



TOWN OF CONCORD

TOWN HOUSE - P.O. BOX 535
CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01742

OLD NORTH BRIDGE

MCI Concord Advisory Board Agenda
With Project Consultants – Agency Landscape + Planning

Monday, May 5, 2025 at 12:00 PM
Town House, 22 Monument Square
Public Hearing Room and Hybrid via Zoom

More information on the MCI Concord Redevelopment:

www.mci-concord.org

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89422188364?pwd=N8i7hOI0bkxuXVxD6zkjZVH7E7lXV6.1>

Meeting ID: 894 2218 8364

Passcode: 940286

Dial In Toll-Free: 833 928 4608

#	Time*	Agenda Item
I.	12:00 PM	Call to Order - Clerk of the Meeting
II.	12:00 PM	Approve Meeting Minutes - April 3, 2025 – Linda Miller, Clerk of the Meeting
III.	12:05 PM	De-Brief MCI Concord Visioning Workshops held on Wednesday, April 30, 2025
IV.	12:25 PM	Presentation of Draft Scenarios
V.	1:00 PM	Working Meeting with Agency Landscape + Planning
VI.	1:10 PM	Reconvene and Discuss Individual Visions for the Site
VII.	1:45 PM	General Public Comment
VIII.	1:50 PM	Action Item Recap and Adjournment

**Times are approximate and subject to change*



The Town of Concord endeavors to make public meetings accessible to all members of the community. To request a meeting accommodation or modification, please contact our ADA Coordinator Jessica Porter at jporter@concordma.gov or at 978-318-3028. Please make any requests for accommodation or modifications at least two (2) business days prior to the scheduled meeting

**Town of Concord
MCI Concord Advisory Board
Minutes
March 24, 2025**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the MCI Concord Advisory Board convened in a meeting both in-person at the Town House, Select Board Room, 22 Monument Square and via Zoom at 12:00 PM on March 24, 2025.

Present were: Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore, John Boynton, Erin Cusker, Dan Gainsboro, Co-Chair, Mark Howell, Peter Lowitt, Patrick McCurdy, Co-Chair, Linda Miller, Emily Rush, and Lee Smith

Also present were: Megan Zammuto, Deputy Town Manager and Shannon McAndrew, Management Specialist

Call to Order

Co-Chair Gainsboro called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

Mr. McCurdy was assigned as Clerk of the meeting.

Approve Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to approve the February 25, 2025 meeting minutes.

Roll Call Vote:

Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore – Aye
John Boynton – Aye
Erin Cusker – Aye
Dan Gainsboro – Aye
Mark Howell – Aye
Peter Lowitt – Aye
Patrick McCurdy – Aye
Linda Miller – Aye
Emily Rush – Aye
Lee Smith – Not yet present

Debrief DCAMM Coordination Meeting

Co-Chair Gainsboro debriefed the last DCAMM Coordination Meeting on February 28, 2025, with discussions continuing regarding the wastewater treatment plant offer. There is an agreement for the Town's wastewater consultants to get access to the site under review currently with Town Counsel.

Paul Lillehaugen, Senior Project Manager at DCAMM, noted that in addition to the DCAMM Coordination Meetings moving forward, there will be a quarterly call with DCAMM, Town representatives, and MassDOT to discuss Route 2 rotary project updates in parallel with the future redevelopment of the MCI Concord site.

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Town Staff Update – Megan Zammuto, Deputy Town Manager

Megan Zammuto, Deputy Town Manager, provided updates on:

- Funding
 - o The Town is facing a hiccup in accessing the second Fiscal Year 2025 Earmark from the State in the amount of \$250,000. The State Office of Economic Development has let the Town know that they would like the Town to spend the first Fiscal Year 2025 Earmark in the amount of \$475,000 before being able to access the second earmark. This is a concern, as the Advisory Board had already provided budgets to the Select Board and Office of Economic Development to be able to use these earmarks in tandem for consulting work with Agency Landscape + Planning and for consulting work with Weston and Sampson on the wastewater treatment plant.
 - o Ms. Zammuto noted that she is working with Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore as Legal and Government Affairs Subcommittee Chair on outreach to the Town's legislative delegation, including Representatives Cataldo and Gentile, on advocacy to the State on releasing the second earmark. The Advisory Board has also previously discussed the concept of a PAC (Previously Appropriated Consolidation), which may have been premature in the fall, but now that the timeline is extremely condensed to utilize the full funding of both earmarks, this may be possible and will be pursued with the legislative delegation.
 - o The Advisory Board discussed work that will be outstanding in Fiscal Year 2026, including zoning recommendations with Agency Landscape + Planning (quoted at \$100,000), continued work on the wastewater treatment plant, and potentially additional community engagement work.
 - o Ms. Akehurst-Moore noted that in a conversation had with Representative Cataldo, it may be a little too late to push for an earmark for Fiscal Year 2026, but the Advisory Board concurred that in collaboration with Town staff and the legislative delegation that they would like to push for an earmark request of \$250,000.
 - o Ms. Akehurst-Moore, as Chair of the Legal and Government Affairs Subcommittee, was also tasked with revisiting the budget that the Advisory Board submitted to the Select Board and Office of Economic Development for potential revisions if the second earmark cannot be released.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **voted:** to recommend that the Town request an earmark for Fiscal Year 2026 in the amount of \$250,000 and that the Town request a PAC for funds unspent from the Fiscal Year 2025 earmarks to be carried forward into Fiscal Year 2026.

