



Urban Land  
Institute

Boston/New England

# Wareham TAP

February 4, 2020





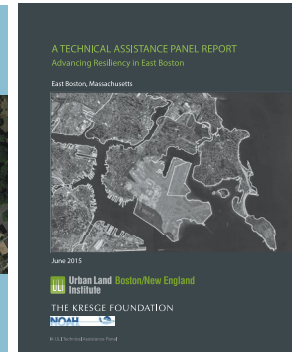
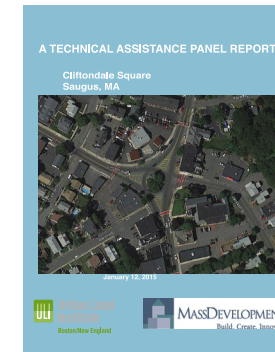
# About ULI – the Urban Land Institute

## Mission

To provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is a research and education institution with nearly 36,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service.

## ULI at the local level

Boston/New England District Council covers nearly all of New England with over 1,400 Members—developers, architects, planners, public officials, financiers, students, etc.



# Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)

## Wareham, MA

ULI Boston/New England is committed to supporting communities in making sound land use decisions and creating better places. A TAP brings together a group of ULI members with a range of professional expertise to provide focused, collaborative consultation to a local government or qualifying non-profit organization.

## This TAP

- This panel looked at a range of options from an unbiased perspective.
- Panelists include public and private sector experts in the fields of architecture, planning, and design
- Panelists have donated their time
- Final Deliverable – Written report (12 weeks) will be available at <http://boston.uli.org>

## PANEL SPONSORS:



**WAREHAM**  
Massachusetts

# The Panel

## Co-Chairs

- Jim Heffernan, Navem Partners, LLC
- Michael Wang, Form + Place

## Panelists

- Susan Connelly, Mass Housing Partnership
- Andrew Consigli & David Pyne, Civico Development
- Mary Ellen DeFrias, MassDevelopment
- Richard Friberg, TEC, Inc.
- Chris Kluchman, Department of Housing and Community Development

## ULI Staff

- Sara Marsh, Manager

## TAP Writer

- Michael Hoban







# Panel Assignment: Address These Questions



1. Assuming up-zoning, what development concepts work on these two sites?
2. We have created a Wareham Redevelopment Authority (WRA) with chap.121B authorities. Is this the right tool to drive development in this area? Are there other programmatic tools that should be considered to facilitate redevelopment? If the WRA makes sense, how can we best advance redevelopment in this area?
3. What mix of financing tools are available to support the redevelopment of these key properties and other properties in the downtown area?



# What did we hear?



# Assets and Opportunities

- Waterfront / Chance for water access
- Government Structure
  - Planning and Community Development
  - Wareham Redevelopment Authority
  - Have many resources already available
- Willingness for change:
  - Key, local landowners open to change
  - Active Town government open to change
- Infrastructure
  - Main Street is already updated / Good traffic calming in place
  - Free public parking
  - Two main streets providing access (Merchant's Way and Main St)
  - Public Water and Sewer



# Assets and Opportunities

- Existing Local Draw
  - Popular local events (e.g., Oysterfest)
  - Besse Park
  - Local businesses already providing a draw
    - Hospital
    - Verilife – Marijuana Dispensary
    - Restaurants
- The beginnings of community engagement with Onset
- An existing volunteer force to organize



# Assets and Opportunities

- Seasonal increase / Seasonal train
- Affordability
- Room for Growth
- Town is largest landowner in the study area
- Livability / Walkability
- Favorable topography
- Proximity to multiple highways and Cape





# Challenges

- Maximizing water access
- Merchant's Way
  - Lack of pedestrian access / Right of ways
  - Speed Limit
  - Lighting
  - Landscaping
  - Lack of investment into buildings / no incentive to improve
  - Lack of dual storefronts with Main Street
- Communication issues, both internal to Town government and external (too much reliance on social media)
  - No predictable zoning process or transparency
  - Limited public / private collaboration



195 Main St, Vacant building

# Challenges

- Zoning code, including use, dimensional and density
- Lack of diversity of uses
  - No café / bakery / gift shops / art galleries
  - No entertainment venues (pubs, arcade, music etc.)
  - Too many gas stations
  - No outdoor dining options
- Organization of parking
  - Employee/Owner Parking
- Pedestrian crosswalks and access
  - Besse Park access
  - Crossing from Pezzoli Square



Closed gas station, Main St



# Challenges

- Lighting
  - Dim lighting on Main Street
  - None on Merchant's Way
  - Parking lots lacking lighting
- Trash and lack of a centralize trash pick up
- Town largest landowner
- Use of community funds
  - Over investment in Tremont Nails
- Coordination of business owners
- Train schedule
- FEMA / Chapter 91
- Bond rating review for resiliency



Backside of 191 Main St, Merchants Way





# Recommendations

# Recommendations – Future land use, option 1









# Recommendations – Placemaking

- Creation of a New Public Realm
  - Improve Merchant's Way – revitalizing the vehicle and pedestrian access
  - Improve / relocate crosswalks
  - Add a rail crossing
  - Create a placemaking space along water and in key properties between Merchant's Way and Main Street
  - Improve lighting
  - Improve trash pickup / create a centralized trash system
  - Landscaping
- Relocate/redevelop fire station
  - Continue push for a public safety building off Merchant's Way



