

Annual Town Meeting
Princeton, MA 01541
May 13, 2025

Warrant duly posted:	April 23, 2025
Inhabitants notified by website posting:	April 23, 2025
Advisory Board Hearing:	April 29, 2025
Quorum needed:	96
Voters Present:	130
Moderator:	Harry Pape
Checkers/Counters:	Lisa Farnsworth, Fran Thomas, Lynne Grettum
Acting Constable:	Chief Paul Patriarca
Meeting called to order:	6:41 PM
Meeting dissolved:	9:29 PM

All votes were taken by voice vote unless otherwise noted.

The Town Counsel was present.

The Advisory Committee approves all articles.

The Moderator opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and introduced a boy scout who led the flag salute.

A motion was made and seconded to dispense with the reading of the full warrant.

The Moderator declared the vote was unanimous at 6:42 PM

The Moderator read the charge to the Constable, and the Return of the Warrant.

The Moderator asked that all first-time attendees and non-voters identify themselves for the tellers.

The Moderator announced that this year marks 250 years since the American Revolution.

The Moderator announced that the annual town-wide yard sale will be held on Saturday, May 17, 2025, and Memorial Day Observance activities will take place on Sunday, May 25th.

The Selectboard awarded the Citizen of the Year award to Deputy Fire Chief Timothy Kelly.

The Moderator read the results from the May 12, 2025 Annual Town Election.

ARTICLE 1. Voted to hear the reports of the Town Officers and any outstanding committees and act thereon.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 1 unanimous at 6:56 PM

ARTICLE 2. Voted under the provisions of G.L. c. 41, §108, to fix the salaries of the following Town Officers for the ensuing year (FY26):

	<u>FY 25</u>	<u>FY 26</u>
Moderator	\$ 25	\$ 25
Selectboard	\$ 3,600 (\$1,200 per member)	\$ 0
Assessors	\$ 1,500 (\$500 per member)	\$ 1,500 (\$500 per member)

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 2 unanimous at 6:57 PM

ARTICLE 3. Moved and seconded to raise and appropriate **\$13,660,776.29** and to transfer the sum of **\$386,588.55** from **Free Cash** to reduce the FY 26 tax rate and to appropriate **\$130,000** from **Ambulance Receipts** for a total of **\$14,177,364.84** including debt and interest, and to provide for a reserve fund, for the ensuing fiscal year (FY26), as set forth in the warrant.

In moving through Article 3, the question was divided. Voters requested that the Total Education budget item be HELD out for discussion.

The Moderator then called for a motion to approve all other budget items for FY26, excluding the Total Education budget item. A second motion was made and seconded to approve all other budget items for fiscal year 2026 (FY26) as set within the warrant, excluding the Total Education budget.

The Moderator declared the second motion vote on Article 3 unanimous at 7:03 PM

After discussion of the Total Education budget, a third motion was made and seconded to approve the Total Education budget as set within the warrant.

The Moderator declared the third motion vote on Article 3 carried at 7:06 PM

Town Clerk note: On the above motions made and duly seconded, it was voted favorably to raise and appropriate **\$13,660,776.29** and to transfer the sum of **\$386,588.55** from **Free Cash** and to appropriate **\$130,000** from **Ambulance Receipts** for a total of **\$14,177,364.84** to fund the ensuing fiscal year (FY26) operating budget for all town departments as shown in the warrant.

DEPARTMENT	FY25 BUDGET VOTED	FY26 CHANGES / GROWTH	FY26 TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST	FY 25 TO FY 26 %INCREASE
GENERAL GOVERNMENT CONT.				
Moderator				
Salary	25.00	-		
Expense	100.00	-		
Sub-Total Moderator	125.00	-	125.00	0.00%
Selectboard				
Salaries	3,600.00	(3,600.00)		
Expense	6,685.00	-		
Sub-Total Selectboard	10,285.00	(3,600.00)	6,685.00	-35.00%
Town Administrator				
Salary	112,583.55	12,416.45		
Assistant To Town Administrator	29,847.00	895.41		
Expense	3,423.50	(364.00)		
Sub-Total Town Administrator	145,854.05	12,947.86	158,801.91	8.88%
Reserve Fund				
Expense	125,000.00	(10,000.00)	115,000.00	-8.00%
Town Accountant				
Salary	51,000.00	(3,000.00)		
Admin Asst Wages	-	14,637.58		
Expense	22,953.00	640.00		
Sub-Total Accountant	73,953.00	12,277.58	86,230.58	16.60%
Board of Assessors				
Board Salaries	1,500.00	-		
Department Salary	30,959.83	928.79		
Expense	38,556.39	400.00		
Sub-Total Assessors	71,016.22	1,328.79	72,345.01	1.87%
Treasurer/Tax Collector				
Department Salary	130,103.60	(8,757.41)		
Expense	33,018.00	1,825.00		
Sub-Total Treasurer/Tax Collector	163,121.60	(6,932.41)	156,189.19	-4.25%
Town Counsel				
Expense	35,000.00	-	35,000.00	0.00%
Information Technology				
Salaries	36,960.46	-		
Info Tech Expense	35,957.00	-		
Sub-Total Information Technology	72,917.46	-	72,917.46	0.00%
Administrative Assistants				
Salaries	28,500.40	(13,782.57)		
Expense	500.00	-		
Sub-Total Administrative Assistants	29,000.40	(13,782.57)	15,217.83	-47.53%

