

Harvard-Devens Jurisdiction Committee
Meeting Held using the Zoom Videoconferencing Facility
Minutes of the December 2, 2021 Meeting
Paul Green, Clerk

Attendance

Members Present: Paul Green, Heather Knowles, Tim Myllykangas, Victor Normand, SusanMary Redinger.

Members Absent: Richard Cabelus, George Glazier, Rich Maiore, Kara Minar.

Guests: Jane Biering (Harvard resident), Chris Ryan (Harvard Director of Economic Development), Ed Starzec (MassDevelopment Real Estate), Lucy Wallace (Harvard resident), Neil Angus (DEC), Tim Bragan (Harvard Town Administrator), Jim DeZutter (Harvard representative on the DEC).

Victor Normand called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

Approval of Minutes

The committee reviewed the November 4, 2021 minutes. SusanMary noted that Lucy Wallace is now a guest; Paul said he would correct the minutes. SusanMary moved to approve the minutes and Paul seconded the motion and the committee unanimously approved them.

Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee Report

Victor reported that the Framework Committee adopted the consensus language that Paul [and others] wrote, and that Ed and Paul had cleaned up. It essentially says that we all must be in agreement before the plan is approved.

The Town Administrators have yet to meet. Robert Pontbriand promised to convene such a meeting to discuss municipal finance as it relates to permanent government structure at Devens.

No progress on funding.

The committee established a group to work on the RFP section of the MOA. Lucy, Ed, and several others have volunteered to work on it and have yet to meet. The essential task is specifying the scope of work and a timeline, which includes public input.

The committee also discussed how the 6th stakeholder group would vote. Each town, MassDevelopment, and the DEC will cast a single vote. The Devens residents have a representative body. There is no such body for the people representing Devens commercial enterprises. Jessica will meet with this group and come back with a proposal on how they will formalize their vote.

Vicksburg Square Rezoning Position Paper

Victor noted that at our last meeting, our consensus was that the current draft was confusing. Jane took the lead in revising it into narrative form and gathering comments from other members.

Jane noted that the previous draft looked at the Vicksburg Square issues from multiple perspectives. She said that while no one wants to see this area disintegrate and everyone

wants to see action, the problem is simply that moving too quickly will result in failure due to lack of information. Until we understand the permanent governance options, any super town meeting vote on rezoning at Vicksburg Square is likely to fail. The paper supports the proposed new zoning for residential use, perhaps with amenities. But it won't pass until we can resolve who (which town) has jurisdiction. Jane gave, as an example, that until Harvard voters understand the impact on the town school system, they are unlikely to approve such a change. Developers will also likely have similar concerns. She noted that nothing in the DEC position paper is contrary to our position paper. However, they don't cover feasibility; we do.

Victor took exception to one aspect of the DEC position paper. He agreed that most of the points put forth by the DEC are fundamental but he noted that the DEC paper alludes that the most viable method to develop Vicksburg Square is to use historic and low income housing tax credits. Both of these methods require that all of the affected units be rental units. This approach would result in over 60% of the housing units at Devens not being owner-occupied. That's problematic. Prior to the adoption of the reuse plan, an affordable-housing advocacy group suggested that all 3,000 units of housing at Devens be used to provide housing for homeless people. This was rejected because it was not seen as good for community development to concentrate one type of housing in a single area. Our paper takes the position that having a majority of residents who are not invested in the community is problematic. Victor then noted that the DEC paper states that veterans and the elderly would be potential clients for new housing. He noted that these groups are not exclusively renters; many of them would prefer to buy their housing.

Lucy suggested that our response should cover the fact that most of the current residents own their homes, and thus adding a large rental property, plus the rental units about to be built at Emerson Green, could impact the value of people's homes. Most of the existing housing areas are clearly in historic Harvard or historic Ayer. Housing today is marketed as part of Harvard and children attend the Harvard Schools. She feels this is one of the reasons for the success of Emerson Green. However, the boundary between Harvard and Ayer divides Vicksburg Square and this will complicate efforts to market those units. Shirley avoided this question by building senior-only housing.

Jane asked if our paper should address both the timing of a rezoning question and the type of housing that would be proposed. The paper so far has focused mostly on the timing. Victor said that the reason the Vicksburg Square issue is before this committee is because the issues it raises relate to permanent government.

