



# Town of Reading



**RPSGUEST** WiFi password:  
**R0cket33r**  
(second character is a ZERO)

**Special Town Meeting  
September 29, 2014**





# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 1 Reports

### Permanent Building Committee update

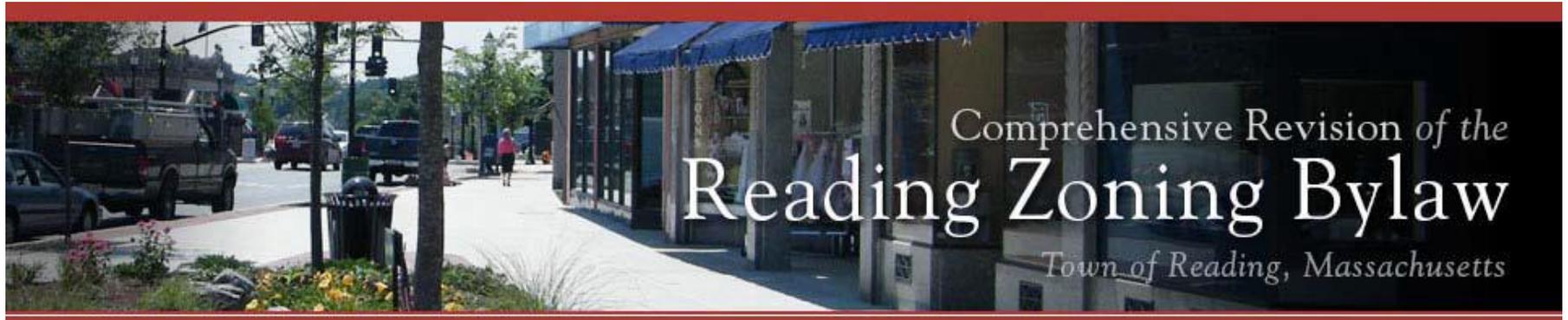
Stephen Crook, Chair of Bylaw Committee

### Charter Review Committee update

Chair Alan Foulds

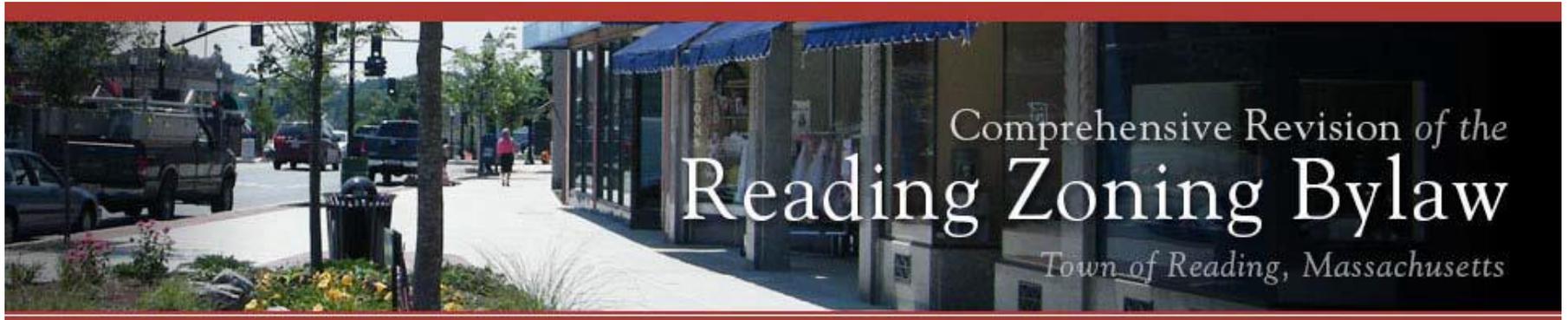
### Zoning Advisory Committee update

Chair Marsie West



## Zoning Background:

- Regulates use and development of property
- First adopted in 1928
- Numerous piecemeal changes
- Conflicts with community goals, creates hurdles
- Complicated zoning is costly and time consuming



## Project Goals:

- **Simplify, Modernize, and Clarify**
- Improve permitting
- Develop initial draft by July 15, 2014
- Final draft for Warrant September 23, 2014
- Recommend Article for November 2014 Town Meeting



## **Zoning Advisory Committee (ZAC) Representing**

\*Marsie West, Chair

David Traniello, Vice Chair

\*David Tuttle

\*Jeff Hansen

\*Eric Bergstrom

\*Erin Calvo-Bacci

George Katsoufis

\*Town Meeting Members

Jean Delios

Jessie Wilson

Board of Selectmen

Zoning Board of Appeals

Community Planning & Development Commission

Community Planning & Development Commission

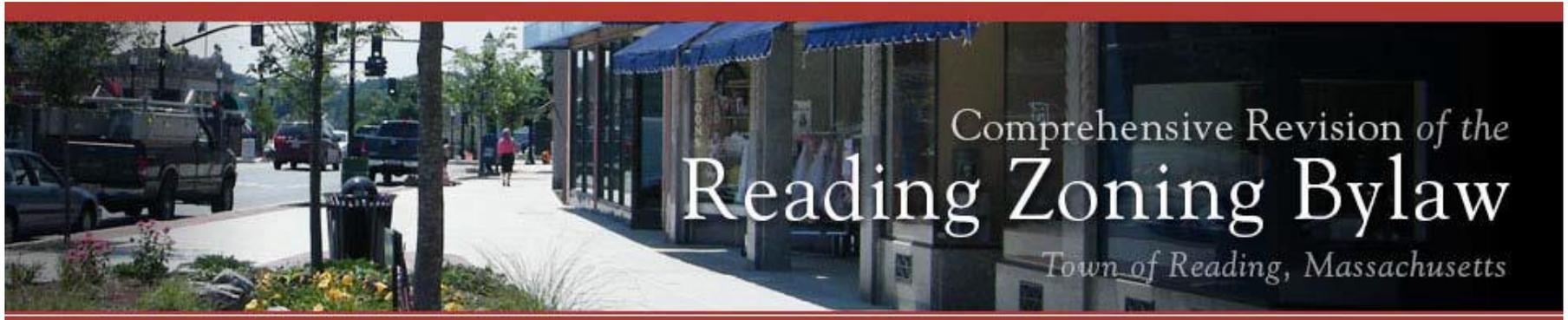
Resident, Financial Services Professional

Resident, Local business owner

Resident, Associate member of CPDC

Assistant Town Manager Community Services

Community Development Administrator



## Key Areas:

- **Definitions, Use Tables, Accessory Uses** – Updated
- **Sign regulations, Parking requirements** – Modernized
- **Non-Conforming lots, Non-Conforming uses** – Daytime government focus
- **Site Plan Review and Special Permits** – Clarified and Streamlined
- **Planned Unit Development (PUD) Districts** – Easier to Understand
- **Aquifer Protection (AQ) District** – Simplified
- **Removed Obsolete Districts** - Wetlands Protection & Downtown Mixed Use



## Process:

- 40 public meetings and 4 public forums seeking public comment
- Project Website: [www.vhb.com/readingzoning](http://www.vhb.com/readingzoning)
- Community Forums including interactive polling
- Reading Co-op and RNR Chamber After Hours Meeting/Business Community
- Input from:
  - Community Planning and Development Commission, Historical Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development Committee, Conservation Commission and RCASA
  - General Public, Town Meeting Members, Town Staff, Lions, Rotary and others.



