

# Request for Interest (RFI) for Mixed Use Development

**Authority:** This RFI, and subsequent RFP, is issued under the authority of The Town of Mendon, Massachusetts

**Issued:** Wednesday February 3, 2021 at 10AM

**Pre-Submission virtual conference call and Project Overview:**

**Date:** Wednesday February 16, 2021 at 10AM; Zoom link will be sent to all parties that RSVP

**RSVP Required:** By Tuesday February 16, 2021 at 4PM to Jack Hunter at [maraeoin03@yahoo.com](mailto:maraeoin03@yahoo.com) or 508.858.6203

**RFI Proposals Due:** Wednesday March 3, at 3:00 pm Proposals must be submitted by email to the Town Administrator Ms. Kim Newman,

**RFP:** Estimated date of RFP to be May 2021 only after full review and vetting of RFI responses and any actions required by the Town of Mendon to include approval by Town Meeting (TM) of any re-zoning.



Figure 1 –Plan of Project Site



## A. Executive Summary

Through this Request for Interest (RFI), the Town of Mendon is seeking statements of interest from qualified development teams for sale and mixed-use development on an approximately twenty-one-acre parcel for an over-55 years of age housing development with a small commercial component

The developer is to propose how their concept will best utilize this site. The town will consider multiple size developments but would request each developer submit as one alternative, a concept plan with a maximum of two stories and no more than 100 bedrooms. This alternative would be based around a Title-V Septic System. **It should be noted that the Town may be receptive to other development opportunities if appropriate and would entertain those proposals at this stage of the vetting process.**

The development must meet one of the two following conditions:

1. All the occupants of the development are over the age of 55; or
2. At least 80 percent of the occupied units include at least one resident who is verified to be over the age of 55, and the development provides documentation that it intends to provide housing for those aged 55 or older.

Each unit within the development must have at least one resident that is over the age of 55. No person under the age of 18 will be allowed to live in this development.

The focus of this solicitation is on statements of interest and development concepts, the qualifications and experience of the develop team, and their approach to investigating with the Town a financially feasible development for both parties. Other important municipal goals to be considered.

Those interested in submitting a statement of interest in response to the RFI should, at a minimum, address the Submittal Requirements outlined in this RFI.

Responses are due by **EMAIL** to the Town no later than the day and time listed on the cover sheet and addressed to:

Ms. Kim Newman  
[knewman@Mendonma.gov](mailto:knewman@Mendonma.gov)  
20 Main Street  
Mendon MA  
01756



**B. Property Summary**

1. Location Information:
  - a. Street Address: property is located at 897 North Ave
  - b. Assessors Map and Parcel: 8-189-3
  
2. Parcel Dimensions:
  - a. Parcel Size: Just over 21 acres
  
3. Existing Site Conditions: Property is an approximately 21-acre vacant site with access/egress on Milford Street and North Avenue. As the map below depicts Mass GIS indicates wetlands just to the east of the property and Natural Priority Habitat occupies the eastern portion of the property.

The successful RFP Respondent shall be responsible for obtaining environmental permits concerning the Property.



Figure 2 –Housing Site



Note that the site shown totals 21 acres. It is Town of Mendon's desire for the development being proposed to have commercial use on the north side of the site currently zoned commercial. Access to the site is by Milford Street and North Avenue.

4. Zoning and Other Land Use Criteria:

The property has a base zoning of Residence and commercial use; however, the Town of Mendon will be adopting zoning (Overlay) which will allow mixed uses for over 55 townhouses; duplexes; and a single family uses, along with small commercial component.

It is anticipated that this zoning will be approved at the May 7, 2021 Annual Town Meeting. An RFP will be issued most likely immediately after a positive Town meeting vote.

Utilities and Other Infrastructure:

- a. **Natural Gas and Electricity:** National Grid is the Town's electricity provider and Columbia Gas is the gas provider.

The successful RFP Respondent shall be responsible for obtaining and paying for all utility connections concerning the Property. Natural gas is available in the public ways abutting the Property.

- b. **Water and Sewer:** There is no Public Sewer or Public Water infrastructure available to the site. It is anticipated that all proposals will be utilizing wells and septic systems which maximize the use of the property.

