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**40B Conference: Shaping the 40B Process in Your Community
May 4, 2018**

**OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER 40B (M.G.L. c. 40B, §§ 20-23)
APPLICATION, REVIEW, DECISION AND APPEAL PROCESS**

CHAPTER 40B INFORMATION RESOURCES

1. 40B Information Available on the Web

The best and most current information on Chapter 40B is available on the Web:

- **Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)**

www.mass.gov/dhcd

Scroll down the page until you see “Community Development, Planning and Funding. Click on this and then scroll down and click on “Chapter 40B.” The following major topics are listed here: Housing Production Plans, Subsidized Housing Inventory, Comprehensive Permit Guidance and Information, Chapter 40B – Unit Sales Prices and Rents, Local Initiative Program (LIP), Chapter 40B Design Review Handbook, Housing Appeals Committee, and Guidelines for Calculating General Land Area Minimum.

The current Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) (9/14/17) can be accessed directly at:

https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/10/shiinventory_0.pdf

Always check with DHCD and/or the local municipality to see if any SHI-qualified units have been added or deleted since 9/14/17.

The 40B Statute, 40B Regulations and 40B Guidelines can be accessed directly at the Housing Appeals Committee site:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/housing-appeals-committee-hac>

- **MassHousing**

www.masshousing.com

Go to “Developers” section on the home page and then scroll down to “Build New Housing” and click on “Building under Chapter 40B.”

The MassHousing Project Eligibility Letter application forms for both rental and homeownership projects can be accessed directly at:

http://www.masshousing.com/imageserver/CompPermitApp_Rental.pdf

http://www.masshousing.com/imageserver/CompPermitApp_HO.pdf

- **Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP)**

<http://www.mhp.net/>

Go to “Resources” on the home page and then type “40B” in the search box.

Be sure to review the Chapter 40B Handbook for Zoning Boards of Appeal (March 2017). The principal author of this handbook is Judi Barrett.

<http://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/Ch.-40B-Handbook-for-Zoning-Boards-of-Appeal.pdf>

Other useful MHP resources are the rent and income limit tables compiled by MHP for the respective Median Family Income levels (30%, 50%, 60%, 80%, and 110%). The FY18 Income and Rent Limits can be accessed directly at:

<https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/Income-Limits-2018-2019.pdf>

<https://www.mhp.net/writable/resources/documents/MAXRENT-2018.pdf>

Note: DHCD, for certain 40B rental projects, uses a different methodology (Number of Bedrooms + 1) to define the applicable Household size than does MassHousing, MHP, and MassDevelopment (Number of Bedrooms*1.5). Therefore, for certain projects, the DHCD rent limits for 1BR and 3BR units will differ from those established for MassHousing, MHP, and MassDevelopment projects. All projects with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) must use the 1.5 persons per bedroom methodology to define the applicable Household size.

Representative listings of Chapter 40B-related documents available at the DHCD, MassHousing and MHP websites are provided at the end of this outline.

BE SURE THAT YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT LAW (M.G.L. c. 40B, §§ 20-23), CHAPTER 40B REGULATIONS (“760 CMR 56.00: COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT: LOW OR MODERATE INCOME HOUSING”) AND “COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT GUIDELINES” (Updated December 2014). THE LAW, REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE REFERENCED HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE (HAC) WEBSITE.

2. Information Re: Funding Available for 40B Technical Assistance Advisors to Zoning Boards of Appeals

- Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) Fund 40B Technical Assistance Program:

“MHP will engage a qualified consultant to assist Zoning Boards of Appeals (ZBA) in navigating and understanding underlying development issues and impacts as they relate to the process and regulations associated with evaluating a proposed 40B development Comprehensive Permit application. Consultants will also help facilitate productive discussions with developers and in most cases, communities receiving TA from MHP have Assistance from MHP have successfully negotiated Comprehensive Permits on terms mutually agreeable to both the municipality and developer. Since 1999, MHP’s 40B technical assistance program has awarded over \$2 million and helped 138 communities on more than 270 40B projects.”

Contact MHP’s Laura Shufelt at 857-317-8582 or lshufelt@mhp.net for more information about this program”.

- In some instances, Applicants have also been willing to provide funding to ZBAs to retain Chapter 40B technical assistance advisors —particularly if they feel that such technical assistance is provided in an objective manner and helps make the review process more efficient.

3. Local 40B Resources: Town Counsel/Town Staff

4. Zoning Board of Appeals Members and Town Staff from Other Towns or Cities/Developers with 40B Experience

5. Peer Review Consultants [See 760 CMR 56.05(5)]

6. 40B Project Visits. For a valuable learning experience, there’s nothing like visiting several representative 40B developments similar to the type of development that is being proposed in your community. Call CHAPA, DHCD, MassHousing, MHP or Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation (MHIC) for 40B project locations or call ZBAs in nearby towns/cities.

7. Local Comprehensive Permit Decisions. These are public documents and should be available at the ZBA office or Clerk’s office. They should also be available as recorded documents at the applicable Registry of Deeds. One good way to understand the 40B review process is to visit a ZBA office and review the complete project file for a 40B project. You can also get a better understanding of the types of conditions that can be included by reviewing some representative recent Comprehensive Permit decisions.

8. Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) Decisions

- HAC decisions since 2007 can be accessed directly at:
<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/housing-appeals-committee-hac>

Decisions and published rulings of the Housing Appeals Committee prior to 2007 are available on searchable databases at Lexis.com, WestLaw.com, Sociallaw.com, and LandLaw.com. Copies of these decisions may also be obtained by contacting the HAC Clerk.

9. Conferences

- Check out MHP's, DHCD's, MassHousing's and CHAPA's web sites for information on any proposed Chapter 40B conferences or other related training sessions.

10. Chapter 40B Consultants and Lawyers

BASIC 40B PROJECT AFFORDABILITY REQUIREMENTS

Rental Housing

Either 25% of Units must be priced to be Affordable to Households with total Household Income at 80% of Median Family Income

OR

20% of the Units must be priced to be Affordable to Households with total Household Income at 50% of Median Family Income.

Eligibility Income levels are adjusted for Household size.

Rents are based upon 30% of the Household Income for the agency-calculated allowable Household size for the respective unit bedroom size and must include all utilities or a Utility Allowance must be deducted from the maximum allowable rent for each utility paid directly by the Household.

Ownership Housing

Either 25% of Units must be Affordable to Households with total Household Income at 80% of Median Family Income

OR

20% of the Units must be Affordable to Households with total Household Income at 50% of Median Family Income.

Eligibility Income Levels are adjusted for Household size.

Almost all Ownership housing 40B projects use the 25% at 80% of Median Family Income alternative. **However**, in order to expand the “Window of Affordability” the Maximum Allowable Sales Price for such ownership 40B units must be calculated based upon 70% of Median Family Income for the agency-calculated allowable Household size—even though the Household Eligibility Income level remains at 80% of Median Family Income, adjusted for Household size. This requirement increases the degree of affordability for Households whose total income exceeds 70% of Median Family Income. The calculation of the maximum allowable sales price takes into consideration the applicable interest rate and amortization term for mortgage loans, local real estate taxes, any applicable condominium or Homeowners’ Association fees, insurance costs, and private mortgage insurance premiums.

In addition to maximum Household income limitations, there are also Maximum Household Asset limitations for 40B ownership housing. 40B ownership homebuyers must also satisfy any applicable First Time Home Buyer requirements.

