

**Jennifer Raitt**  
Executive Director, NMCOG

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# **Housing** **Converts** (an overview)

Massachusetts Municipal Association  
Annual Meeting & Trade Show  
January 2024

## Housing Converts: An Overview

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## Adaptive Reuse

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# Building Better by Transforming Underutilized Structures Into Homes



**Courthouse Lofts, Worcester**  
Former Court Building

<https://www.courthouselofts.net/photogallery.aspx>

## Housing Converts: An Overview

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# Housing: A Puzzle

What are the components of the housing crisis?

### Financing

Access to capital and funding stack

### Inventory

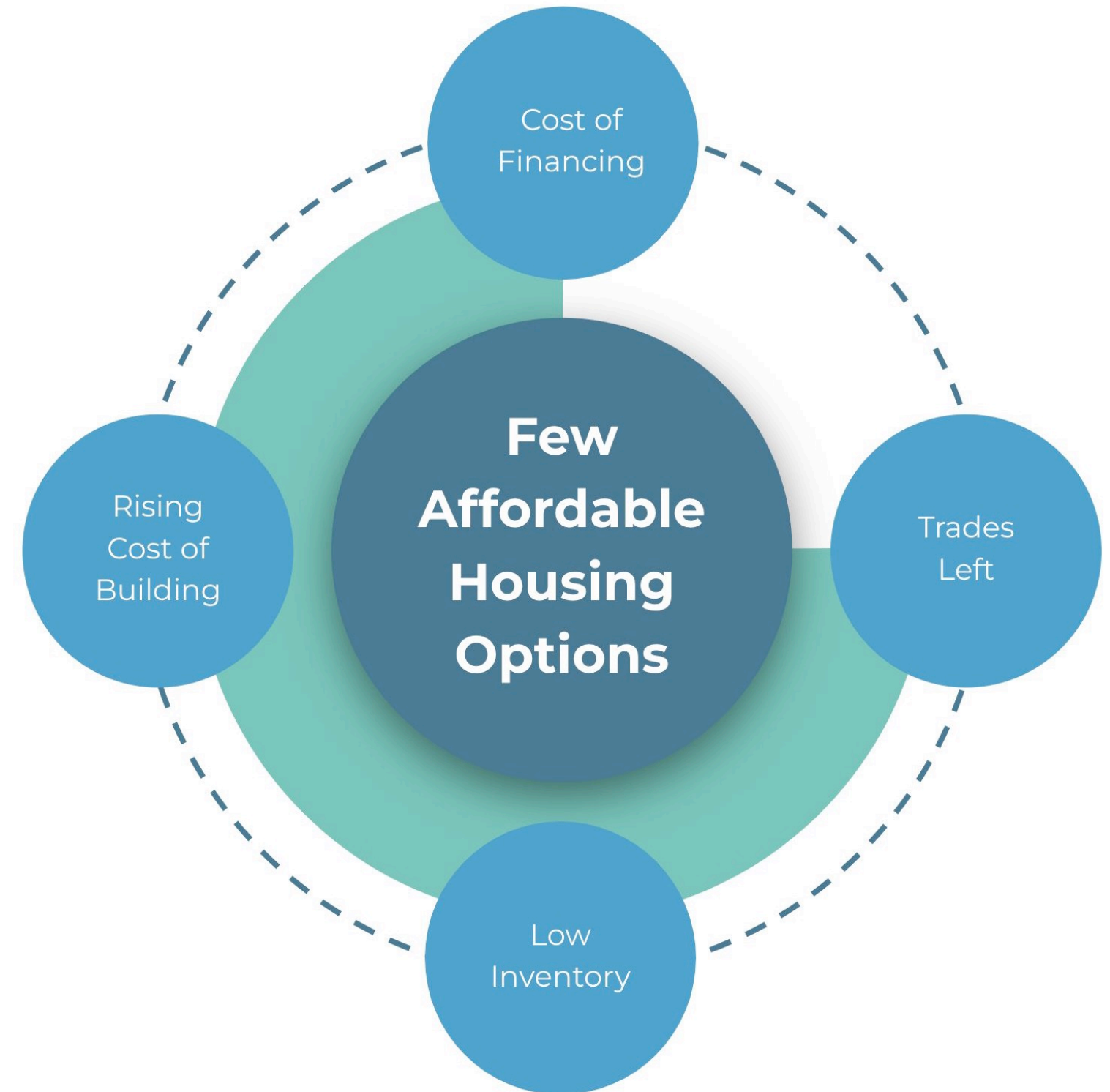
Record low inventories and price increases in double digits in 85 out of 100 US markets

### Construction/Labor

Development costs and lack of skilled labor/ pipeline

### Land Use/Zoning

Zoning limitations and restrictions can hem innovation and opportunity



## Housing Converts: An Overview

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# Enter: Adaptive Reuse

Many strategies exist to preserve and expand upon existing structures to create housing.