## Key zoning updates:

### ▪ **Added:**

- Definitions and Tables
- Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries (moratorium expires Nov. 2014)

### ▪ **Removed:**

- Wetlands Protection District
- Downtown Mixed Use Overlay District

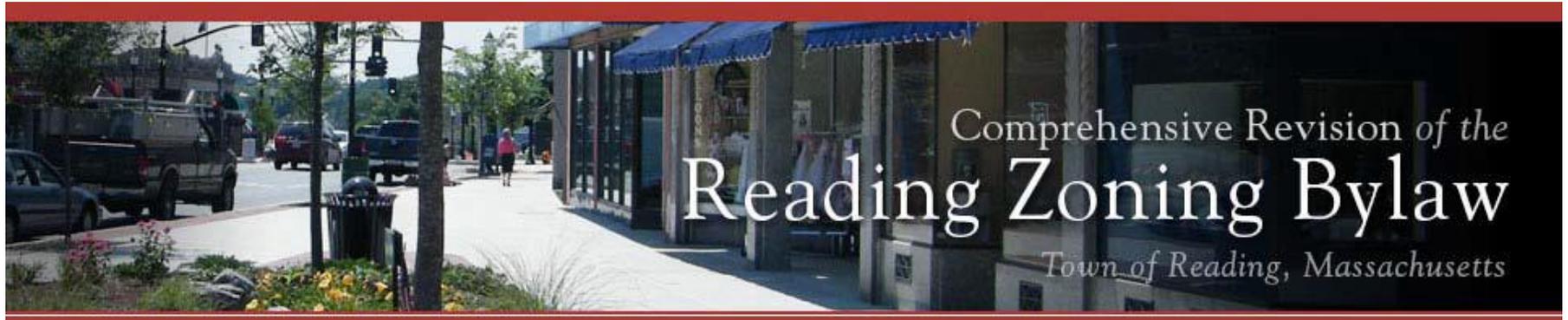
### ▪ **Modernized:**

- Uses Graphics to Illustrate Concepts
- Reorganized for Ease of Use
- Checklists and Permitting Flow Charts to Accompany Zoning



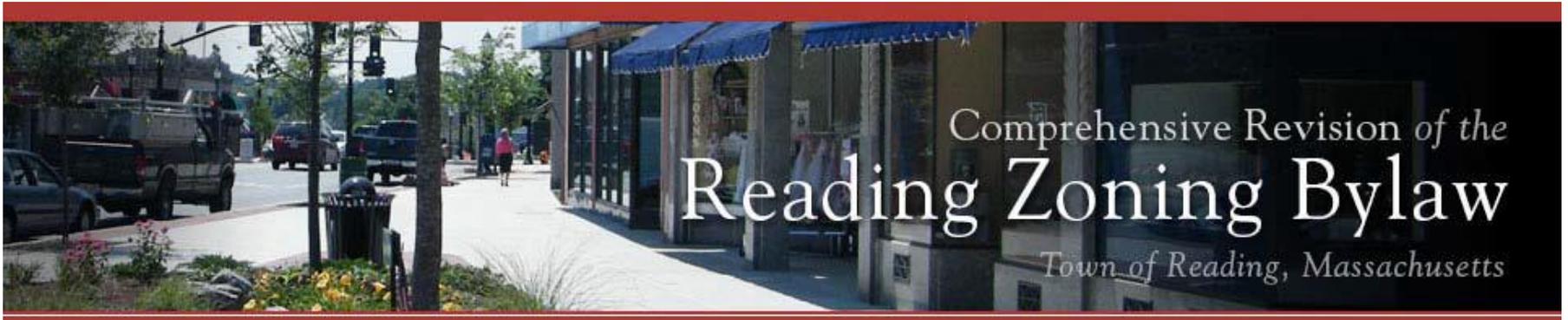
## Public Input Driving Key Changes:

- **Accessory Apartments** – make rules clearer and process simpler, but preserve neighborhood character
- **Medical Marijuana Dispensaries** – locate away from areas children congregate, near public transportation, not in remote locations
- **Non-Conforming** – clarify vague language and add staff review of routine construction
- **Signs** – simplify regulations so they are easy to understand
- **Permitting Process** – clarify and streamline the process
- **Aquifer Protection District** – relax standards, consistent with other communities



## Schedule:

- Articles 9 – 13 are before Town Meeting tonight
  - Authority & Purpose (Article 9)
  - Delete Obsolete Districts ( Article11 & Article12)
  - Establishment of Districts (Article 10)
  - Special Requirements for Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries (Article 13)
- Subsequent Town Meeting (November 2014) – comprehensive update ZBL
- Future, TBA - tracked a list of items for possible Zoning Bylaw changes