40B PRODUCTION DATA

Total Units Built or Under Construction

	<i>Projects</i>	<i>Total Units</i>	<i>Affordable Units (Income Restricted)</i>	<i>Percentage of Units Affordable</i>
<i>Rental</i>	811	50,302	30,264	60.2%
<i>Ownership</i>	537	19,147	5,434	28.4%
<i>Mixed Tenure</i>	23	879	278	31.6%
Total	1,371	70,328	35,976	51.2%

Additional Units Permitted but Not Yet Under Construction

	<i>Projects</i>	<i>Total Units</i>	<i>Affordable Units (Income Restricted)</i>	<i>Percentage of Units Affordable</i>
<i>Rental</i>	31	3,800	1,252	32.9%
<i>Ownership</i>	43	2,770	692	25.0%
<i>Mixed Tenure</i>	2	125	31	24.8%
Total	76	6,695	1,975	29.5%

Combined Total

	<i>Projects</i>	<i>Total Units</i>	<i>Affordable Units (Income Restricted)</i>	<i>Percentage of Units Affordable</i>
<i>Rental</i>	842	54,102	31,516	58.3%
<i>Ownership</i>	580	21,917	6,126	28.0%
<i>Mixed Tenure</i>	25	1,004	309	30.8%
Total	1,447	77,023	37,951	49.3%

All estimates provided by Ann Verrilli of Citizens' Housing and Planning Association based upon her review of Subsidized Housing Inventory data as of May 2017.

BASIC STEPS IN THE 40B PERMITTING PROCESS

1. Developer creates the development concept and preliminary feasibility analysis for a proposed 40B project and decides which of the primary Subsidizing Agencies would be the best match for its proposed 40B project:

- **MassHousing** (primarily for rental or ownership projects financed through MassHousing programs, Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae, FHA, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston New England Fund (NEF), and other financing programs. MassHousing can also issue Tax Exempt bonds. More detailed information on MHP funding programs is available at: <https://www.masshousingrental.com/portal/server.pt?mode=2&uulD=%7B63B3E440-0FEB-4FC2-B3B3-E9C01604714A%7D>
- **Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP)** (primarily for rental projects financed through MHP, Fannie Mae, FHA and other funding programs) More detailed information on MHP funding programs is available at: <http://www.mhp.net/rental-financing/loan-products>
- **Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)** (primarily for Local Initiative Program (LIP) rental or ownership projects and/or Low Income Housing Tax Credit rental projects). More detailed information on DHCD funding programs is available at: www.mass.gov/dhcd
- **MassDevelopment** (primarily for rental projects financed with Tax Exempt Bond Financing) More detailed information on MassDevelopment funding programs is available at: <https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/financing/>

2. Developer submits Project Eligibility Letter (PEL) application to Subsidizing Agency and simultaneously provides a copy to the municipality.

3. Subsidizing Agency reviews the PEL application for completeness. Once Subsidizing Agency makes a determination that PEL application is complete, Subsidizing Agency sends out a “30-day comment letter” asking the municipality to submit comments on the proposed development, as presented in the Developer’s PEL application. Subsidizing Agency also schedules Site Visit and invites municipality to attend. After review of PEL application and any comments submitted by municipality, Subsidizing Agency issues Project Eligibility Letter if Subsidizing Agency can make the necessary findings as outlined in the 40B regulations [760 CMR 56.04 (4)].

4. Developer prepares Comprehensive Permit application and files it with the municipality.

5. Municipality provides proper legal notice, conducts Public Hearing, closes Public Hearing, deliberates, and then issues its Comprehensive Permit decision.

6. Assuming a favorable Comprehensive Permit decision and no appeals, Developer prepares Final Approval application and submits it to the Subsidizing Agency. A critical component of Final Approval is the execution of the applicable Regulatory Agreement.

7. Assuming Subsidizing Agency approves the Developer's Final Approval application, Developer prepares final engineering and architectural plans, satisfies all Comprehensive Permit conditions that must be completed prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, and applies for Building Permit.

8. Assuming a Building Permit is issued, the Developer builds project and conducts the necessary Lotteries for the Affordable Units in accordance with the Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan (AFHMP) and Lottery Plan approved by the Subsidizing Agency as part of its Final Approval review.

9. Developer submits all required Cost Certification information and also, for rental projects, annual financial reports as required in the Regulatory Agreement.

10. At any point after the issuance of a Comprehensive Permit, the Developer may request either "Substantial" or "Insubstantial" modifications (760 CMR 56.05 (11)). **ZBA must respond in a timely manner or the requested modifications will be approved automatically.**

GENERAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES FROM PRIOR 40B REVIEWS

1. Conduct a site/neighborhood visit early in the review process and make sure that you understand both site and neighborhood existing conditions, the proposed site plan and building design, and the location of abutters who will be most affected by the proposed development. You may want to ask the Developer to place stakes at the building corners of buildings that are close to neighbors and/or place stakes on the center line of proposed roadways.
2. ZBA, town staff, peer reviewers, and potential opponents should identify and focus on the proposed project's issues/impacts as early in the review process as possible and try to resolve each issue in a logical, efficient manner that recognizes the critical path nature of the respective steps in the housing development process. Sometimes, but rarely, there is a "silver bullet" issue (for example, inadequate soils for a Title 5 septic system or inadequate stopping sight distance) that creates a valid and sustainable argument for a ZBA to deny a proposed 40B project.
3. ZBA's should establish realistic agendas for each Public Hearing session and clearly define any supplemental information that it feels is necessary for the Developer to submit in advance of the next continued Public Hearing.
4. If ZBA members have particular concerns about any aspect of a proposed 40B project, they should raise these as early in the review process as possible. Waiting until the end of the Public Hearing to raise critical issues is neither productive nor fair.
5. Negotiating with developers is possible and is frequently done. Understandably, developers normally prefer to have "all issues on the table" before initiating a meaningful negotiation discussions.
6. Work Sessions with the developer can often be productive **after** initial more formal Public Hearings are held—but be sure to get legal advice re: Open Meeting law legal requirements. Work Sessions should not be scheduled until there have been a sufficient number of Public Hearing sessions for all interested parties to present their concerns about the proposed development. Work Sessions should be posted and held in a public building—not at the developer's office. No final decisions can be made on behalf of the Board at Work Sessions.
7. ZBAs should get experienced and objective technical assistance advisors and peer reviewers to supplement ZBA members' and staff skills and experience, especially if the current ZBA board members and staff have limited 40B review experience.
8. Density is a relative concept. You need to focus on the particular site characteristics, unit mix, site plan, building type, building design, infrastructure and environmental issues, and phasing plans to meaningfully evaluate density.
9. Rarely are all parties (particularly neighbors to the development) fully satisfied. Compromise among the involved parties is always necessary.

**PRIMARY CONCERNS AND/OR QUESTIONS OF ZBA MEMBERS,
OTHER MUNICIPAL BOARDS/DEPARTMENTS OR COMMITTEES,
ABUTTERS/NEIGHBORS, AND APPLICANT/DEVELOPMENT TEAM MEMBERS**

1. **QUESTION:** WHEN IS AN APPLICANT ELIGIBLE TO SUBMIT A COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION AND RETAIN THE RIGHT TO APPEAL ANY DECISION TO THE HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE (HAC)?