DEPARTMENT	FY25 BUDGET VOTED	FY26 CHANGES / GROWTH	FY26 TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST	FY 25 TO FY 26 % INCREASE
Town Clerk				
Salary	59,737.60	5,824.13		
Expenses	7,050.00	850.00		
Sub-Total Town Clerk	66,787.60	6,674.13	73,461.73	9.99%
Elections & Registration				
Salaries	6,000.00	(3,000.00)		
Expense	16,440.00	(8,570.00)		
Sub-Total Elections & Registration	22,440.00	(11,570.00)	10,870.00	-51.56%
Conservation Commission				
Expense	970.00	-	970.00	0.00%
Environmental Action Committee				
Expense	970.00	-	970.00	0.00%
Planning Board				
Expense	1,810.51	-	1,810.51	0.00%
Board of Appeals				
Expense	500.00	-	500.00	0.00%
Open Space Committee				
Expense	985.00	-	985.00	0.00%
Agricultural Commission				
Expense	1,000.00	-	1,000.00	0.00%
Housing Committee				
Expense	-	1,000.00	1,000.00	
Town Building Operations				
Salaries	56,028.53	4,769.87		
Expense	69,451.00	-		
Sub-Total Town Building Operations	125,479.53	4,769.87	130,249.40	3.80%
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT:	947,215.37	(6,886.74)	940,328.63	-0.73%
PUBLIC SAFETY				
Police				
Police non-union Salaries	194,265.59	3,272.59		
Police Union Salaries	807,555.06	30,188.23		
Expense	299,511.30	27,194.97		
Sub-Total Police	1,301,331.95	60,655.79	1,361,987.74	4.66%
Fire Department				
Salaries	186,576.68	(19,890.69)		
Expense	124,584.78	14,340.00		
Sub-Total Fire	311,161.46	(5,550.69)	305,610.77	-1.78%
Ambulance				
Salaries	313,132.00	9,393.96		
Expense	67,685.00	(6,000.00)		
Sub-Total Ambulance	380,817.00	3,393.96	384,210.96	0.89%
Regional Services				
Animal Inspector Salary	500.00	-		
Animal Control Expense	13,673.50	-		
Emergency Dispatch	107,866.20	16,459.70		
Sub-Total Regional Services	122,039.70	16,459.70	138,499.40	13.49%
Emergency Response				
Expense	11,767.20	-	11,767.20	
Sub-Total Emergency Response	11,767.20	0.00	11,767.20	0.00%
Tree Warden				
Salary	1,665.00	-		
Expense	11,750.00	-		
Sub-Total Tree Warden	13,415.00	-	13,415.00	0.00%
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY:	2,140,532.31	74,958.76	2,215,491.07	3.50%
EDUCATION				
Wachusett Regional School				
Wachusett Minimum Contribution	4,223,361.00	154,378.00		
Operations Assessment	1,272,884.00	355,584.00		
Transportation	565,690.00	(108,892.00)		
Long Term Debt	44,144.00	(11,794.00)		
Wachusett Regional Total	6,106,079.00	389,276.00	6,495,355.00	6.38%
Montachusett Reg. Vocational	412,228.00	46,738.00	458,966.00	11.34%
Smith Vocational	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
TOTAL EDUCATION: HELD	6,518,307.00	436,014.00	6,954,321.00	6.69%
PUBLIC WORKS				
Highway				
Salaries	509,300.61	65,415.74		
Expense	338,574.00	-		
Road Reconstruction	250,000.00	-		
Sub-Total Highway	1,097,874.61	65,415.74	1,163,290.35	5.96%

