



Town of Natick

Fall 2016 Newsletter

*Issued by Martha L. White,
Town Administrator*

Natick Board of Selectmen

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Town of Natick, Massachusetts

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Sustainability Update

The Town continues to focus on reducing its energy use and switching to low-cost, green power. This summer Natick received a combination of utility incentives and grants from the Department of Energy Resources' Green Communities Program to complete \$375,000 in energy efficiency projects. The funds are being used to upgrade lighting in several elementary schools to LED fixtures, purchase two new electric vehicles and commission the Community Senior Center and Town Hall. We also recently signed a Power Purchase Agreement to install approximately 700kW of solar power at the DPW, William Chase Ice Arena and Lilja Elementary School.

In addition, over 140 residents and one small business have taken advantage of the state-funded, volunteer-led Solarize Mass Natick program. Of the 51 cities and towns enrolled in this program, Natick has the 2nd highest level of participation! Many thanks to the team of volunteers who helps make this program such a success. Because we had over 100 participants, we have been received the donation of a \$25,000 solar array for award to a local non-profit. Non-profits - watch for more information about the application process to compete to win the array!

Update Regarding Opioid Crisis

On July 18, the Board of Selectmen held a well-attended public meeting to update the community on Natick's initiatives and collaborations in response to the opioid crisis. Pursuant to suggestions made at that meeting, an Opioid Task Force has been formed to ensure that the network of local officials, service providers and first responders work together to help reduce opioid and heroin addiction, prevent overdose deaths, and improve the quality of life for those in our community suffering from substance use disorders and their families.

Another suggestion made at the public meeting was to have a staff person focused on this issue. Accordingly, the Task Force and Board of Selectmen have proposed that a new position be created for this purpose, and we are seeking funding from the upcoming Fall Annual Town Meeting.

Lastly, the Task Force will soon be scheduling a follow-up public meeting, at which we will provide a brief update and allow adequate time for questions and discussion. Please monitor our website and local media for information as to time and location of the public meeting, or call the Selectmen's Office at 647-6410.

Transportation Project Updates

Marion Street Bridge

The state-funded bridge replacement is underway, yet delayed for a familiar reason. Once Verizon completes the relocation of its wires, and the old utility poles are removed, a temporary pedestrian bridge will be installed, then demolition and replacement of the bridge will proceed over the next year.

Cottage Street

The redesign of Cottage Street, funded by a vote of Town Meeting, has received the required approvals. Construction starts next Spring and will be complete in 2017. Residents should enjoy a safer roadway for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

Cochituate Rail Trail

The long-planned Rail Trail is on target to be built starting in 2018, using approved federal and state funds. Design is continuing, with a public hearing expected as soon as this fall. The most significant challenge is buying the land from CSX, which we expect to address through a Special Town Meeting in the coming months.

Route 27

North Main Street between Natick Center and the Wayland line (except the Route 9 interchange) is scheduled for a full reconstruction starting in 2019, funded by the federal and state government. The Town is continuing the design process, which will be the subject of a Town Meeting article this Fall.

9/27 Interchange

The replacement of the 1931 bridge and the reconfiguration of this interchange is in the design stage, but is not yet scheduled for construction. It may be 2021 or later for this to be funded by the state and federal government.

Complete Streets Program

Based on the Town's Complete Streets policy and a new state program, we have applied for MassDOT funding to make many pedestrian safety improvements all across Natick, including new and upgraded signal crossings at busy locations. This work will start in the Spring, subject to state approval. Learn more about Complete Streets at NatickMA.gov/DPW.

Natick Center MBTA Station

The MBTA will be undertaking a redesign of the Natick Center commuter rail station to make the station fully accessible, with improved connections to surrounding streets. The Town expects the MBTA to share a project update and expected timetable at a meeting of the Board of Selectmen in the coming months.

Local Road Projects

Based on the DPW's five-year roadway improvement plan, we are nearing completion of 2016 work, including sidewalk replacements in East Natick. This plan is available at NatickMA.gov/DPW under Engineering.

Natick 2030+ Master Plan

The Town's Comprehensive Master Plan, is underway!

Natick 2030+ is an approximately 18-month public process that asks the community to create a shared vision for Natick's future development, and will outline how to achieve that shared vision. The result is a Town-wide Comprehensive Master Plan that will answer three basic questions: Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there?

To help complete **Natick 2030+**, the Town hired planning and design consulting firm Crosby Schlessinger and Smalridge (CSS) of Boston, who assembled a talented team to complete this work. Over the past several months, the CSS team and town staff

have engaged in the first phase of a master plan - an Existing Conditions Analysis.

The next phase of **Natick 2030+**, Community Engagement, Outreach and Education, is critical to its success. In completing this phase, the CSS Team, Town staff, and volunteers will schedule a series of outreach efforts, including community-wide and small scale meetings, as well as online surveys and other outreach.

The first large-scale community meeting for this phase of **Natick 2030+** is scheduled for the evening of November 15th at Wilson Middle School, at which CSS will present and conduct community-wide discussion about the state of the town today (i.e. existing conditions) and start the discussion on what the community wants for the future.

To stay informed, get involved, or provide comments about the future of Natick, please visit the project website at www.Natick2030.com.

Personnel Updates

Deputy Town Administrator/Finance Director Jeff Town resigned in August; we are currently accepting applications for this critical position. Also, long-time Deputy DPW Director and Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Tom Collins recently retired after a 31 year career with the Town of Natick. Best wishes Tom! Peter Cakridas was recently welcomed as the DPW's new Equipment Maintenance Supervisor. The responsibilities of DPW Deputy Director were assigned to long-time Supervisor of Highway and Sanitation Tom Hladick. Senior Planner Geoff Lewis also recently resigned, and in August we welcomed Edwin "Ted" Fields to this position.

2016 Fall Annual Town Meeting

Town Meeting starts on October 18 at the Natick High School. The Warrant includes 34 Articles covering a variety of topics, including proposed zoning changes, capital funding requests and much more. Visit the Town's website (Town Clerk's page) for more information.