Heather stated that she believes that settling the disposition question will allow more options to be raised for Vicksburg Square. She agrees with previous comments that having 60% of the units as rental units is not desirable. She said that adjusting town boundaries to keep all of the residents together might make it easier for residents to approve the final plan. She confirmed that the real estate agent who sold her a house touted the fact that the house is in historic Harvard and this was a big factor for her decision. She feels that most Devens residents consider themselves part of Harvard; they vote in Harvard and their kids go to school in Harvard. Only a few people are in Ayer. She thinks that keeping all of the residents in the same town after disposition will make it easier for residents, who are now included in the 6th stakeholder, to approve a plan for disposition.

SusanMary said that the marketing of current homes in Devens has relied heavily on promoting the fact that children attend school in Harvard. Deciding where new Devens residents will live has a huge impact on Harvard. An additional one hundred students could put the Harvard schools over capacity depending on the ages of the children. The Harvard school system is a huge draw for this area. Residents need to know where their kids will be going to school before they buy or rent. We will want to know how many students the buildings can hold. Devens

doesn't have the capacity to build its own school, and it took us 7 years to build our new elementary school. Harvard takes a huge pride in our schools and so we need to know the impact before we decide on development.

Ed did some online research and reported that Harvard, as of 2010, is at 4.8% rental units. Shirley is at 27.1%, Ayer at 35.3%. Newton at 28%, Belmont is 35% rental. He said that he doesn't believe rentals are the boogie man that some have stated. Heather asked if any communities were at 60%; Ed said no but said that the Devens housing count is artificially limited to 282 units; if the limit was 500, they could build another 120 market-rate single-family units and get the percentage down to 35%.

Jane asked if the coefficient used to estimate the number of students per housing unit was different for owner-occupied units versus rental units.

Victor noted that if one of the buildings was devoted to assisted living, it would not produce any students. If we simply zone the area multifamily, we have no idea about the percentage of student population. SusanMary said that a rental property in Boxborough, across the town line from Harvard, offered an opportunity to learn the student percentage for it. Ed said he had tried to get this data but school systems are reluctant to share it, for privacy reasons.

Lucy said that one of the concerns expressed to the DEC by Devens residents has been that they don't want to see Devens used to create all of the affordable housing for this area. She said the previous proposal for redeveloping Vicksburg Square by Trinity Financial also relied on affordable housing and low income tax credits, because those are the only ones that are available. She noted that residents want a diverse community and so we must be mindful of the community we are building. She stated that she has heard many times that residents want to be in the same town and not split apart.

Heather noted that even now, before additional affordable housing is created, her daughter regularly gets questions about whether she lives in a shelter at Devens; people have a perception that Devens is prisons and shelters and industry. She thinks this is detrimental both to redevelopment and to the community.

Paul said that he believes Harvard has voted on Vicksburg Square redevelopment 3 times; against it the first time, for it the second time, and against it the third time. Ed clarified that the first vote was part of scenario 2B. Paul asked that the report clarify this point. Lucy noted that the proposal that Harvard supported would have created fo-sale condominiums; the Trinity proposal was for subsidized rental housing.

Paul said he sees 3 likely outcomes for the residential area of Devens; anchor to Harvard, anchor to Ayer, or become its own town. He noted that the choice of outcome answers two big questions: where do children attend school, and what community is the basis for the value of residential properties. He urged this committee to be consistent in saying that the residences at Devens are a part of Harvard right now.

Victor said that Chapter 498 makes it clear that determining permanent government can be decided before 2030 but in a different section it also says that MassDevelopment shall be the interim government until 2033. In his view, the concept of permanent government and MassDevelopment are not mutually exclusive, and the legislation recognizes this. He said that when the time is right to determine permanent government, we should take advantage of that, but barring any legislative changes, MassDevelopment is there for the duration.

