

# A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

## Town of Dedham

Dedham, MA



October 13, 2016



**Urban Land  
Institute**

**Boston/New England**

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# Executive Summary

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The Dedham Legacy Place TAP convened at the Endicott Estate in Dedham on October 13, 2016. Under the direction of the Urban Land Institute's Boston/New England District Council, a panel of eight real estate professionals met for an intensive twelve-hour day with town leaders, community residents, developers and business owners. The exercise focused on the issues, constraints, and opportunities presented by the area lying to the south and west of Wigwam Pond and bounded by Providence Highway to the west, Legacy Place to the southwest, Ruscraft Road to the south and the General Dynamics property, among others, to the east (see "the Study Area"). The TAP also considered Legacy Place and the MBTA Corporate Station, particularly with regard to improving connectivity between the Study Area and these two focal points. The panel looked at zoning changes that would engender the growth and redevelopment Dedham is looking for, examined long-term potential of the area, and what redevelopment vision it supports.

During the panel's discussions and interviews with residents, town leaders, business owners, and property owners, a few issues stood out: This area has strong assets in the MBTA Corporate Station, Legacy Place and Wigwam Pond, but they are completely segregated from one another. Further, Wigwam Pond is a wonderful natural resource that is underutilized and inaccessible to the community.

Two other clear takeaways for the panel were a lack of public open green space and a level of frustration by community stakeholders and residents over the lack of affordable housing and housing for senior residents looking to downsize from single-family homes.

The town has shown a strong commitment to fostering appropriate growth by completing planning studies both town-wide and area-focused. Most recently, the Study Area and neighboring areas were the subject of a TOD study conducted by the Metropolitan Area Council (MAPC).

The panel concluded its work with a preliminary estimate of potential capacity for development and most appropriate uses and forms of development. Scenarios indicated redevelopment could potentially generate approximately six million dollars of net new annual tax revenues to the town (in constant, uninflated \$2016).

It should be noted that the recommendations found at the end of the report are long-term strategies, therefore, city officials and stakeholders should be proactive about approaching implementation in phases over the coming years.



# ULI and the TAP Process

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## Urban Land Institute (ULI)

The Urban Land Institute is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the institute now has nearly 40,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service, including developers, architects, planners, lawyers, bankers, and economic development professionals, among others. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and to help sustain and create thriving communities. The Boston/New England District Council serves the six New England states and has over 1,300 members.

## Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

The ULI Boston/New England Real Estate Advisory Committee convenes Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs) at the request of public officials and local stakeholders of communities and nonprofit organizations facing complex land use challenges who benefit from planning and development professionals providing pro bono recommendations.

At the TAP, a group of diverse professionals specially assembled with expertise in the issues posed spends one to two days visiting and analyzing existing conditions, identifying specific planning and development issues, and formulating realistic and actionable recommendations to move initiatives forward in a way consistent with the applicant's goals and objectives.

## The Panel

The ULI Boston/New England convened a volunteer

A ULI Boston/New England Technical Assistance Panel

panel of experts to examine the challenges and opportunities facing Dedham/Legacy Place.

## Co-Chairs

Barry Abramson, President  
Abramson & Associates

Michael Wang, Principal  
Form + Place

## Panelists

Patrick Campbell, Project Executive  
Campanelli

Todd Finard, Partner  
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Steven Garvin, President  
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## ULI Boston/New England Staff