ANSWER: WHEN THE MUNICIPALITY HAS NOT SATISFIED ANY OF THE STATUTORY MINIMA REQUIREMENTS OR SAFE HARBOR PROTECTIONS DESCRIBED BELOW, THE APPLICANT CAN SUBMIT A COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION AND RETAIN THE RIGHT TO APPEAL TO HAC:

STATUTORY MINIMA REQUIREMENTS

- A. Less than 10% of year round housing units in community are qualified “affordable” units [the methodology for calculating number of qualified affordable units is provided in 760 CMR 56.03 (3) (a)]. All statutory minima standards are to be measured as of the date the Comprehensive Permit application is submitted.
- B. Qualified “affordable” units are located on less than 1.50% of total land area zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use [methodology for calculating land areas is provided in 760 CMR 56.03 (3)(b)]

Guidelines for Calculating General land Area Minimum (including Appendix A / Technical Instructions and Appendix B/ Example Calculation) were published by DHCD on January 17, 2018 and can be accessed directly at:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/guidelines-for-calculating-general-land-area-minimum>

- C. The application before ZBA will not result in commencement of construction of qualified “affordable” housing comprising more than 0.3% (three tenths of one percent) of the total land area zoned in community for residential, commercial, or industrial use or ten acres, whichever is larger, in any one calendar year [methodology for calculating annual land area minimum is provided in 760 CMR 56.03 (3)(c)]

SAFE HARBOR PROTECTIONS

- A. Housing Production Plan (HPP) —under certain circumstances a municipality can deny any Comprehensive Permit application within a defined one or two year period **if** the municipality has a DHCD-approved Housing Production Plan and is meeting its affordable housing goals [760 CMR 56.03 (4)] or if it has made Recent Progress Toward Housing Unit Minimum [760 CMR 56.03 (5)].

Detailed information on preparing Housing Production Plans, including copies of DHCD-approved plans, can be accessed directly at:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/chapter-40-b-housing-production-plan>

A municipality can grant Comprehensive Permits even it has satisfied these Planned Production requirements. However, an Applicant has no right to appeal any ZBA decision if a municipality has satisfied either the ½ of 1% or 1% HPP standards and has been certified by DHCD. These HPP regulations are complicated. If you need help in understanding them, contact Phillip DeMartino at DHCD (phillip.demartino@state.ma.us).

Guidance on when units become eligible to be listed on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) is included at 760 CMR 56.03 (2)(b). Units may be dropped from the SHI if there are “time lapses” greater than 12 months between the issuance of the Comprehensive Permit and the issuance of a Building Permit. The conditions under which these units will regain eligibility for relisting on the SHI are included at 760 CMR 56.03 (2)(c). These conditions are also complicated but Phillip DeMartino can help make them more understandable.

- B. Recent Progress Toward Housing Unit Minimum—even without an approved HPP, if a community has created SHI-eligible units equal to or greater than 2% of the municipality’s year round housing units, the ZBA can deny an application for a defined one year period. See 760 CMR 56.03 (5). However, the community can approve a 40B project even if it has satisfied this Recent Progress Toward Housing Unit Minimum Safe Harbor.

NOTE: The list of “Certified Communities” that have been “certified” by DHCD as having satisfied the applicable Safe Harbor requirements discussed above is available at the Housing Production Plan URL.

- C. The municipality can also deny Large Projects, as that term is defined in the regulations, without the Applicant having the right to appeal the denial to the HAC. There are limits on the maximum number of units in 40B projects. The limits vary based upon the number of year round housing units in each community based upon the latest decennial census data. See 760 CMR 56.03 (6).

The ZBA can deny any 40B project that exceeds the unit limits listed in the table below:

<p>Total Number of Year Round Housing Units in Community (as enumerated in current U.S. decennial census)</p>	<p>Maximum Project Size <i>(ZBA can deny a project greater than this size and its denial “shall be consistent with local needs.” However, ZBA can approve projects that exceed these limits, if it so desires.)</i></p>
<p>Greater than 7500 units</p>	<p>300 units or 2% of all housing units in municipality, whichever is greater (Therefore, if Year Round Housing Units exceed 15,000, the 2% limit becomes the operative control.</p>
<p>Between 5,000 and 7,500 units</p>	<p>250 units</p>
<p>Between 2,500 and 5,000 units</p>	<p>200 units</p>
<p>Less than 2500 units</p>	<p>6% of all housing units in municipality</p>

D. Related Applications (Under certain circumstances, a developer can not submit a Comprehensive Permit application within 12 months of the filing of a prior application for a variance, special permit, subdivision, or other approval related to construction on the same land, if that application was for a prior project that was principally non-residential in use, or if the prior project was principally residential in use **but** did not include at least 10% of its units as SHI-eligible units. Additional information on Related Applications is provided at 760 CMR 56.03 (7)

REMINDER: A MUNICIPALITY HAS THE RIGHT TO APPROVE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATIONS EVEN IF IT HAS SATISFIED ANY OF THE STATUTORY MINIMA OR SAFE HARBOR REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, THE APPLICANT DOES NOT HAVE ANY HAC APPEAL RIGHTS UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. THE ZBA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BALANCING REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS WITH THE FOLLOWING LOCAL CONCERNS:

- A. Health**
- B. Safety**
- C. Environmental**
- D. Design**
- E. Open Space**
- F. Planning**
- G. Other Local Concerns**

3. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ZBA MEMBERS

4. CHAPTER 40B PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT DEADLINES

7/14/30/15/15/30/20/180/40/20 DAYS

Although the author believes that the information presented below has been derived from reliable sources, it is subject to errors and omissions and no warranty is made as to its accuracy. The ZBA must confirm with its own Town Counsel, other advisors, and/or applicable public agencies each of the following Chapter 40B performance requirement deadlines and procedures.

