

**MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 05/22/2025**  
**SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE:** Tabitha K. McCrohan, Chairwoman, Jennifer Vincent, Clerk

| TOPIC        |  | ACTION   |
|--------------|--|--|
|              | Meeting Called to Order at 6:04 p.m. in the Council on the Aging Room  |  |
|              | <p>The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM. Present were Selectmen Jennifer Vincent (JV) and Tabitha McCrohan (TM). Planning Board members present Donna Leary (DL), Marc Olivera (MO), Michael Leger (ML) and Greg Unger (GU)</p> <p>Board to host joint discussion with the Berkley Planning Board and Lizeth Gonzalez of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) regarding progress on the Town's Economic Development Plan and relevant Town Meeting warrant articles</p>   |  |
| New Business | <p>Donna Leary (DL) introduced a proposed amendment to the official zoning map. This amendment, referencing Section 2.2, involved adding #'s 33, 35 and 35R Padelford Street to the existing general business district.</p> <p>DL and Marc Olivera (MO) then discussed some needed corrections to the bylaws to make sure the language matches what's outlined in the regulations regarding multi-family and two-family properties. This is only to correct language and not change any regulations and bylaws existing already.</p> <p>Regarding Article 23 on the Annual Town Meeting warrant Matthew Chabot noted that the petitioner had withdrawn their petition as a zoning bylaw. He clarified that the noise ordinance in question would instead be added to the general bylaws of Berkley, to be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting (ATM).</p>   | <p>DL motioned to accept, Marc Olivera second. Motion accepted</p> <p>DL motioned to accept, MO second. Motion accepted</p> <p>Discussion only</p> |
| Old Business | <p>At 6:11PM opened the joint meeting between Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Lizette Gonzalez of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to regarding progress on the Town's Economic Development Plan and relevant Town Meeting warrant articles</p> <p>JV then introduced Lizeth Gonzalez from the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District to speak about the town's broader economic development plan. JV stressed the importance of economic development for maintaining sustainable services and preserving the unique character of the town. The plan focuses on zoning policies, incentives, and initiatives that support growth while engaging a wide range of stakeholders.</p> <p>JV outlined a phased timeline for the plan, which includes data collection, spatial analysis, and opportunities for public engagement through events, flyers, and surveys. She then introduced Chris, who provided insights into the data driving the plan, pulling from sources like census data, state figures, and industry reports. Chris presented key demographic trends, including population growth, shifting age demographics, and school enrollment figures—especially the impact of COVID-19 on education. He also compared Berkeley's median household income to county and state levels and discussed the rising burden of housing costs on residents.</p> <p>Next, Chris broke down taxation and revenue trends, comparing residential and commercial tax rates in Berkeley with those in other communities. He explained how the tax levy is largely supported by residential properties. He and Matthew Chabot also explored how personal property taxes are assessed and the possibility of hiring an outside firm for better accuracy. This led to a broader discussion on how understanding this data is essential for community engagement and informed decision-making.</p> <p>In terms of industry and employment, Chris identified the top sectors employing residents in Berkeley and introduced the location quotient—a tool for comparing local industry presence</p> | <p>JV motioned to open, TM second. Motion accepted</p>   |

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to statewide averages. He and Jennifer Vincent highlighted how key sectors like healthcare and education shape the local economy and how this data can help shape effective development strategies.

On zoning and land use, Jennifer Vincent presented a new analysis tool showing Berkeley's predominantly residential makeup. There was discussion about the use of special permits and redevelopment opportunities in areas like Round Hill, as well as the challenges and potential of brownfield sites. She and Matthew Chabot emphasized the value of knowing who owns land and its current valuation to make better redevelopment decisions. Public engagement was a recurring theme throughout the meeting. Jennifer Vincent stressed how vital community involvement is to the plan's success. Tools like TextMyGov were discussed for keeping residents informed. She and Tabitha McCrohan also spoke about supporting local farms and agricultural businesses, suggesting a potential business guide to help locals navigate permitting and regulations.

Looking ahead, Matthew Chabot discussed the possibility of future zoning changes to further economic development. He and Vincent talked about aligning zoning rules with community values and creating overlay districts to promote specific development types, all while ensuring the town's natural and historic character is preserved.

The group engaged in a discussion regarding compliance with the MBTA Communities (Section 3A) zoning requirements, with particular focus on identifying prospective properties for potential overlay zoning.

The Town Administrator informed the group that Berkley has received eligibility for technical assistance through SRPEDD to develop a model bylaw for MBTA 3A compliance. This technical support does not obligate the Town to adopt the resulting bylaw, nor does it represent an endorsement by any public body. However, the TA emphasized that declining to participate in the drafting process at this stage could limit the Town's options in the future.

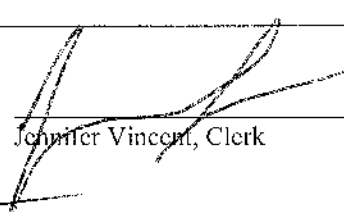
The discussion then focused on the area surrounding the train crossing at Myricks Street. There was general consensus that the land south and east of the crossing is the most appropriate area to consider for an overlay district. Without taking a formal vote, the group expressed agreement in wanting to see zoning options for the Myricks area—potentially extending to the entirety of the land east of Myricks Street to the Freetown town line.

The meeting wrapped up with a review of next steps, emphasizing ongoing public engagement and planning. Everyone agreed to schedule another joint meeting to review progress and keep the conversation going. The session ended with a shared commitment to advancing the economic development plan and zoning amendments.

Discussion only

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned 08:09AM

  
Tabitha K. McCrohan, Chairwoman  
Jennifer Vincent, Clerk  
Matthew Chabot, Town Administrator