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Joe Federico  
FED CORP

Richard Putprush  
Fulcrum Real Estate Partners

Katherine Wetherbee  
Legacy Place

Curt Bryant  
Property Owner

Mark Cristo

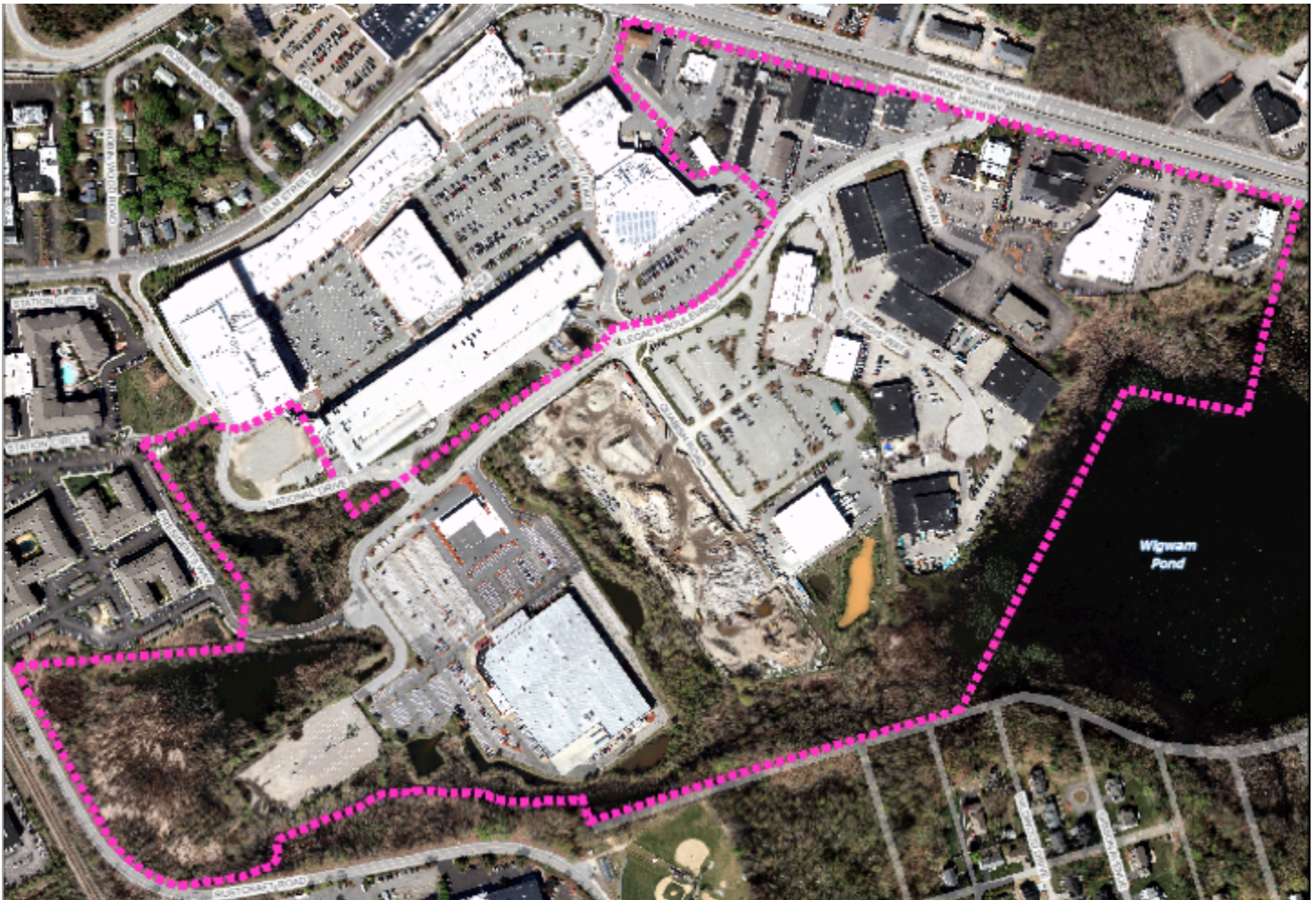
Rob Kirschner, Fulcrum Real Estate Partners

### Study Area

The Study Area includes roughly 77 acres in 34 separate parcels. These separate parcels host a range of land uses; medical, office, retail, light industrial, restaurant, warehousing, distribution, and gravel processing. Buildings primarily date from a previous generation. Of the 34 parcels, 29 are developable and just three remain undeveloped. These three parcels offer 12 acres of potential development. The Town Assessor's database shows the 26 developed parcels include nearly 470,000 square feet with assessed value of \$60.5 Million. Please note the TAP study area does not include Legacy Place's 1 million square feet of office, retail, restaurant, and theater space. However, some 7.4 acres of developable land (two parcels) owned by Legacy Place are included.

### TAP Process

The Dedham TAP met October 13 at the Endicott Estate in Dedham. TAP members took a bus tour of the Study Area and environs, including the MBTA Station, Legacy Place and Wigwam Pond, led by John Sisson, the town's economic development director. Following the tour, the panel met town stakeholders, leadership, business owners and property owners at the Endicott Estate. Panel members spent the afternoon drafting a series of observations and recommendations based on this input and its analyses. That evening, the panel made a presentation at the monthly Planning Board meeting, followed by a question-and-answer session.



*The Study Area*



# Background and History

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## Dedham

Dedham is a town in Norfolk County settled in 1638. According to the U.S. Census, Dedham has a population of 25,111 and an area of 10.5 square miles. It is located on Boston's southwest border. The subject site that the panel examined included Legacy Place, which is bounded on the west by Providence Highway (Route 1A), on the south by I-95 and on the east extending up to Wigwam Pond in the north.

## Legacy Place

Legacy Place is a 675,000-square foot open-air shopping destination lifestyle center at the intersection of Route 1 and I-95. Officially opened on August 20, 2009, it has powerful anchors including Whole Foods, L.L. Bean and National Amusements Cinemas.

## Wigwam Pond

Wigwam Pond is a hidden gem that sits behind the large format retail stores on Providence Highway. There is limited access to the pond from several parking lots, and a few streets in the Fairbanks neighborhood on the east side of the pond.