DEPARTMENT	FY25 BUDGET VOTED	FY26 CHANGES / GROWTH	FY26 TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST	FY 25 TO FY 26 % INCREASE
Snow/Ice Removal				
Expenses	261,335.00	1,375.05	262,710.05	0.53%
Street Lights				
Expenses	7,100.00	-	7,100.00	0.00%
Wachusett Earth day	2,332.82	-	2,332.82	0.00%
Wachusett Greenway	832.00	-	832.00	0.00%
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS:	1,369,474.43	66,790.79	1,436,265.22	4.88%
ENVIRONMENTAL				
Expense	66,416.00	-		
PFA's Monitoring/Testing	423,997.00	(43,997.00)		
PFA's Water/Filters	10,000.00	-		
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL:	500,413.00	(43,997.00)	456,416.00	-8.79%
HUMAN SERVICES				
Council on Aging				
Salary	49,245.21	1,524.32		
Expense	59,223.34	-		
Sub-Total Council on Aging	108,468.55	1,524.32	109,992.87	1.41%
Veterans Services				
Salary	7,200.00	200.00		
Expense	43,200.00	(13,200.00)		
Sub-Total Veterans Services	50,400.00	(13,000.00)	37,400.00	-25.79%
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES:	158,868.55	(11,475.68)	147,392.87	-7.22%
CULTURE & RECREATION				
Library				
Salaries	145,800.68	4,374.02		
Expense	66,388.00	-		
Sub-Total Library	212,188.68	4,374.02	216,562.70	2.06%
Band Concerts	2,440.00	(440.00)	2,000.00	-18.03%
Parks & Recreation				
Salaries	20,997.60	629.93		
Expense	21,819.34	-		
Sub-Total Parks and Recreation	42,816.94	629.93	43,446.87	1.47%
Historical Commission	1,500.00	-	1,500.00	0.00%
Town Celebrations	5,550.00	-	5,550.00	0.00%
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION:	264,495.62	4,563.95	269,059.57	1.73%
DEBT & INTEREST				
Leases	26,106.00	50,000.00	76,106.00	191.53%
Thomas Prince/Green Repair	111,100.00	(111,100.00)	-	-100.00%
PFAS Remediation	178,740.00	68,218.33	246,958.33	38.17%
Broadband Make Ready	109,300.00	(3,000.00)	106,300.00	-2.74%
Fire Truck Debt/Int	58,753.00	-	58,753.00	0.00%
Bagg Hall Stab. Debt/Int	151,321.00	(8,075.00)	143,246.00	-5.34%
Salt Shed Debt/Int	17,405.00	(5,325.00)	12,080.00	-30.59%
Ambulance	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
General Interest/Borrowing Fees	25,000.00	-	25,000.00	0.00%
TOTAL DEBT & INTEREST:	677,725.00	(9,281.67)	668,443.33	-1.37%
MISCELLANEOUS				
Retirement	376,862.00	117,024.00	493,886.00	31.05%
Town Insurance	125,000.00	9,375.00	134,375.00	7.50%
Health Insurance	374,141.74	23,295.61	397,437.35	6.23%
Life & Fringe	9,900.00	-	9,900.00	0.00%
FICA/Medicare	52,348.75	1,700.06	54,048.81	3.25%
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS:	938,252.49	151,394.67	1,089,647.16	16.14%
TOTAL BUDGET:	13,515,283.77	662,081.07	14,177,364.84	4.90%

ARTICLE 4. RECURRING BUSINESS – Moved and seconded to approve Article 4 as proposed in subsections A through D.

- A. VOTED to transfer **\$10,000** from **Free Cash** to be deposited in the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund in order to offset future health insurance costs for retirees.
- B. VOTED to **raise and appropriate \$50.00** to the Goodnow Book Expense Account for the purchase of books for the Library, as required by the terms of the Goodnow Deed of Gift.

- C. **VOTED** to transfer **\$2,047** from **Free Cash** to the School Septic System Stabilization Fund for the purpose of reserving funds for the replacement and/or repair of the septic system at the Thomas Prince School.
- D. **VOTED** to authorize the Selectboard to contract with and accept any grants from the Mass. Department of Transportation-Highway Division for the construction of any road or related work that may be allotted to the Town for the ensuing year.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 4 unanimous at 7:09 PM

ARTICLE 5. Moved and seconded to **amend Chapter XIX of the General Bylaws** by adding to the table of revolving funds in Section 5 thereof a revolving fund for the Council on Aging (the “Council”) for fiscal years 2026 and subsequent years, specifying that the persons authorized to spend from the fund are the Chair of the Council, the Director of the Council and the Town Administrator, and providing that the revenue source shall be fees collected from the programs of and donations to the Council, and further providing that the use of the fund shall be to provide programs and defray expenses of the Council, with no other restrictions or conditions on expenses payable from the fund and no other requirements or reports.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 5 unanimous at 7:11 PM

ARTICLE 6: DEPARTMENTAL REVOLVING FUNDS AUTHORIZATION

Moved and seconded to authorize the following expenditure caps for revolving funds for certain town departments under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44 Section 53E ½ for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025.

