

**MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE
DEVENS IMPACT EVALUATION RFP
PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE
JUNE 1, 2015**

Master Plan Steering Committee Members Present: Kara McGuire Minar (Planning Board) Joe Theriault (Historical Commission), Don Ludwig (Finance Committee), SusanMary Redinger (School Committee), Lucy Wallace (Board of Selectmen) and Victor Normand (Devens Economic Analysis Team)

Others Present: Bill Scanlan (Town Planner), Liz Allard (Land Use Administrator), Fran Nickerson (Planning Board) Austin Burke (Burns & McDonnell) and Lisa Davis (Lisa Davis Associates)

Introductions of those present were made.

An overview of the Devens Impact Evaluation Request for Proposals was given. It was explained the last Master Plan (2002) did not consider Devens at all. The available land at Devens has been developed or handed over to other entities, such as MassDevelopment, the Mass. National Guard, and the Federal Government.

A decision on whether or not to resume jurisdiction of the historic boundaries of the three towns (Ayer, Harvard and Shirley) could be forced on the towns sooner than 2033.

Harvard is seeking to determine what the impact, under the elements of the master plan, may be to the Town if jurisdiction of Devens is resumed, from both a financial and cultural aspect.

How will this piece relate to the overall master plan?

Along with the elements of the 2015 master plan the contractor will be provided with materials detailed under Appendix B of the RFP. The contractor is expected to provide recommendations, as to what are the opportunities and the challenges to accepting or not accepting the historical boundaries of Devens.

What is the existing relationship with the military post that remains at Devens?

The military retains a small area in the center of Devens with a primary mission focused on the reserves. The South post is still actively used as a military post as it is the only live fire range in the northeast and probably will remain forever.

Do any of the TIF's extend beyond 2033?

When and if historical boundaries are resumed the agreements made by MassDevelopment would collapse. In addition, upon re-sale these agreements collapse as well.

Where are students educated?

MassDevelopment makes this decision. Harvard won the last contract award and students within Devens from all 3 towns attend Harvard schools.

What is the number of restaurants in Harvard as compared to Devens?

Harvard consists of a small number of eating establishments (less than 10), some of which are only open seasonally. Devens has a relatively similar number of eating establishments, but these have a higher volume of business.

How does Devens affect affordable housing in Harvard?

The Devens Reuse Plan capped housing at 282 units, of which 25% were to be affordable for low and moderate income households, i.e. to those who earn less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). However, MassDevelopment changed the definition of moderate income to 80% to

120% of AMI, which means such moderate income units do not qualify as affordable units on the Town's subsidized housing inventory.

What is the budget for this project?
The operating number is \$30,000.

Who is on the Master Plan Steering Committee?

The MPSC consists of five voting members:

- Kara McGuire Minar, Planning Board
- Lucy Wallace, Board of Selectmen
- SusanMary Redinger, School Committee
- Victor Normand, Devens Economic Analysis Team
- Didi Chadran, Community Preservation Committee

Liaisons from other boards and commissions include:

- Joe Theriault, Historical Commission
- Don Ludwig, Finance Committee
- Jaye Waldron, Conservation Commission
- Elaine Lazarus, Economic Development Committee

Who completed the 2002 Master Plan?

Community Opportunities Group.

Additional information/facts provided:

- 20% of the Town of Harvard is within the boundaries of Devens
- It has been difficult to determine the cost associated with resuming jurisdiction of Harvard's historical boundaries within Devens because it is a re-development project that is not part of an omnibus budget
- The Town of Harvard does not collect any taxes from Devens residents, yet Devens residents can vote at Harvard's Town Meeting and affect budget decisions
- Some services within Harvard are currently used by Devens residents such as the transfer station and Town beach, however Harvard residents must pay to use services available in Devens, such as Mirror Lake
- Devens tax rate is artificial as it does not require the need to balance a budget annually in the same way that other communities in the Commonwealth do. Subsidizes from MassDevelopment make up the difference. As the tax base at Devens grows the subsidy from MassDevelopment decreases
- Harvard does not have a complete understanding of the revenue available through taxes at Devens
- Devens has a split tax rate