## MBTA Corporate Station

Dedham Corporate Center is a station on the MBTA Commuter Franklin Line, which runs from Franklin to Boston and was opened in Jan 1990. The station is located just off exit 14 of I-95/Rt. 128 and serves mostly as a park-and-ride location for inbound riders. It provides access to the office park and nearly 500 parking spaces for commuters riding to Boston. The parking lot is the subject of an ongoing disposition process, the objective of which is to foster redevelopment.

## Town of Dedham's Objectives for the TAP

The Town of Dedham seeks to develop a long-term sustainable strategy for the Study Area. Immediate goals include creating a long-term development strategy and improving connectivity between the MBTA Corporate Station, Legacy Place and Wigwam Pond. Further, the area lacks both green and public space for community members to use for both active and passive recreation.

The development of the Study Area and surrounding areas has occurred in piecemeal fashion over time and resulted in a disconnect between the sites. The MBTA station, Legacy Place and development in the Study Area function as individual islands that are close to one another but not connected. Two recently developed residential communities, Jefferson and AvalonBay, provide no connections between the MBTA stop and Legacy Place. Legacy was also built without the community green space that one often finds integrated into similar, more recent lifestyle centers.

The area contains several of the ingredients associated with creating a high-quality, livable community: access to transit, housing, retail, restaurants, entertainment, and office (and the potential for accessible open/green space) all within walking distance. The area lacks the proper infrastructure to connect these amenities, such as sidewalks, lighting, walking paths and bicycle paths. Complete Streets, an idea that roadways should be safe, accessible, and comfortable for all users, would be applicable here. Complete Streets considers the needs for pedestrians, cyclists and people using public transportation (commuter rails and buses) while also catering to children, seniors and people with disabilities. This area falls short in many of these considerations.



The panels task during the TAP was to address the three following questions:

1. What is the real potential of this area, and what redevelopment vision does it support?
2. How do we knit this area together?
3. What other added benefits to redevelopment of this area?



*Focal Points – Wigwam, Legacy, Dedham Corporate Center*

# Challenges

## Connectivity

Connectivity is a significant issue in this area. This problem, already explored in previous studies including the recent MAPC TOD study, is two-fold: one, each of the main anchors studied (Legacy, MBTA and the Study Area) is an island with no convenient access to one another. Second is the lack of safe Complete Streets. On both Rustcraft Road and Legacy Boulevard there are no sidewalks or bicycle paths. A commuter going to the MBTA station from Legacy has to walk on Rustcraft Road. The Jefferson and Avalon Bay developments bisect the area between Legacy and the MBTA stop, exacerbating this disconnect.

Vehicular circulation around Legacy Place does not flow fluidly. It is a hard right off of the Providence Turnpike into the backside of Legacy with no prominent entrance. Furthermore, planners designed the traffic to flow into Legacy and prohibited a left-hand turn onto Jefferson Place, so many residents now illegally take the left onto Jefferson. This has raised a number of safety concerns to residents and town officials.

Wigwam Pond is completely inaccessible to the rest of the site. The area behind Sturgis has an eight-foot chain link fence with barbed wire on top. One would never know that a beautiful natural resource is less than a quarter mile from Legacy Place. Despite the fact that the area has been the source of various studies over the years, Wigwam has not been a central focus in any of these plans. One community stakeholder noted that although the area is an important part of the town, there is no connection to the rest of Dedham.

## Numerous Property Owners

The panel met with numerous property owners of the various sites. All voiced similar frustrations with the area and made mentioned that many of the same concerns have been voiced for some time.

Ultimately, redevelopment will be challenged by the large number of different property owners to the extent that they do not collaborate in support of area public improvements and consolidation of parcels more conducive to redevelopment.

## Lack of Green/Open Space

The Study Area is of sizable acreage, yet lacks dedicated green space. As national trends shift towards green initiatives and active lifestyles, the focal point for large lifestyle centers is shifting towards incorporating green and public spaces. Developed in 2009, Legacy has missed out on this trend. An example that was raised was the 2013 Market Street development in Lynnfield (see below), which has a large open green space that serves as the hub of the entire area. The space is used for community events, movie nights, and outdoor yoga seminars. Because of parking concerns and how the complex is laid out there may not be a viable opportunity to retrofit a significant open space within the Legacy complex. Nevertheless, the Study Area offers multiple opportunities for adding green and community spaces.



*2013 Market Street Development in Lynnfield, MA*





*2013 Market Street Development in Lynnfield, MA*

## Zoning

The Study Area falls into two municipal zoning districts – Highway Business and Research Development Office. There are also a number of overlays in the area. The new development is stifled by zoning constraints, since currently no development can move forward without issuance of a special permit. Legacy was developed under the PCD – Town’s Plan Commercial Development. A large hurdle is the limit of housing to 30 units per project. No other area in Dedham has the number of overlays that this study area contains.