Roll Call Vote:

Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore – Aye
John Boynton – Aye
Erin Cusker – Aye
Dan Gainsboro – Aye

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Mark Howell – Aye
Peter Lowitt – Aye
Patrick McCurdy – Aye
Linda Miller – Aye
Emily Rush – Aye
Lee Smith – Aye

- Project Logistics and Timeline with Agency Landscape + Planning
 - o An updated project timeline from Agency Landscape + Planning was distributed. Highlights were:
 - Scheduling of future Advisory Board meetings – keep the meetings on Mondays and extend the length of the meetings to meet Agency’s workshop timeframes.
 - Scheduling of future Community Outreach Subcommittee meetings – first Friday of each month at Noon via Zoom.
 - Scheduling of future community engagement workshops:
 - Visioning Workshops
 - o Two times (not yet finalized) on Wednesday, April 28, 2025
 - Scenarios Workshops
 - o Two times (not yet finalized) on Wednesday, May 26, 2025
 - o At the next Advisory Board meeting on Thursday, April 3, 2025, Agency Landscape + Planning team will be providing their initial findings and analyses from the Discover Phase of their scope of work.

Adjournment

Co-Chair Gainsboro adjourned the meeting at 1:36 PM.

Meeting Materials:

[MCI Concord Advisory Board Meeting Packet for March 24, 2025](#)

[MCI Concord Advisory Board Meeting Recording for March 24, 2025](#)

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April 3, 2025

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the MCI Concord Advisory Board convened in a meeting both in-person at the Town House, Public Hearing Room, 22 Monument Square and via Zoom on Thursday, April 3, 2025, at 12:00 PM.

Present were: Elizabeth Akehurst-Moore, John Boynton, Erin Cusker, Dan Gainsboro, Co-Chair, Mark Howell, Peter Lowitt, Linda Miller, Lee Smith, and Emily Rush

Also present were: Megan Zammuto, Deputy Town Manager and Shannon McAndrew, Management Specialist, Town of Concord; Agency Landscape + Planning Consulting Team (Buro Happold, Nitsch Engineering, Merge Architects, Designing Justice + Designing Spaces, Landwise Advisors, U3 Advisors)

Call to Order

Co-Chair Gainsboro called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM.

Ms. Miller was assigned as Clerk of the meeting.

Approve Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from March 24, 2025, were tabled until the next meeting.

Summary of Analysis

- Rhiannon Sinclair, Principal at Agency Landscape + Planning, presented the consultants Summary of Analysis of the MCI Concord site and project schedule.
- April 30th – Public Workshops on Visioning
- May 5th – Advisory Board Working Meeting on Scenario Development
- May 28th – Public Workshops on Scenarios
- June 2nd – Advisory Board Working Meeting to Refine Scenarios and Assemble Draft Plan
- June 23rd – Final Meeting to Review the Draft Plan and Discuss Implementation

In addition to these meetings, there will be meetings with the Community Outreach Subcommittee to focus on the website and various themed conversations (such as housing, mobility or future development). A first pop-up information sessions is scheduled for April 19th to join the 250th anniversary event. An on-line survey will also be discussed with the Outreach Subcommittee.

Ms. Sinclair noted that the engagement strategy emphasizes reaching different "zones" of stakeholders, from the deeply engaged Advisory Board (Zone 1), to the Town (Zone 2), to interested organizations and neighbors of the site (Zone 3), to the broader general public, those in the region and with connections to the prison (Zone 4). Ms. Sinclair noted that the new website, www.mci-concord.org is being finalized and will be ready for deployment during the second week of April.

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There are 6 elements of the analysis: 1. Buildings and Structures, 2. Environment and Open Space, 3. Transportation and Access, 4. Energy and Infrastructure, and 5. Economics and Feasibility. What connects each of these is 6. Concord's Community and its Culture. Other items like history, equity and/or resilience cut across and touch each of these 6 topics.