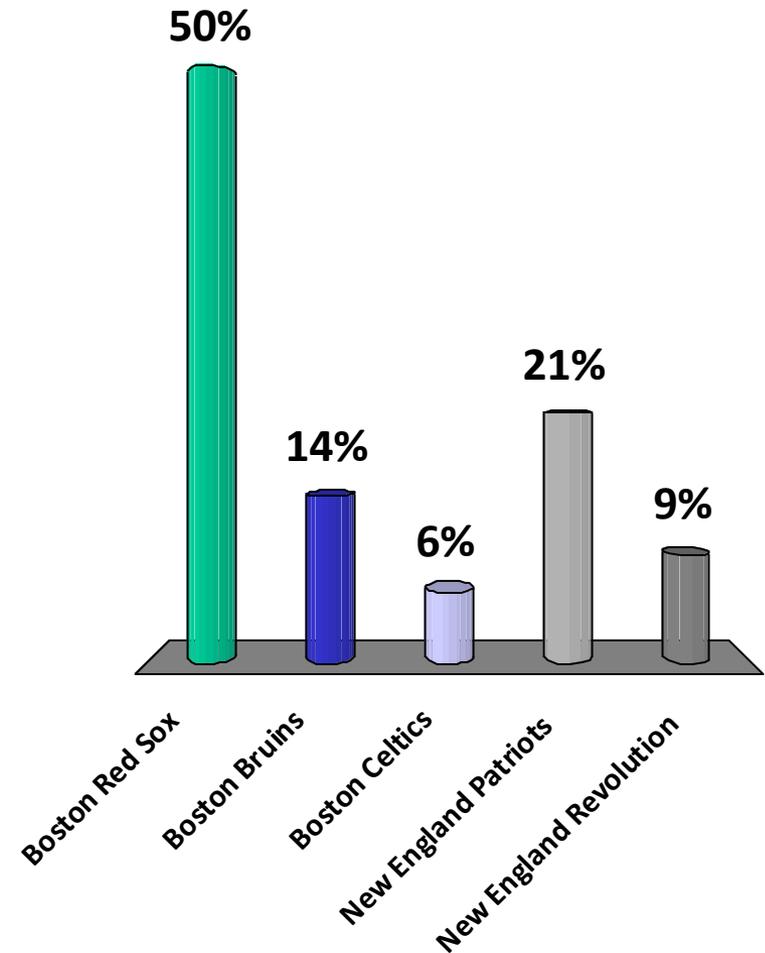


## Interactive Questions



# Who is your favorite sports team?

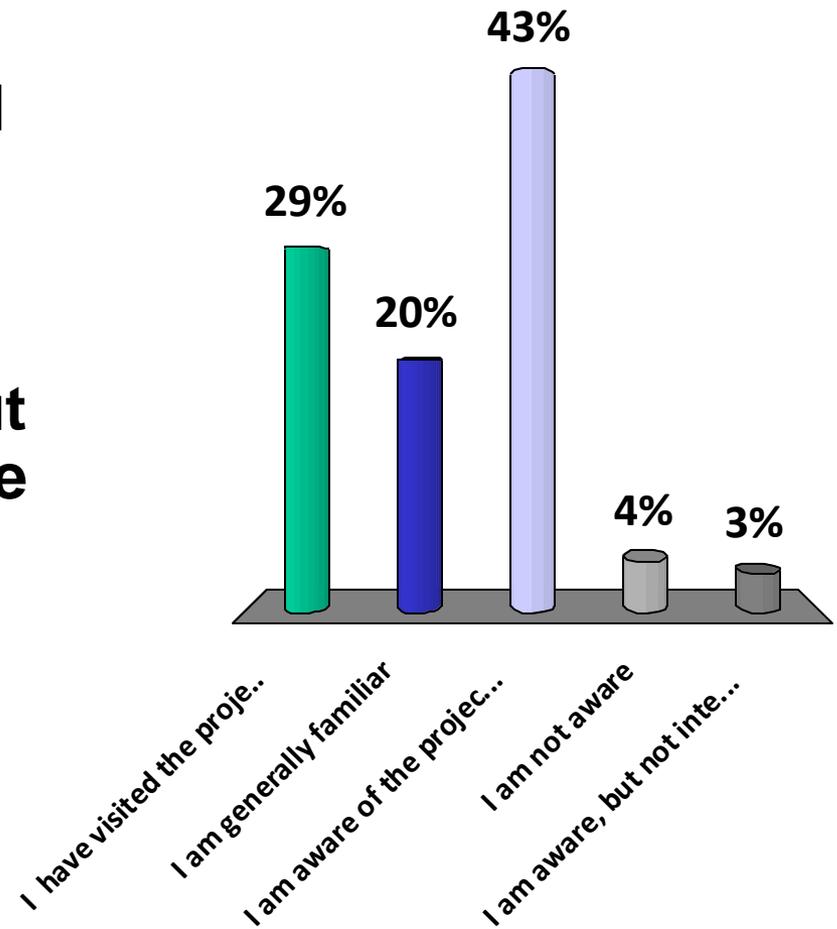
1. Boston Red Sox
2. Boston Bruins
3. Boston Celtics
4. New England Patriots
5. New England Revolution





# How familiar are you with the Reading Zoning Bylaw Comprehensive Update ?

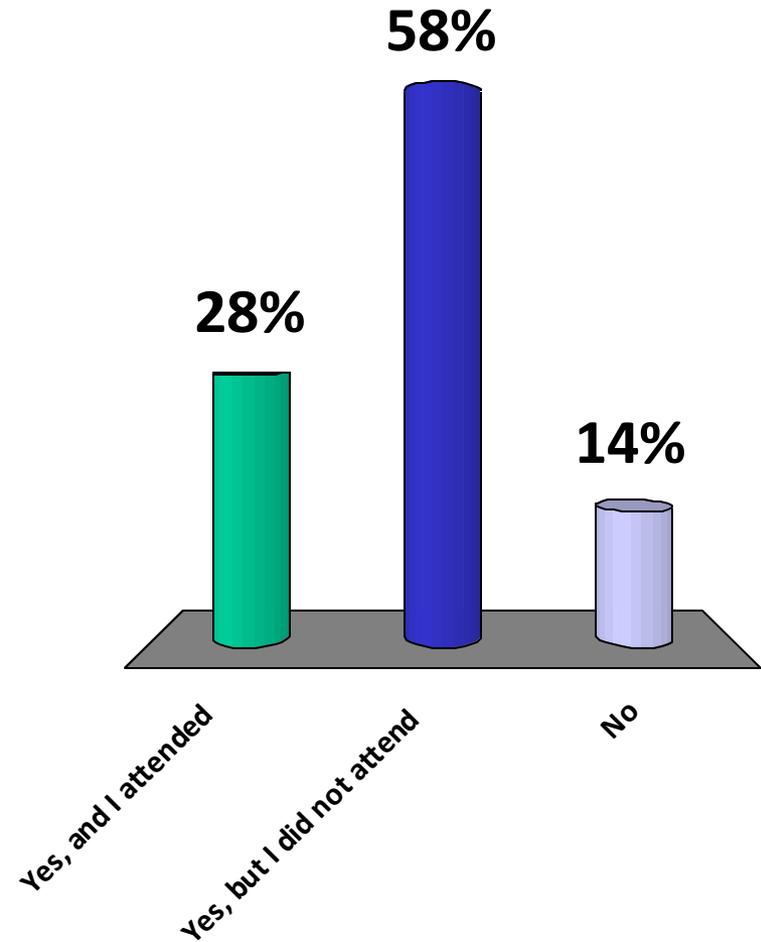
1. I have visited the project website and /or participated in meetings
2. I am generally familiar
3. I am aware of the project but have not visited the website or participated
4. I am not aware
5. I am aware, but not interested