Revolving Fund	Authorized to Spend Fund	Revenue Source	Use of Fund	FY 2025 Spending Limit	FY 2026 Spending Limit
Building Department	Bldg. Inspector Town Admin.	Fees from Bldg, Wiring, and Plumbing Permits	To Pay Administrative & Inspector Salary & Expenses	\$55,000	\$85,000
Library	Library Director, Town Admin.	Copy Machine, Fax, Fines and Fees	Defray Operational Expenses	\$4,000	\$4,000
Parks and Recreation (P&R)	P&R Commission Chairman, P&R Director, and Town Admin.	Fees Collected from Recreational Programs	Provide Recreational Programs & Pay Salaries	\$20,000	\$20,000
Parks and Recreation (P&R)	P&R Commission Chairman, P&R Director, and Town Admin.	Fees Collected from Recreational Programs	Maintenance of Parks Pay Salaries	\$20,000	\$20,000
Board of Health	Board of Health Town Admin.	Permits & Inspections	Salary & Expense	\$21,000	\$21,000
Cemetery	Cemetery Comm. Chairman, Town Admin.	Burial Fees	Salary & Expense	\$10,000	\$10,000
Fire Department	Fire Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Town Admin.	Fees from Fire Permits	To Pay Administrative & Inspector Salary & Expenses	\$8,500	\$8,500
Conservation Commission	Conservation Commission Chair, Town Admin.	Lease Payments from Four Corners Hayfields	To Pay for the Upkeep of & Improvements to Conservation Property	\$3,500	\$3,500
Council On Aging	Director, COA Chair Town Admin	Donations & Fees from Programs	Operational Expenses & Programs		\$16,000
Maximum Spending					\$188,000

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 6 unanimous at 7:15 PM

ARTICLE 7. Moved and seconded to **authorize**, under G.L. c. 44, § 21C, upon the recommendation of the Selectboard, the following lease purchase financing agreements for the acquisition of equipment that

may be acquired through the issuance of debt under G.L. c. 44, the term of such agreement not to exceed the useful life of the equipment or improvement as determined by the Selectboard, and to authorize the departments below to enter into such agreements on behalf of the Town, subject to appropriation for the first year payments of the agreements as stated below.

Equipment / Capital Asset	Max Term	Authorized Department	Appropriation
Police Vehicle (1)	3 years	Police	FY 27
Excavator	5 years	Highway	FY 26

Requires a 2/3rd vote under G.L. c. 44, § 21C.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 7 carried at 7:18 PM

ARTICLE 8. Moved and seconded to transfer \$40,000 from Free Cash to purchase an “All Season Dump Body” for the Highway Department.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 8 carried at 7:19 PM

ARTICLE 9. Moved and seconded to transfer \$55,000 from Free Cash to rebuild the Highway Department catch basin truck.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 9 carried at 7:24 PM

ARTICLE 10. Moved and seconded to transfer \$15,000 from Free Cash for consultant services to perform a building assessment to identify building repairs and provide cost estimates at the Highway Department dry storage building and old salt barn.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 10 unanimous at 7:29 PM

ARTICLE 11. Moved and seconded to transfer \$200,000 from Free Cash to replace some of the Univents at the Thomas Prince Elementary School.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 11 unanimous at 7:31 PM

ARTICLE 12. VOTED to transfer \$20,000 from free cash to replace the furnace at the Library.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 12 unanimous at 7:32 PM

ARTICLE 13. Moved and seconded to transfer \$150,000 from Free Cash for resurfacing the Town Campus parking lot, repairing the septic line and replacing the walkway at the Library with a new accessible walkway.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 13 carried at 7:33 PM

ARTICLE 14. VOTED to transfer \$16,000 from Free Cash to purchase a refurbished CPR (Lucas) device for the Fire/EMS Department.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 14 carried at 7:34 PM

ARTICLE 15. Moved and seconded to approve the establishment by the Wachusett Regional School District of a Capital Stabilization Fund in accordance with MGL 71, Section 16G 1/2 effective July 1, 2025.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 15 unanimous at 7:36 PM

ARTICLE 16. Moved and seconded to transfer \$100,000 from Free Cash to the PFAS Legal Account to cover legal expenses in connection with the Ervin vs. Town of Princeton lawsuit.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 16 carried at 7:39 PM

ARTICLE 17. Moved and seconded to transfer \$102.73 from Free Cash to pay unpaid bills from a prior fiscal year (FY 24).

