

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: 09.06.2022
Article Title: East Central/Union Street Intersection (southern side)	
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 that the Natick Zoning Bylaws be amended as follows:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amend § II-A.1 by adding a new line <u>Neighborhood Corridor NC</u>; 2. Amend §200 Definitions to add the following new definitions Artisan and Creative Enterprise; Creative Production; Makerspace; Brewery, Winery, Distillery, Cidery; 3. Amend § II-A.2 Use Regulations Schedule to add a new column titled NC, and amend each line; 4. Add a new § III-EE Neighborhood Corridor; 5. Amend § VI-DD.2.A.a.1 by adding a new line <u>Neighborhood Corridor – NC</u>; 6. Amend § VI-DD.2.B.a) by adding a new line <u>Neighborhood Corridor – NC</u>; <p><i>Further, move that the Natick Zoning Map be amended as follows:</i></p> <p><i>Create a Neighborhood Corridor Zoning District, comprised of parcels 57 East Central Street (44-0000244), 59 East Central Street (44-0000243), 63 East Central Street (44-0000242), 67 East Central Street (44-0000241), 4 Grant Street (44-0000219), 6 Grant Street (44-0000220A), 6 Grant Street (44-0000220B), 6-off Grant Street (44-0000220C), 2 Union Street (44-0000240), and 5 Union Street (44-0000239) from Residential General (RG) Zoning District to a new Neighborhood Corridor (NC) Zoning District; and rezone parcels 69 East Central Street (44-0000266), 77 East Central Street (44-0000267), 85 East Central Street (44-0000268), 93 East Central Street (44-0000269), 99 East Central Street (44-0000270) from Administrative and Professional (AP) Zoning District to Neighborhood Corridor (NC) Zoning District. The respective frontage to the centerline of the roadway shall be further rezoned as Neighborhood Corridor (NC) Zoning District.</i></p>
2	At a summary level and very clearly, what is the proposed purpose and objective of this Warrant Article and the accompanying Motion?
Response	<p>The parcels on the south side of East Central Street from Grant Street to Union Street are presently zoned Residential General (RG), while parcels on the north side of East Central directly across the street are zoned Downtown Mixed-use. Further along the south side of East Central Street from Union Street to 99 East Central Street, the parcels are presently zoned Administrative and Professional. Across the street, the parcels are zoned Residential General (RG).</p> <p>The intent of Article 24 is to rezone the parcels south of East Central from Grant Street to 99 East Central Street from RG and AP Zoning Districts to a new Neighborhood Corridor (NC) Zoning District. The proposed NC Zoning District has been developed to serve as a transition from the DM Zoning District to abutting residential zoning districts. Such effort allows compliance with the Commonwealth’s Housing Choice requirements while allowing for redevelopment of this critical commercial corridor.</p>

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	To transition from DM Zoning District to residential neighborhoods, the NC proposes increasing uses compatible with residential neighborhoods but often found in walkable neighborhoods that connect community centers.
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	Article 24 is a new zoning effort that has not been presented for this area previously.
4	Why is it required for the Town of Natick and for the Town Agency sponsor(s)?
Response	<p>The area identified for rezoning proposes many great opportunities for the Town.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reinvestment in parcels along a commercial corridor may not happen without such amendment. Current zoning has significant setbacks and dimensional requirements that make redevelopment impossible without getting dimensional relief and increasing the nonconformity. 2. In 2020, the Commonwealth voted to enact the Housing Choice Legislation. The Town is required to comply with such effort to provide housing opportunities by-right within a ½ mile of a commuter rail station, with the requirement of affordable housing. Such effort would ensure compliance with such requirements, including commercials along major corridors. Note: noncompliance would deem the Town ineligible for certain state funding opportunities. 3. Distributes multi-family housing opportunities within key areas rather than concentrated in one area. 4. Increase in tax base associated with redevelopment.
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.
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	<p>Chapter 358 of the Acts of 2020 amended sections of Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) chapter 40A. Such amendments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>MGL c 40A § 3A MBTA community must have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and meets other criteria set forth in the statute. This page includes final Compliance Guidelines.</i> <p>The efforts of Article 24, would allow mixed-use with residential on the upper floors and commercial on the first floor along East Central Street.</p> <p><i>More information can be found at https://www.mass.gov/orgs/housing-choice-initiative</i></p>

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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+ Master Plan, Chapter 3, R5.1 includes an Action Step: Develop a “<i>Transitional Mixed Use Zone</i>” with uses similar to the existing DM Zone, but with lower densities compatible with adjacent residential development: South side of Central Street from Lincoln Street to Union Street.” • Natick 2030+ Master Plan, 1-5 Years: <i>There also are several locations where gateways into Natick Center could serve as transition zones from the adjacent RG residential neighborhoods. It is recommended that a “Transitional Mixed Use” Zone be considered that allows uses similar to the DM zone, but with lower densities compatible with adjacent residential development. This new district should be considered for the south side of Central Street from Lincoln Street to Union Street (currently zoned RG) and the north side of Middlesex Avenue from Spring Street to Washington Avenue. The zone is designated as DM-Transition on the Proposed Zoning Changes Diagram on page 3.37.</i>
8	Who are the critical participants in executing the effort envisioned by the article motion?
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natick Planning Board • Economic Development Committee (EDC) • Landowners of the parcels proposed to be rezoned
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 September 21st public hearing will be published in the Metro West Daily Newspaper on September 7th and September 14th • Legal mailers will be sent to the abutting communities and required parties of interest prior to September 7th • Public hearings for Article 21 will commence on September 21st
10	Since submitting the article have you identified issues that weren’t initially considered in the development of the proposal?
Response	No issues were identified since the submission of Article 24.
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"> • Non-compliance with the Housing Choice requirements of MGL c 40A §3A • Limited redevelopment to parcels along the south side of East Central Street, while parcels to the north are allowed the benefits of the DM Zoning District. • Required dimensional relief, which increases barriers to the redevelopment of the parcels