

TOD COMMENTS  
GEORGE MANSFIELD  
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Beacon's riverfront development, known as the TOD, represents the greatest opportunity and challenge currently before our city. It has the potential to undo the damage done by Urban Renewal and other failed planning efforts of the past. It is an opportunity to once again seamlessly integrate our riverfront and Main St. It is in our power, as a community, to demand that it represent the goals, hopes and vision expressed in our comprehensive plan. We should beware the impulse to compromise that vision when faced with a bleak economic forecast. This is the time to rely heavily on a plan drafted by the community. It was created, I believe, for just such an occasion. It is a map created to help chart our future during difficult times. By ignoring the key goals of this plan we risk doing irreparable damage and we will miss an opportunity to position our city at the forefront of sustainable design.

I believe the zoning, as currently drafted, does not meet the standards set in our comprehensive plan. The health of Main St. and a link between it and the riverfront were listed as high priorities. There is not sufficient language in this draft to ensure that the economic stability of Main St. is improved nor protected.

The TOD is not an isolated development limited to its borders. It has the potential to impact either positively or negatively the entire city and surrounding areas.

We should not lower the bar, which our comprehensive plan set, in the hope that the developer and the MTA have the best interests of our city at heart.

The riverfront and Main St. are two of our greatest assets and must be protected. We must draft our zoning from a position of strength rather than economic weakness. We cannot allow the uncertain economic times to cloud our vision of the future. We must protect our interests and assets through clearly defined zoning regulations. They must state, unequivocally, the will of the people. Without a mandatory link to Main St. included in the zoning we can only hope for the best. I suggest we make that hope binding and not left to the interests of the MTA and the developer.

I don't see this project as a battle between evil developers vs. community interests. We all have a lot to gain from its success and I believe we share similar goals. It will be a challenge to achieve them but I know, through the combined efforts of all interested parties, we can expand rather than compromise our vision for the future.

We should aspire to greatness. We should hope that future generations will applaud the courage and diligence that has gone into this planning. We should hope that they will look back on our efforts with gratitude and awe. We have only one chance to get this right. Compromise and mediocrity should not be an option.

For more information regarding the TOD please visit [www.CityofBeacon.org](http://www.CityofBeacon.org).

Your involvement in this project is crucial to it's success.

George Mansfield