# Were you aware of the Public Forums on Zoning?

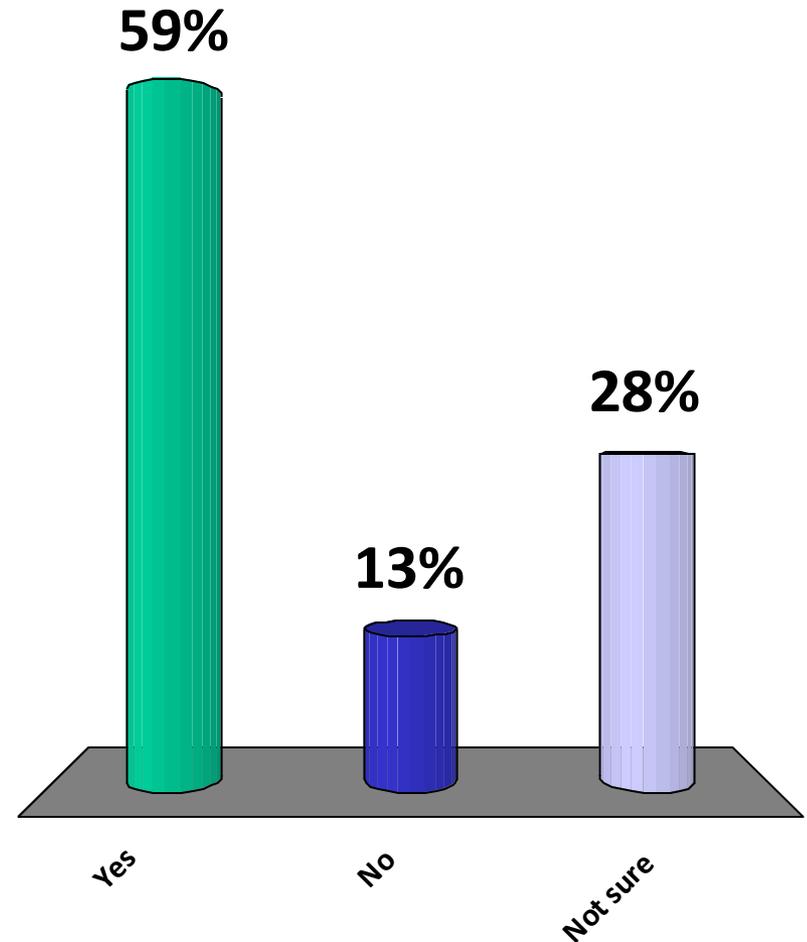
1. Yes, and I attended
2. Yes, but I did not attend
3. No





# Would you attend an informational meeting before November Town Meeting?

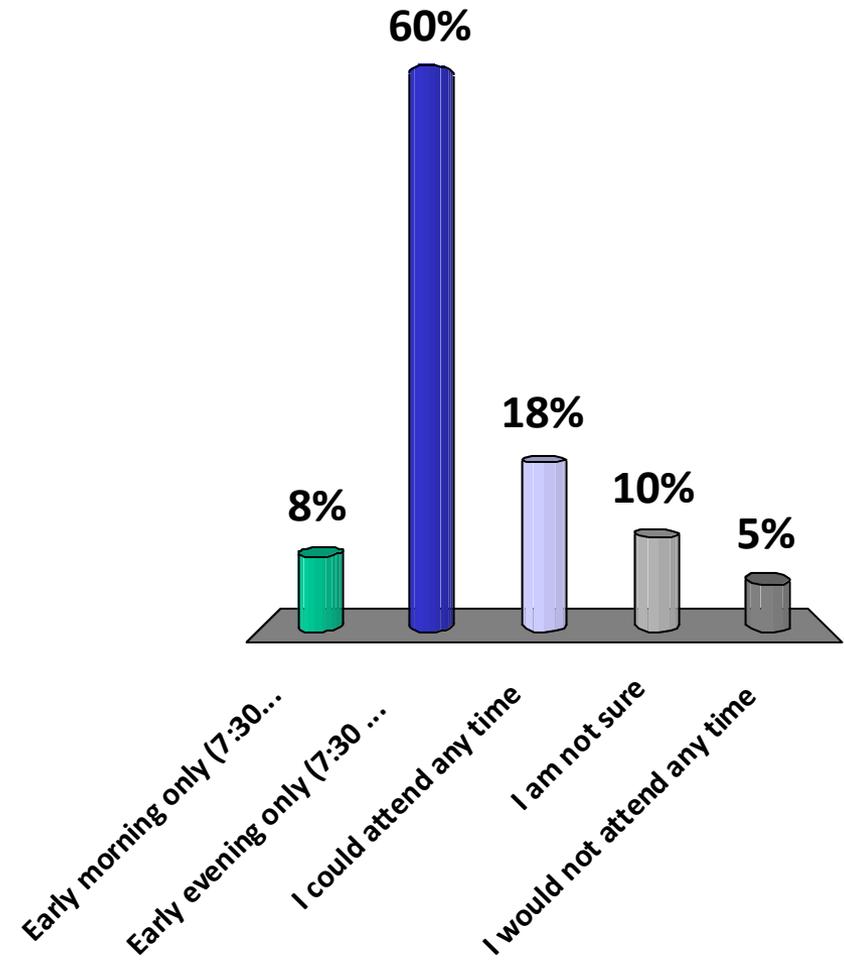
1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure





# When would you be available?

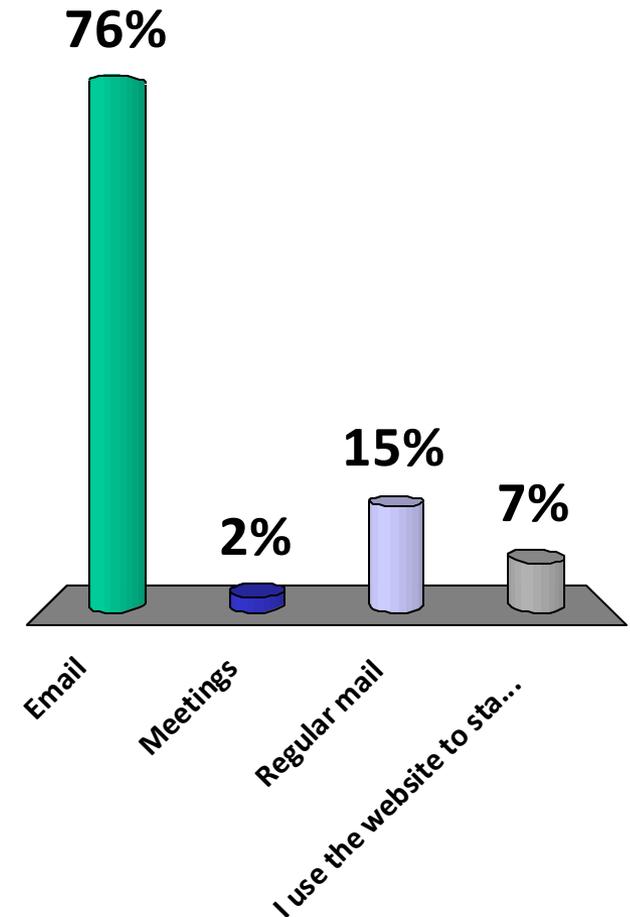
1. **Early morning only**  
(7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.)
2. **Early evening only**  
(7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.)
3. **I could attend any time**
4. **I am not sure**
5. **I would not attend any time**





# How do you prefer to receive information about this project?

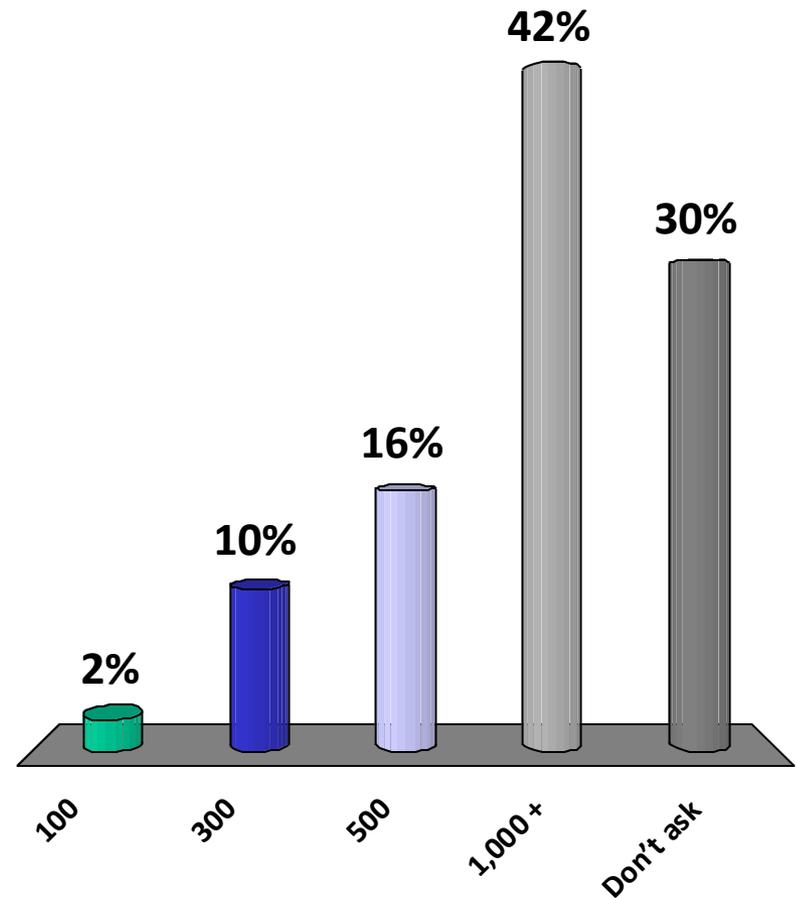
1. Email
2. Meetings
3. Regular mail
4. I use the website to stay updated





# How many hours have staff, volunteers & consultants spent on this project?

1. 100
2. 300
3. 500
4. 1,000 +
5. Don't ask





# **2014 September Special Town Meeting**

## **Article 2 Instructions**



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 3

**Adds, removes or changes items in the FY15-24 Capital Improvements Program – does not authorize any funding for these items:**

- **FY15 General Fund (+\$266,000)**
  - + \$150,000 DPW Snow Holder #c3 (replaces 2008 truck)
  - + \$ 75,000 School network technology (moved up from FY16)
  - + \$ 33,000 School Facilities (Joshua Eaton roof, phase #1)
  - + \$ 27,000 Town technology (\$15,000 Audience response systems; \$12,000 online Cemetery system)
  - + \$ 6,000 Town Facilities (change \$30,000 Police carpeting to \$36,000 Police HVAC work)
  - \$ 0 School facilities (change \$18,000 masonry repairs from Parker to RMHS)
  - \$ (25,000) Community Services – EHS van (received grant ☺)
- ***FY15 General Fund (+\$680,000 added – funding will be requested at November Town Meeting, if cash reserves allow)***



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 3

**Adds, removes or changes items in the FY15-24 Capital Improvements Program – does not authorize any funding for these items:**

- **FY15 Water Enterprise Fund (+\$120,000)**
  - + \$120,000 Larch Lane water main project (moved up from FY16);
  - add \$2.5 million water main improvements (shown as debt expenses – to begin in FY16)



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 4

- Items estimated to be valued \$5,000 or more have previously been brought to Town Meeting for authorization (even a pile of dirt, whose value was completely unknown);
- The Finance Committee, reacting to a change in state law, recently changed that minimum threshold to \$10,000, as the threshold had not changed for many years. FINCOM will authorize disposal of lesser valued items to allow for operational flexibility;
- **This Article asks Town Meeting to declare a DPW 1998 Leeboy Pavement Spreader as surplus. It has an estimated value of \$9,500 and therefore is close enough to seek Town Meeting approval. It will be sold on an online government auction site, and the proceeds will go towards cash reserves.**



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 5

- **To remove debt that Town Meeting previously authorized, but was never issued and no longer needed**
  - Ratings agencies like to be tidy
  - Green Repairs \$326,722 not needed from 11/8/10 authorization
  - Green Repairs \$110,607 not needed from 4/25/11 authorization;
- **In this case, the scope of the projects were reduced, so the debt was not issued;**
- **Sometimes we ask Town Meeting to authorize more debt than we need, as grant funding is expected (but not guaranteed).**