Review Select Board Charge to the HDJC

SusanMary asked for this topic to be addressed. She pointed out that our charge states that we are charged to look at resuming jurisdiction and either stay focused on that, or change our charge to align with our current activities. Victor said he went back and looked at where we have been. His view is that we were to put for a plan for resuming jurisdiction and then to test the validity of that plan. He and Lucy took this idea to Ayer and Shirley; to have all 3 towns look at what was best for their town, and then look for points of agreement. Victor noted that, over time, this approach has been changed, via the Framework Committee, to an approach starting with a blank slate. He said that for this committee to remain true to its charge, we should have an outline of a plan that we think is the best alternative for Harvard. Paul said that he thinks we've been at this long enough to have a good feel for what a viable and effective plan would be for Harvard, and then get some reactions to it, both from residents and our neighboring towns. Lucy said that the ballot question was designed to get Harvard to take a position, looking all of the impacts, holding public meetings, and to seek funding for consultant services. She said that our experience on the 2016 Master Plan showed us the limits of what citizens can do on their own. She noted that our charge says we should seek funding so that we can get comprehensive information on our options and plans from consultants with experience in government activities. She said we have also followed the charge by keeping MassDevelopment informed of our work. Lucy noted that we are straddling two approaches; one from our charge and one from the Framework committee. She is concerned that we won't be able to provide the community with a comprehensive plan without funding, and the cost of such an endeavor is always a question citizens are going to raise. She thinks people will want to know the impact on their taxes, how roads will be reconnected, how the schools will be impacted; all of these things translate to dollars. Jane said that she thinks the Select Board will be open to us coming back with a tweak to the town boundary. She asked if we can use back-of-the-envelope estimates on our own, without using a consultant, in order to make progress. Tim concurred with Jane, and added that, in his experience, putting a written proposal on the table can move a discussion along. Tim asked if we are looking at land use from a "highest and best" way. Victor responded that the reuse plan has been faithfully implemented and a significant percentage of it is complete. He thinks the train has left the station as to reimagining how the land could be used. Ed responded that we are pretty far down the road. He said there is some potential for change on the residential side; both at Vicksburg Square and Emerson Green but that the commercial and industrial side is pretty set. He noted that there are some areas that will be redeveloped by future generations, such as the airfield. Heather said that she believes most Devens residents want to become part of Harvard, but that they want to be part of the planning process. She supports both resuming jurisdiction and looking at options, and wants to continue with a collaborative process. She supports the idea of creating a draft proposal. Victor said that in his experience, starting with a blank sheet can be overwhelming and frustrating; it is more productive to start with a draft plan, hold public hearings, listen to comments from citizens, and incorporating their ideas. Lucy suggested that people read the draft RFP creating by the Master Plan Committee, and also read the Devens matrix in the 2016 Harvard Master Plan because

a lot of work went into these two documents. She thinks this would help us create a strawman proposal. Paul said that he hears our members saying that process matters; we should not rush into this. He doesn't want to be hamstrung by the lack of funding; he wants to keep moving the process forward. Victor suggested that members put together a list of the major issues for jurisdiction; such as boundaries, utilities, the Enterprise Commission; he will compile the list and distribute it before our next meeting.

Review Devens Enterprise Commission Vicksburg Square Memo

Victor asked Peter Lowitt if this committee could respond directly to the DEC memo. If members have a response to any of their points, please send them to Victor. He suggested that we can either hold a joint meeting, or invite ourselves to their meeting. Neil Angus from the DEC suggested that people look at the Development Services / Planning & Policy pages on the DEC web site, which is devensec.com. He offered to answer any questions that committee members might have, by email.

Other Business

No other business.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2021, on Zoom.

Adjournment

Victor adjourned the meeting at 10:04 am. The vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Attachments

Draft HDJC Vicksburg Square position paper.

DEC Vicksburg Square position paper.

HDJC Charge.

Draft RFP for 2016 Master Plan consultant.

References

2016 Harvard Master Plan (<https://www.harvard-ma.gov/master-plan/pages/2016-master-plan>)

Harvard-Devens Jurisdiction Committee Recommendation: Rezoning Vicksburg Square

Background

One of the most pressing issues facing Devens, and thereby the towns and organizations responsible for guiding its future, is the redevelopment of Vicksburg Square. The seven historic buildings that make up the 20-acre complex contain about 435,000 square feet of space. They dramatically frame an open courtyard and face the Rogers Field Parade Ground, a 44-acre open area that gives Devens a unique sense of place. In addition, Vicksburg Square and the Parade Ground are on the National Register of Historic Places. The buildings sit largely empty and boarded up, and, unfortunately, straddle the town line between Ayer (70%) and Harvard (30%) and county line between Middlesex and Worcester Counties.