**THE FOLLOWING ZBA
PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT
DEADLINES ARE VERY IMPORTANT!**

TIME PERIOD	ACTION
<p>NO LATER THAN 7 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF CP APPLICATION</p>	<p>Within 7 days of the receipt of the Comprehensive Permit application, the ZBA needs to distribute copies of the Comprehensive Permit application to all Local Boards, departments, and committees (E.g., Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Board of Health, DPW, Affordable Housing Partnership, etc.) If in doubt, it's always better to include any Town entity that might have an interest in the project.</p> <p>The Applicant should provide a reasonable number of copies to simplify this distribution requirement. Most communities also require a digital copy of the full application so that it can be easily posted to the municipality's web site. The information that must be included in the Comprehensive Permit application is listed at CMR 760 56.05 (2):</p> <p><u>Elements of Submission, Filing Fees.</u> The Applicant shall submit to the Board an application and a complete description of the proposed Project. Normally the items listed below will constitute a complete description. Failure to submit a particular item shall not necessarily invalidate an application. The Board shall not require submissions for a Comprehensive Permit that exceed those required by the rules and procedures of Local Boards for review under their respective jurisdictions.</p> <p>(a) preliminary site development plans showing the locations and outlines of proposed buildings; the proposed locations, general dimensions and materials for streets, drives, parking areas, walks and paved areas; and proposed landscaping improvements and open areas within the site. An Applicant proposing to construct or rehabilitate four or fewer units may submit a sketch of the matters in 760 CMR 56.05(2)(a) and (c) which need not have an architect's signature. All Projects of five or more units must have site development plans prepared by a registered architect or engineer;</p> <p>(b) a report on existing site conditions and a summary of conditions in the surrounding areas, showing the location and nature of existing buildings, existing street elevations, traffic patterns and character of open areas, if any, in the neighborhood. This submission may be combined with that required in 760 CMR 56.05(2)(a);</p> <p>(c) preliminary, scaled, architectural drawings. For each building the drawings shall be prepared by a registered architect, and shall include typical floor plans, typical elevations, and sections, and shall identify construction type and exterior finishes;</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">NO LATER THAN 7 DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF CP APPLICATION (Continued)</p>	<p>(d) a tabulation of proposed buildings by type, size (number of bedrooms, floor area) and ground coverage, and a summary showing the percentage of the tract to be occupied by buildings, by parking and other paved vehicular areas, and by open areas;</p> <p>(e) where a subdivision of land is involved, a preliminary subdivision plan;</p> <p>(f) a preliminary utilities plan showing the proposed location and types of sewage, drainage, and water facilities, including hydrants;</p> <p>(g) the Project Eligibility letter, showing that the Applicant fulfills the requirements of 760 CMR 56.04(1);</p> <p>(h) a list of requested Waivers.</p> <p>The Board may require the payment of a reasonable filing fee with the application, if consistent with subdivision, cluster zoning, and other fees reasonably assessed by the municipality for costs designed to defray the direct costs of processing applications, and taking into consideration the statutory goal of M.G.L. c.40B, §§ 20 through 23 to encourage affordable housing development.</p> <p>Note: Communities that have adopted Local 40B Rules may have additional submission requirements. The submission requirements must be reasonable.</p> <p>The ZBA should request in writing that each Local Board review the application and submit written comments by a date certain (preferably no later than the date of the opening of the Public Hearing). Unfortunately, this rarely happens and the ZBA often needs to follow-up with each local entity to assure that written comments are received.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">NOT LESS THAN 14 DAYS PRIOR TO THE DATE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OPENING</p>	<p>The initial session of the Public Hearing must be advertised with proper legal notice and proper notice to abutters such that the Public Hearing can be legally opened within 30 days of the receipt of a Comprehensive Permit application by the town. The ZBA must place all necessary legal ads and notify all abutters of the opening of the Public Hearing in accordance with normal ZBA Public Hearing advertising requirements. M.G.L. c.40A, §11 details the notice requirements for Public Hearings. In general, <i>“notice shall be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town once in each of two successive weeks, the first publication to be not less than fourteen days before the day of the hearing and by posting such notice in a conspicuous place in the city or town hall for a period of not less than fourteen days before the day of such hearing ...”</i> The Applicant is often required to include a certified list of abutters in its Comprehensive Permit application. SEE 760 CMR 56.05(3)</p>

TIME PERIOD	ACTION
<p>NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM THE MUNICIPALITY'S RECEIPT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION</p>	<p>The ZBA must open the Public Hearing within 30 days of receipt of a Comprehensive Permit application. Even if the ZBA feels that the Comprehensive Permit application is incomplete, some ZBAs take a conservative (and wise) approach and schedule and open Public Hearing. At the initial Public Hearing session, the ZBA can explain why it feels that the Comprehensive Permit application is incomplete, request any additional required information, and with input from Town Counsel, make a decision as to what the appropriate next step should be.</p> <p>Note: A ZBA may stay the commencement of the Public Hearing if three or more Comprehensive Permit applications are concurrently undergoing hearings before the ZBA, and the total number of housing units in the pending projects exceeds the numerical threshold for a Large Project within that municipality, as set forth in 760 CMR 56.03(6).</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.05(3)</p>
<p>NO LATER THAN 15 DAYS FROM THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC HEARING</p>	<p>Within 15 days of the opening of the Public Hearing, the ZBA must make a determination as to whether or not it wants to deny an application on one or more of the grounds set forth in 760 CMR 56.03(1) in accordance with the procedures set forth in 760 CMR 56.03(8). The ZBA must provide written notice to both the Applicant and DHCD.</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.05(3) and 760 CMR 56.03(1) and 760 CMR 56.03(8).</p>
<p>NO LATER THAN 15 DAYS FROM ZBA ACTION</p>	<p>If the Applicant wishes to challenge the ZBA's assertion that it can deny the application on one or more of the grounds set forth in 760 CMR 56.03(1), the Applicant must file its written response with the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) within 15 days of its receipt of the ZBA's notice. The Applicant must also provide the ZBA with a copy of its challenge.</p>

<i>TIME PERIOD</i>	<i>ACTION</i>
<p>NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS FROM FILING OF APPLICANT'S CHALLENGE</p>	<p>DHCD must issue its decision re: the Applicant's appeal within 30 days of the receipt of all materials. Any failure of DHCD to issue a timely decision shall be deemed a determination in favor of the municipality.</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.03(8).</p>
<p>NO LATER THAN 20 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF DHCD'S DECISION ON A "SAFE HARBOR" APPEAL</p>	<p>The Applicant or ZBA may appeal DHCD's decision by filing an interlocutory appeal with the HAC and the ZBA's Public Hearing must be stayed until the conclusion of the appeal.</p>
<p>WITHIN 180 DAYS OF THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC HEARING</p>	<p>Except with the written consent of the Applicant, the Public Hearing shall not extend beyond 180 days of the opening of the Public Hearing. The 180 day limit presumes that the Applicant has made timely submissions of materials in response to reasonable information requests by the ZBA and that there have not been any significant changes in the proposed project during the Public Hearing. If significant modifications do occur, the ZBA will normally ask the Applicant to consent to an extension of the 180-day limit.</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.05(3)</p>

Table Continued on Next Page

TIME PERIOD	ACTION
<p>NO LATER THAN 40 DAYS FROM THE CLOSING OF PUBLIC HEARING</p>	<p>The ZBA must “render a decision” (Denial, Approval, or Approval with Conditions), based on a majority vote of the Board within 40 days of the closing of the Public Hearing, unless such time period is extended by written agreement of the ZBA and Applicant. The ZBA shall file its decision with 14 days in the office of the city or town clerk and forward a copy to the Applicant or its designated representative, and to DHCD”.</p> <p>Note: Although the regulations state that the ZBA needs only to “render a decision” within 40 days, most ZBAs take a conservative approach and file an executed Comprehensive Permit decision within 40 days of the closing of the Public Hearing.</p> <p>Note: The majority vote is based upon the number of originally sitting members. For example, assume that there were 5 announced sitting members. However, at the closing of the Public Hearing, only three members remain eligible to vote. A vote to grant the Comprehensive Permit would require the support of all 3 of the voting-eligible members. Therefore, if a voting member is at risk of losing voting eligibility because the member is unable to attend a Public Hearing and has already used the Mullin Rule for one absence (assuming the municipality has adopted the Mullin Rule), the ZBA will normally ask the Applicant if it desires to proceed with the hearing or continue the hearing to a date on which all voting members can be present. SEE CMR 760 56.05(8).</p>
<p>NO LATER THAN 20 DAYS FROM DATE ZBA DECISION IS FILED WITH TOWN CLERK</p>	<p>If the ZBA denies the permit or approves the permit with conditions or requirements that the Applicant feels make the project “Uneconomic,” the Applicant may appeal the ZBA decision to the Housing Appeals Committee within 20 days after the written decision has been filed in the office of the city or town clerk.</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.05(9)(b) and 760 CMR 56.06(4)(g)</p> <p>If the ZBA approves the Comprehensive Permit, any person aggrieved may appeal within the time period and to the court provided in M.G.L. c. 40A, §17. The court would normally be either the Land Court or Superior Court.</p> <p>SEE 760 CMR 56.05(9)(a)</p>

5. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER MUNICIPAL BOARDS/
DEPARTMENTS OR COMMITTEES
6. LOCAL COMPRHESIVE PERMIT RULES, APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS,
AND APPLICATION FEES
7. PUBLIC HEARING FORMAT/CONTINUANCE OF PUBLIC HEARING/LEGAL
NOTICE REQUIREMENTS
8. ZBA VOTING REQUIREMENTS (MULLIN RULE RELIEF IF ONE PUBLIC
HEARING MISSED BY A VOTING ZBA MEMBER)

9. MOST CRITICAL 40B APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Applicant Status: Public Agency, Non-Profit, or Limited Dividend Organization

B. Evidence of Site Control (Deed, Lease, Option, or P&S Agreement)

C. Project Eligibility Letter from Subsidizing Agency (primarily MassHousing, DHCD, Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), and MassDevelopment). The Subsidizing Agency must make the following findings in accordance with 760 CMR 56.04 (4):

(a) that the proposed Project appears generally eligible under the requirements of the housing subsidy program, subject to final approval under 760 CMR 56.04(7);

(b) that the site of the proposed Project is generally appropriate for residential development, taking into consideration information provided by the municipality or other parties regarding municipal actions previously taken to meet affordable housing needs, such as inclusionary zoning, multifamily districts adopted under M.G.L. c.40A, and overlay districts adopted under M.G.L. c.40R, (such finding, with supporting reasoning, to be set forth in reasonable detail);

(c) that the conceptual project design is generally appropriate for the site on which it is located, taking into consideration factors that may include proposed use, conceptual site plan and building massing, topography, environmental resources, and integration into existing development patterns (such finding, with supporting reasoning, to be set forth in reasonable detail);

(d) that the proposed Project appears financially feasible within the housing market in which it will be situated (based on comparable rentals or sales figures);

(e) that an initial pro forma has been reviewed, including a land valuation determination consistent with the Department's guidelines, and the Project appears financially feasible and consistent with the Department's guidelines for Cost Examination and Limitations on Profits and Distributions (if applicable) on the basis of estimated development costs;

(f) that the Applicant is a public agency, a non profit organization, or a Limited Dividend Organization, and it meets the general eligibility standards of the housing program; and

(g) that the Applicant controls the site, based on evidence that the Applicant or a related entity owns the site, or holds an option or contract to acquire such interest in the site, or has such other interest in the site as is deemed by the Subsidizing Agency to be sufficient to control the site. The Subsidizing Agency shall provide copies of its written determination of Project Eligibility to the Department, the Chief Executive Officer of the municipality, and the Board

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR CLARIFICATION OF SUBMITTED INFORMATION THAT CAN BE REASONABLY REQUESTED FROM APPLICANT DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING (MAKE SURE YOU HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO BE ABLE TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION.) **REMEMBER: THE APPLICANT IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT “PRELIMINARY” NOT “FINAL” INFORMATION. MORE DEFINITIVE INFORMATION WILL NEED TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE FINAL APPROVAL AND/OR BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION STAGE.**
11. LAND VALUE APPRAISAL BASED UPON EXISTING “BY-RIGHT” ZONING PREPARED BY AN APPRAISER LISTED ON MASSHOUSING’S APPROVED APPRAISER LIST. THIS APPRAISAL IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ISSUANCE OF A PROJECT ELIGIBILITY LETTER (PEL).
12. TIMELY REVIEW OF APPLICATION BY ZBA
13. TIMELY IDENTIFICATION OF **“REAL”** ISSUES RELEVANT TO A 40B REVIEW. GIVEN THE 180-DAY LIMITATION ON THE PUBLIC HEARING, BOARDS CAN’T AFFORD TO WASTE TIME ON **“RED HERRING”** ISSUES.
14. TIMELY IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS WHERE INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW CONSULTANTS WILL BE REQUIRED. PEER REVIEWERS FUNDED BY THE APPLICANT THROUGH DEPOSITS TO THE MUNICIPALITY’S 53G ACCOUNT ARE CHARGED TO **REVIEW** STUDIES SUBMITTED BY THE APPLICANT. PEER REVIEWERS CAN’T PREPARE INDEPENDENT STUDIES. ALL WRITTEN RESULTS AND REPORTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE PUBLIC RECORD. PEER REVIEWS SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL CRITICAL ISSUES ARE CLEARLY DEFINED.
15. FINANCIAL REVIEW (PRO FORMA REVIEW). SEE 760 CMR 56.05 (6) FOR DETAILED GUIDELINES ON HOW AND WHEN A FINANCIAL PEER REVIEW CAN BE DONE. FINANCIAL PEER REVIEWS CAN NOT BE CONDUCTED UNTIL THE PUBLIC HEARING CLOSING DATE IS APPROACHING AND DRAFT CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED AND SHARED WITH THE APPLICANT.

16. REASONABLE RETURN DEFINITION AS ESTABLISHED BY SUBSIDIZING AGENCY AND/OR FINANCING PROGRAM
17. TIMELY PROCUREMENT OF PEER REVIEW CONSULTANTS
18. TIMELY COMPLETION OF PEER REVIEWS
19. COOPERATION AMONG ZBA/DEPARTMENTS/COMMITTEES/APPLICANT
20. OPEN MEETING LAW/CHAPTER 30B PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS
21. NEGOTIATION OPPORTUNITIES/PROCESS
22. 40B SUBSIDIZED HOUSING INVENTORY (SHI).
https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/10/shiinventory_0.pdf
23. REQUIREMENTS FOR INCLUSION OF UNITS IN SHI:
 - A. Units must satisfy all applicable affordability requirements
 - B. Units must be subject to a long term use restriction limiting occupancy to income eligible households for a specified period of time (at least thirty years for newly created affordable units and at least fifteen years for rehabilitated units). Most Comprehensive Permit decisions today require that the affordable units remain affordable in perpetuity. The 2002 Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court “Ardemore” Decision ([Zoning Board of Appeals of Wellesley & another vs. Ardemore Apartments Limited Partnership](#)) stated that 40B projects must continue to satisfy the 40B affordability requirements unless the 40B project complies with the underlying zoning requirements or a specific term of affordability was included in the Comprehensive Permit decision.
<http://masscases.com/cases/sjc/436/436mass811.html>
 - C. Units must be rented/sold in accordance with an approved Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan (AFHMP)
23. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN “RENTAL” AND “OWNERSHIP” 40B DEVELOPMENTS RE: UNITS QUALIFYING FOR INCLUSION IN SHI: 100% OF THE AFFORDABLE **AND** MARKET UNITS IN A RENTAL DEVELOPMENT COUNT BUT ONLY THE AFFORDABLE UNITS COUNT IN AN “OWNERSHIP” PROJECT.
24. EXCEPTIONS (AKA WAIVERS) ALLOWED FOR ZONING BY-LAWS AND OTHER **LOCAL** RULES BUT NOT FOR STATE WETLANDS PROTECTION ACT, STATE TITLE 5 REQUIREMENTS, AND OTHER **STATE** REQUIREMENTS. ZBA CAN NOT GRANT EXCEPTIONS TO ANY BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS.

25. ZBA DECISION ALTERNATIVES

A. DENIAL OF COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION

Not common unless ZBA feels that there is a clear reason to deny based upon statutory minima requirements, Safe Harbor provisions, or local health, safety, environmental, design, open space or planning local concerns that outweigh regional housing needs. Prior to denying a Comprehensive Permit application, the ZBA should consult with its Town Counsel and other advisors to assess the validity and strength of its arguments for denial given the Applicant's likely appeal of the denial to the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC).