## Wetlands

The wetlands surrounding Wigwam must be examined to determine viability of the entire area, as there are access issues to various points of the pond and no natural entry points.



*Wigwam Pond from Sturgis Road*

# Assets and Opportunities

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## Wigwam Pond

Wigwam has great potential for the community and residents. One idea is to create a public boardwalk over the wetland area to make it accessible. The boardwalk could later figure as a part of a longer trail between the Study Area and Dedham Square. The panel also saw the pond as offering a great amenity for development of two-plus-story townhouse-style residential housing, which, as long as public access is maintained, would be an appropriate use for this sensitive location. There is opportunity to create natural green space near the southwest portion of the pond (behind the gravel pit and Costco) that would provide yet another connection to the ball fields off Rustcraft Road.

## Legacy Place

Legacy has been a tremendous boost to the community as one of the preeminent shopping/lifestyle centers in New England and certainly in the Greater Boston Area.

## MBTA Parking Lot Redevelopment

The 5.5 acre MBTA parking lot contains approximately 500 spaces. Earlier this year, the MBTA issued a Request for Proposal for the lot and received one bid from National Development. The proposal includes a multi-family project with a 330 car parking structure.

## MBTA Station

The MBTA Dedham Corporate Center Commuter stop is clearly a differentiator in the area. Having accessible public transportation with less than a 30-minute ride to South Station is a positive asset to the area.

## Route 1/128

Dedham is one of the most well-connected towns in the Commonwealth. It borders I-95/128, Route 1 and is minutes to I-93, the Massachusetts Turnpike, and I-95 South to Providence.

## Infrastructure is in Place

Infrastructure is strong in area due to enhancements of Legacy development. Further study of infrastructure needs would be merited before further development.

## Underutilized Developable Parcels

Underdeveloped large parcels of land within the study area, specifically the area south of the Jefferson Apartments (west of Costco) along the bend on Rustcraft Road and the gravel site behind Legacy provide immediate opportunities for near-term development. The undeveloped parcel on Rustcraft Road was particularly appealing due to proximity to MBTA Station and frontage on a main road with neighboring high-value development.

## Broad Market Appeal

Prospects for future redevelopment are positive due to the area's broad market appeal. All major real estate market sectors already exist in the area and enjoy success. The panel felt there can be continued growth in all areas of retail, office, medical office and residential.



## Current Market Conditions

### Residential

The current multi-family rental residential market in this area is reasonably strong, though rents may be borderline for supporting new development. Development of Wigwam Pond and green space would further improve the prospects for development. Current rental market below:

#### Jefferson Apartments

**1 Bedroom - \$2000-\$2300; 2 Bedrooms - \$2600**  
**300 Units / 93% occupancy**

#### Avalon Bay

**1 Bedroom - \$2000; 2 Bedrooms - \$2500**  
**Before Legacy – never had full occupancy**  
**Since Legacy – 100% occupancy**

### Standard Office

The current office market is stable but rents and demand at present are generally uncondusive to supporting new development. Both marketing and improving the connectivity of the MBTA Corporate Station are important steps moving forward.

As the intense demand for office space in central locations of Boston continues to push more cost-conscious companies to suburban locations, prospects for office development in Dedham will improve. The town's convenient access to the MBTA, regional highway system, and broad mix of uses and amenities suggest the possibility that Dedham could be the next Burlington in terms of office development, i.e., a suburban office market rising significantly in market acceptance supporting significant new development. The Study Area would be particularly well-suited to accommodate such development.

### Medical Office

Medical office is another sector that appears to provide significant potential. Medical tenants want to be with other medical tenants, thus if this area continues to establish itself in this area, demand will follow. One indication of the robustness of this market is the record sale of the New England Baptist Hospital building. The landscape of how medical treatment is delivered is evolving and Dedham could increase its footprint in this sector and get its fair share of such use for the south suburban quadrant and possibly even poach some organizations from locations such as Needham and Wellesley. Attracting medical tenants would reap significant tax benefits, considering Class A medical office has increased almost 50% in rents over the past five years.

### Retail

Despite the area's abundance of retail, there will continue to be demand for more. This area is a destination location for shoppers and has the capacity for more everyday retail needs and national retailers. Providence Highway frontage is and will continue to be paramount to new occupants.

### Hotel

There are no hotels or motels within the Study Area. However, within a quarter mile there are four hotels totaling close to 700 rooms. These hotels are reported to be experiencing strong occupancy. The panel did not feel the Study Area provides optimal locations for hotel development as hotels typically prioritize highway access and visibility. Conceivably, the identity of Legacy Place could, to some extent, offset some of this disadvantage, but this would be considered speculative.