Transform Existing Structures: reimagine municipal, commercial, industrial, and more.

Cost-Effective Solutions: repurpose existing structures can lower overall costs, including those for future residents.

Sustainable and Community-Oriented: reduce waste, improve heritage, and revitalize neighborhoods.



**Carriage Lofts, Amesbury**  
Former Mill Building

# Same/ Similar Structures

## New Opportunities



**Whipple Riverview Place, Ipswich**  
Former Town Building

**Elm Street Amesbury**  
Former Train Depot



**Oakley Neighborhood, Belmont**  
Former Church

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Photo Credits:  
<https://harborlighthomes.org/homes/whipple-riverview-place-ipswich-ma/>  
J. Raitt  
<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2343/Case-Studies---Chapter-40R-Smart-Growth-Overlay-District-Residential-and-Mixed-Use-Development---June-2020-PDF>

## Housing Converts: An Overview

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# Process/ Project Considerations

## Common hurdles



**Walker School Apartments, Taunton**  
Former School Building



### **Building/ Structural Issues**

Hidden problems and unforeseen repairs can add to project costs and timelines.



### **Zoning/ Regulatory Issues**

Navigating complex zoning regulations and balancing historic preservation guidelines or requirements.



### **Funding**

Local funding can be leveraged, including CPA, and tax credits, and land can be made available at a discount or by ground lease.



### **Partnerships**

Strong partnerships among developers, community-based organizations, and government agencies can help guide and smooth processes.

## Housing Converts: An Overview

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# Building: Resilient Communities

Achieving multiple community and regional goals, adaptive reuse can be transformative for individual properties and even neighborhoods.

- **Reinvigorate Places**
- **Advance Resiliency**
- **Preserve Cultural Heritage**
- **Foster Inclusion**

## Resources to help you get started

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- Regional Planning Agencies:  
<https://massmarpa.org/>
- MassHousing:  
<https://www.masshousing.com/en/programs-outreach/planning-programs/planning-housing-production>
- MHP:  
<https://www.mhp.net/community/technical-support>
- 30B/ Procurement/ Surplus:  
<https://www.mhp.net/assets/resources/documents/30B-presentation.pdf>
- Operating Manual for AHTFs:  
[https://www.mhp.net/assets/resources/documents/MAHT-Ops-Manual\\_final.pdf](https://www.mhp.net/assets/resources/documents/MAHT-Ops-Manual_final.pdf)

# Panelists/ Developments



**Thomas Emery**  
**Director of Real Estate**  
**Coalition for a Better Acre**



Case: Dracut, MA



**Jason Korb**  
**Principal**  
**Capstone Communities, LLC**



Case: Cambridge, MA



**Dave Traggorth**  
**Principal**  
**Causeway Development, LLC.**



Case: Williamstown, MA

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Photo Credits:  
[www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org)  
<https://www.neighborworks.org/blog/serving-those-who-served>  
<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/frostterrace1791massave>  
<https://www.housingtoolbox.org/zoning-and-land-use/adaptive-reuse>





# THANK YOU

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# **11 Spring Park Ave, Dracut, MA**

**Adaptive Reuse of Town Hall Annex  
for Veteran Preference Housing by  
Coalition for a Better Acre**

# Coalition for a Better Acre



The Coalition for a Better Acre is a community development corporation dedicated to resident empowerment and sustainable community revitalization for residents of Lowell and the Merrimack Valley. We promote healthy, vibrant neighborhoods by developing resident leaders, affordable housing and economic opportunities, and by responding to community needs through collective action. The Coalition for a Better Acre has been actively involved in the development of housing affordable to families and commercial development for more than 41 years. In that time, CBA has been responsible for the development of 556 residential rental units, 50 homeownership units, plus retail, office, community center, and commercial incubator space. In a broad array of project types, including a large garden-style apartment complex, duplexes, and adaptive reuse of historic buildings, the agency has demonstrated expertise with complex financing packages, including the use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME, Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Program, Mass Housing Partnership Fund, NeighborWorks, LISC and other private and public funding sources.



