

Director of Planning & Community Development Department 2020 Annual Report

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. Professional involvement, noteworthy department emphasis, and financial awards over the last year are detailed below.

Awards & Recognition:

- Professional Planner Award, American Planning Association: Massachusetts Chapter
- National Planning Achievement Award for Grassroots Initiative, American Planning Association

Professional Leadership & Affiliations:

- President, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- Stoneham Representative, MAPC
- Delegate, North Suburban Planning Council
- Member, Stoneham Transportation Advocacy Committee
- Member, MAPC Executive Committee
- Member, Metro Common 2050 External Advisory Committee
- Member, MetroFuture Inc. Board of Directors
- Member, Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors
- Northeast Representative & Member, American Planning Association Massachusetts Chapter

Department Highlights:

- Professional Planning Review – Oversight and assessment of all proposed special permit requests, zoning language, and site plan applications to the Town of Stoneham.
- Stoneham Commercial Improvement Program – Continued to facilitate the financial program for businesses in the Central Business District to improve its signage, windows and storefront esthetic.
- Green Communities Designation – Received and spent \$250,000 from the Massachusetts Green Communities Division of the Department of Energy Resources, \$73,214 from utility incentives and \$37,684 from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council in municipal energy improvements.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations – Applied and awarded through the Eversource Make-Ready Program the underground infrastructure of electric vehicle charging stations at the Stoneham Arena at no-cost to the Town.
- Pop-Up Stoneham – Collaborated with the Stoneham Recreation Department, Stoneham Coalition, and Stoneham Community Development Corporation to host “E.T.” movie night on the Common.
- Community Compact – Awarded \$35,000 for the second round of project funding – one for a Downtown Parking Study and the other for Age Friendly Stoneham: Needs Assessment. Both studies will be conducted in 2020.
- Stoneham Housing Production Plan – The Planning Board and Select Board voted to approve the document to be sent to DHCD with a few edits. Document has been sent to the State and the Town is

waiting to hear its approval. The Plan identifies the housing needs and demand in the municipality as well as establishes goals for future housing development.

- Tri-Community Greenway – Ribbon cutting occurred in June 2019 and the Greenway is officially open!
- 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.
- Stoneham Traffic Commission – Participates in monthly meetings to address traffic and safety issues throughout the municipality. Piloted a new traffic configuration at the Middle School that was greatly successful.
- South School Redesign – Contributed to the working group to identify challenges and opportunities at the existing site. Goal is to create a safer, more welcoming parcel for students, families, and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Solar at the Arena – Worked with Solect to execute agreements including PILOT, install solar panels, and submit all necessary paperwork to achieve a high performing PPA for the next twenty years
- Census 2020 – Developed the Town’s first Complete Count Committee in preparation of the 2020 Census. Created a robust work plan and community engagement strategy. Process will conclude by summer 2020.
- Arts & Culture Regional Trail Project – Awarded funding with the towns of Wakefield and Lynnfield to create a regional arts trail project. Project will be conducted in 2020 and 2021.