Community and Culture (discussed by Robin Bankert of Merge Architects):

- **History:** Concord is a historic community with progressive roots and as we discuss prison repurposing, connections with social justice movements (the Underground Railroad and Transcendentalism & Social Reform). The Town draws 1 million visitors annually, primarily for historic and literary sites and recreation.
- **Demographic Shifts:** Concord is experiencing an increase in the 65+ and under 18 demographics, immigrant communities and communities of color
- **Housing Goals:** Housing affordability is a growing challenge, with nearly half of renters and a quarter of homeowners spending over 30% of income on housing in 2022. Housing costs have outpaced median income growth. The town's Housing Production Plan (2023-2028) prioritizes immediate and long-term affordability, healthy aging (65+), increasing rental and ownership variety, stabilizing housing for vulnerable populations, emphasizing smaller homes, and outreach/education on affordability needs.
- **Scenarios will explore: The site's and Town's future audiences, it's relationship to its layered history, the arts and cultural resources of West Concord and growth and affordability goals.**

Buildings and Structures: (discussed by Seth Hoffman of Merge Architects):

- **Disposition of Structures:** There are two main considerations: reclaiming materials from demolished buildings (sustainability) and adaptive reuse. Certain buildings (Warden's house, last remaining white row house) are considered for preservation due to historic significance. Cell blocks are seen as architecturally difficult to reuse. Other larger structures with open floor plates and big span structures (administrative buildings, gym, school/workshop, intake building) may have reuse potential for housing, public or commercial uses.
- **Facilities to Remain:** Six or seven buildings near the river are wastewater treatment and other facilities serving the former prison site. Their future use and integration into redevelopment are being explored.
- **Scenarios will explore:** Selective reuse versus building new, what programs could be housed in existing structures with reuse potential, upfront versus life cycle costs of adaptive reuse.
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Environment and Open Space: (discussed by)

- **Takeaway:** Concord has a really rich network of open spaces, trails and high-quality recreational amenities. For this site there are opportunities to further expand that network to enhance the quality of experiences for a variety of audiences and to protect the valuable habitats and waterways.
- **Recreation Needs:** Existing facilities are often beyond a 10-minute walk from the site. The town's Recreation Facility Strategic Plan highlights a strong foundation but unmet

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needs in various facilities (playgrounds, indoor ice rinks, etc.). The site could help bridge these gaps.

- **Natural Systems:** The site is within a network of waterways (Warner's Pond, Assabet River), which are valued community resources but face challenges like eutrophication and declining water quality. The future of the dam at Warner's Pond is an ongoing discussion.
- **Trails:** The site could improve connections from regional trail networks (Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Assabet River Rail Trail, Reformatory Branch Trail). Integrating informal river trails and improving access points can connect the site to regional bikers and pedestrians.
- **Scenarios will explore:** The site lacks a complete trail network, however along the river there are trails that could be integrated with better signage and access points to serve a greater audience. As well, the level of open space and recreation, impacts of Warner's Pond restoration, in addition to the relations to surrounding agricultural land and commemoration of the prison cemetery are considerations.

Transportation and Access: (discussed by Kristin Brozowski of Buro Happold)

- **Takeaway:** There is ample opportunity with the site with the connection to Route 2 as well as the walking distance from the West Concord train station and Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.
- **Current Access:** Trips in/out of Concord are primarily by vehicle. Thus there are opportunities to increase multi-modal options to access the site. The site has current access points, but a MassDOT plan to convert Route 2 near the site which presents an opportunity to overlay how we're proposing to use this site with this MassDOT redevelopment.
- **Safety:** Safety is a key issue for the site, specifically as related to the Rotary which has high density. Commonwealth Avenue, parallel to Route 2, is experiencing much greater volumes of traffic because of vehicles cutting through to the Rotary. And the Rotary is experiencing high levels of collisions. The redesign of Route 2 by the MassDOT will likely be implemented after the redevelopment of the site.

Energy and Infrastructure: (discussed by Brian Cramer Nitsch Engineering)

- **Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP):** The existing WWTP is potentially an asset to the Town and its existence on site is incredibly important to a potential developer. However, it can also be a constraint due to potential odors, particularly in the summer. The plant needs to continue serving adjacent/remaining on-site uses. There's potential to serve West Concord Village and the site development itself. An investment of around \$25 million is estimated to restore the facility to its permitted capacity of 310,000 gallons/day. Currently, it operates at around 60-80,000 gallons/day and requires immediate investment to remain operational. Mitigating odors would likely require significant investment.
- **Steam Plant:** The steam plant serves existing facilities but is unlikely to be a value add for a redeveloper, who would likely need to propose new heating/cooling systems. The steam plant does not serve off-site parcels like the farm or state police barracks.