# Project Details

- The Town Hall Annex is a signature neighborhood building that was constructed in 1898 as the Dracut Centre School. The Town Hall Annex project is an adaptive reuse project that consists of a major renovation of the existing building, substantially on the original footprint of the current building, with any additions being only those required to meet ADA accessibility standards.
- Town Meeting voted to sell the property for \$1, forgoing acquisition income on a property assessed at \$367,800 in FY18.
- Dracut's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) targeted the building for preservation and made a major award of \$200,000 to support the adaptive reuse of the building.
- Dracut's CPC voted to provide additional funds of up to \$350,000 to support affordable housing at the Town Hall Annex, which received an affirmative vote at the Town Meeting on June 4, 2018.
- Dracut's Zoning By-Law Committee voted to approve changes to the Dracut Center Neighborhood Overlay District to allow the Annex project to proceed under local zoning, which received a final vote at the Town Meeting on June 4, 2018.
- Dracut's CPC voted to recommend an additional \$661,000 to the project. The award was split between its historic preservation and affordable housing funding categories. Town Meeting voted to authorize this allocation at the June 3, 2019 Town Meeting.
- Therefore, the Town of Dracut committed a total of \$1,211,000 in Community Preservation Act funding to this project.



# Project Pros



**Compelling State and Local Support through monetary and municipal relief.**

**Community scale project utilizing State financing.**

**Historic Tax Credit recipient throughout construction.**



**Units of affordable, veteran preference housing added to the Town SHI.**

# Project Improvements



Town adopting the MassDocs Loan process ahead of closing.



Town accepting MHC advice in preservation documentation and design review.



Construction delay due to reuse of historical features.

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# Cable Mills

Revitalizing former  
industrial Sites

Dave Traggorth

January 2024

Mass Municipal Association Conference





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# About

- Williamstown, Massachusetts
- Privately owned
- 90,000 sf historic mill, 9+ acres
- Riverfront parcel
- Walking distance to downtown, golf course, Williams College
- Started in 2004, completed construction in 2016
- 61 residential units in the mill
- Development cost of \$26M (\$426,000/unit)
- \$1.5M Town of Williamstown Investment via CPA



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# A Challenging Site in Downtown

- Site contamination
- Historic restrictions
- Conservation Commission
- Structural failure
- Security concerns
- Years of starts/stops



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# POST-INDUSTRIAL TIMELINE

## Tech Incubator

Early 2000's envisioned as a technology incubator during the .com boom and source of economic development as office space.

## 40B Rental

2004 picked-up by long-time developer and envisioned as a mixed-income condominium building with significant affordability

## Condo

2006, previous owner dies, and in 2007 bought by firm that I worked with envisioned as a more market-rate condominium. Change overlay zoning.

## Rental

2008 pivots to a rental project in order to utilize state and federal historic tax credits. Finally starts construction in 2011 and complete in 2016.

## Condo

In 2022, converted to condominiums and being sold individually.

Tax base went from \$10,000 to over \$300,000 annually just on condos.

# CAPITAL STACK

Source	Type of Source	Amount	Percentage
Permanent Loan	Private	\$ 10,000,000	38%
Mezzanine Loan	Private	\$ 2,255,000	9%
Equity	Private	\$ 4,200,000	15%
Federal HTC	Federal	\$ 4,000,000	11%
State HTC	State	\$ 3,000,000	5%
State AHTF	State	\$ 1,300,000	6%
CPA Funds	Town	\$ 1,525,000	16%
Total Development Cost		\$ 26,280,000	

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# TOWN/CITY ROLE IN REDEVELOPMENT

## Advocate/Align/Vision

- Come to an agreement with the owner on the vision
- Align zoning and planning, conservation
- Advocate for state and federal funding
- Align state and federal delegations around a vision
- Align town staff/departments

## Finance

- Learn the pro forma (none of these projects pencils from a debt/equity perspective.)
- Understand ALL the sources of financing and how they work.
- Lend in CPA and leverage infrastructure improvements
- Consider tax breaks (not this project but others)

## Commit

- Know when it is time to put on pressure vs. give flexibility and time
- Stay at the table and be available.

# Catalyst for Additional Development

Cable Mills proved that there was a market for walkable, single-level living near the downtown which have spurred additional development on the site and elsewhere in town.

