



MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board

FROM: Christopher Dillon, Town Manager

SUBJECT: Town Manager's Report

DATE: March 2, 2026

Town Manager

Unfortunately, I have been out of the office with limited access to materials. I do have the following information for the board's consideration.

Budget

At this point, I know the Administrative Services Director has provided an electronic copy of the budget. I plan to provide paper copies on Monday. There are parts of the budget that might seem scary. Proposing a 7% increase for my first budget submission is disappointing. There are mechanisms to assist with this increase. We will propose to pull more from the Debt Stabilization Fund during the fall Town Meeting than we will put into the fund for FY2027. This is the purpose of the fund and will lower the increase on the tax levy to around 5.7%. This is still a high number, but most of this increase is due to items that were previously voted on and/or increases we have no control over, i.e. an 18.3% increase in health insurance.

Moving forward, there are steps the Town will take to help reduce increases in the future. We will be reviewing everything related to health care over this next year. The larger discussion for the board is what steps can we take to promote development in areas that will minimize impacts to the town, (increasing the tax base to offset increases) and/or what level of services the Town provides to its citizens.

Parker Street Restricted Access

As you are aware, the Board confirmed its vote and intention with restricted access to Parker Street from 7:45-8:45 and 2:15-3:15. A notice of this effect was published in the paper on Friday, February 20th, as required by MGL. The next step was to install the signs. This was scheduled to happen on Monday, February 23rd. However, the blizzard prevented this from occurring. The signs will be installed during the week of March 2nd.

Gazebo

I am aware there was discussion regarding the Town Center Gazebo during the Select Board's meeting on February 23, 2026 and that discussion will continue on March 2, 2026. Previously, Mark LaLumiere presented three design options for the Board's consideration to address structural deficiencies and potential ADA compliance requirements. The Select Board selected Option 3, which lowers the Gazebo

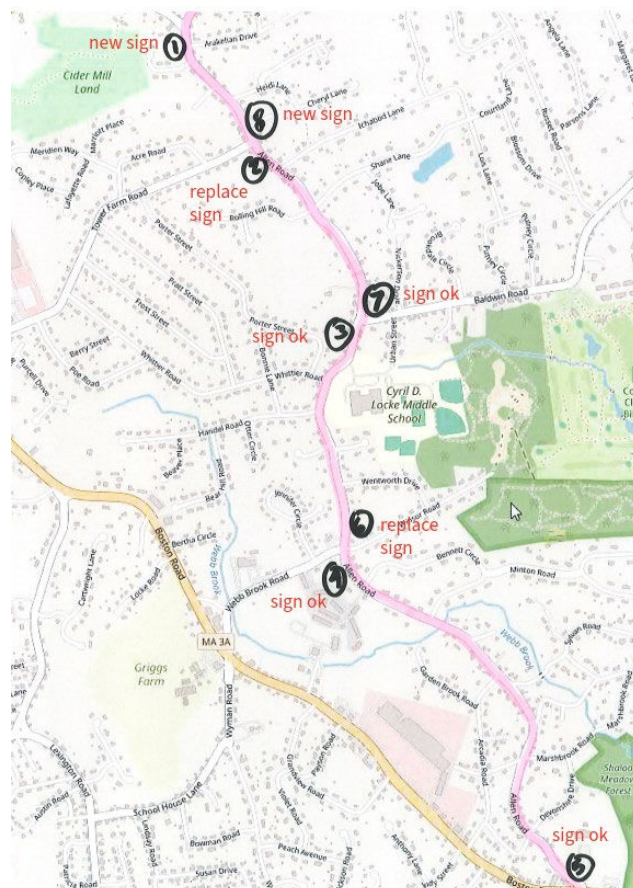
approximately 30 inches and incorporates a ramp wrapped around the structure. This option was presented informally to the Historic District Commission (HDC). Based on my understanding, the HDC did not view the proposed design favorably. For clarification, Mr. LaLumiere prepared the three design concepts voluntarily; this work was not undertaken in his official capacity as Building Commissioner.

At present, the existing Gazebo is in significant disrepair. According to the Building Commissioner, the structure is deteriorating to the point that it should be condemned.

Town Counsel has provided guidance regarding the respective authority of the Select Board and the Historic District Commission. The recommendation confirms that even if the gazebo is under the care, custody, and control of the Select Board, the Historic District Bylaw prohibits alteration of any structure within the Historic District without issuance of a certificate of appropriateness, non-applicability, or hardship from the HDC. Alterations cannot proceed without first obtaining the appropriate certificate from the HDC.

Department of Public Works

- **Boston Road TIP Project:** On Thursday, February 18, the new traffic signals at Boston Rd / Good St were activated for full operation.
- **Allen Road:** As requested, we have reviewed the “Thickly Settled – 30 MPH” speed limit signage on Allen Road between Andover Road and Boston Road. Our review determined that a total of four (4) signs are required within this segment. Two (2) new signs will be installed, and two (2) existing older signs will be replaced. A sketch is provided below for reference.



Planning and Economic Development

- Save the Date: Small Business Administration event May 13th to connect small business manufacturers with resources.
- Billerica Restaurant Week is in the works. Several local restaurants are banding together to offer collaborative specials. No specific date is chosen yet.

Community News

- 250th Committee met 2/25/2026 to kick off planning for July 4th celebrations. Tentative details include an event date of Thursday July 2nd, located at Vietnam Veterans Park. Due to crowd expectations, they will likely rely on Park-n-Ride locations with shuttle buses.
- Arbor Day Seedling Giveaway: 400 red maple seedlings have been ordered for our 3rd annual tree seedling giveaway in honor of Arbor Day. Delivery and giveaway will occur in late April, alongside other Earth Day/Arbor Day events.

Recreation Department

Important Dates to remember:

Spring Registration: March 4

Summer Registration: March 18 (*programs will be visible online starting 3/11*)

Registration goes live both days at 10am.

Pro Tip: Summer registration particularly is extremely busy, so folks will want to prepare accordingly. Many of our most popular summer day camps will sell out in a matter of minutes! Residents are advised to log in to their accounts ahead of time to ensure they have no issues with passwords or logging, as waiting until the morning off may result in delays and being unable to register as we will always experience a very high volume of business that morning.