# Recommendations

## Improve Pedestrian Access to/from Train Station

Short-term immediate impact can be accomplished with improved sidewalks, crosswalks and appropriate lighting. A Complete Streets and wayfinding study will help script the area and 'make it make sense'. Property owners could be asked to contribute to the studies. A pedestrian connection from MBTA to legacy must be developed. Currently visitors and workers have to make an unsafe walk through the parking lot or up and around the corner of Avalon Bay.

## Extend Legacy Boulevard to Rustcraft Road

Extending Legacy Boulevard to Rustcraft Road can help create a natural connection. In addition to creating new access points to future development, it may also ease traffic along Providence Highway. See figure 1 below for illustration.

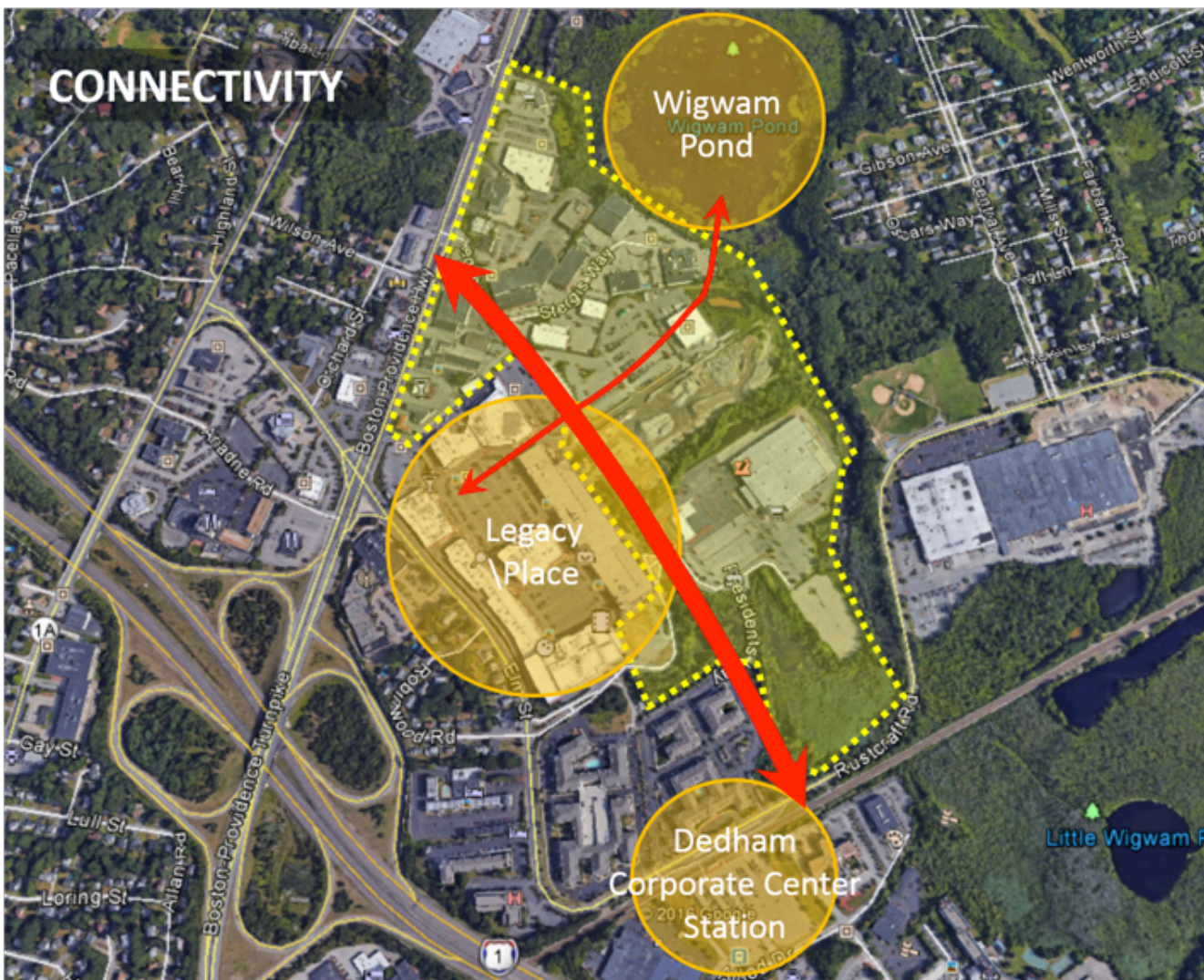


Figure 1 – Extend Legacy Blvd



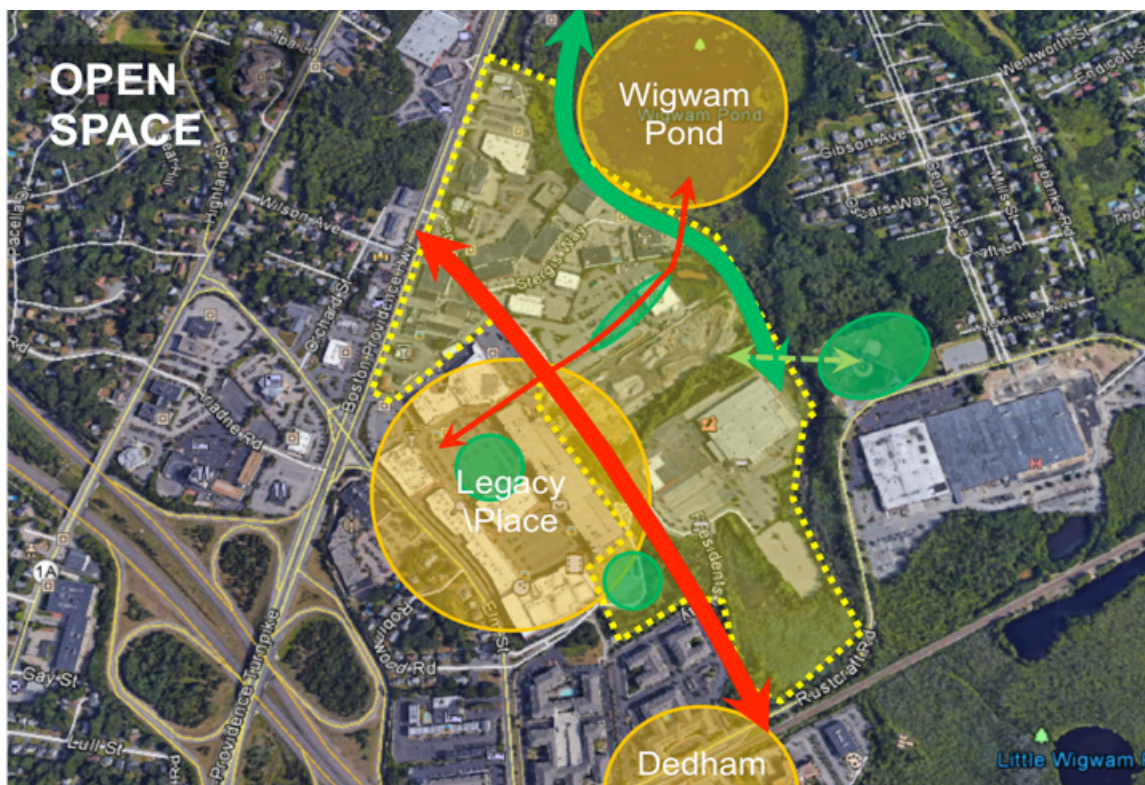


Figure 2 - Open Green Space

### Create Access to Wigwam Pond

Long-term growth is connected to future development of Wigwam Pond. Once it is opened up and development begins, there needs to be multiple access points to connect. One natural connection would be extending the access road parallel to Sturgis and the gravel pit site. This extension could be completed in conjunction with Legacy Boulevard, illustrated in Figure 1 above. The second connection would be to create a boardwalk along Wigwam that links Dedham Square to a future rail trail. An engineering feasibility study should be completed to determine overall accessibility over wetlands. A boardwalk connecting the pond area to a trail to Dedham Square would create more synergy between the downtown, Study Area, and surrounding areas. See figure below for illustration.

### Open Green Space

Figure 2 above illustrates the green space concept