RiverHouses and ModernMill built in 2020





Thank you

**causeway**  
DEVELOPMENT

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# Massachusetts Municipal Association

## Housing Converts

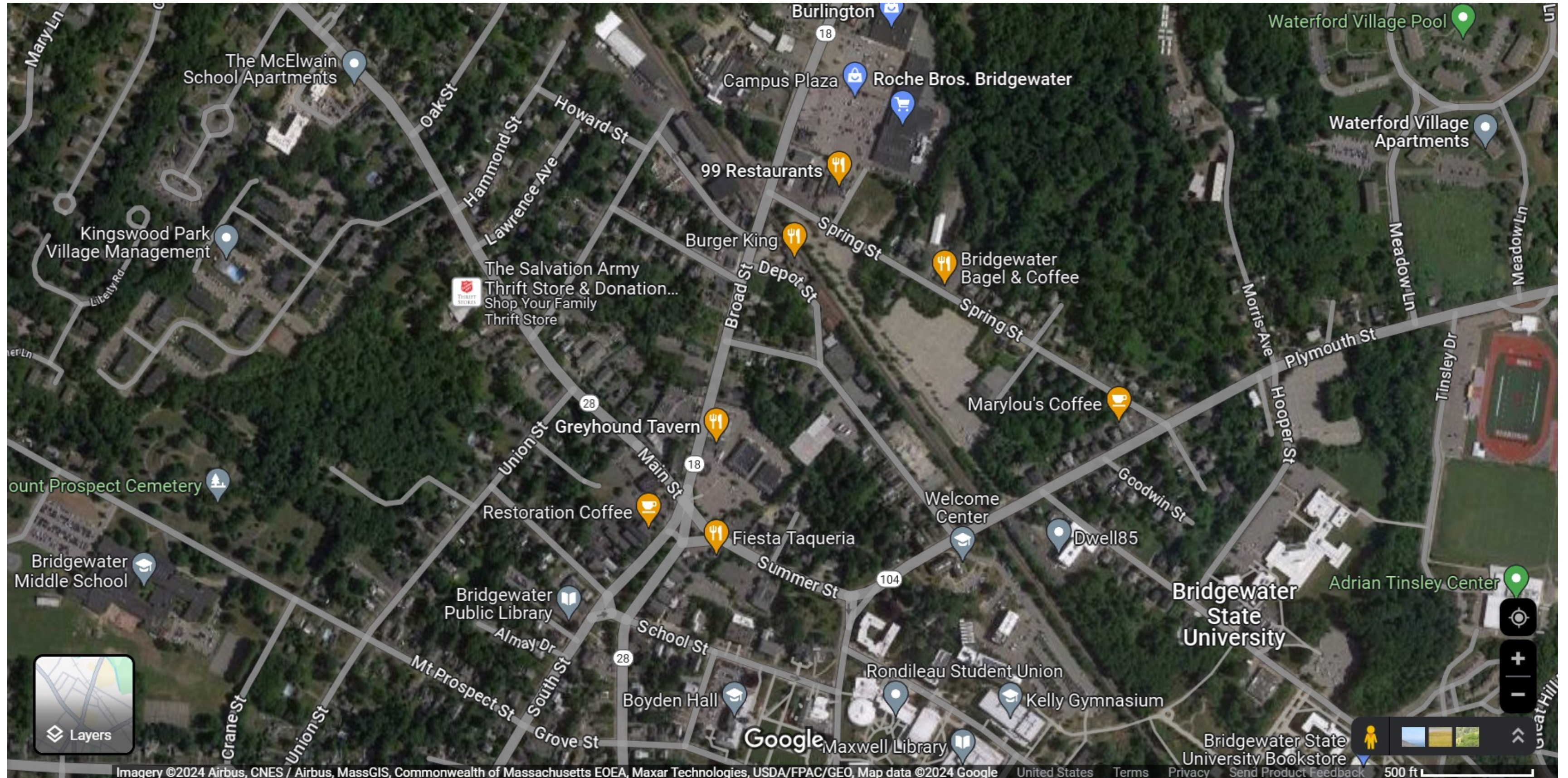
The McElwain School Apartments  
242, 250A, 250B Main Street, Bridgewater

January 19, 2024

CAPSTONE  
COMMUNITIES

MPZ  
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# The McElwain School Apartments - Location



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# The McElwain School Apartments