Vicksburg Square is currently zoned for technology and business innovation use. For several years, the buildings were occupied by MassDevelopment, Freedom's Way Heritage Association, and Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, as well as Mt. Wachusett Community College, while being marketed for technology and business innovation. In the early ninety's MassDevelopment and the other tenants vacated the deteriorating buildings. Continued marketing efforts were unsuccessful and many believed that a change in zoning – to some form of residential or residential with ancillary amenities – would provide a more viable solution for redevelopment and a way to save this historic complex. In such a scenario, residences might be complemented by shops and services such as a drug store, a bank, and doctors' offices.

Residential redevelopment remains a vision that many support. In fact, over the last decade or so, two proposals have gone before the voters in the three host communities of Ayer, Harvard and Shirley for approval. In each instance, however, and for a variety of reasons, they both failed. There were simply too many unknowns which made the voters hesitant to endorse the proposals.

The question before us today is when best to seek the towns' approval of a change in zoning and for what type/mix of residential use: before or after a decision on final governance for all of Devens is determined?

Recommendation

The Harvard Devens Jurisdiction Committee (HDJC) believes firmly that it is critical for the stakeholders to first come to consensus on a proposed final disposition and local governance of Devens before taking a proposed rezoning of Vicksburg Square to the three towns for approval at a Super Town Meeting. Second, there should be clarity on the type and mix of residential uses, along with any ancillary uses, in order to estimate the population to be served by the local governing entity.

Rationale

Our reasoning here is straightforward: until governance is resolved, any effort to rezone and redevelop Vicksburg Square for largely residential use will most likely fail. There are simply

too many unknowns for voters, as witnessed by the previous two failed votes. Without having clarity on who will be providing services in the permanent, the towns will, once again, be reluctant to approve a rezoning.

The HDJC offers the following reasons for its recommendation:

TOWNS WON'T SUPPORT: Until the residents of Ayer, Harvard, and Shirley know what town (or towns) will have ultimate responsibility for Devens (and for Vicksburg Square in particular), they will be unlikely to vote in support of a change that could add several hundred new households to Devens. They won't know – no one will know -- the most basic implications of a zoning change: Who will levy and collect property taxes on Vicksburg Square? Will there be a mix of rental/ownership? Only rental? Only ownership? What will be the number of units, estimated number of residents? Of seniors? Of children? In what town would the children attend school? What town would be responsible for providing services for these residents? Should the town and county lines through Vicksburg Square be changed so it is all in one town?

Given that Devens does not have its own school district; MassDevelopment has been contracting with neighboring towns for this service. Currently, MassDevelopment has chosen to contract with Harvard to educate the students residing in Devens. This has benefited both Harvard through increased revenues and MassDevelopment which markets that benefit when promoting residential properties for sale. The potential addition of several hundred units at Vicksburg Square means there will be a significant number of new children to educate. It is unlikely that Harvard residents will endorse the redevelopment of Vicksburg Square without having a good understanding of its impact on the schools. Discussions and planning for where students will be educated permanently must take place before any proposals about Vicksburg Square are put forth in order for the effort to succeed.

In addition to the responsibility to educate an expanded student population, there are other services for residents to consider, such as those provided by a local Council on Aging (COA). While seniors on Devens do not currently have access to the social services provided through a COA, an increase in the senior population residing in Devens will likely require that this need be addressed. As with education, there needs to be discussions and planning for providing social services before a rezoning proposal is taken to the towns for approval.

Since changing zoning in Devens requires all three towns to vote simultaneously in a Super Town Meeting, it is a complicated and time-consuming process under the best of circumstances. And until the governance question is resolved, it is not actually clear what the towns would be voting for...a recipe for failure or for poor decision-making.

In fact, the three towns have voted down the rezoning idea twice times in the past....in 2009 and 2012. And if it fails yet again, the outlook for a successful redevelopment will seem even more elusive.

DEVELOPERS WON'T BITE: Until governance is resolved, even if the three towns did vote to change the zoning, developers are unlikely to take full advantage of the opportunity to develop mixed use housing. Why? Developers, and their lenders, succeed when there are the fewest

unknowns and uncertainties. Marketing residential development also involves marketing the larger community. Potential home buyers or renters want to know “what and where they are buying.” Furthermore, current Devens residents may want the future redevelopment of Vicksburg Square to enhance, not decrease, their investment in their homes. With certainty of future governance known, a wider and deeper pool of developers may vie for Vicksburg Square. MassDevelopment took advantage of such a competition when choosing a developer for Emerson Green, which is now becoming a new neighborhood all in one town. And in the end, chose a developer whose proposal will result in a mix of housing two thirds homeownership and one third rental, both with affordable housing components. Should Vicksburg Square be developed as all rental, as both MassDevelopment and the Devens Enterprise Commission expect, over sixty percent of all the housing in the Devens community will not be owner occupied.