for the study area. More publicly accessible green spaces would complement residential and other development within and near the Study Area. There is an access point at the southern part of Wigwam Pond that is a natural connection to a network of parks and walking paths. Footbridges to the ballfields on Rustcraft Road create a gateway to the residential area just east of the fields.



Boardwalk in Sandwich, MA



## Development and Tax Implications

Optimally, the Study Area would be redeveloped with a mix of uses and forms of development. Those most appropriate and likely are office, medical office, and multifamily residential at 3-5 stories in height, leveling to 2- to 2+ story townhouses nearer to the pond. Townhouses would most likely be for sale, whereas larger multifamily buildings would be rental and/or condominium. Such units would appeal to downsizing empty-nesters and seniors from Dedham,

and singles and DINKs from the region. The town could explore designating a portion of units for seniors or as affordable units. Development along Legacy Boulevard should include active ground floor commercial or other use.

Regarding parking, townhouses should have in-building parking incorporated. Parking for other buildings would likely be surface in the early stages, with the potential for in-building or structured parking as development progresses.



*Residences above retail at Market Common Clarendon*



*Figure 3 shows the area broken into phases of development based on their relative conduciveness to redevelopment and illustrates how buildings might be laid out. Product type for each phase can be found in the table 1 below.*





*Figure 4– Illustrative Program for Development*

Figure 3 and 4, above, shows an illustrative development program for the Phase I and II areas. Note, the panel did not show any illustrative development for the Phase III area because redevelopment of this area was felt to be the most speculative and long term.