Requires 4/5 majority vote

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 17 unanimous at 7:40 PM

ARTICLE 18. Moved and seconded to transfer \$22,042.62 from Free Cash to reconcile previous fiscal year variances.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 18 unanimous at 7:41 PM

ARTICLE 19. Moved and seconded to transfer \$2,228.80 from Free Cash to reconcile deficit grant accounts.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 19 unanimous at 7:42 PM

ARTICLE 20. Moved and seconded to accept G.L. c.64L, §2 to impose a local meals excise tax of .75%.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 20 carried via electronic vote at 7:47 PM (Yes– 98, No – 25)

ARTICLE 21. Moved and seconded, in connection with the Hobbs Road Bridge Project, to authorize the acquisition of easements necessary for the construction and maintenance of such bridge, as follows:

- a. pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 14 and all other enabling laws, to authorize the Select Board to acquire by gift or purchase, or to take by eminent domain, such temporary and permanent easements and rights as may be necessary in connection therewith, including without limitation easements on property owned by Shawn Bernard located at Assessors' Map 5, Parcels 15, 16 and 19, and property owned by James E. Gray located at Assessors' Map 5, Parcel 36, as shown on a plan entitled "EASEMENT PLAN OF LAND IN PRINCETON MASSACHUSETTS" dated March 21, 2025, which is on file with the Town Clerk (the "Plan"); and
- b. pursuant to G.L. c. 40, § 15A and any other applicable law, to transfer the care, custody, management and control of so much of the Town-owned land located at Assessors' Map 5, Parcel 35A as is shown on the Plan to be within temporary or permanent easement areas, from the Select Board for purposes of a fire pond to the Select Board for purposes of supporting the said bridge, the Select Board having determined that such areas are no longer needed for fire pond purposes.

Requires 2/3rd majority vote.

The Moderator questioned as to why part b. in the warrant article was omitted in the motion. Town Administrator Patch explained that there was no longer a need to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds a sufficient sum of money for the acquisition of easements for the properties indicated in the article.

The main motion was put to vote.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 21 unanimous at 7:51 PM

ARTICLE 22. Moved and seconded to amend Section VII of the Zoning By-Laws by adopting the following new Section VII.7 with common driveway regulations:

7. Common Driveways

- (A) **Purposes.** The purposes of these common driveway regulations are to protect the safety and welfare with regard to normal driveway use, intersection of driveways with the public way, and adequacy of driveways for emergency vehicle access, and to minimize environmental impacts of driveways especially with regard to stormwater management and water resource protection. The provisions in this Section VII.7 supersede all procedures and standards for common driveways in these Zoning By-Laws and in the Town of Princeton Rules and Regulations Governing Subdivision of Land.
- (B) **Definition.** A common driveway is a private way, extending from a public way, and serving as common access to more than one (1) lot but not more than five (5) lots. Any private way that serves more than five (5) lots requires compliance with the regulations and standards governing streets under the Town's Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land.
- (C) **Standards.** The following standards, regulations, and requirements apply to common driveways:
 - (1) So as to enable emergency vehicles to easily locate the common driveway and the lots served by the common driveway, every common driveway serving three (3) or more lots shall be named and shall have a sign approved by the Highway Department placed at the intersection of the common driveway and the public way with the name of the

- common driveway, the house numbers, and the words “Private Way.” Any fork in a common driveway shall be marked with house numbers. The name of a common driveway and the house numbers it serves must be filed with the Town Clerk, the Fire Chief, and the Police Chief.
- (2) While a common driveway may provide actual access to a lot, every lot served by the common driveway shall meet the area and yard requirements in Section VI or as approved under Sections XIV or XV of these Zoning By-Laws.
 - (3) The common driveway shall be located entirely within the boundaries of the lots being served by the common driveway or within permanent and recorded easements to the owners of those lots and their assigns. Except as permitted through a recorded easement, or when the common driveway serves a back-lot development approved under Section XV of these Zoning By-Laws, at no point shall the centerline of a common driveway be closer than twenty-five (25) feet to any lot line not served by the common driveway.
 - (4) The angle of the centerline intersection of the common driveway with the centerline of the public way shall not be less than 60 degrees.
 - (5) The common driveway centerline intersection on a public way must be at least two hundred (200) feet from the centerline intersection of any other existing or approved public way, private way, or common driveway on the same side of the public way, unless the applicant can demonstrate to the Planning Board’s satisfaction that public safety will not be compromised by a lesser separation.
 - (6) The sidelines of the intersection of the common driveway and the public way shall have a radius of not less than five (5) feet.
 - (7) The intersection of the common driveway and the public way shall be designed so that drainage of water shall not be channeled onto the public way. Any drainage method must be approved by the Planning Board and the Highway Department with an opportunity for review by the Conservation Commission.
 - (8) The maximum centerline grade of the common driveway shall be 10%. Within seventy-five (75) feet of the public way, the maximum centerline grade of the common driveway shall be 3%.
 - (9) The maximum length of the common driveway shall be seven hundred fifty (750) feet. Where the common driveway exceeds five hundred (500) feet in length, it shall end in a circle with a radius of no less than twenty-five (25) feet.
 - (10) Turnouts shall be installed and maintained every three hundred (300) feet on a common driveway to allow vehicles to pass.
 - (11) The minimum easement width for a common driveway that serves a residential use shall be twenty-four (24) feet. The minimum easement width for a common driveway that serves a non-residential use shall be forty (40) feet.
 - (12) For a common driveway that serves a residential use, the minimum cleared travel lane width shall be twelve (12) feet with shoulders of at least two (2) feet width for a total minimum cleared width of sixteen (16) feet. Except where turnouts are installed, the maximum cleared width of a common driveway serving a residential use, including shoulders, shall not exceed twenty-four (24) feet.
 - (13) For a common driveway that serves a non-residential use, the minimum cleared travel lane width shall be twenty-two (22) feet with shoulders of at least two (2) feet width for a total minimum cleared width of twenty-four (26) feet. Except where turnouts are installed, the maximum cleared width of a common driveway serving a commercial use, including shoulders, shall not exceed thirty (30) feet.
 - (14) The common driveway shall be constructed using a minimum twelve (12) inch layer of sorted gravel sub-base, compacted to a least 95% of maximum dry density.
 - (a) Paved common driveways shall have a base course with a minimum two (2) inch binder and a top course with a minimum one and one-half (1.5) inch thickness.
 - (b) Common driveways may be surfaced with gravel, crushed stone, or another permeable or semi-permeable surface that the surface allows for all season access by vehicles of up to 40,000 pounds as certified by a professional engineer.
 - (15) No common driveway shall be constructed off of any cul-de-sac or dead end of a public or private way. No common driveway shall be connected or attached to any other common driveway or be extended without prior approval of the Planning Board which may require a public hearing.
- (D) **Procedures.** A common driveway requires a Special Permit and Site Plan Review from the Planning Board and a Driveway Opening Permit from the Highway Superintendent.
- (1) New Common Driveways. A special permit and compliance with the design criteria of this Section VII.7 is required for the construction of a new common driveway.
 - (2) Pre-Existing Common Driveways. A special permit and compliance with the design criteria of this Section VII.7 is required
 - (a) For the construction of an additional dwelling unit (other than an ADU) or for the conversion of a single-family dwelling to a two- or three-family dwelling that