MassDevelopment has taken great pains to develop the commercial and industrial areas of Devens with diverse, stable, growing, and ground-breaking businesses, resulting in the success of this aspect of the Devens Reuse Plan. In order to attract residential development as complimentary to the commercial development, the need is to attract the same level of committed developers. The need for a significant percentage of housing available for first time homebuyers is important to the region, where such buyers have been priced out of the market, and to the Devens workforce whose average annual income exceeds \$90,000. With future governance known, developers will respond to this opportunity.

UNKNOWN CAN BECOME KNOWN SOONER RATHER THAN LATER: It is likely that resolving the unknown of Devens disposition could happen sooner rather than later. The structure and charge of the Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee could produce a consensus recommendation on permanent government in a timely manner, ready for a Super Town Meeting, which could include the re-zoning of Vicksburg Square. The enabling legislation, Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1993, Section 23 provides that the decision on permanent governance can be made anytime **on or before July 31, 2030**. Section 12 of the Act also provides that MassDevelopment (successor to the Massachusetts Government Land Bank) **shall be the interim government until July 31, 2033**. Determining local governance now will be good for the redevelopment of Vicksburg Square and not interfere with the ongoing implementation of the Reuse Plan by MassDevelopment.

The HDJC wants Devens to continue to thrive and is particularly interested in helping to bring about a resurgence of development at historic Vicksburg Square, an iconic property on Devens. We know that rezoning, if supported by the towns, could bring exciting housing opportunities to the area. All the parties involved in this process want it to succeed. The most effective way to do that is to resolve unknowns, and then move ahead with the rezoning effort. Attempting to do the reverse would divert the time and energy from the work of resolving the all-important governance question and likely lead to another failed Super Town Meeting vote.



MEMO

TO: Devens Jurisdiction Committee

FROM: Peter Lowitt, FAICP Director, Devens Enterprise Commission

DATE: November 4, 2021

RE: Why Rezone Vicksburg Square to allow residential uses in the near term

The Town of Harvard has requested that the component members of the Devens Jurisdiction Committee, one of whom is the DEC, provide a list of pros and cons for rezoning Vicksburg Square in the near term. The Commission met to discuss this issue and voted at its meeting to November 4, 2021 to send a summary of the discussion points to the Devens Jurisdiction Committee for their consideration:

- Without an intervention in the near term, the National Register buildings comprising Vicksburg Square will succumb to the elements.
- The Governor has declared a housing emergency and has repeatedly shown the connection between the availability of housing and successful economic development.
- Prior market studies and over twenty years of efforts to sell the property under its current Innovation Technology Center zoning have all stated that the property needs to be rezoned to residential in order to redevelop it.
- Vicksburg Square is the iconic emblem of the former Fort Devens and representative of the US Army's presence in New England.
- Past efforts brought to town meeting have shown a viable path to redevelop these properties using a combination of Historic Tax Credits and Low Income Tax Credits.
- Redevelopment will have multiple regional benefits, including twenty five percent of the units redeveloped will be deed restricted to count towards the underlying communities low income and workforce housing requirements.
- Mixed use should be considered by MassDevelopment to help underwrite the redevelopment costs for the project. Allowing some minor retail uses should be discussed. Limited retail should be discussed and input sought by MassDevelopment as part of their rezoning process for Vicksburg Square. The Commissioners encourage MassDevelopment to continue to meet with the host communities and seek input into the rezoning process.
- The region needs the affordable and workforce housing component to support its continued growth and economic development. Housing will attract people for the jobs within the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone and surrounding communities.