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 6

- **To transfer debt proceeds that Town Meeting previously authorized, and the Town issued - but was not completely spent**
  - \$65.71 was issued for the Barrows school project (12/10/98)
  - \$47,193.63 was issued for Green Repairs (4/25/11)
  - \$21,913.45 was issued for Technology Improvements (4/23/07);
- **We wait to gather a few items together and then ask Town Meeting to re-purpose the debt for another project – in this case the local share of the West Street improvements;**
- **There are strict financial rules about repurposing debt that are all met here.**



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 7

- **Request debt authorization for an additional \$2.512 million for water main repairs, funded in the Water Enterprise Fund**
  - A larger than expected interest-free loan was obtained from the MWRA for the start of the first phase of this long-term
  - The interest savings allows the remainder of the Phase #1 to be planned and financed more quickly while rates are low;
- **New Phase #1 total authorization will be \$7.512 million**
  - Expected to cover the Phase #1 costs, including contingency funds for the portions not yet bid out.
  - \$4.012 million has been borrowed from the MWRA
  - \$3.5 million will be borrowed in the public market early in 2015



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 8

**Authorizes these changes to FY15 General Fund budget:**

Line	Description	Decrease	Increase
B99	Worker's Comp ins. premiums -\$25k	\$25,000	
C99	DPW snow holder +\$150k School technology +\$75k School Facilities +\$33k Town Technology +\$27k Town Facilities +\$6k Elder/Human Services van -\$25k		\$266,000
D99	Debt service -\$350k West St. project (delayed by State)	\$350,000	
E99	North Essex Voke School +\$80,000 (as mentioned at Annual Town Meeting April '14)		\$80,000



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 8

### FY15 General Fund budget (continued):

Line	Description	Decrease	Increase
F99	FINCOM Reserves +\$9,500 (replenish for DPW trade-in)		\$9,500
G92	Administrative Services expenses Legal expenses +\$100,000 P&C ins. Premiums +\$15,000		\$115,000
K92	Public Works expenses Traffic controls \$18,000 Highway supplies \$7,000		\$25,000
	<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$375,000</b>	<b>\$495,500</b>
	<b>Net Operating Expenses</b> <b>Funded by state aid \$72,98477,417</b> <b>and excise taxes \$47,51643,083</b> <i>On 9/23 State Assessments (spending not subject to Town Mtg vote) were increased</i>		<b>\$120,500</b>

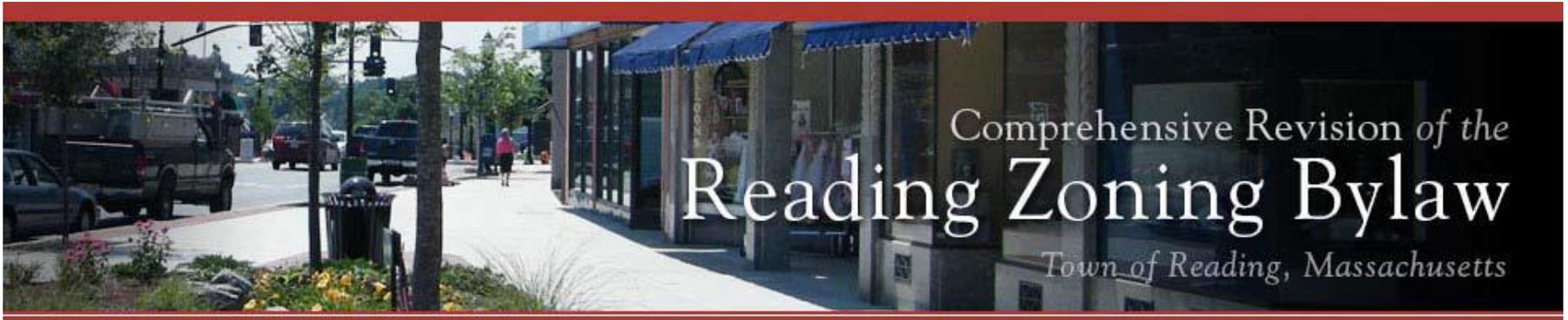


# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Article 8

### FY15 Water Enterprise Fund budget:

Line	Description	Decrease	Increase
W99	Larch Lane project +\$120,000 Water main debt service -\$120,000		\$0
	<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
	<b>Net Operating Expenses</b>		<b>\$0</b>



## **Article 9**

### *Zoning Bylaw*

#### **Section 1 - Authority and Purpose**



## **Article 9** (ZBL Section 1) *Authority and Purpose*

- Defines the role of zoning and its regulatory authority
- Deletes the existing *Purpose*
- Inserts a new updated *Authority and Purpose*



- **Key Changes - Authority and Purpose :**
  - **Simplified, Modernized, Clarified**
  - Reorganized
  - Consistent with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A and Chapter 40R;
  - More comprehensive
  - Better reflect Town goals and land use plans that have been adopted.



## **Article 11\***

### *Zoning Bylaw*

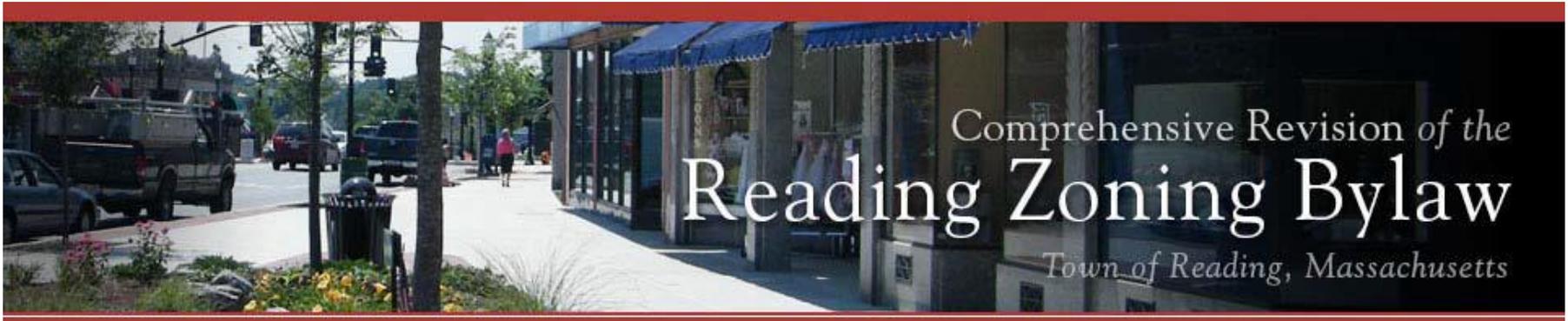
**DELETE** Section 4.5 - Wetlands Protection District

