

Nobscot Community Hours (Summary) Report

Abstract

The City of Framingham held 13 Nobscot Community Hours (NCH) from March 9 to April 27, 2018, in order to hear community ideas related to the redevelopment of Nobscot. During the NCH it was echoed that Nobscot needs to be redeveloped as a place that can provide an opportunity to live within a neighborhood, while providing employment, entertainment, and community space that service all ages. Nobscot's key asset is the McAuliffe Library that should serve as a focal point for the neighborhood and any future redevelopment. Over the years the lack of investment in the Nobscot Shopping Plaza, nonexistent entertainment opportunities, limited convenience and services, accompanied with increased commercial development in nearby communities has intensified the neighborhood's desire to see redevelopment of Nobscot.

What do people want?

- A mixture of commercial and retail uses within the center that supports pedestrian activity. In supporting a walkable neighborhood-village people wanted to see more sidewalks that extend up Edmands Road and Edgell Road, and increased trail and open space opportunities.
- Mixed-use with commercial, retail, office would be supported as a predominate principal use, while residential space may be welcomed as an accessory to the commercial uses, such as convenience items, a local grocery store or specialty market, places for people to gather, entertainment opportunities, a variety of restaurant and dining opportunities.
- Host and support events for all ages within the community. Currently, people drive outside of Framingham to attend events, meanwhile they are impressed with the recent community events taking place in Downtown Framingham.
- People want to see outdoor seating areas, more trees, increased landscaping, landscape area between the street and the structure, and open space incorporated into future development efforts in Nobscot.

What the Nobscot community does not want here or possess concerns about:

- Nobscot does not want to see cookie cutter building design.
- The corners of the Water Street/Edgell Road, Edmands Road intersection should be softened to establish a neighborhood/village feel.
- Opinions about the inclusion of residential within Nobscot, ranged from very limited to no appetite for additional apartments; any type of residential development needs to be accessory to a principal commercial and/or retail use.
- There is a concern about the lack of parking associated with the Branch Library, on-street parking, and future development projects will not park themselves.

Nobscot Community Hours Topic – Housing

- There were mixed feelings about the inclusion of new housing within Nobscot but there was little support for additional rental housing.
 - Quality affordable housing that is not geared towards the top 10 percent
 - Housing targeted for an aging population that allows people the opportunity to live and walk to amenities and entertainment and age in place
 - Work force housing that is affordable for those employed here
 - Cooperative style housing where there is a mixture of over 55, work force, starter housing, mixed with commercial, retail, community space, and restaurants.

Nobscot Community Hours Topic – Transportation

- There is a need to think differently about mobility since the roads were not designed to support the amount of traffic associated with the recent developments of the area.
- Request for more bicycle lanes, alternative options for transportation (public transportation, ride-shares, monorail, etc.) to decrease traffic.
- Nobscot has a major traffic issue specifically around the hours of school drop-off in the morning and afternoon.
- Need to establish Nobscot as a nice and safe place to walk.
- Roadways (specifically Edmands Road) were not designed for multiple vehicles. These roads are scenic and very narrow. It is believed that there is not much the City can do to widen the scenic roadways especially without losing the scenic/historic nature of the roadway.