5. **Access:** The Property has access off two public ways, Milford Street (Route 16) and North Avenue.

6. **Housing Production Plan/Town Master Plan:** Though there is no current Master Plan the Town is vigorously pursuing the creation of one as this is written. However, there is an approved Housing Production Plan (HHP) which outlines the assessments and needs of the Town regarding housing. Notably 2 of the primary goals of plan are:

- a. Develop Town Own Land for Housing  
b. Approve Mixed use zoning by law to encourage a diversity in housing needs.

7. **Ownership:** Ownership of the development site is municipal, Town of Mendon. The Town wants to sell the parcel as part of this project.



8. **Area and Proximity Character:** The subject site has the following adjacent land uses:
  - a. North: Single Family Houses
  - b. South: Small Commercial
  - c. East: Conservation Land.
  - d. West: Current Town elementary school.
  
9. **Taxes and Assessment:** As Town-owned land the Property is currently exempt from real property taxes. The Town plans for property tax valuation immediately upon project completion. A land value will be set after the parcel is sold.

### C. Background of Project

Like many small communities in Massachusetts the town of Mendon is not immune to the demographic waves that towns across New England are experiencing. The median age in Mendon is increasing, and many older residents, approaching or in retirement, are seeking to downsize their residences but remain in Mendon. This is a significant challenge because Mendon does not have many units, does not have many senior-oriented units or developments, and does not facilitate this development with appropriate zoning (see HHP). Thus, seniors who want to remain in Mendon either have to remain in their larger homes with their big properties or be fortunate enough to obtain one of the few smaller houses, condominiums, or rental units that are available.

Interest in the property has been strong for years. Interest in housing on this property as outlined in the HPP has been of particular interest of the Mendon Planning Board and Board of Selectmen. One key reason for an over 55 development is the lack of available over 55 units in Town. The changing demographics and how housing needs change for older residents. Seniors do not feel the need large homes anymore and are seeking to remove the burden of home and yard maintenance. Additionally, aging in many cases makes negotiating multiple stories difficult and age-friendly design is often at the top of the list when seniors are looking for the next home. Therefore, the RFI is focused on housing alternatives currently unavailable in town that would meet these needs including:

- Smaller housing units with first floor living (including master bedroom) for seniors who wish to stay in Mendon but no longer need a large single-family home;
- Retirement housing, where seniors with common interests can enjoy social interactions and down-size to a smaller unit with minimal yard and house maintenance responsibilities.
- Small commercial building (s) totaling approximately 10,000 sq. ft. in area.

One important goal that stemmed from the need for over 55 housing:

- Amend the zoning bylaws to allow mixed-use housing alternatives for seniors.

Given the constraints on septic systems, and private wells the Town believes the project may have a maximum density capacity limited to approximately 85 bedrooms, though this number maybe





increased by alternative septic designs or reduced by the size and type of proposed commercial development.

The Town issued an RFP in the June 2020 for Real Estate Consulting Services and Gov Services at KW Commercial (Gov. Services) was selected.

The Town was informed by Gov Services that input from interested housing developer should be solicited through the issuing of a Request for Information and Qualification or RFI-RFQ would be a good step that would indicate potential demand for a subsequent RFP and also provide the Town with valuable information that could shape the content of the RFP.

The Town and its consultant seek the guidance of experienced developers and land use planners for this project site. Therefore, the Town is starting with an RFI (subject of this notification) to gauge interest and determine next steps based on feedback that will shape the subsequent RFP with lessons learned from successfully completed similar projects.