B. APPROVAL OF COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT APPLICATION AS SUBMITTED

Rarely, if ever, occurs

C. APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

Most common ZBA action in recent 40B history

Conditions should not make the project "Uneconomic." If Applicant feels that Conditions do so, Applicant is likely to file an appeal with the Housing Appeals Committee (HAC)

D. HOW IS "UNECONOMIC" INTERPRETED BY THE HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE?

OVERLY SIMPLIFIED EXPLANATION:

RENTAL PROJECTS

The standard "Economic" benchmark is that a project's Return on Total Cost (ROTC) must be at least 450 basis points higher than the 10-year Treasury bill rate.

For example, if the applicable 10-year Treasury rate is 2.50%, any ZBA-imposed condition(s) that resulted in the project's estimated ROTC falling below 7.00% (2.50% + 4.50%) would be considered to make the project "Uneconomic".

ROTC is calculated by dividing the project's estimated Net Operating Income (NOI) by the project's estimated Total Development Cost (TDC). Net Operating Income is the revenue remaining after deducting all Operating Expenses and Replacement Reserves from collected revenue.

For example, if a project's estimated NOI is \$700,000 and the project's estimated TDC is \$10,000,000, the project's ROTC would be 7.00%. The ROTC calculation methodology assumes an unleveraged project.

FOR SALE PROJECTS

The standard "Economic" benchmark is that the estimated Developer's Fee must be at least 15% of the estimated Total Development Cost (not including any Developer's Fee). Any ZBA-imposed condition(s) that would result in the estimated Developer's Fee falling below 15% would make the project "Uneconomic".

The Developer's Fee is the difference between estimated Total Sales Revenue and estimated Total Development Cost. The Developer's Fee is then divided by the Total Development Cost. For example, a project has estimated total Sales Revenue of \$11,700,000 and an estimated Total Development Cost of \$10,000,000, resulting in a Development Fee of \$1,700,000 or 17% of Total Development Costs. If the conditions in the Comprehensive Permit decision would reduce the projected Developer's Fee to less than \$1,500,000, resulting in a Developer's Fee less than 15% of Total Development Cost, those condition(s) would make the project "Uneconomic."

NOTE: The maximum allowable Developer's Fee is 20% of Total Development Cost. However, the Developer is also entitled to a reasonable (i.e. within normal industry standards) Builder's Profit above and beyond the maximum allowable Developer's Fee if the Developer or a related party to the Developer serves as the General Contractor.)

EXPLANATION BASED UPON APPLICABLE EXCERPTS FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT 40B GUIDELINES AND COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT REGULATIONS:

GUIDELINES

Definitions

Uneconomic – means any condition imposed by a Board in its approval of a Comprehensive Permit, brought about by a single factor or a combination of factors, to the extent that it makes it impossible (a) for a public agency or a nonprofit organization to proceed in building or operating a Project without financial loss, or (b) for a Limited Dividend Organization to proceed and still realize a reasonable return in building or operating such Project within the limitations set by the Subsidizing Agency on the size or character of the Project, or on the amount or nature of the Subsidy or on the tenants, rentals, and income permissible, and without substantially changing the rent levels and unit sizes

proposed by the Applicant. See 760 CMR 56.02, 56.05(8)(d) and the definitions above for Amount, Applicable 10-Year U.S. Treasury Rate, Minimum Return on Total Cost, Net Operating Income, Return on Total Cost, and ROTC Threshold Increment.

Amount – means, as used in the definition of Reasonable Return at 760 CMR 56.02(c) and (d) with respect to profit to the Developer or payment of development fees from the initial construction of the Project, the greater of (i) such profit or fees expressed as a dollar amount; (ii) such profit or fees expressed as a percentage of total development costs, or (iii) with respect to the payment of development fees from the initial construction of the Project only, the maximum total developer fee payable to the Developer pursuant to a formula established by the Subsidizing Agency under its regulations or guidelines for the Project Subsidy, expressed either as a dollar amount or a percentage of total development costs.

Applicable 10-Year U.S. Treasury Rate – means the interest rate for 10-year notes as published by the U.S. Treasury on the later of the date of (a) the Project Eligibility Application, (b) if applicable, a revised pro forma is submitted to the Board, or (c) if applicable, on appeal to the Housing Appeals Committee, the date of the Pre-Hearing Order.

Minimum Return on Total Cost – means a Return on Total Cost that is less than the sum of the ROTC Threshold Increment and the Applicable Ten-Year U.S. Treasury Rate, which shall be the minimum return necessary to realize a reasonable return from the operation of a Project for purposes of determining whether a condition imposed by a Zoning Board in its approval of a Comprehensive Permit results in a Project being Uneconomic.

Net Operating Income(NOI) -- means rental income less operating expenses and replacement reserves assuming a vacancy rate determined by the Subsidizing Agency; all rents, vacancy rate, operating expense and replacement reserve estimates shall be based upon the date used to determine the Applicable 10-year U.S. Treasury Rate.

ROTC Threshold Increment – As of December, 2014, 450 basis points.

REGULATIONS

760 CMR 56.02 Definitions

Reasonable Return - means, as calculated according to guidelines issued by the department, and with respect to

a. building an ownership project or continuing care retirement community, that profit to the Developer is not more than 20% and not less than 15% of the total development costs;

b. building a rental project:

i. that payment of development fees from the initial construction of the Project is not more than a reasonable fee as determined by the Subsidizing Agency's program limitations and not less than 10% of the total development costs; and

ii. that commencing upon the Project's initial occupancy, distributions of profit funded by operating revenues shall not exceed a reasonable rate relative to the Developer's equity in the Project as determined by the Subsidizing Agency's program requirements;

c. building an ownership project, continuing care retirement community or rental project, for the purpose of determining whether the Project is Uneconomic, that profit to the Developer or payment of development fees from the initial construction of the Project, if an amount lower than the minimum set forth above in (a) or (b), as applicable, has been determined to be feasible as set forth in the Project Eligibility Letter, then such lower amount shall be the minimum; or

d. building an ownership project, continuing care retirement community or rental project, for the purpose of determining whether the Project is Uneconomic, when one or more conditions imposed by the Board decrease the total number of units in a Project, if those conditions do not address a valid health, safety, environmental, design, open space or other Local Concern, then the amount as calculated prior to the imposition of such conditions shall be the minimum, provided that such amount does not exceed the maximum return set forth (a), above, or fall below the minimum set forth in (a), (b) or (c), above, as applicable.

760 CMR 56.05(8)(d) Board Decisions

(d) Uneconomic Conditions. The Board shall not issue any order or impose any condition that would cause the building or operation of the Project to be Uneconomic, including a requirement imposed by the Board on the Applicant:

1. to incur costs of public infrastructure or improvements off the project site that:

a. are not generally imposed by a Local Board on unsubsidized housing;

b. address a pre-existing condition affecting the municipality generally; or

c. are disproportionate to the impacts reasonably attributable to the Project; or

2. to reduce the number of units for reasons other than evidence of Local Concerns within the purview of the Board (see 760 CMR 56.05(4)(e); see also 760 CMR 56.07(3)(c – h) regarding evidence that would be heard by the Committee on an appeal), such as design, engineering, or environmental deficiencies that directly result from the impact of a Project on a particular site.

If a proposed nonresidential element of a Project is not allowed by-right under applicable provisions of the current municipal zoning code, a condition shall not be considered Uneconomic if it would modify or remove such nonresidential element.

