

INFORMATION SESSIONS
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15TH AT 7:00PM - TOWN HALL
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH AT 6:30PM - HARMONY HALL

MBTA Community Housing

M.G.L. Chapter 40A Section 3A

Town Meeting Vote
November 18th at 7pm - Dracut High School

www.dracutma.gov/MBTA-Zoning



What is the MBTA Communities Law?

Like many Massachusetts communities, Dracut is obligated to comply with the MBTA Communities Housing Law, created by the Baker administration in 2021, that is designed to increase the amount of land zoned to allow multi- family housing without special permits.

What does it mean for Dracut?

Dracut must create zoning capacity of at least 50 acres allowing 1,233 housing units - there's no requirement for anything to be built. Holding the minimum allowable density of 15 units per acre, this requires approximately 85 acres, less than 1% of the land in Dracut.

What is our Reasonable Approach to Compliance?

- Step 1 - Understand public preferences via meetings, information sessions and survey results
- Step 2 - Identify locations where only gradual change is likely with a longer time horizon
- Step 3 - Create Zoning Bylaw language aligning development with community standards

The Dracut Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Zoning Bylaw Review Committee support compliance because:

- **It's the law** - Communities that fail to comply with the Law may be subject to expensive civil enforcement action and risk liability under federal and state fair housing laws (if the law changes, so too can the local bylaw)
- **It meets the Master Plan goals** -
 - Provide a range of housing options - for our adult children, seniors who want to stay in town, first-time homeowners, police, firefighters, and teachers
 - Create transit accessible housing close to the places people go every day, such as local shops, jobs, schools, restaurants, and parks
- **It's fiscally responsible** - Communities that fail to comply are ineligible for some types of grants and less likely to receive others

Grants that we would not have received:

MassWorks Infrastructure Grants –	\$650,000 - 144 Greenmont Senior Housing project
Community Planning Grants –	\$50,000 - FY24 Early Action Grant update Zoning Bylaw & MBTA
Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grants –	\$45,000 - FY23 Update Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)
Use Planning Grants –	\$15,000 - 2017 Economic Analysis of the Navy Yard
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grants	\$40,000 - 2023 MBTA Housing Compliance
	\$60,000 - 2019 - NMCOG Zoning Assistance
	\$44,000 - FY20 Planning Grant to identify local vulnerabilities
	<u>\$174,000 - FY23 Action Grant Collinsville Dam Removal</u>

Total: \$1,078,000

Grant Eligibility Lost:

*Housing Choice Initiatives
MassWorks Infrastructure Grants*

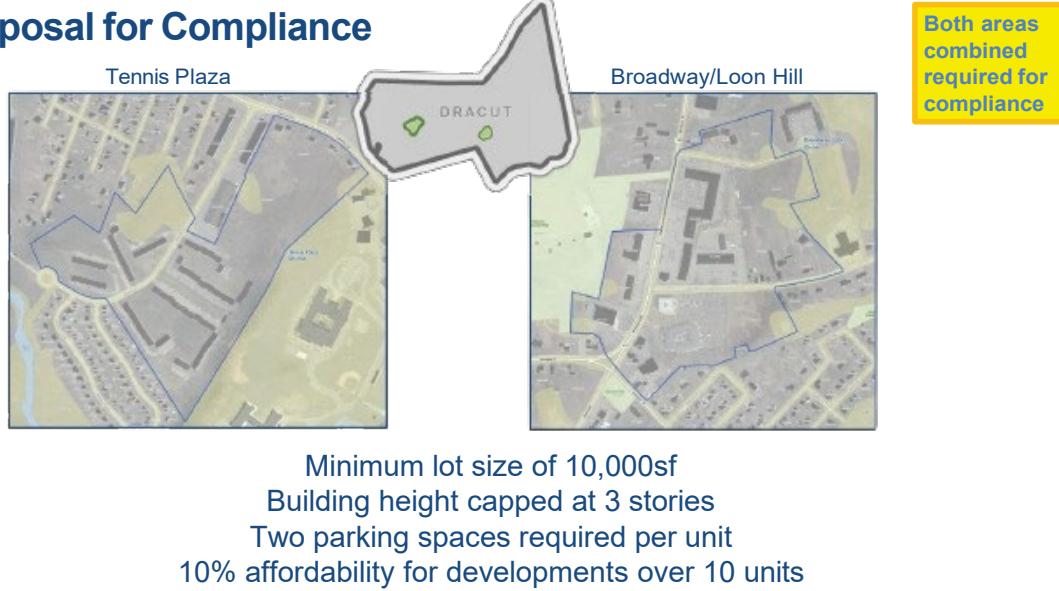
*Local Capital Projects
Community Planning Grants*

Applications Negatively Impacted:

*Community Planning Grants
Land Use Planning Grants
Site Readiness Program
Underutilized Properties Program
Real Estate Services Technical Assistance
Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity Grants
Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grants
Funding decisions by EOED, EOHLC, the MBTA and other state agencies which consider local housing policies*

*Urban Agenda
Brownfields Redevelopment Fund
Rural and Small-Town Development Fund
Collaborative Workspace Program
Commonwealth Places Programs
Massachusetts Downtown Initiative*

Proposal for Compliance



What changes are likely?

- Property owners can do nothing and continue the existing use of their property – for most properties, this will be the case!
- If they choose to, owners can redevelop what the existing base zoning allows (in commercial districts - shops and plazas; in residential districts - single family homes)
- In the Zoning Overlay District, they may choose to build up to 15 units per acre
 - They must follow requirements for wetlands, septic systems, parking and building height
 - They can build less densely if they prefer, or if wetlands or septic are controlling factors
 - Development could be duplex, triplex, townhomes, or other multi-family style

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