*\*Take out of order after Article 9*



## **Why Delete** *Section 4.5 Wetlands Protection District:*

- Superseded by the State Wetlands Protection Act and by Reading's Local Wetland Protection Bylaw
- Conservation Commission supports this change



## **Article 12**

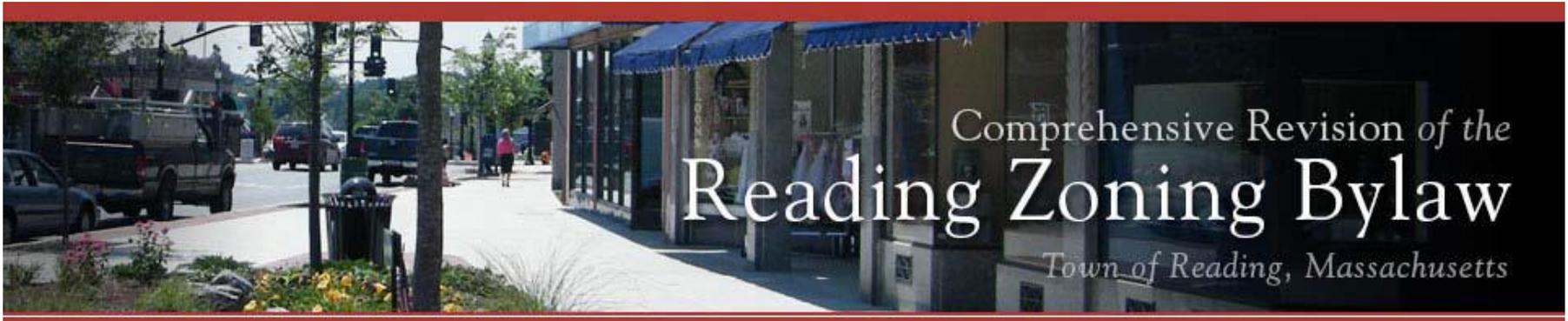
### *Zoning Bylaw*

**DELETE** Section 4.6 – Mixed Use Overlay District



## **Why Delete** *Section 4.6 Mixed Use Overlay District:*

- No projects have been developed under *Section 4.6 Mixed Use Overlay District (to date)*;
- Downtown Smart Growth District allows for mixed use developments and contains design guidelines



## **Article 10**

### *Zoning Bylaw*

#### **Section 3 - Establishment of Districts**

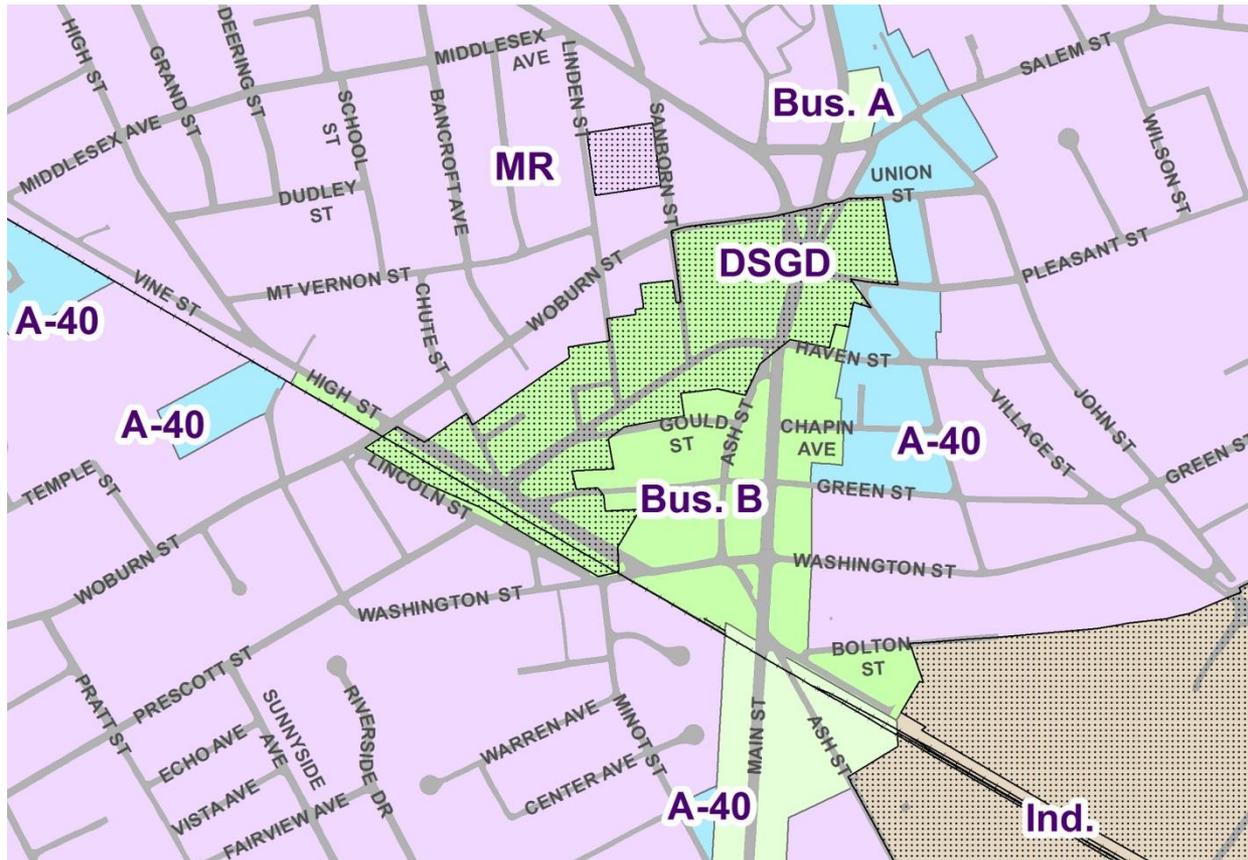


## **Key Changes** – *Establishment of Districts (Section 3)*

- Clarified and reorganized regulations for:
  - lot boundaries
  - lots in two districts.
- Deleted two overlay districts
- Deleted certain language pertaining to:
  - Floodplain District
  - Municipal Reuse District
- Updated reference to the Federal Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM)



# New Zoning Map





## **Article 13**

### *Zoning Bylaw*

#### **4.13 Special Requirements for Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries**



## Background – Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

- A temporary moratorium **expires on November 10, 2014**
- Public meetings with the Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse, Reading Police Chief and Town Staff for input and feedback on the proposed regulations.

