

# NEWBURY SECTION 3A "MBTA COMMUNITIES" FACT SHEET

## WHAT IS SECTION 3A?

Section 3A (MBTA Communities) is a new MA law requiring communities with an MBTA transit stop or bordering communities with an MBTA transit stop to adopt a **zoning** bylaw that allows multi-family housing by-right in at least one district of reasonable size.

This is **NOT** a construction mandate.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Massachusetts has among the highest, and fastest growing, home prices and rents of any state in the nation.
- There is an estimated shortage of 200,000 housing units in MA – this law would **allow** for construction of new housing to help close this gap and stabilize costs.

## WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR NEWBURY?

- Newbury must zone for a district that allows for multi-family residential development by-right.
- Newbury is classified as an Adjacent Small Town, which requires a minimum district of about 10 acres and an average density of 15 dwelling units per acre.
- The Town has until 12/31/2025 to comply with Section 3A.

## HOW CAN I MAKE MY VOICE HEARD?



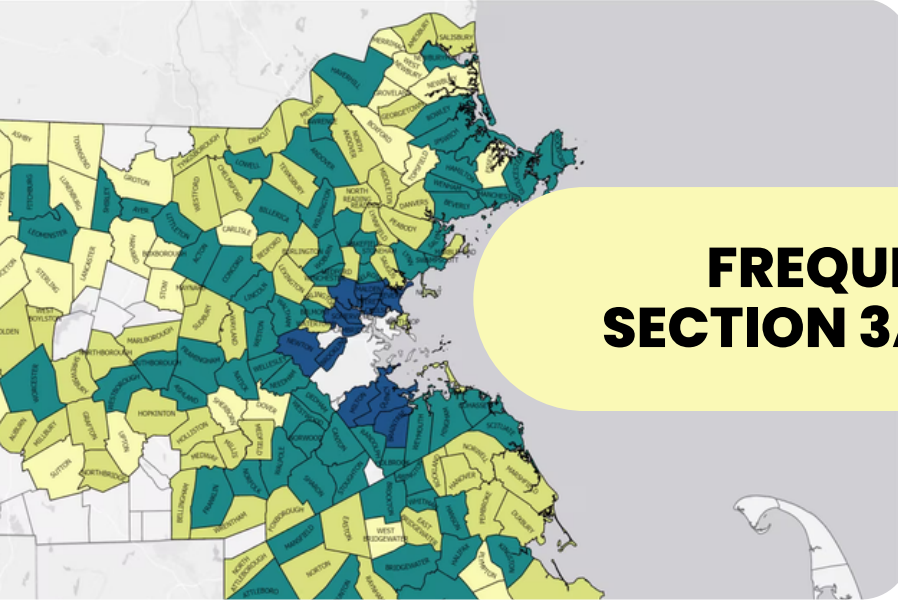
Ask questions and share comments at the Planning Board Public Hearing on February 21st.



Spread the word – inform your neighbors and fellow residents about Section 3A.



Attend the Newbury Annual Town Meeting on April 30th to vote on district adoption.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SECTION 3A "MBTA COMMUNITIES"

### **Does Newbury need to build more housing to comply?**

No. The state regulations only require the Town creates a zoning district that could accommodate the unit capacity and density required. This is not a building mandate.

### **Are our neighboring communities subject to this law? Are they complying?**

Yes. All cities & towns in the Merrimack Valley are subject to the law. This includes bigger cities like Haverhill and small towns like Boxford. All of these communities, including Newbury, are currently identifying potential districts and soliciting community feedback.

### **What happens if Town Meeting decides to not adopt zoning that complies?**

- The Town would risk losing access to over 12 state grant programs. In recent years, Newbury has received over \$1.7 Million in funding from some of these programs.
- The Attorney General has also stated communities may face litigation from the state.

### **Will residents have the opportunity for public input and feedback?**

Yes, residents will have several opportunities to have their voice heard:

- The Town will hold multiple public meetings on this topic where residents will have the opportunity to learn, ask question, and provide feedback before Town Meeting.
- The bylaw will go through the regular public hearing process that all proposed zoning bylaw amendments are required to go through prior to Town Meeting on April 30th.
- Check the Planning Board page of the Town's website and sign up for Planning Board News alerts to stay up to date.

*As with any zoning change, adopting this bylaw will be up to residents at Town Meeting.*