will be served by a common driveway existing before the adoption of this by-law (“pre-existing common driveway”); and

- (b) For any material relocation, expansion, or extension of a pre-existing common driveway; provided, however, that for good cause shown, the Planning Board may waive specific design criteria pursuant to Section VII.(E).

The standards and procedures of this Section VII are not otherwise applicable to pre-existing common driveways.

- (3) Plans. An applicant for a Special Permit for a Common Driveway shall submit to the Planning Board a plan that substantially complies with the requirements appended to the application form, prepared and signed by a professional engineer and/or land surveyor registered in Massachusetts.
- (4) Documents. An applicant for a Special Permit for a Common Driveway shall submit to the Planning Board draft documents providing for easements binding present and future owners of all the lots served by the common driveway, together with an opinion from an attorney that the documents provide for:
- (a) The right to use in the common driveway for all purposes for which private driveways are customarily used, including the right to install, maintain and repair drains, culvert and underground utilities in, along, under and across the common driveways.
- (b) The obligation to repair, maintain, and remove snow so as to insure continuous year-round access to each lot by emergency and other vehicles, including a clear expression of specifications to which the common driveway must be maintained.
- (c) The right of each owner of a lot served by the common driveway to enforce the obligations to repair and maintain the common driveway.
- (d) Maintenance of the required signs where the common driveway enters the public way and the required signs at each branch of the common driveway.
- (5) Review Fees and Expenses. When reviewing an application for, or when conducting inspections in relation to, a Common Driveway Special Permit, the Planning Board may determine that the assistance of outside consultants is warranted, including but not limited to professional engineering, surveying or planning review. In such cases the applicant shall pay a “project review fee” consisting of the reasonable costs for such outside consultant(s). An additional project review fee deposit may be required by the Planning Board at the time of submission or at any time during the review or inspection process.
- (E) **Waiver**. Strict compliance with these common driveway Standards and Procedures may be waived by the Planning Board if the Planning Board finds that the required information is irrelevant to a particular project, that the granting of a waiver is in the public interest, and that granting the waiver would not be inconsistent with the purposes of these By-Laws and, where applicable, the Town of Princeton Subdivision Rules and Regulations.

Requires 2/3rd majority vote to pass.

After discussion, a motion was made and seconded to move the question.

Requires 2/3rd majority vote to move the question.

Point of order: A resident requested that an electronic vote count be taken.

The Moderator declared the vote to move the question carried via electronic vote at 8:24PM (Yes-97, No- 8)

The main motion was then put to vote.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 22 failed via electronic vote at 8:25 PM (61-Yes, No– 42.)

