



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION



Mayor Charles C. Kokoros

Meeting Notes

Wood Road Revitalization and Mixed-Use Development Initiative Kick Off

Tuesday, December 12th, 2023 | 10:00 am

Cahill Auditorium – Braintree Town Hall

1 JFK Memorial Drive

Synopsis:

The Wood Road Revitalization initiative's kickoff identified key strengths, such as strategic location and the area's separation from residential zones, allowing for robust development with minimal neighborhood impact. Challenges included outdated zoning, infrastructural concerns, and competition from other regions. Comparisons with other successful industrial parks underscored the potential for Wood Road to attract innovative businesses and enhance local aesthetics.

Key Themes:

Strengths of Wood Road Area:

- Proximity to highway and access to Boston
- Proximity to Blue Hills /opportunity for connection to recreation/open space amenities
- Separation from residential uses (potential for less concern about impacts on neighborhoods)
- Utilities/infrastructure capacity
- Quality of life in Braintree (education system, community, etc.)
- Inquiries from innovate concepts (e.g., Eataly-like concept)

Challenges facing the Wood Road Area:

- Need for zoning updates
 - Restrictive building height and density requirements
 - Excessive parking requirements
 - Deterrence to rehabilitation/redevelopment projects
- Unfavorable projections for the life sciences industry (development would be to the west)
- Lack of cohesiveness to the area/synergy between businesses
- Condition/design of road itself
- Traffic/circulation issues
- Excessive pavement (heat, stormwater runoff issues)
- Lack of amenities/business for employees of the area
- Appearance of unmaintained/underutilized properties
- Competition with communities both within Massachusetts and nationwide



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Comparison/Peer Communities:

- Needham's industrial parks (height, density, proximity to highway, cohesive layout)
- Burlington's industrial/mixed use developments (restaurants, retail, entertainment)
- Extend nationwide

Vision for Broader Economic Development Impact:

- Potential to emulate the 'new face of industrial parks,' like in Burlington
- Potential to attract innovative business concepts (e.g., Eatery-like business)/signal the Braintree is open for business, bring your new concepts, and test them with us
- Business retention (e.g., via revision of parking requirements)
- Improvements to neighborhood appearance
- Need for understanding of the business composition/mix, number of employees in the area

Questions for Town:

- What was the meeting last summer that this conversation built on?
- What is the defense contractor project that Margaret referenced?