26. CONDITIONS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE TO INCLUDE IN A COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT DECISION: A MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT (SJC) DECISION IN THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS OF AMESBURY V. HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE , SJC-10637, September 3, 2010 ADDRESSES THIS ISSUE:

“This court concluded that the scope of a local zoning board's authority under G.L. c.40B § 21, to impose conditions on the issuance of a comprehensive permit to construct low or moderate income housing is limited to the types of conditions that the various local boards, in whose stead the local zoning board acts, might impose, i.e., matters of clear local concern, such as building construction and design, siting, zoning, health, and safety; thus, insofar as a local zoning board's conditions on the issuance of a comprehensive permit to construct low or moderate income housing included requirements that went to matters such as, inter alia, project funding, regulatory documents, financial documents, and the timing of sale of affordable units in relation to market rate units, those conditions were subject to challenge as ultra vires of the board's authority under § 21. [755-758]

This court concluded that the Housing Appeals Committee (committee) of the Department of Housing and Community Development, in reviewing conditions imposed by a local zoning board on the issuance of a comprehensive permit to construct low or moderate income housing, is authorized in the first instance to review and strike conditions that are not within the local zoning board's power to impose or that otherwise intrude impermissibly into areas of direct programmatic concern to State or Federal funding and regulatory authorities, separate from any analysis of whether such conditions render the project "uneconomic" as that term is defined in G.L. c.40B, § 20 [758-763]; thus, the committee was within its power to strike or modify by summary decision conditions imposed by a local zoning board that concerned matters properly within the regulatory responsibility of State housing agencies or State and Federal funding and supervising agencies, and not of local concern [763-765].”

All ZBAs and their Town Counsels should familiarize themselves with this Amesbury decision. The decision is available at:

www.masscases.com/cases/sjc/457/457mass748.html

27. APPEAL VENUE FOR APPLICANT: HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE (HAC)

APPEAL VENUE FOR OTHER AGGRIEVED PARTIES: SUPERIOR COURT OR LAND COURT

AN APPEAL OF AN HAC, SUPERIOR COURT OR LAND COURT DECISION MAY ULTIMATELY BE DECIDED BY THE MASSACHUSETTS SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT (SJC), AS WAS THE CASE IN THE AFOREMENTIONED ARDEMORE AND AMESBURY DECISIONS.

28. POST COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT DECISION REQUIREMENTS:

A. **“FINAL APPROVAL”** BY SUBSIDIZING AGENCY (SUBSIDIZING AGENCY MUST REVIEW ANY DIFFERENCES IN PROPOSED PROJECT SINCE ITS ISSUANCE OF A PROJECT ELIGIBILITY LETTER (PEL) AND THE PROJECT AS APPROVED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT DECISION. SUBSIDIZING AGENCY MUST REAFFIRM FINDINGS THAT WERE REQUIRED FOR ISSUANCE OF PEL. FINAL APPROVAL INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO, THE SUBSIDIZING AGENCY’S REVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT CONDITIONS, AFFIRMATIVE FAIR HOUSING MARKETING PLAN, LOTTERY PLAN, EVIDENCE OF FINANCING COMMITMENT, REGULATORY AGREEMENT, AND ELIGIBILITY AND LIMITED DIVIDEND RESTRICTION MONITORING AGREEMENTS.

B. FINAL ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURAL PLANS FOR BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION

C. COST CERTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

29. CHANGES IN PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING DECISION. SEE 760 CMR 56.05 (11)

A. Substantial Change or Insubstantial Change

IMPORTANT: ZBA MUST RESPOND (MAKE A DETERMINATION AS TO WHETHER THE REQUESTED CHANGE IS A SUBSTANTIAL OR INSUBSTANTIAL CHANGE) WITHIN 20 DAYS. OTHERWISE, THE REQUESTED CHANGE IS DEEMED APPROVED. A REVIEW OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES REQUIRES A NEW PUBLIC HEARING.

30. INSPECTIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION PERIOD

31. LIMITED DIVIDEND RESTRICTIONS AND COST CERTIFICATION

32. LOTTERY, FAIR HOUSING, LOCAL PREFERENCE

33. INCOME, ASSET AND FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER STATUS REQUIREMENTS FOR AFFORDABLE UNITS

34. REGULATORY AGREEMENT

35. MONITORING SERVICES AGREEMENT (TENANT OR HOMEOWNER ELIGIBILITY COMPLIANCE). MONITORING SERVICES AGREEMENT (LIMITED DIVIDEND RESTRICTIONS)

36. UNIVERSAL DEED RIDER (FOR HOME OWNERSHIP PROJECTS)

37. TRANSFER OF COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT. SEE 760 CMR 56.05 (12) (b)
38. LAPSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PERMIT. SEE 760 CMR 56.05 (12) (c)
39. TIME LAPSES AND EFFECT ON BEING ABLE TO INCLUDE UNITS IN
SUBSIDIZED HOUSING INVENTORY (760 CMR 56.03 (2) (c))

SPECIFIC CHAPTER 40B PROJECT REVIEW ISSUES

1. SITE CONTROL
2. QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE OF DEVELOPMENT TEAM. FLEXIBILITY AND COOPERATIVENESS OF DEVELOPMENT TEAM.
3. DENSITY AND DESIGN

See: Handbook: Approach to Ch 40B Design Reviews available at:

<http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/40b-plan/handbook-approach-to-ch-40b-design-reviews.html>

4. SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (SAC) / BEDROOM MIX

Although most municipalities and residents are concerned about potential increases in school-age children that could be generated by 40B projects, any potential increase in school-age children is a non-issue from the HAC's perspective.

Given the need for family housing suitable for larger families, all 40B projects (except those projects specifically designed for senior housing or certain special needs populations) must have at least 10% of their units as 3 Bedroom or larger units.

This 10% 3 Bedroom or larger unit requirement also applies to "all other Affordable Housing Production Developments funded, assisted, or approved by a State Housing Agency on or after May 1, 2014" as noted in the Interagency Agreement dated January 17, 2014. The Interagency Agreement (DHCD, MHP, MassHousing, MassDevelopment, and CEDAC) is available at:

<https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/who-we-help/pdfs/familyhousinginteragencyagreement.pdf>

5. WETLANDS/RESOURCE AREA IMPACTS

6. SITE PLAN, BUILDING DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING
(Building massing, building height, exterior building design, ADA compliance, landscaping, screening/buffering, road/sidewalk design, parking, public safety vehicle access, exterior lighting, setbacks, impacts on adjacent and nearby properties, open space, etc.)
7. ENGINEERING
(Storm drainage, sewer, domestic water, fire protection, grading, road design, blasting, erosion control, wetlands protection, wetlands replication, construction specifications, etc.)
8. TRAFFIC SAFETY AND TRAFFIC VOLUME
9. OTHER IMPACTS ON NEIGHBORHOOD/TOWN
10. MITIGATION OFFERED/REQUESTED TO LESSEN ADVERSE IMPACTS
11. PRO FORMA REVIEW (See 760 CMR 56.05(6) for explanation of when and why pro forma reviews should be done)

**REPRESENTATIVE CHAPTER 40B-RELATED DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT
DHCD's WEBSITE**

Chapter 40B is a state statute, which enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions.

Top tasks

Housing Production Plans
Subsidized Housing Inventory

All other tasks

Comprehensive Permit Guidance and Information
Chapter 40 B - Unit Sale Prices and Rents
Local Initiative Program (LIP)
Chapter 40 B Design Review Handbook
Housing Appeals Committee
Guidelines for Calculating General Land Area Minimum

**REPRESENTATIVE CHAPTER 40B-RELATED DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE AT THE
HOUSING APPEALS COMMITTEE (HAC) WEBSITE**

The mission of the Housing Appeals Committee is to provide, within the parameters of the comprehensive permit process established by G.L. c. 40B, §§ 20-23, an impartial forum to resolve conflicts arising from the siting of new affordable housing.