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- **Sand Beds:** Existing but inactive sand beds for wastewater treatment/disposal to the southeast. Their future use or removal needs to be determined. These potentially could be an asset.
- **Tunnels:** An existing tunnel system under the site is a potential asset but has unknowns regarding condition, materials (asbestos, etc.), size, and depth.

Economic Development and Feasibility: (discussed by Amy Fater Landwise Advisors)

- **Takeaway:** The site is a highly visible site with lots of people passing by that could handle mixed use development. The scale of development that occurs here needs to offset some upfront costs.
- **Real Estate Market:** There is a housing crisis in Massachusetts and housing is in need. The office market is challenged by hybrid work models, with little speculative office space being built. The lab space market is oversupplied. Post-pandemic mixed-use development requires careful consideration of the use mix.
- **Federal Landscape:** Federal policies (higher education endowment taxes, research funding cuts, tariffs potentially boosting manufacturing) are influencing the real estate landscape.
- **Housing Production:** Multi-family permits have spiked when the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) dips below 10%, enabling 40B applications. Two major projects will add significant multi-family units, raising questions about school capacity.
- **Employment:** Concord experienced a net loss of 142 jobs between 2017 and 2022 (while the region/MSA grew). Healthcare is the dominant sector, followed by professional/scientific/technical services and education. 92% of jobs in Concord are filled by people from outside town, suggesting a mismatch between housing costs and job pay.
- **Fiscal Landscape:** Concord has a large residential tax base, limited opportunities for large-scale commercial development elsewhere, and one of the highest tax bills in Massachusetts (up 45% since FY16). There is debt from new schools.
- **Site Costs:** The site is not a greenfield site and has immense upfront costs for site preparation and infrastructure upgrades. Balancing market-driven (tax-paying) and mission-driven uses is important.
- **Scenarios will explore:** Variables at play include the public appetite for density, the level of new construction versus reuse, the community vision for use mix, and level of inclusionary units desired in housing.

Fixed and Flexible Areas of the Site and Q&A: (discussed by Rhiannon Sinclair)

- **Fixed:** Areas known to be historic (influences preservation, though not national register); Cemetery; 200-foot river buffer (state regulation); Existing parks and trails (Bruce Freeman Trail); Sand pits (quasi-fixed).
- **Flexible/To be Tested:** Many MCI buildings with reuse potential; Agricultural land considerations; Warner's Pond area (influenced by ongoing planning); Underground utilities (need to flex for new development); Solar panels.

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- **Entirely Flexible:** Route 2 (potential for significant influence through this project); Rethinking existing structures; Future of open space and park amenities; Site access points.

The fixed areas tend to be along the perimeter of the site (closest to the river, bisected by the trail), while the most flexible areas are at the center of this site.

Members discussed issues with the wastewater treatment plant, the Junction Village parcel which has zoning under the MBTA Communities Act, trends regarding the influence of additional housing options on workforce and school enrollment trends, economic feasibility and live-work spaces.

Emerging Themes / Site Identities:

Based on the analysis and stakeholder input, five potential site identities have emerged to guide scenario development.

- **Healthy and Green:** Leans into restoring the ecosystem and watershed. Potential anchors: healthcare, wellness industry. Features: additional trails, wildlife viewing, nature center, housing integrated into a natural setting.
- **Climate Friendly:** Focuses on reducing negative climate impact, potentially aiming for net-positive development. Potential anchors: green industry. Features: net-positive housing, shared/clean transportation.
- **Active and Artsy:** Supports West Concord's vibe, recreational needs, and arts/cultural themes. Potential anchors: Concord museum, art installations, artist collectives, recreation/arts organizations. Features: reusing buildings or promoting activities in open space for these themes. Includes sports and organized recreation needs.
- **Supportive:** Explores housing/consolidating town public works functions and potentially maintenance yard activities. Examines freeing up land elsewhere in town.
- **Incubating / Innovation:** Positions the site as a hub for research, academic research, and industry partnerships along the Route 2 corridor. Potential anchors: educational institution (satellite campus), research anchor, industry anchor creating a cluster of businesses. Features: live-work housing, exploring housing production innovation (prototyping, 3D printing). This is seen as a potential avenue for generating commercial tax revenue.

Board members engaged in an activity to create "pie charts" representing their desired prioritization and balance of the five emerging site identities. There was brief discussion regarding the Board members' charts, with Agency Landscape + Planning to catalog the results for further review.

Adjournment

Co-Chair Gainsboro adjourned the meeting at 2:00 PM.

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