

Mike Kennealy, Chair
Dan Rivera, President and CEO
MassDevelopment Board of Directors
99 High Street
Boston, MA 02110

Re: Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee

Dear Chairman Kennealy and Mr. Rivera,

I am writing on behalf of the Devens Enterprise Commission to express our shock and disappointment at MassDevelopment's abrupt withdrawal from the Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee process. As you know, Section 23 of Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1993 states that "On or before 2030, the commission, the boards of selectmen of the towns with the advice of the planning boards, and the bank (MassDevelopment) shall initiate a study concerning permanent government structure for the ongoing operation and administration of Devens". After almost two and a half years into this process, the committee has made progress and engaged a diverse array of stakeholders from the surrounding towns, including residents and business representatives from Devens, who have committed time to this process to help ensure its success. For MassDevelopment to walk away from discussions so abruptly and without any clear reasoning is a blow to this entire process and all of the work of the committee and its members to date.

This move is not consistent with past actions by MassDevelopment concerning the disposition process. As a major stakeholder, MassDevelopment has always been at the table and played a strong and necessary role in this process. Prior moves by MassDevelopment have shown a more principled approach to engagement by:

- Insisting that Devens residents and businesses be stakeholders in the jurisdiction process.
- Broadening the discussion to move beyond Harvard's goals and to include the input and participation of Ayer and Shirley.
- Staying the course during COVID as the communities and other stakeholders slowly stood up their committees.

That patience is paying off as businesses are engaged, Ayer just held a walking tour of their historic boundaries within Devens attended by thirty participants, and the Devens resident on the jurisdiction committee has been holding listening sessions with local residents to assess their concerns.

This abrupt withdrawal is squandering the trust built up over time between the communities and MassDevelopment. This trust is an essential component to the collaborative and regional redevelopment process in Devens. By stepping away from this process, the likelihood of future support and cooperation on any new development initiatives above and beyond the existing zoning and current bylaws, could be diminished.

We sincerely hope that MassDevelopment reconsiders their withdrawal from this process. The disengagement with the jurisdiction process can be remedied by returning to the table, a course of action we encourage you to consider. 2030 is quickly approaching. The Devens Enterprise Commission looks forward to re-engaging with MassDevelopment and continuing to work with the Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee on this effort, supporting the existing and future residents, businesses, and institutions within this region to fulfil this requirement of Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1993 within the prescribed time limit.

Sincerely,

Peter Lowitt, FAICP Director
Devens Enterprise Commission

Cc: MassDevelopment Board of Directors

Mr. Brian Kavogian

Mr. Mark Atta

Mr. Gary Campbell

Ms. Joan C. Corey

Ms. Francesca Maltese

Ms. Kristina Spillane

Mr. James Chisholm

Mr. Juan Carlos Morales

Ms. Julieann Thurlow

Ms. Ellen Zane

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