ARTICLE 23. Moved and seconded to amend the title to Section VI of the Zoning By-Laws to be

SECTION VI. AREA, YARD, HEIGHT, AND FLOODPLAIN REQUIREMENTS

And to amend Section VI to adopt the following additional Section VI.3:

3. Floodplains

- (A) **Purpose**. This provision is intended to reduce the risk of damage to persons and property, to reduce hazards for emergency responders when there are floods, to reduce the public and private costs associated with response to and cleanup after

floods, and to minimize adverse effects to the floodplain and its important functions in the storage and conveyance of water, the protection of water quality, the recharge of groundwater, and the provision of wildlife habitat.

- (B) No building shall be constructed in a Special Flood Hazard Area as identified and defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) as an area that will be inundated by a flood event having a one percent (1 %) chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (also known as the 100 year flood or 1 % chance regulatory floodplain) as delineated by the most recent map from FEMA.
- (C) All other activities in a Special Flood Hazard Area require the filing of a Request for Determination with the Conservation Commission and compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. In reviewing a Request for Determination for activities in a Special Flood Hazard Area, the Conservation Commission shall consider the possible impact on down-gradient properties.

Requires 2/3rd majority vote to pass

After discussion, the main motion was put to vote.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 23 failed via electronic vote at 8:50 PM (Yes-58, No-36)

ARTICLE 24. Moved and seconded to amend Section III.1.(B) of the Zoning By-Laws by striking the current Section III.1.(B) and replacing it with the following:

- (B) Conversion, alteration, or extension of a single-family dwelling existing before December 31, 1980 into a two- or three-family dwelling with a special permit from the Planning Board as provided in Section VIII.3 and Site Plan Review by the Planning Board as provided in Section XII.
 - (1) All two- and three-family dwellings under this subparagraph B shall meet the following criteria:
 - (a) A dwelling for two (2) families requires a lot containing at least 130,600 square feet (3 acres) of land, of which not less than 65,340 square feet (1 ½ acres) shall be exclusive of wetlands and flood hazard areas.
 - (b) A dwelling for three (3) families requires a lot containing at least 217,720 square feet (5 acres) of land, of which not less than 108,860 square feet (2 ½ acres) shall be exclusive of wetlands and flood hazard areas.
 - (c) The conversion involves no substantial external enlargement of the preexisting dwelling building.
 - (d) All dwelling units are in a single building.
 - (e) Unless all two- or three-family dwelling units are owner-occupied condominium units, one dwelling unit shall be occupied by the owner of the building.
 - (f) Dwellings converted under this subparagraph B shall to the extent reasonably practicable have the appearance of a single-family dwelling, be constructed in accordance with the Design Guidelines in subsection (g), and shall require site plan review and approval by the Planning Board pursuant to Section XII of these Zoning By-Laws with notice to abutting landowners. For dwellings converted to condominium units, draft condominium documents shall be provided as part of the application for a special permit and must address responsibility of property maintenance.
 - (g) Design Guidelines. The purpose of these design guidelines is to facilitate and encourage affordable and diverse residential housing in Princeton while preserving the existing rural, scenic, and aesthetic qualities of the Town, and minimizing any adverse impact on neighboring properties.
 - (i) Entrances. No façade shall have more than one entrance unless each entrance is on a separate ell or wing. Units may share a common entrance into a common hallway.

- (ii) Driveways. There shall be a single driveway.
 - (iii) Exterior staircases. There shall be no exterior staircases above the first floor of the dwelling.
 - (iv) Parking. There shall be not less than two parking spaces per unit, including parking spaces in garage(s).
 - (v) Setbacks. No part of the dwelling, and no part of any accessory structure, shall be so located as to extend within fifty (50) feet of a lot line where the lot line borders the street right of way, or within fifty (50) feet of a side or rear lot line.
- (2) There shall be submitted to the Planning Board with the application for permission for the conversion a site plan of the proposed conversion drawn to scale showing the land area, the location of the well and septic system, the location of all existing buildings and any proposed external changes to existing buildings, and the location of all existing and proposed structures, parking facilities, driveways and service areas, and surface water drainage.
- (3) Except as may be specifically provided in this Section III.1.(B), all conversions shall comply with all other requirements of these Zoning By-Laws.

Requires simple majority vote to pass

Discussion: A second motion was made to amend the main motion by striking the text “existing before December 31, 1980”. The Moderator ruled the motion to amend was out of scope because it expands the intent of the article. The Moderator explained that for zoning bylaw amendments, a hearing must be held before the town meeting. The hearing for the amendment that expands the intent of the article had not happened, therefore the motion to amend by striking the words “existing before December 31, 1980” was ruled out of order. The Planning Board Chair, John Mirick stated that the resident could propose this amendment as a citizens’ generated article for the next town meeting.

The main motion was put to vote.

The Moderator declared the vote on Article 24 carried via electronic vote at 9:06 PM (Yes-72, No-24)

ARTICLE 25. Moved and seconded to amend the Zoning By-Laws by adopting the following new Section XXIV for a MBTA Adjacent Small-Town Community High-Density Multi-Family Overlay District.

