

Draft Recommendations

Discussion and Voting

Meeting 8: December 2, 2025

Calendar Reminder

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1 P.B.	2 RIO	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 P.B.	16 RIO	17	18	19	20
21	22 P.B.	23 Warrant	24	25	26	27

Discuss / Vote on Recommendations

Draft RIO Presentation Report

RIO Report Discussed by Task Force

RIO Report deliberation and Vote to accept and place on Warrant

Warrant Closes



After The Warrant Closes on 23-December

What?	Who?	When?
Complete / Final Draft RIO Task Force Written Report*	• RIO Task Force	January
Meet/discuss Planning Related Articles with Advisory	• Planning Board • RIO Task Force members (for RIO discussion)	January / February
Zoning Public Hearings	• Planning Board	February
Add RIO Task Force Report as Appendix/Supplement to Planning Report for ATM	• Planning Board	February
Phase 2 deliberations and report?	• RIO Task Force	tbd

* The Final Draft of the RIO Task Force Written Report cannot be materially different than what is Presented to the Planning Board on 22-December and placed on the Warrant. Further explanation (for example) of the comments from those in support and opposed to a recommendation is feasible, but changing or tweaking a recommendation is not.

Recommendations for Discussion / Voting Tonight

- a) Elimination of RIO v. Adjustment of Key Aspects
- b) Purpose Statement
- c) Density and Location
- d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors
- e) Process Change Recommendations for Planning Board
- f) Amenities
- g) Senior Housing
- h) Subcommittee – Charge and Membership

a) Elimination of RIO vs. Adjustment of RIO

CONTEXT:

- At RIO Task Force (“RIO T.F.”) September meeting: discussion of PURPOSE STATEMENTS, a member suggested that Wellesley doesn’t need RIO at all
- At RIO T.F. October meeting: A deliberation prompt suggested getting rid of RIO altogether. Majority of member comments on the matter did NOT support, instead favoring adjustment. No vote taken.
- At RIO T.F. November meeting: one citizen letter suggested, and some additional discussion.
- Before we get into deliberations on how to change RIO, we should officially decide/confirm this precedent question.

a) Elimination of RIO vs. Adjustment of RIO

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION STATEMENT TO VOTE ON

Wellesley should adjust the RIO zoning bylaw, as per suggestions from the RIO Task Force, rather than eliminate it.

- Deliberation
- Potential amendment to Recommendation Language
- Vote

b) Purpose Statement

CONTEXT:

- Purpose Statement is a critical definition of the objectives/goals of the bylaw.
- Purpose Statements are not objective, YES/NO criteria - but a more subjective “sniff test”
 - For developers, property owners and regulatory boards to gauge, at a big picture level, if a project is consistent with the Town’s goals.
 - A project wouldn’t have to meet every goal in the Purpose Statement to be deemed worthy. More of a “preponderance of the evidence” consideration.
- Original 1999 RIO Purpose Statement was written with clear objectives – specifically tailored to the initial site.
- Current 2018 RIO Purpose Statement is less of an objectives statement and more of a statement of some of the rules and regs.

b.1) Purpose Statement First Sentence / Primary Purpose

ORIGINAL RIO BYLAW

<need this text>

b.1) Purpose Statement First Sentence / Primary Purpose

CURRENT RIO BYLAW

**To provide a residential reuse incentive ...
for a parcel or parcels greater than one acre ...
located in close proximity to the Town's Commercial
Districts and public transportation.**

b.1) Purpose Statement First Sentence / Primary Purpose

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION STATEMENT TO VOTE ON

**To create and overlay district ...
that encourages the redevelopment of parcels for
housing and housing diversity ...
at a scale, density and aesthetic that are compatible
with existing surrounding uses.**

- Deliberation
- Potential amendment to Recommendation Language
- Vote

b.2) Additional Objectives to Further Define the “Why”

POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATION STATEMENTS TO INCLUDE

- A. To increase housing diversity / choice in Town**
- B. To foster development near Town amenities and open space, to facilitate more foot/bike traffic and fewer cars**
- C. To foster development near commercial centers to facilitate a customer base for Town businesses**
- D. <maybe> proximity to train (although we already have MBTA Communities)**
- E. <not specifically required> housing affordability ... because it is already required for RIO zoning districts in the Inclusionary Zoning bylaw**
- F. <other?>**

c) Density and Location

CONTEXT:

- A lot of conversation on this core aspect of the RIO bylaw.
- Convergence toward not wanting full-density developments in Single Residence districts.
- Two alternatives floated how to implement the general consensus:
 - RIO not allowed in Single Residence Districts
 - RIO allowed conditionally:
 - at a much lower density in Single Residence Districts,
 - *if* part of, or abutting to, Commercial Districts*
- Voting discussion on the above two alternatives PLUS a “do nothing” option

* Commercial Districts* - slightly expanded set of districts from definition in ZBL

- Commercial Districts as define in ZBL: Business, Business A, Industrial, Industrial A, Lower Falls Village Commercial,
- + Administrative and Professional, + Multi-Use Residential

c) Density and Location – Option 1

“Do nothing” - Max Density/Location Table:

Zoning District	Zoning Bylaw Section	Max Density if RIO Overlay is Applied (Units per Acre)
Single Residence 10 (SR10)	2.1	24
Single Residence 15 (SR15)	2.1	24
Single Residence 20 (SR20)	2.1	24
Single Residence 30 (SR30)	2.1	24
Single Residence 40 (SRA)	2.1	24
Single Residence A (SR40)	2.1.1	24
General Residence (GR) General Residence A (GRA)	2.2, 2.2.1	24
Town House (TH)	2.3	24
Multi-Unit Residence (MR)	2.4	24
Limited Residence (LtR)	2.5	24
Limited Apartment (Lt A)	2.6	24
Educational (Ed) Educational A (Ed A) Educational B (Ed B)	2.7, 2.7.1, 2.7.2	24
Planned Development **	2.8	24
Administrative and Professional (Ad/P)	2.9	24
Business (Bus) Business A (BusA)	2.10, 2.10.1	24
Lower Falls Village Commercial District (LFVCD)	2.11	24
Wellesley Square Commercial District (WSCD)	2.12	24
Industrial (Ind) Industrial A (IndA)	2.13, 2.13.1	24
Transportation (T)	2.14	24*
Parks, Recreation and Conservation (Con)	2.15	24*

* - Underlying districts do not allow housing.
** - District that has never been used/applied.

c) Density and Location – Option 2

No Single Family Districts - Max Density/Location Table:

Zoning District	Zoning Bylaw Section	Max Density if RIO Overlay is Applied (Units per Acre)
Single Residence 10 (SR10)	2.1	RIO Not Allowed
Single Residence 15 (SR15)	2.1	RIO Not Allowed
Single Residence 20 (SR20)	2.1	RIO Not Allowed
Single Residence 30 (SR30)	2.1	RIO Not Allowed
Single Residence 40 (SRA)	2.1	RIO Not Allowed
Single Residence A (SR40)	2.1.1	RIO Not Allowed
General Residence (GR) General Residence A (GRA)	2.2, 2.2.1	a) TH (100% affordable): 12 b) TH (>25% affordable): 10 c) TH (<25% affordable): 8 d) 2-unit dwellings: 12
Town House (TH)	2.3	a) 55% Open Space = 10 b) 65% open space = 12 c) 75% open space = 15
Multi-Unit Residence (MR)	2.4	20
Limited Residence (LtR)	2.5	24
Limited Apartment (Lt A)	2.6	RIO Not Allowed
Educational (Ed) Educational A (Ed A) Educational B (Ed B)	2.7, 2.7.1, 2.7.2	24
Planned Development **	2.8	RIO Not Allowed
Administrative and Professional (Ad/P)	2.9	24
Business (Bus) Business A (BusA)	2.10, 2.10.1	24
Lower Falls Village Commercial District (LFVCD)	2.11	24
Wellesley Square Commercial District (WSCD)	2.12	24
Industrial (Ind) Industrial A (IndA)	2.13, 2.13.1	24
Transportation (T)	2.14	RIO Not Allowed
Parks, Recreation and Conservation (Con)	2.15	RIO Not Allowed

Changes in this option vs. current bylaw:

- Single Residence Districts - RIO does not apply.
- General Residence Districts - Max density applied using a multiplier of 1.4 (ratio = 24/17) to each of the different TownHouse/Affordability scenarios defined in section 2.2 and 2.2.1, and allowing for 2-Unit dwellings also allowed as-of-right.
- TownHouse District - Max density applied using a multiplier of 1.4 (ratio = 24/17) to each of the different OpenSpace scenarios defined in section 2.3.
- Multi-Unit Residence District - RIO incentive would allow up to 20 units/acre.
- Limited Apartment District - RIO does not apply - district already allows 24 units/acre.
- Planned Development District - RIO does not apply. (Zero parcels in Town in this district)
- Transportation District - RIO does not apply.
- Parks, Recreation and Conservation District - RIO does not apply.

- Districts shaded in red or green differ from the current RIO bylaw rules.
- Districts shaded in red differ between option 2 and option 3

c) Density and Location – Option 3

Conditional / Exceptions in Single Family Districts - Max Density/Location Table:

Zoning District	Zoning Bylaw Section	Max Density if RIO Overlay is Applied (Units per Acre)
Single Residence 10 (SR10)	2.1	6 **
Single Residence 15 (SR15)	2.1	4 **
Single Residence 20 (SR20)	2.1	3 **
Single Residence 30 (SR30)	2.1	2 **
Single Residence 40 (SRA)	2.1	2 **
Single Residence A (SR40)	2.1.1	RIO Not Allowed
General Residence (GR) General Residence A (GRA)	2.2, 2.2.1	a) TH (100% affordable): 12 b) TH (>25% affordable): 10 c) TH (<25% affordable): 8 d) 2-unit dwellings: 12
Town House (TH)	2.3	a) 55% Open Space = 10 b) 65% open space = 12 c) 75% open space = 15
Multi-Unit Residence (MR)	2.4	20
Limited Residence (LtR)	2.5	24
Limited Apartment (Lt A)	2.6	RIO Not Allowed
Educational (Ed) Educational A (Ed A) Educational B (Ed B)	2.7, 2.7.1, 2.7.2	24
Planned Development **	2.8	RIO Not Allowed
Administrative and Professional (Ad/P)	2.9	24
Business (Bus) Business A (BusA)	2.10, 2.10.1	24
Lower Falls Village Commercial District (LFVCD)	2.11	24
Wellesley Square Commercial District (WSCD)	2.12	24
Industrial (Ind) Industrial A (IndA)	2.13, 2.13.1	24
Transportation (T)	2.14	RIO Not Allowed
Parks, Recreation and Conservation (Con)	2.15	RIO Not Allowed

Changes in this option vs. current bylaw:

- Single Residence Districts – RIO applies if parcel in or abutting to a Commercial District.
- General Residence Districts - Max density applied using a multiplier of 1.4 (ratio = 24/17) to each of the different TownHouse/Affordability scenarios defined in section 2.2 and 2.2.1, and allowing for 2-Unit dwellings also allowed as-of-right.
- TownHouse District - Max density applied using a multiplier of 1.4 (ratio = 24/17) to each of the different OpenSpace scenarios defined in section 2.3.
- Multi-Unit Residence District - RIO incentive would allow up to 20 units/acre.
- Limited Apartment District - RIO does not apply - district already allows 24 units/acre.
- Planned Development District - RIO does not apply. (Zero parcels in Town in this district)
- Transportation District - RIO does not apply.
- Parks, Recreation and Conservation District - RIO does not apply.

- Districts shaded in red or green differ from the current RIO bylaw rules.
- Districts shaded in red differ between option 2 and option 3

c) Density and Location – Confirmation of “Other Districts”

Suggested Voting:

Single Family Districts

- Deliberation
- Potential amendment to Recommendation Language
- Vote

Other Districts

- Deliberation
- Potential amendment to Recommendation Language
- Vote

c) Density and Location – Reminder of Data Set 4

Type	Address	Owner : Use	Area (sqft)	Area (acres)	Zones in Parcel	Commercial Abutting	Voting Precinct
SF & Com	521 Washington St	Town of Wellesley : Cochituate Aqueduct @ Town Hall	101,835	2.3	SR10, Lt R		H
SF abut Com	525 Washington St	Town of Wellesley : Town Hall and Duck Pond	558,595	12.8	SR10	Lt R, WSCD	H
SF & Com	216 Worcester St	Ko Realty : Toyota Auto Sales	73,657	1.7	Bus, BusA, SR15		E
SF & Com	230 Worcester St	Atrius MSO, LLC : Harvard-Vanguard Medical Bldg.	100,650	2.3	Bus, BusA, SR15		E
SF & Com	892 Worcester St (+ 888)	Various : Office Space	258,477	5.9	SR10, Ad/P		B
SF abut Com	12 Russel Rd	Various : Wellesley Hollow condos	65,881	1.5	SR10	Bus	B
SF abut Com	900 Worcester St	Albany Rd : Hockey/Swimming (Town of Wellesley land!)	341,171	7.8	SR10	Ad/P	B
SF abut Com	29 Overbrook Dr	Town of Wellesley : Cross-Town Trail	162,753	3.7	SR10	Bus	A
SF & Com	981 Worcester St	Cohen,Trustee : "Renaissance" Office Bldg	113,410	2.6	SR10, Bus		A
SF & Com	965 Worcester St	Worcester St LLC : Mazda Auto Sales	58,902	1.4	SR10, Bus		A
SF abut Com	Cedar Street (no #)	Town of Wellesley : Cochituate Aqueduct @ Charles R.	102,268	2.3	SR10	Bus A	D
SF abut Com	5 Edgemoor Cir	Various : Multi-Unit TH on Natick Line @ Overbrook Dr	67,089	1.5	SR10	Bus	A
SF abut Com	66 Walnut St	National Grid : Gas facility and parking lot	64,414	1.5	SRA	Bus A	D
SF abut Com	62-66 Hastings St	Hastings Village LLC : Multi-fam Apartments	95,447	2.2	SR15	Bus A	E
SF & Com	50 River St	State of MA MDC : Woods/Shoreline in Lower Falls	78,380	1.8	IndA, SR10		D
SF & Com	57 River St	River Place LP : Office Building	107,050	2.5	IndA, SR10		D
SF & Com	40 Washington St	Haymac LLC (Haynes) : Office Building	84,155	1.9	LFVCD, SRA		D
SF & Com	6 Washington Ct	McQuillen Trust : ex-Auto Repair + 2-Unit Dwelling	46,449	1.1	LFVCD, SR10		D
SF & Com	9 Ledyard St	Archbishop of Boston : St. Johns School	69,029	1.6	LFVCD, SR10		D
SF abut Com	20-30 Municipal Way	Town of Wellesley : DPW Offices and Operations	472,171	10.8	SR15	Bus	D
SF abut Com	25 Municipal Way	Town of Wellesley : DPW Offices and Operations	126,113	2.9	SR15	Bus	D
SF & Com	24 Eaton Ct	Town of Wellesley : Parking Lot	58,567	1.3	SR20, Bus		E
SF & Com	231 Forest St	Babson College : College Campus	7,588,914	174.2	Ed, EdA, EdB, SR30, BusA		F
SF & Com	312 Washington St	Telik-Berkeley LP : Multi-Unit Apts + Restaurant	47,195	1.1	Bus, SR10		E
SF & Com	12 Seaward Rd	GPLF Realty, LLC : Multi-Unit Apts	82,764	1.9	Bus, SR10		E
SF & Com	326-332 Washington St	Jumbo Capital : Medical Office + Retail	70,418	1.6	Bus, SRA		E
SF & Com	16 Laurel Ave	Jumbo Capital : Misc Offices	82,780	1.9	Bus, BusA, SR10		E

d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors

CONTEXT:

- While we have the “patient on the operating table”, we should also clean up the language and make sure the Terms used are clearly defined and are the right Terms.

d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors

Change d.1: 3.2 RIO Bylaw, Paragraph D. Permitted Uses

- FROM: **Conventional Multi-Unit Dwelling Units**
- TO: **Conventional Multi-Unit Dwelling Units and associated {Affordable/Assisted} Units required as per ZBL Section 5.7 Inclusionary Zoning**

WHY?