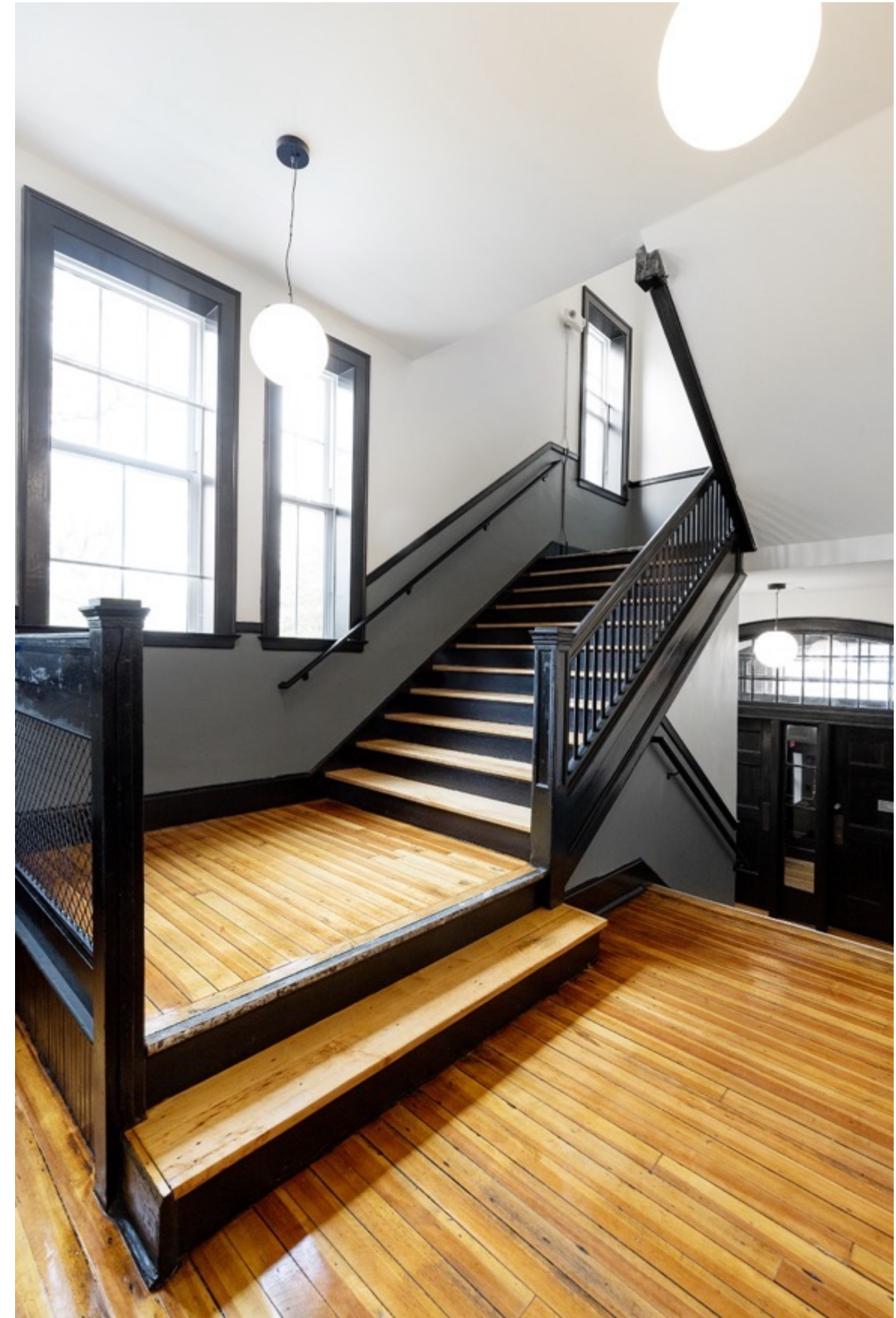
- 3 buildings (2 historic)
- 57 apartments for families
- 51 affordable in perpetuity
- PHIUS (new construction)



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# The McElwain School Apartments

- Town RFP
- Town Support
  - CPA
  - Fees
  - Permitting (Comp Permit)
  - Advocacy



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# The McElwain School Apartments - Affordability

- 6 at 30% AMI
- 4 at 50% AMI
- 41 at 60% AMI
- \$24,870 - \$82,380 (income)
- \$666 - \$1,845 (rents, including all utilities)



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# The McElwain School Apartments



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# The McElwain School Apartments

- 242 Main Street
- DDA with Town



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# The McElwain School Apartments - Amenities



- Public playground
- Public use of community room

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# The McElwain School Apartments – Financing

1. Town of Bridgewater CPA Loan
2. MHP Permanent Debt
3. MHIC Construction Loan
4. EOHLC HOME Loan
5. EOHLC HSF Loan
6. EOHLC AHT Loan
7. EOHLC NFIT Loan
8. EOHLC AAHG Loan
9. EOHLC CBH Loan
10. EOHLC CATNHP Loan
11. MA Historic Tax Credit Loan
12. MA Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Loan
13. Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Equity
14. Federal Historic Tax Credit Equity
15. Federal ITC (Solar) Equity
16. PHIUS, EV, etc. Rebates
17. Deferred Developer Fee
18. EOHLC Section 8 PBV's
19. EOHLC Section 811 PBV's



# Massachusetts Municipal Association

## Housing Converts

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242, 250A, 250B Main Street, Bridgewater

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