Section XXIV. MBTA Adjacent Small-Town Community High-Density Multi-Family Overlay District

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Section is to provide an area in Town in which high-density multi-family housing may be developed to meet the goals of M.G.L.Ch. 40A sec. 3A. This overlay district is on a major artery, as proximate as feasible to a Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (“MBTA”) commuter rail station, with reasonable provisions so that any site within the MBTA Adjacent Small Town Community High Density Multi-Family Overlay District (“the MBTA Overlay District”) developed for high-density multi-family housing shall be as consistent as feasible with the dominant rural, residential, and agricultural character and uses of the Town, and of a scale, density, and appearance that is as compatible as feasible with existing surrounding uses, while minimizing the impact on environmentally sensitive land.
2. MBTA Overlay District Boundaries. The MBTA Overlay District shall consist of a strip of land 1,000 feet wide on the southerly side of Route 140 (Redemption Rock Trail North), from a point 1,500 feet west of the westerly side of the intersection with Hobbs Road to a point at the intersection with Fitchburg Road directly opposite the westerly side of Fitchburg Road, excluding any portion of lot 27 on Assessors Map 4. The easterly and westerly boundaries of the MBTA Overlay District shall be at a right angle to Route 140.
3. Permitted Uses. In addition to all uses permitted in a Residential-Agricultural district pursuant to Section III of these Zoning By-Laws, and all uses permitted in a Business-Industrial district as applicable, in the MBTA Overlay District multi-family

housing and associated accessory structures may be constructed with a minimum gross density of 15 residential dwelling units per acre, subject to the following conditions which are intended to facilitate and encourage affordable and diverse residential housing in Princeton while preserving to the extent feasible the existing natural, scenic, and aesthetic qualities of the Town, and minimizing any adverse impact on neighboring properties:

- A. Setbacks. The minimum setback for all multi-family housing, and all associated accessory structures including but not limited to garages, sheds, swimming pools, tennis courts, patios, parking lots, and retention ponds (“associated accessory structures”), shall be 100 feet from the boundary of the MBTA Overlay District.
- B. Screening. All multi-family housing and all associated accessory structures shall be screened from Route 140 and from adjacent properties by native vegetation not less than 20 feet high and not less than 30 feet in depth.
- C. Adjacent Open Space. For all areas in the MBTA Overlay District developed for multi-family housing and associated accessory structures (“the Developed Site”), there shall be an adjacent area at least equal in size to the Developed Site maintained as open space (“the Open Space”). The Open Space may extend beyond the boundaries of the MBTA Overlay District. The Open Space shall be protected in perpetuity by a Conservation Restriction pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 184 sec. 31-33 held by the Princeton Conservation Commission or by a charitable non-profit conservation organization approved by the Selectboard. The Open Space may have hiking paths but shall have no associated accessory structures.
- D. Access. Access to the Developed Site shall be from Route 140 only.
- E. Design Criteria. All multi-family housing in this MBTA Overlay District shall be designed to present the appearance of traditional New England architecture using elements that reflect the colonial and nineteenth century architectural history of Princeton.
- F. Affordable Units. Ten percent (10 %) of the residential dwelling units in a Developed Site shall be affordable units with an affordable housing restriction in the chain of title limiting the sale price or rent, or a restriction limiting occupancy, or both, to an individual or household of a specified income. The cap on income of individuals or families eligible to own, rent, or occupy an affordable unit shall be no more than 80 percent of area median income as determined by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. The income restriction shall have a term of not less than 30 years.
- G. Site Plan Review. No building permit shall be issued, and no construction or site preparation shall be started, for any multi-family housing or associated accessory structures unless a site plan has been reviewed and approved by the Planning Board after notice to abutting landowners and a public hearing. The criteria in Section XII (Site Plan Review) of these Zoning By-Laws shall be applied in a manner consistent with the design criteria for this MBTA Overlay District. At the expense of the applicant, the Planning Board may engage technical experts to review the site plan and advise the Planning Board.
- H. 75 Unit Limitation. The Building Inspector shall issue building permits for no more than 75 residential dwelling units in high-density multi-family housing in this MBTA Overlay District.
- I. Compliance. All structures and uses in the MBTA Overlay District shall comply with all applicable town, Commonwealth, and federal laws, codes, and regulations.

4. Relationship to Other Zoning By-Law Provisions. Except as may be specifically provided in this Section XXIV, all structures and uses in the MBTA Overlay District shall comply with all requirements of these Zoning By-Laws.

Requires simple majority vote to pass

**The Moderator declared the vote on Article 25 carried via electronic vote at 9:28 PM
(Yes-84, No -12)**

A motion was made and seconded to dissolve the meeting.

The Moderator declared the vote was Unanimous at 9:29 PM.

Meeting was dissolved at 9:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alissa K. Horsung
Princeton Town Clerk