

Erin Wortman, Director of Planning & Community Development

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Director of Planning & Community Development Department is to collaborate with residents, town officials and business owners by following best practices of urban planning and development to progress short- and long-range plans that identify and prioritize the needs of the municipality while promoting a well-designed, livable and thriving community.

Department Overview:

The Director of Planning and Community Development Department consists of one employee who provides technical support and leadership regarding land use and development to all Town Departments, Committees and Boards as requested. She contributes guidance and expertise with civic-minded volunteers on the Stoneham Square Strategic Action Plan, advocacy through the Transportation Advisory Subcommittee, and leads regionally with conversations about first and last mile mobility solutions for Stoneham residents and employers.

Completed and ongoing planning projects are listed below by subcategory:

Transportation:

- Complete Streets – Successfully aided the Town in signing a Complete Streets policy and creating a Prioritization Plan after numerous planning workshops and community engagement tactics; submitted a Complete Streets funding request and awaiting response from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.
- North Suburban Mobility Study – Participated and served as project lead in mobility challenge conversations to create a connectivity study with the communities of Burlington, Lynnfield, North Reading, Reading, Wakefield, Wilmington, Winchester, and Woburn
- Downtown Conceptual Design – Engaged with consultant at no-cost to the Town of Stoneham to complete a Complete Streets Conceptual Design for Stoneham Square. Proposal included opportunities to improve safety, increase green space, widen sidewalks, create economic development expansion possibilities for local businesses, and include a more efficient traffic design for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.
- Stoneham Traffic Commission – Participates in monthly meetings with the Town Administrator, Chief of Police, Police Safety Officer, Fire Chief, Department of Public Works Superintendent, and Town Clerk to address traffic and safety issues throughout the municipality

Land Use:

- Stoneham Open Space & Recreation Plan Update – Worked with consultants and Steering Committee to update the 20 year old plan in order to meet the latest Division of Conservation Service requirements, and be written in accordance with the Open Space and Recreation Plan Requirements, and the Open Space and Recreation Planner’s Workbook. Plan has been submitted to the Commonwealth for its approval.
- Stoneham Housing Production Plan – Began work with consultants and Steering Committee to create the first ever Plan to identify housing need and demand as well as establish goals for future housing development.
- Stoneham Strategic Action Plan – Follows the matrix of the Action Plan in nearly all facets of planning. Meets quarterly with the Action Plan group as well as monthly with the Stoneham Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Professional Planning Review – Oversight and assessment of all proposed special permit requests, zoning language, and site plan applications to the Town of Stoneham.
- Zoning Updates – Submitted zoning warrant articles on a-frame signage, stretch code, electricity aggregation, and non-medically prescribed marijuana moratorium to town boards for consideration at Town Meeting.

Energy & Sustainability:

- Green Communities Policies – Energy-forward policies were reviewed and adopted by the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. Policy approval were part of the application process and effect energy choices moving forward.
- Green Communities Designation – Awarded designation and \$169,615 from the Massachusetts Green Communities Division of the Department of Energy Resources which demonstrates that Stoneham is an energy leader in Massachusetts, poised to reduce its energy costs, and improvement the local environment.
- Energy Audits – Works with energy auditing company and Eversource on finding efficiencies and opportunities throughout municipal buildings and properties.
- Municipal Aggregation – Serves as staff lead on municipal aggregation process with Good Energy and DPU. Participates in trainings and working with the consultant on the approval process. Will be involved with the public process once the project is approved through the Commonwealth.

Economic Development:

- Stoneham Commercial Improvement Program – Created and facilitated the financial program for businesses in the Central Business District to improve its signage, windows and storefront esthetic resulting in over \$65,000 investment by local merchants and property owners
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – Facilitated a 10-year TIF agreement with C & S Capital Properties, LLC at 370-380 Main Street. The \$4 million redevelopment will create new, modern commercial space with ground-floor retail in Stoneham Square. The TIF is a first-time project for Stoneham and approved formally by the Baker-Polito Administration
- Pop-Up Stoneham – Summer place-making summer event series held on Town Common designed to engage residents, businesses and visitors of all ages while energizing the community. Programming includes the local business community through cross promotion, event sponsorship, and coupons to visit nearby establishments.
- How to Do Business Guide – Worked with municipal departments, Chamber of Commerce and local merchants to curate a How to Do Business Guide in Stoneham. Guide was published electronically and distributed among business community.
- Economic Development Self-Assessment Tool (EDSAT) – Worked with Northeastern University to host an economic development conversation about current and future trends in Stoneham; published the EDSAT onto the Town website and shared with the business community.