General Information

[Chapter 40 B - Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law Overview](#)

[Chapter 40 B - Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law Regulations - 760 CMR 56.00 \(Comprehensive Permit; Low or Moderate Income Housing\)](#)

[Comprehensive Permit Information and Guidelines](#)

[Handbook: Approach to Chapter 40B Design Reviews](#)

[Guidelines for Local Review of Comprehensive Permits](#)

Housing Appeals Committee - Decisions

All decisions and published rulings of the Housing Appeals Committee are available on searchable databases at Lexis.com, WestLaw.com, Sociallaw.com, and LandLaw.com. Those from the past several years appear below.

[Waltham, Alliance Realty Partners](#)
Committee Decision - 02/13/18

Note: all post 2007 Decisions are listed at site.

[Hingham, River Stone, LLC v.](#)
Committee Decision - 10/31/17

[Amesbury, Roger LeBlanc, v.](#)
Committee Decision - 09/27/17

Contact Information

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MassHousing Planning and Programs Department

Chapter 40B Affordable Housing

Chapter 40B is the Commonwealth's regional planning law. [Chapter 40B](#) promotes responsible housing growth, by creating a streamlined permitting process for eligible projects that utilize subsidized financing, and that meaningfully accommodate lower-income residents.

Since its passage in 1969, Chapter 40B has supported almost all affordable housing construction in Massachusetts outside of the Commonwealth's largest cities. Approximately 70,000 total units have been produced under Chapter 40B, of which over 35,000 units are restricted to households making less than 80% of the area median income (AMI).

Chapter 40B promotes regional planning solutions, and new housing consistent with local and regional planning needs. The law balances the regional need for affordable housing development with local public health, public safety, design, and environmental welfare needs.

The statute allows eligible affordable housing developments to receive a comprehensive permit, even when projects require waivers of local zoning. In cities and towns that achieve certain affordable housing production goals, zoning boards of appeal may reject 40B proposals without facing an appeal from the developer, giving such cities and towns

QUICK LINKS

[Build Multifamily Housing](#)

[Preserve Multifamily Housing](#)

[Planning & Programs](#)

[Planning for Housing
Production](#)

[Chapter 40B's Local Impact](#)

[40B Cost Certification](#)

[40B Affordability Monitoring](#)

[40B Information from EOHEd](#)

[Affordable Housing Trust](#)

[Sober Housing/CCRI](#)

[Success Stories](#)

40B COST CERTIFICATION

Access 40B Home Ownership [Cost Certification materials and information](#).

40B CONFERENCE

MassHousing is glad to co-sponsor the Chapter 40B

Conference: *Shaping the 40B Process in Your Community*, May 4 in Waltham. [Learn more](#).

40B Rental Affordability Monitoring

 [40B Compliance Monitoring Spreadsheet](#)

40B Homebuyer Closing Documents

 [Affordable Housing Restriction \(Deed Rider\)](#)

great discretion over 40B development. Municipalities that have not achieved minimum affordable housing production thresholds have a more limited ability to reject 40B proposals.

MassHousing is one of the state's four subsidizing agencies responsible for administering development under Chapter 40B. MassHousing oversees projects financed by the Agency, as well as projects financed by the [Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston](#), through its private member banks.

	Affordable Housing Restriction Mortgage
	Closing Attorney Instructions
	Compliance Certificate
	Homebuyer Disclosure Statement
	Notice of Affordable Housing Restriction

Chapter 40B for Residents and Local Officials

Planning for Housing Production Grant Program

MassHousing has made \$2 million available to cities and towns that are actively planning to increase their supply of affordable housing. This new technical assistance program will provide cities and towns with additional technical capacity to implement their own housing production goals, and deliver new mixed-income housing. The program will empower municipalities to control their own development destinies, by progressing toward, achieving and exceeding the state's 10% 40B affordable housing goal. [Please click here for more information, and to apply for funding.](#)

Local Impact

Chapter 40B helps communities meet the Commonwealth's housing needs, by providing more flexible approaches that allow for the creation of new homes for individuals, families, and older adults, across a range of incomes. [Please click here to see the difference Chapter 40B housing has made locally, to access resources for municipalities with current Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit applications, and to search for affordable homeownership opportunities.](#)

Chapter 40B for Affordable Housing Developers

MassHousing is one of the state's four subsidizing agencies responsible for administering development under Chapter 40B. MassHousing acts as subsidizing agency for 40B projects financed by the Agency, as well as projects financed by the [Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston](#) through its private member banks.

Through its Planning and Programs Department, MassHousing issues initial and final site approval to 40B proposals; enters into regulatory agreements with 40B developers, providing for housing affordability and fair housing marketing, and limiting the profits of 40B developments; and monitors compliance with housing affordability and profit restrictions.

Housing developers are encouraged to carefully review the [Chapter 40B regulations](#), the [40B guidelines](#), and [40B Design Principles Handbook](#), which steer the comprehensive permit process.

Comprehensive Permit site approval applications for [rental](#) and [homeownership](#) projects are available as fillable PDFs. Developers are encouraged to discuss potential projects with a member of MassHousing's Planning and Programs Department prior to submitting a formal application for site approval.

Developers pursuing housing under a comprehensive permit may find detailed information on [affordable housing monitoring](#), and on the [40B cost certification process](#).

Contact Information

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Resources

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APRIL

2

2018

Ch. 40B: Project Eligibility Letter (PEL) - Invitation to Apply

This is the Project Eligibility Letter (PEL) application package with sections to be completed throughout.

- Rental Financing
- Chapter 40B

MARCH

7

2018

Municipality's Role in Chapter 40B presentation (SWAP and TRIC)

This presentation covers the municipalities role in Chapter 40B and includes recent 40B activity in the state, community's role in the Project Eligibility process, what's a "Friendly 40B," examples and proactive planning for multifamily development.

- Community Assistance
- Chapter 40B

FEBRUARY

15

2018

Ch. 40B resource: Public Hearing Protocol poster

The Public Hearing Protocol poster is designed to be printed on large poster board and placed outside Public Hearings for the general public. This board covers general information on Public Hearings as well as the sequence of events during a hearing.

- Community Assistance
- Chapter 40B

FEBRUARY

15

2018

Ch. 40B resource: Order of the Public Hearing

The Public Hearing Guidance for Board Chairs document is a resource for ZBA chairs conducting a hearing on Chapter 40B.

- Community Assistance
- Chapter 40B

DECEMBER

19

2017

Testimony of MHP's Clark Ziegler on Ch. 40B

On Dec. 19, 2017, MHP Executive Director Clark Ziegler testified before the Joint Committee on Housing regarding various legislative proposals to amend Ch. 40B. Ziegler testified that "the need for zoning mechanism like Chapter 40B is greater than ever" and urged the committee to reject legislation that would weaken its effectiveness.

- Community Assistance
- Rental Financing
- Policy
- Chapter 40B

NOVEMBER

28

2017

40B Handbook Training (11/27/17) | Framingham

Judi Barrett, consultant for MHP's 40B Technical Assistance Program, presentation covers the critical details regarding the 40B Handbook for Zoning Boards of Appeals. The presentation covers, 40B process from project eligibility to cost certification, what's the board role, crucial deadlines, and best practices for working with developers.

- Community Assistance
- Chapter 40B

1

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