- Original definition of “Conventional” was written before RIO was added to Section 5.7 Inclusionary Zoning bylaw at **ATM 2024**

d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors

Change d.2: 3.2 RIO Bylaw, Paragraph D. Permitted Uses

- FROM: **Assisted Elderly Living**
- TO: **Assisted Elderly Housing**

WHY?

- Ensure the term used in the RIO bylaw is precisely the same term as defined in Section 1.3 Definitions.

d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors

Change d.1: 3.2 RIO Bylaw, Paragraph E. Minimum Lot or Building Site Area

- FROM: ... lot or development site containing less than 45,000 square feet.
- TO: ... lot or development site containing less than 1 acre (43,560 square feet).

WHY?

- If the minimum parcel size is 1 acre, don't use a different number than 43,560 square feet.

d) Technical Changes and Scrivner's Errors

- OTHER?

e) Process Change Recommendations for Planning Board

- Two changes seemingly strongly supported by the RIO T.F.:
 - 1. Expect a Development Agreement prior to the zoning map decision by Town Meeting – defining the specific number of units and perhaps other parameters in advance of Town Meeting zoning change articles.**
 - 2. Encourage the Planning Board to not have to “take sides” and sponsor a zoning article at Town Meeting. It’s OK for the Planning Board to stay out of picking sides NOT sponsor and and potentially being in an adversarial position, even if the members of the Board are supportive of a project.**
- These changes are NOT changes to the Zoning Bylaw, do NOT require Town Meeting approval, thus are NOT on the Dec 23 Warrant for ATM2026. (i.e., if we want to discuss more, the RIO T.F. can choose to cover in a set of Phase 2 recommendations)
- Change 1 is a recommendation for the Select Board and Planning Board to collaborate and, ultimately for the Select Board to adopt.
- Change 2 is a recommendation for the Planning Board to adopt.
- Given the busy agenda required for ATM prep and other hot topics in Town, may not be firmly in place by ATM2026

e) Process Change Recommendations for Planning Board

- OTHER?

f) Amenities

CONTEXT:

- Not a lot of discussion of this topic to date by RIO T.F.
- Not easy to get fully through this discussion in time for 22-Dec Planning Board and 23-Dec Warrant Closing. Potential Phase 2 recommendations for a future Town Meeting?

f) Amenities

- Current RIO bylaw language; Section O. Project Approval / Special Permits:
 1. <N/A>
 2. The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward pedestrian and bicycle amenities and shall, as applicable, accommodate pedestrian and bicycle circulation and safety in accordance with nationally recognized and accepted standards.
 3. The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward the improvement of pedestrian or public transit, and access to a river, open space, public trails or other public amenities.
 4. The proposed project shall provide and/or contribute toward the creation of a village center, town green, or mini-park within or adjacent to the RIO.

g) Senior Housing

CONTEXT:

- Very little discussion of this topic to date by RIO T.F.
- Potential Course of Action and Potential Recommendation:
 - Approach: use the upcoming 888 Worcester St. project that will be coming in front of the Planning Board for the Town / Planning Board to assess what kind of zoning bylaw needs there are for Senior Housing.
 - Maybe it's an adjustment to the RIO bylaw, which already has a set of rules and regulations to govern Senior Housing.
 - Maybe it's the crafting of a newer/different bylaw.
 - Maybe a recommendation to the Planning Board is to use the 888 Worcester process to define how zoning bylaws need to work across town for the next X years (and not just to meet the needs of this one potential project). ???

h) Subcommittee

CONTEXT:

- The Hope: a sub-set of Task Force Members to pitch in to help write:
 - 22-December presentation to the Planning Board
 - 22-December draft report to share with the Planning Board
 - <January> final draft of report to be shared and discussed with Advisory, Town meeting, etc.
- Open Meeting Law requirements/suggestions:
 - **This subcommittee of the RIO Task Force will draft a report and recommendation for review, amendment, if needed, and approval by the RIO Task Force. The draft report shall summarize the thoughts and concerns raised during the RIO Task Force meetings, and the draft recommendation will provide language for the Task Force to amend, if needed, and adopt, which will then be presented to the Planning Board.**