response	No issues were identified since the submittal of the request.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacant retail areas may remain vacant due to change in the retail market; • Inability for landowners to re-invest in property due to decreased revenue; • Inability to attract new businesses and companies looking to invest and locate in Natick if use is not permitted in targeted area; • Development projects limited to small area due to property is split zoned • Lack of diversification, making and area susceptible to vacancy