- Housing is currently not available or affordable in our communities.
- There is a need for rental housing. Shirley Meadows is restricted to deeply affordable senior rental housing. The Emerson Village Green rental housing is permitted, but has yet to be built but would still not meet the current demand.
- If the iconic buildings of Vicksburg Square are not preserved through rezoning and utilized, it will reflect poorly on the Commonwealth's redevelopment efforts and the businesses will take notice of this failure to invest in the area's future.
- The demand for housing of all types is through the roof. The Governor's housing initiative and legislation to change how housing is voted on in town meeting (changing it to a simple majority for rezoning efforts) illustrates the need for action and the legislature's support for efforts to create more housing.
- The Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce is on record as supporting the rezoning of Vicksburg Square in the near term.
- The Commissioners believe there are no negatives to rezoning as quickly as possible.
- Rezoning and the adaptive reuse of the Vicksburg Square buildings will help Devens meet the Reuse Plan sustainable redevelopment goals as well as the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals of the Devens Forward Climate Action and Resilience Plan through the adaptive reuse of these historic structures and the retention of the embodied energy in the existing buildings.
- The rezoning will bring in additional residents who will help support the region's businesses and the Town of Ayer's West Ayer Village redevelopment which includes retail.
- Regional affordable and workforce housing goals (helping both Ayer and Harvard meet their goals)
- Opportunities for additional regional support services (veterans housing and senior housing, mixed in with market-rate apartments)
- Devens has the existing infrastructure to support this density of development
- Urgent need for rezoning was repeated by the Commission throughout the meeting.

Harvard-Devens Jurisdiction Committee

Adopted February 27, 2018 – Amended June 5, 2018 and August 14, 2018

Passage of Ballot Question #4 at the 2107 Town Elections directed the Board of Selectmen to “begin planning for and initiate discussions with appropriate parties with the goal of presenting a plan to the Town of Harvard voters to resume jurisdiction over the land presently part of Devens formerly under the jurisdiction of the Town of Harvard...”

Accordingly, the Harvard-Devens Jurisdiction Committee is charged with instituting a process for developing a plan to resume jurisdiction, including, but not limited to, the following tasks:

- Manage the process and timeline to collect and report additional information as requested by the Board of Selectmen;
- Provide status reports to the Board of Selectmen on at least a quarterly basis;
- Meet with Harvard Town Departments and Committees to review and seek input on Devens topics as set forth in the 2016 Master Plan;
- Meet with MassDevelopment and Devens Departments (particularly DPW, Fire and DEC) to review and seek input on Devens topics as set forth in the 2016 Master Plan;
- Hold periodic public meetings to inform and seek input from the general public, including Devens residents. It is recommended that an initial kick-off meeting be held to provide an overview of the findings in the 2016 Master Plan and proposed next steps;
- Upon the request by the Board of Selectmen prepare a draft “Request for Qualifications” for a planning consultant to assist in the development of a plan. An initial proposed scope of work is outlined in the attached draft RFQ, dated 12/11/17, and set forth in the 2016 Master Plan;
- Seek funds to underwrite the cost of consultant services;
- Following the issuance of the RFQ, review proposals and recommend a consultant firm to the Board of Selectmen; and
- Keep state legislators, MassDevelopment, and key stakeholders informed as work progresses.

The Committee, which will be appointed by the Board of Selectmen, shall be comprised of 9 Harvard and Devens residents and the Town Planner. Recommended appointees are:

- Two members of the Board of Selectmen
- One member of the Planning Board
- Members-at-Large: Six residents, at least one of whom lives on Devens.

It is recommended that the Committee be provided seed money in the amount of \$5,000 to cover initial costs associated with preparing and disseminating documents such as the RFQ and grant applications.

Attachments:

12/11/17 Draft Request for Qualifications
Devens Matrix from 2016 Harvard Master Plan

Request for Qualifications
Consultant Services to Develop Plan for Resumption of Jurisdiction
Devens Enterprise Zone Lands within Harvard
Draft 12/13/17

1. Background:

- The Devens Enterprise Zone, established by Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1994, gave MassDevelopment, the state's redevelopment agency, 40 years to redevelop Ft. Devens for civilian use. During that time, MassDevelopment assumed the responsibility of providing municipal services (police, fire, etc) and was given the right to assess/tax businesses and residents as a way to offset some of the cost of providing these services.
- The vision and goals defined in the 2012 Phase I and incorporated in the 2016 Phase I and II Harvard Master Plan called for a comprehensive analysis of community and fiscal impact of Devens on Harvard.
- Burns & McDonnell were retained by the Planning Board to study the Devens factor. To that end it completed two studies in 2015: "Devens Impact Evaluation & Recommendations" and "Economic and Financial Findings."
- A summary of issues and recommendations compiled within the Burns & McDonnell reports were included in the Master Plan in the attached "Devens Matrix."
- At the 2017 Town Election a non-binding referendum was passed which authorized the Board of Selectmen to prepare and present a plan to town voters to "resume jurisdiction over the land which is now part of Devens formerly under the jurisdiction of the Town of Harvard, provide services to the residents of such area and collect taxes."