It should be noted that the inclusion of office in the first phases of the program may be aspirational, as current and near-term market conditions may point more toward residential. Nevertheless, the town may wish to promote and hold out for at least some portion of development for office.

*Table 1 - Product type for each phase*

PHASE I

Rustcraft	Building 1	25,000 sf footprint x 4 floors	=	100,000 sf Office/Med. Office
	Building 2	25,000 sf footprint x 4 floors	=	100,000 sf Office/Med. Office
Gravel Site	Building 1	28,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [above grade + lobby + retail]	=	86,000sf Office + 16,000sf Retail
	Building 2	28,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [above grade + lobby]	=	86,000sf Office
	Building 3	28,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [above grade + lobby]	=	86,000sf Office
PHASE 1 TOTALS		458,000sf Office/Med. Office		
		16,000sf Retail		
		<u>474,000sf</u>		

PHASE 2

Quabish Rd West, Stergis Way and McNeil Way East Properties

	Building 1	28,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [above grade + lobby + retail]	=	86,000sf Office + 16,000sf Retail
	Building 2	28,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [above grade + lobby + retail]	=	86,000sf Office + 16,000sf Retail
	Building 3	23,500sf footprint x 4 floors	=	94,000 Multi-Fam Residential [90 DUs]
	Building 4	23,500sf footprint x 4 floors	=	94,000 Multi-Fam Residential [90 DUs]
	Townhouse	800sf footprint x 2.5 floors	=	2,000sf x 30 units
			=	60,000sf Residential
PHASE 2 TOTALS		172,000sf Office/Med. Office		
		188,000sf MF Residential [180 Dus]		
		60,000sf Townhouses [30,000 Dus]		
		32,000sf Retail		
		<u>452,000sf</u>		

TOTAL REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

630,000sf Office/Med. Office	[x 3.3/1K = 2,079 spaces]
188,000sf MF Residential [180 DUs]	[x 1/DU = 188 spaces]
60,000sf Townhouses [30,000 DUs]	[x 1/DU = 60 spaces]
48,000sf Retail	[x 4.0/1K = 192 spaces]
926,000sf	[2,519 spaces x 0.8 shared discount = 2,016 spaces (- 10% for TOD = 1,815?)]
Plus.....?	

PHASE 3

Prov Hghw	Building 1	32,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [Lvl. 1 lobby/retail]	=	66,000sf Office + 30,000sf Retail
	Building 2	32,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [Lvl. 1 lobby/retail]	=	66,000sf Office + 30,000sf Retail
	Building 3	16,000 sf footprint x 3 floors [Lvl. 1 lobby/retail]	=	17,000sf Office + 15,000sf Retail
PHASE 3 TOTALS		132,000sf Office/Med. Office		
		75,000sf Retail		
		<u>207,000sf</u>		

Table 2 - Preliminary estimated tax implications of illustrative development program

Illustrative New Development						vs Existing Development		Incremental Assessed Value	Incremental Annual Property Tax
	Acres	Units	Gross SF	Assessed Value	Annual Property Tax	Assessed Value	Annual Property Tax		
Phase 1 Area									
Office			458,000	\$ 114,500,000	\$ 3,890,000				
Retail			16,000	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 140,000				
Residential - Multi-Family		-	-	-	-				
Residential - THs		-	-	-	-				
Total Phase 1 Area	20		474,000	\$ 118,500,000	\$ 4,030,000	\$ 2,075,700	\$ 70,470	\$ 116,424,000	\$ 3,960,000
Phase 2 Area									
Office			172,000	\$ 43,000,000	\$ 1,460,000				
Retail			32,000	\$ 8,000,000	\$ 270,000				
Residential - Multi-Family		180	188,000	\$ 37,600,000	\$ 600,000				
Residential - THs		30	60,000	\$ 18,000,000	\$ 290,000				
Total Phase 2 Area	25	210	452,000	\$ 106,600,000	\$ 2,620,000	\$ 19,982,300	\$ 678,399	\$ 86,620,000	\$ 1,942,000
Combined Phase 1 and 2 Areas									
Office			630,000	\$ 157,500,000	\$ 5,350,000				
Retail			48,000	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 410,000				
Residential - Multi-Family		180	188,000	\$ 37,600,000	\$ 600,000				
Residential - THs		30	60,000	\$ 18,000,000	\$ 290,000				
Total Phase 1 and 2 Area	45	210	926,000	\$ 225,100,000	\$ 6,650,000	\$ 22,058,000	\$ 748,869	\$ 203,040,000	\$ 5,901,000

Note; All estimates of assessed value and property taxes are preliminary and are in constant, uninflated \$2016

*In summary, redevelopment of just the areas labelled Phase I and II would result in an increase in annual real estate taxes (expressed in constant, uninflated \$2016) at a preliminary estimate of \$6,000,000.*



### Move Utilities Underground

As redevelopment occurs, continual infrastructure improvements should be made, with the potential to offset costs with contributions from property owners and development partners.