Outdoor Dining Opportunities







Pedestrian Mews



Urban Furniture





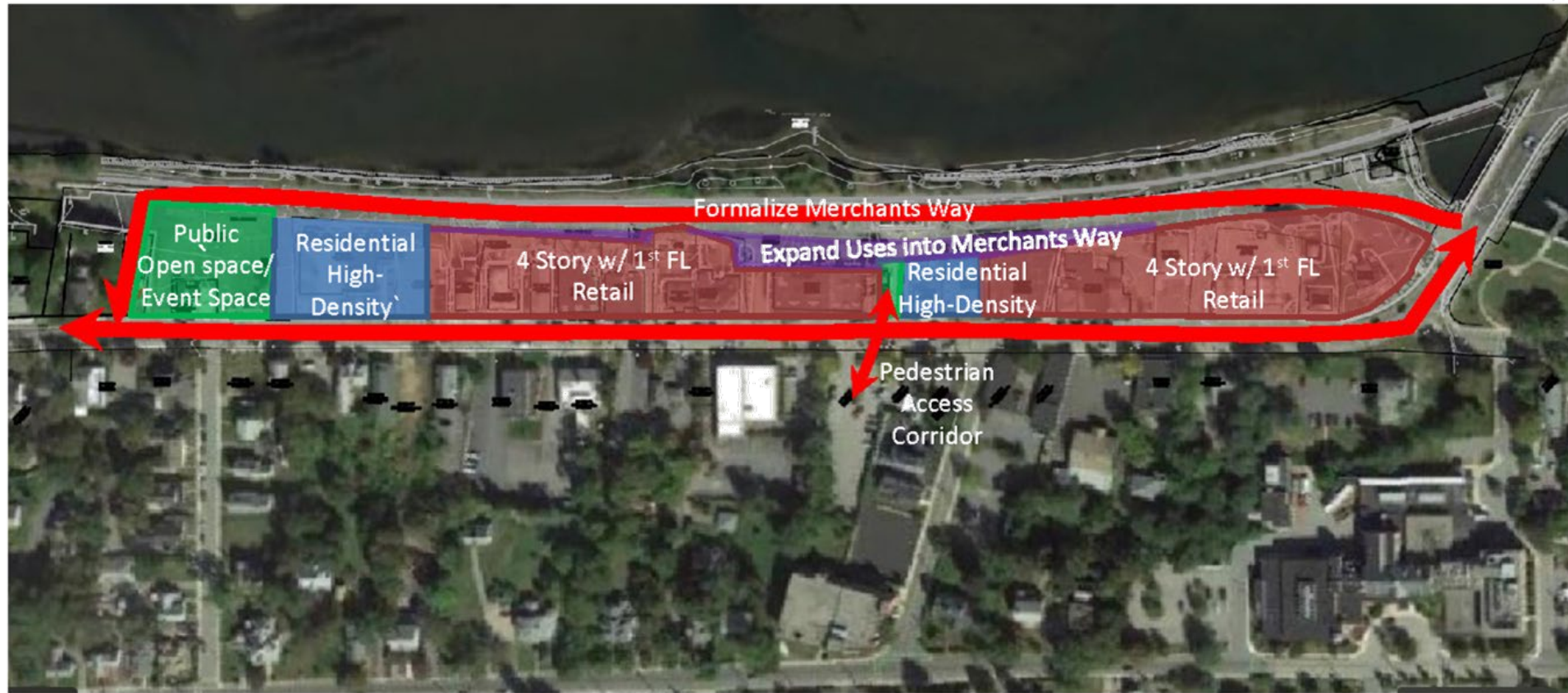


Activating Merchants Row





## Recommendations – Future land use, option 2





Public Open Space / Event Space



Pedestrian Access Corridors – Flex Roads





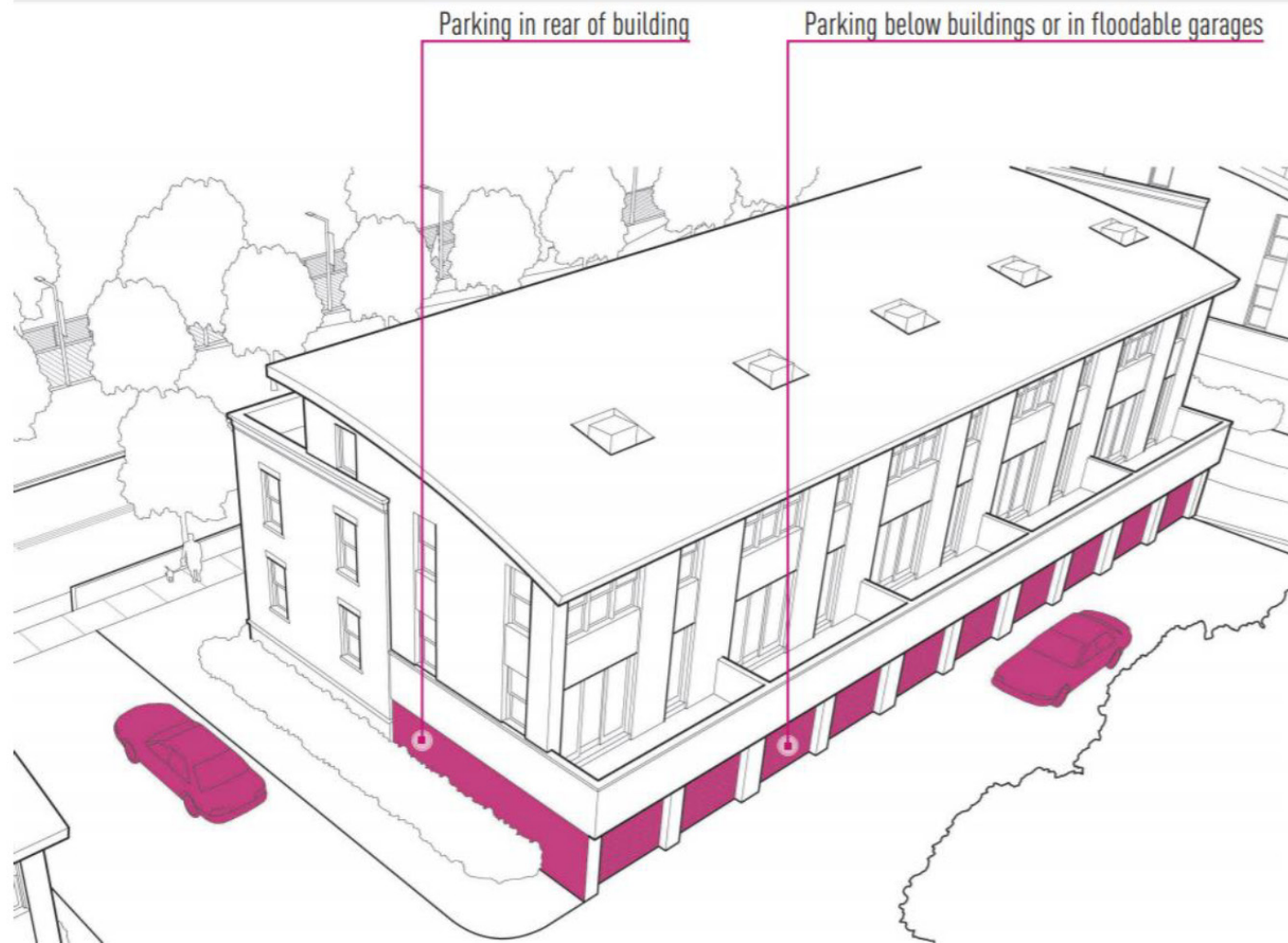
Formalize Merchants Way



Utilize Merchants Way to Expand Existing Uses

# Recommendations – Update Zoning Code

- Replace and Improve the Zoning Code for Wareham Village
  - Consider Form Based Zoning
  - Allow by right for mixed use, with commercial/retail on first floor, office and residential above
    - Allow four stories by right, special permit for higher
    - 3.5 FAR minimum
  - Specify use to make clear for financiability
  - Increase density / adjust dimensional requirements (decrease residential sq ft requirements)
- Consider Updating Zoning along abutting neighborhood for higher residential density
- Recruit subject matter experts to serve on local land use boards
  - Planning board, Redevelopment authority, conservation commission, zoning board, etc.
  - Create clear roles for Planning Board and WRA
- Prepare for environmental factors and resiliency / Take advantage of topography





# Recommendations – Improve Communication

- Redesign Town websites
  - Update regularly with events and meetings
  - Centralize the information online
  - Reduce reliance on social media groups (but still promote through social media)
  - Create a clear entitlement process to follow online
- Community Engagement
  - Host community events to discuss WRAs role, upcoming plans or proposals before Town meeting, and seek public input

# Recommendations – Best Practices for WRA

- Administer local grant programs
  - CDBG (Community Development Block Grants)
  - Small business loans
  - Storefront improvements
  - Placemaking grants
- Create transparent and predictable community input and engagement process
- Assess composition of board to ensure best possible impacts for community development



# Funding & Resources



- Federal grants
  - CDBG (Community Development Block Grants)
- State grants
  - MassDevelopment
    - Brownfields, Commonwealth Places, Site Readiness, Technical Assistance
  - MassWorks
  - Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) – MA Downtown Initiative (MDI)
- Financing
  - MassDevelopment (tax-exempt bonds, bridge financing, loans, etc.)
- CPA (Community Preservation Act)
- Federal/State Historic Tax Credits
- Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)

- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)
  - Energy and environmental affairs (EEA), state agency
  - Planning grants → next round Spring 2020
  - Project Grants once planning is complete
- Seaport Economic Council
  - State agency
  - Grants that support maritime blue economy projects



A grayscale background image showing the back of a person's head and their hand raised in an audience setting. The person is wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in the audience.

# Q&A

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