2. Areas Recommended for Further Study in Resuming Jurisdiction in 2016 Master Plan:

- Land Use:
 - Extent, if any, would the Town need to increase its planning, zoning and permitting capacity.
 - Opportunities to address infrastructure needs in Ayer Rd Commercial District, and impact on existing zoning and need for zoning amendments.
 - Does the current 1994 Devens Reuse Plan reflect Harvard's vision for Devens; can it be incorporated into Harvard's vision of lands currently under its jurisdiction.
 - Address different levels and density of development in Harvard and Devens.
- Natural Resources & Open Space:
 - Access to and management of additional recreation facilities and impact on volunteer boards and staff capacity.
 - Ability to absorb and effectively steward additional open space and natural resources on Devens?
 - Benefit to and liability for Harvard with access to Devens extensive public water and wastewater systems.
- Population & Housing:
 - Housing on Devens is limited to 282 units in roughly 3 neighborhoods (Bates/Auman/Cavite; Walnut/Elm; and Grant Rd) – how could Devens address Harvard's current and future housing needs?

- Children are currently educated in Harvard schools through contract with MassDevelopment, but no other social services are offered to Devens residents. Does Harvard have capacity to absorb and integrate this population?
- If Devens were part of Harvard would more employees of Devens' businesses live in Harvard and, therefore, put greater pressure on Harvard's housing stock and residential development?
- Identify and address social and physical barriers to re-integration of Devens with Harvard.
- Harvard's Economy:
 - Could Devens commercial/industrial development benefit the Ayer Rd Commercial District by spinning off secondary businesses?
 - Does Harvard have the staff capacity to address needs of Devens business community?
 - Does the magnitude of the Devens "commercial park" enhance or debase Harvard's existing, limited commercial base?
 - Devens currently has a split tax rate (between residential and commercial properties) whereas Harvard does not. What would the impact be on Harvard businesses and commercial agriculture assuming split tax rate adopted?
- Cultural & Historical Resources:
 - Devens contains one historic district: Vicksburg Square/Rogers Field that would come under the jurisdiction of the town's Historical Commission.
- Community Services & Facilities:
 - Assess capacity of current public safety services and facilities (police, fire, dpw) to absorb additional responsibilities.
 - Assess capacity of current social services (Council on Aging, Park & Recreation Commission) to absorb additional population.
 - Identify possible areas to regionalize services, such as current Regional Dispatch.
 - Identify changes in local government that could be required to meet demands of Devens residents and businesses.
- Circulation & Traffic:
 - Determine need for internal connection between Harvard and Devens.
 - Identify possible internal vehicular connection, either by reconnecting closed access (Old Mill Rd) or creating new access (Depot Rd).
 - Identify possible walking and biking connectivity.
 - Identify mechanisms to control truck traffic on Ayer Rd between Ayer rotary and Rte. 2.
- Municipal Operations & Finance:
 - Education
 - Public Safety (Fire, Police & Ambulance)
 - Public Works
 - General government
 - Combined (or split) tax base

3. Additional Areas to be Considered:

- Utilities – Transfer and Management (electricity, gas, water, sewer, storm water)
- Status of Military Enclave

- Continuation of One-Stop Permitting and Devens Enterprise Commission (membership)
- Long term status of the 1994 Devens Reuse Plan and Bylaws
- Future of Devens Enterprise Zone
- Public Outreach: residents and businesses

4. Transition Plan

- Process and time line
- Moving towards local government
- Need to maintain commercial base
- Amending Chapter 498
- Transition costs

5. Based on experience with similar planning endeavors, topics, if any, that the consultant believes should be addressed in developing a plan for resuming jurisdiction that have not been included in items 1-3.

6. RFQ shall include the following:

- Description of approach to developing a comprehensive plan which addresses items 1 – 4 above, and includes a final recommendation to the Board of Selectmen
- Set out planning methodology, including outreach to stakeholders (town and Devens residents and businesses, MassDevelopment) to bring to conclusion
- Plan for engagement with MassDevelopment, state senator and representative
- Proposed schedule, by tasks, for completing in 12-18 months
- Identify the consultant team