### Zoning Improvements

Current zoning is prohibitive to some of the development proposed by the panel. The area is currently zoned into two nonresidential districts, Highway Business and Research, Development and Office. There is a 30-unit limit to mixed-use residential development in the latter and no limit for Highway Business. The panel suggests lifting the 30-unit cap and encourages a residential buffer along Wigwam

Pond to allow for townhouse style housing.

The Town can attract more desirable development by creating incentives for developers in the form of increasing allowable FAR limits, allowable residential density limits, and by refining parking ratios. Some of the parcels are too small for suggested development scenarios, so the Town could promote assemblage with rezoning incentives.

### Relocation

The town should work to facilitate the relocation of businesses that face displacement by redevelopment to other areas of town by providing appropriate and cost-effective space.



*Market Common Clarendon is a mixed-use development with open green space*



# Implementation Strategies

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The TAP's recommendations for ways to help the Study Area reach its full potential will require financial support. Some proposals – such as adjustment to town zoning requirements– may involve leveraging existing town resources. Others, however, such as streetscape improvements and infrastructure work, are likely to require additional state or possibly city funding. Linkage payments levied on new development could be explored.

## Mass DOT Complete Streets Funding

Cities and towns interested in creating “complete streets” that are safe and accessible for walking and biking as well as public transportation and cars may be eligible for financial assistance. Mass Dot's Complete Streets program provides up to \$50,000 in technical assistance and \$400,000 in construction funding for communities that meet a series of requirements. To qualify, a community must have a municipal employee attend Complete Streets training; create a Complete Streets Policy that scores at least 80 on a scale of 100; and draft a “Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.”

## Mass Works Infrastructure Program Grants

The Mass Works Infrastructure Program provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other eligible public entities seeking public infrastructure funding to support economic development and job creation. The Program represents an administrative consolidation of six former grant programs.

## Brownfield Remediation Assistance

On August 5, 1998, the Massachusetts Legislature passed the Massachusetts Brownfields Act. This landmark legislation created financial and liability incentives to help parties overcome obstacles associated with the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated property. Over the past decade, the programs created by the Brownfields Act

have supported more than 1,300 brownfields redevelopment success stories across the Commonwealth.

## Designate Study Area as DIF District

District Improvement Financing (DIF) is an economic tool that promotes redevelopment by use of public/private partnerships. DIF channels tax dollars into targeted redevelopment districts.

Once a district and program have been certified, the town has the ability to use various tools to implement the program. These include acquiring land, constructing or reconstructing improvements (such as buildings, roads, schools and parks), incurring indebtedness and pledging tax increments and other project revenues for repayment of these debts. Initial funding for these activities is usually accessed through the posting of a bond by the city or town.

## Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA allows communities to create a local community preservation fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of no more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and the town must adopt CPA by ballot referendum.

## 43D Priority Development Sites

This program offers communities a tool to promote targeted economic and housing development. 43D provides a transparent and efficient process for municipal permitting by guaranteeing local permitting decisions on priority development sites within 180 days. Other benefits of the program are priority

consideration for the Mass Works Infrastructure Program grants, brownfields remediation assistance, and other financing through quasi-public organizations. The community must identify a qualifying parcel as a priority development site, and obtain permission of its owner (if private) for participation in the program.

### Public Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships, or PPP, are a contract between the public and private sectors in which the private partner is tasked with providing a public asset. In Dedham an example could be the MBTA parking lot disposition. This redevelopment has potential to unlock Mass Works funding for infrastructure improvements between MBTA station and study area.

### Walk Boston

Walk Boston is a non-profit pedestrian advocacy organization dedicated to improving walking

conditions in cities and towns across the Commonwealth. The organization partners with cities and towns to make them more walkable and ensure that pedestrian needs and safety are considered in discussions around transportation improvements.

### Congress for New Urbanism

The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) is an international nonprofit organization working to build vibrant communities where people have diverse choices for how they live, work, and get around. CNU provides trainings and technical assistance to public officials and land use professionals interested in making their communities more compact, mixed-use and walkable.

## Conclusion

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Overall the panel was very encouraged by the long-term redevelopment possibilities within the Study Area. The three focal points of the area, Legacy Place, Wigwam Pond and the MBTA station, are all in their own right powerful anchors and assets to the town. The long-term vision was to see how to better connect the three areas and how future development would fit alongside an already successful retail space.

The Study Area offers a great opportunity for substantial redevelopment which could generate increased tax revenues. Development could also address some needs of community residents in terms of providing housing for seniors and some affordable housing options.

Improvements to connectivity to and within the Study Area as well as green space improvements and access to Wigwam Pond would enhance the vitality of surrounding areas and provide benefits to community residents as a whole.