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**MEMORANDUM**

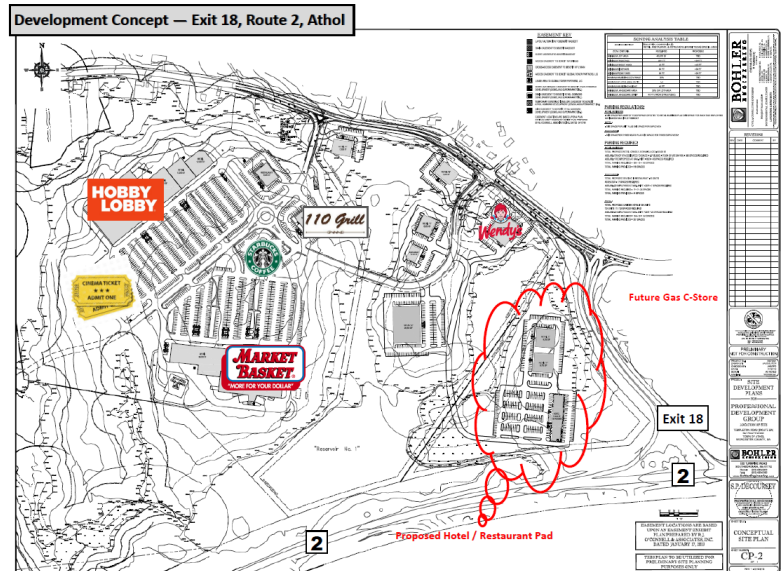
TO: Athol Board of Selectmen  
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager  
RE: Town Manager’s Report  
DT: February 20, 2018

Dear Board: Please see following update for tonight’s meeting.

**Community Economic Development Planning:** With the formal ribbon-cutting ceremony for Wendy’s scheduled on February 26, and the soft opening of the 110 Grill slated the following day, I thought I would provide a snapshot update on several community and economic development projects in the planning stage.

The Town is currently awaiting a formal scope-of-work and proposal from BSC Group, of Worcester, to complete high-level master planning and/or conceptual design surrounding the following projects. The study will help to prioritize the projects and outline concrete steps the Town can take to advance these initiatives for further funding:

- South Athol Road; Bidwell site; Potential Route 2 interchange
- Union Twist Mill redevelopment and infrastructure improvements for Chestnut Hill Ave.
- Exit 18 (potential hotel site)
- Downtown Redevelopment / Lord Pond Plaza area
- Illustrative plan for Sanders Street School site for Annual Town Meeting consideration



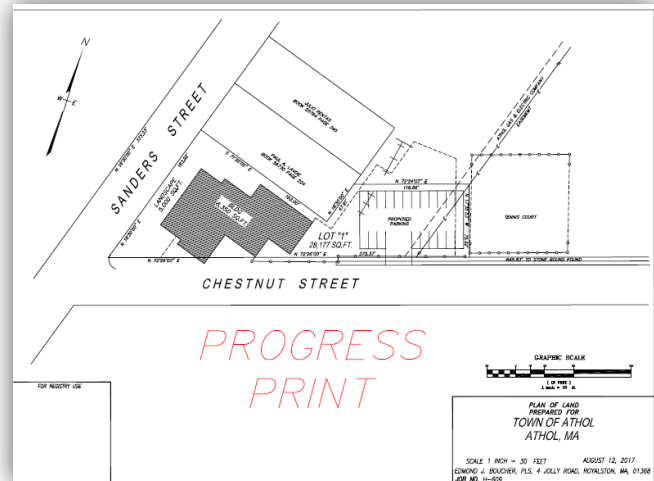
The work by BSC Group is funded by the \$25,000 planning grant from the Community Compact Program with up to \$10,000 in local matching funds. The Town needs to utilize its grant as we had purposefully delayed to allow the MRPC feasibility study for a future Route 2 interchange further advance since access to the

highway would make the Bidwell site and South Athol Road corridor substantially much more competitive for investment.

Further to the above, last week I also joined with Congressman Jim McGovern, federal Economic Development Administration representative Deb Boivin, the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce and other regional community stakeholders to discuss the region's economy. I was able to outline the above projects, and others in the planning stage (downtown brewery; recapitalize North Quabbin Loan Fund, etc.) to determine potential eligibility for EDA planning grants which can then lead to necessary infrastructure funding.

In the short-term, the design team will develop a concept site plan for the former Sanders Street School so that the Board can consider options for disposition and Town Meeting authorization in June.

You will recall that the deed boundaries followed a stream crossing and did not match the assessor plat thus requiring a new site plan and additional Town Meeting approval to dispose of the property. I hope to present options to the Board at your March 20 meeting.



### Miscellaneous:

- Discussed Boston-area graduate school design competition proposal for Ellen Bigelow / Riverbend with NewVue Communities; prepared letter of support for presentation held on February 13
- Reviewed sanitary sewer concerns and proposal with Doug Walsh and Dennis Kimball and authorized replacement of old style trap which is scheduled for completion later this week (as the Board is aware a sewer backup forced early closure of Town Hall last Thursday)
- Met with lead dispatcher Jillian Parent and Officer Todd Neale to review a \$50,000-plus grant application for upgraded dispatch software (PowerPhone) through the Community Compact Information Technology grant program
- Attended Finance and Warrant Advisory Committee special town meeting review discussion
- Held department head meeting; met with Cathy Savoy regarding Senior Center issues and proposed re-pointing capital project; attended housing task force
- Met with John Robertson of Lake Ellis Ass'n and DPW Superintendent to discuss potential collaboration on planning and volunteer efforts to improve the facility