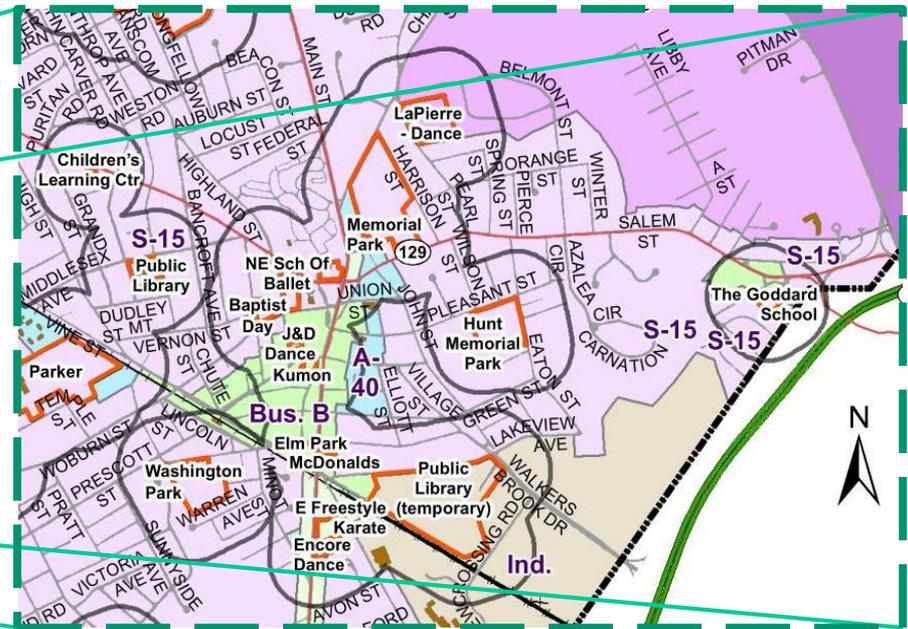
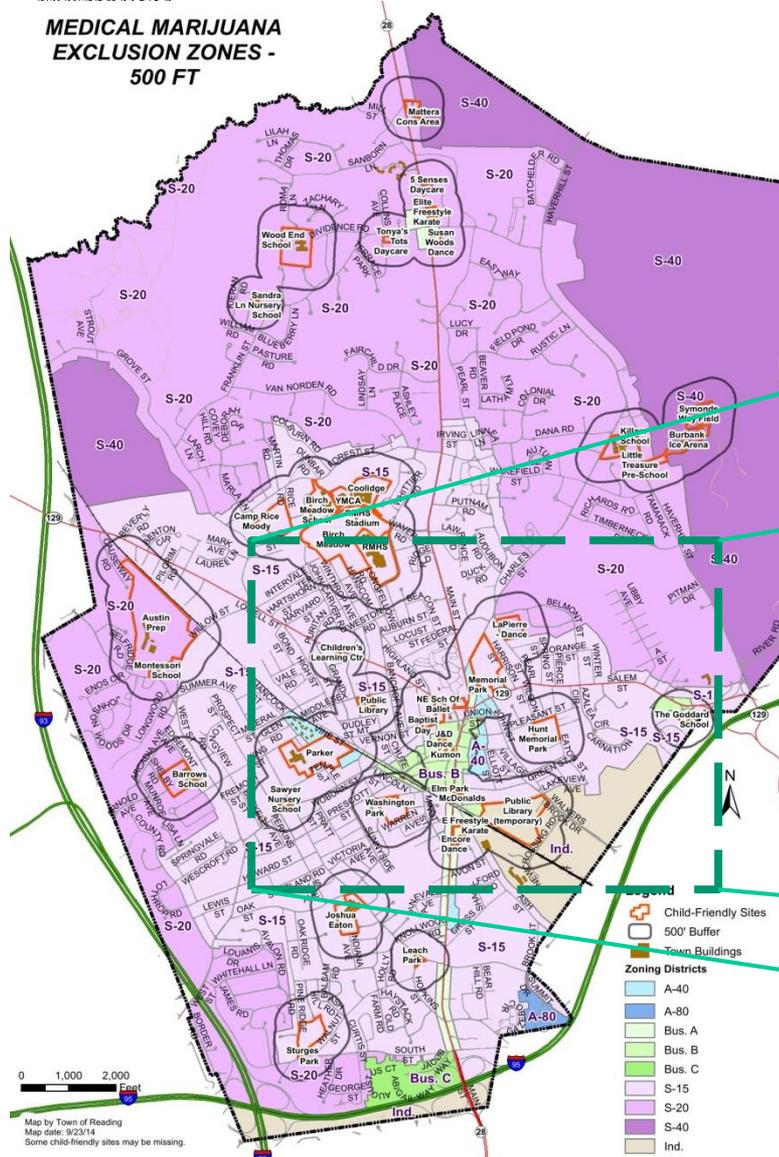


## Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries

- Allowed only in the **Industrial District by Special Permit**
- 500 foot buffer from areas where children commonly congregate
- General Requirements - Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensaries:
  - Size of facility
  - Hours of operation
  - Commercial buildings only
  - Annual reporting



# MEDICAL MARIJUANA EXCLUSION ZONES - 500 FT



- Legend**
- Child-Friendly Sites
  - 500' Buffer
  - Town Buildings
- Zoning Districts**
- A-40
  - A-80
  - Bus. A
  - Bus. B
  - Bus. C
  - S-15
  - S-20
  - S-40
  - Ind.

- Legend**
- Child-Friendly Sites
  - 500' Buffer

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Map by Town of Reading  
 Map date: 9/23/14  
 Some child-friendly sites may be missing.



# 2014 September Special Town Meeting

## Articles 14 & 15

### Article 14

- Recent questions raised about surplus disposal practices by town bodies has prompted FINCOM to desire to initiate a review of these practices and history for the Town, Schools and RMLD;
- The Charter allows such examination by FINCOM of the Town and Schools – passing this Article will use an existing Bylaw to instruct FINCOM to include RMLD in their review;
- FINCOM will initiate this review and report progress to November Town Meeting.

### Article 15

- This Article seeks to change the Bylaw so that FINCOM may conduct such a review in the future without waiting for a Town Meeting in order to seek permission.