#### **D. Project Goals**

To make the Subject Property available for development, the Town of Mendon seeks to achieve the following goals:

1. Feasibility – both financial and developmental feasibility of building a suitable project on the Subject Property while meeting the other goals as stated herein.
2. Site and Building Design – the site and architectural design shall be in harmony with the historic character of the Mendon and have a strong community orientation. More specific design requirements will be detailed in a subsequent RFP. Design considerations should include green spaces, pathways, pedestrian orientation, outdoor sitting and recreational areas.
3. Community Integration – The site, shall be developed so that it is integrated into the fabric of the surrounding area and become part of the neighborhood. This should be done through well-designed pedestrian connections to the other activity centers.
4. Cost – To the extent possible while maintaining project feasibility, keeping the cost for either for sale or rental units within a moderate market range by offering features that facilitate affordability.
5. Payment of Town's Consultant- As part of the RFP to be issued following the inclusion of RFI comments, the selected developer shall be obligated to pay Gov Services at KW Commercial a development fee equal to three (3) % of the total SDH project cost.



6. Town Charge – Meeting, to the extent possible, the list of conditions, requirements, and standards as listed in the by the Town.
7. Partnership – Mendon is seeking developers who want to work collaboratively and respect the goals and objectives of the Town. We will be looking for evidence that developers have previously established good working relationships with the communities with which they have worked in.
8. Model – The Town hopes that the Mendon site can successfully serve as a model for this type of development both in Mendon and the region.

### **Submittal Instructions & Site Visits**

Interested parties should submit a signed statement of interest and the proposal in either Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) or Microsoft Word (.docx) format via **EMAIL** and submitted no later than **March 3, 2021 at 3PM** to:

Ms. Kim Newman  
Town Administrator  
20 Main St. Mendon, MA 01756  
[knewman@Mendonma.gov](mailto:knewman@Mendonma.gov)  
508-478-8863

**Pre-Submission virtual conference will be held on:**

**Wednesday February 17, 2021 at 10AM**

**RSVP Required: By Tuesday February 16, 2021 at 4PM** to Jack Hunter at [maraeoin03@yahoo.com](mailto:maraeoin03@yahoo.com) or 508.858.6203

A zoom link will be sent to all parties who have RSVP'd.

The Town will schedule an additional tour should demand exceed tour capacities. Upon arrival at the property, all attendees must sign in and provide a business card with contact information. Attendees will have the opportunity to tour the property and ask clarifying questions.

The Town may offer oral comments or responses to questions asked at the site tour, but such comments or responses will not modify the terms of the RFI. In the event the Town determines that formal clarification or modification to the RFI is warranted, the Town will issue a written Addendum to this RFI to all responding participants. **Questions about any matter contained in this RFI should be emailed to Jack Hunter at [maraeoin03@yahoo.com](mailto:maraeoin03@yahoo.com) no later than Tuesday February 16, 2021 at 4PM.**

All material changes or clarification of any matter contained in this RFI will be published in a timely manner in the form of a written addendum our web site and e-mailed to all interested parties who have contacted us and/or attended one of the pre-tours.



**E. Submittal Requirements**

Statements of Interest should, at a minimum, provide the following information:

1. Cover letter
2. Contact information for the development team
3. Team capability and experience (including experience in similar projects), including a statement of developer qualifications and financial capability
4. Preliminary concept program and conceptual site plan. This should include preferences for site control, extent of site proposed to be used, and preferences for building types and site configuration.
5. Description of how this project addresses the Project Goals listed above
6. Proposed development schedule including key milestones
7. Description of project financial feasibility and description of any proposed terms of public investment or subsidy. This should include simple pro-forma showing feasibility and expected ROI.

**F. Evaluation**

In evaluating responses, the Town will consider how the proposed project advances the Project Goals described in this RFI. The Town may request additional information and conduct interviews with responders as part of the evaluation process. This RFI may lead to one of the following outcomes:

- The issuance of an RFQ or RFP open to all potential development teams.
- Cancellation of this RFI without the issuance of an RFQ or RFP.

NOTE: The RFI process is being undertaken to gauge the interest of developers and other interested parties in the development of the Town property. However, no award will be made at the conclusion of this process and no respondent will be given priority or advantage with respect to the final disposition of the site. All proposals will be reviewed for the purpose of determining how best to develop an RFP for the site disposition, which RFP will be issued in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. 30B, sec. 16 and shall be open to all proposers in accordance with the requirements of the RFP and applicable law.

**G. Additional Information**

Information supplemental to this RFI will be posted to the project website

<http://www.kwgovernment.com/rfp-bids/>

