



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Economic Development Committee

Councillor Taylor, Chair
Councillor Luong, Vice Chair
Councillor Condon
Councillor Crowe
Councillor McDonald

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

5:30 PM

City Hall, Room 105
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Watch the meeting with Teams: <https://tinyurl.com/msujp2te>

A quorum of the City Council may be present at this meeting. While no formal votes or actions are anticipated by the City Council, members may participate in the discussion of topics listed on this agenda. This notice is filed to ensure compliance with the Open Meeting Law should a quorum of the parent body be present.

Present: 4 - Ari Taylor, Michelle Luong, Peg Crowe and Carey McDonald

Absent: 1 - Paul Condon

Roll Call

Also Present: Council President Linehan Councillors Sica, Simonelli, Winslow
Councillors Colon Hayes via Teams
Councillors O'Malley via Teams/in person 5:56 PM
Maria Luise-Special Assistant to the Mayor
Chris Mooney-Assistant City Solicitor
Michelle Romero-City Planner
Alex Pratt-Director OSPCD
Zach Lemel -Deputy Director of Economic Development
Elana Eimert- Senior Planner

Councillor Taylor called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.
There will be audio and video for this meeting via Teams.

Minutes to be Approved

[230-26](#)

Minutes of February 10, 2026 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor Luong, seconded by Councillor McDonald, that the Committee Minutes of February 10, 2026 be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[253-26](#)

Order: That the City Council tasks the Economic Development Committee, in

conjunction with respective City staff, to undertake studies and obtain resident input on the infrastructure, environmental, health, and economic considerations data centers may have on the City of Malden and surrounding communities. The Economic Development Committee will report back to the Full Council on the findings from this study and provide a recommendation to determine appropriate zoning districts and use regulations.

Sponsors: Ari Taylor, Carey McDonald and Ryan O'Malley

Attachments: [Data Center Definitions 51226](#)
[Data Center Information 51226](#)

Councillor Taylor gave clarification that she heard from the City Clerk, that in order for us to do a moratorium, there has to be a definition in our zoning code. We currently do not have that. So one thing we're going to have to work on is defining it and then sending it back. She gave a handout to the committee on definition samples from other cities and towns to review and asked if they had any questions or discussion or ideas.

Councillor McDonald asked we have the moratorium but in order to clarify what it applies to goes to enforcement and we need to adopt a definition and asked if the handout is a draft definition

Councillor Taylor explains these are two draft definitions one sheet is draft definitions from other cities and towns and the other is information from OSPCD that they put together which she shared for the committee to review to see what they are looking that fits best for our purpose here in Malden.

Michelle Romero, City Planner explained that a moratorium on permitting data centers requires a zoning amendment, which must include a clear definition of 'data center' and a public hearing, as the current zoning code lacks such a definition. You need to not only propose a definition for the use you would then propose the moratorium which would then get added to the zoning.

Councillor McDonald asked if we have done it this way in the past have we not done it this way by passing an order

Michelle explained I think it was licensing that was being referred to because I heard some of the data from that meeting in licensing ordinances you can amend on the floor so you could enact a moratorium of that licensing ordinance.

Councillor McDonald asked if this is for discussion today

Councillor Taylor said this is for discussion and see what the next step is. We will probably send something new out to the Council then go to zoning

Councillor McDonald the point of the moratorium is to take time to develop the policy so they would except a definition which is simpler and broader

Councillor O'Malley questioned whether a moratorium could be enacted by order or required a zoning amendment, referencing past moratoriums on housing and self-storage facilities, which all went through the zoning amendment process and required a 2/3 council vote.

Michelle said yes you implemented it several times several different moratoriums more

than probably 20 years ago, then more recently within the past 10 or 15 years, you implemented it and renewed it and renewed it several times. All those amendments, had to go through the zoning amendment process, public hearing every time you extended it, it went back for public hearing because it was an amendment to the zoning. She said she believes that their requirement is a 2/3 council vote.

Councillor Crowe asked if we could take this information and digest it and do a little research

Councillor Taylor wanted to know what the sense of the committee or if they would like to adopt one of the definitions moving forward.

The Committee agreed that the next step is to file a new paper to create the use in the table of uses and define it, with the Planning Board Director tasked to draft language for the moratorium and zoning regulations, and OSPCD to provide a recommended definition.

Councillor Taylor entertained a motion to table the paper by Councillor McDonald and seconded by Councillor Luong. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Luong, that the Order be tabled. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

256-26

Communication from Mayor Christenson regarding an Economic Development Package Proposal

Attachments: [Mayor's Letter & Economic Development Package](#)

[260518_Presentation_Econ Dev_Policy Package](#)

[EcDevPresentation_CommercialSt_V5](#)

[MHC re CCP 256-2026 5.21.26 wAtts](#)

[Proposed Amendments to MCC 4.16 Sign Control for Council Review](#)

[OSPCD Memo Recommendations for 256-26 May 28 2026](#)

[Historical Commission to OSPCD 6.1.26 ref CCP 256-26](#)

[BldgCmmr CityPlr 256-26 6.3.26 wAtt](#)

[OSPCD Response to BldgCmmrCityPlr on 256-26 June 8 2026](#)

[Proposed Sec. 12.12.030 Use Table](#)

[Proposed Sec. 12.32.060 Medical Center Definition](#)

[Proposed Sec. 12.28.010 Nonconforming Uses](#)

[Historical Commission to OSPCD 6.1.26 CCP 256-26 Resent with signatures](#)

[Section 12.28.010 PreNCF 6.16.26 Redlined](#)

[Redlined proposed amendments June 11 2026](#)

Alex Pratt reviewed communications from Mayor Christenson and regarding the economic development package, which includes amendments to signage ordinances and zoning for different uses, with a larger conversation scheduled for the following week.

Councillor McDonald requested benchmarks from peer communities to understand how similar municipalities handle sign design review ordinances and zoning, suggesting a list of comparable cities for reference.

Councillor Winslow debated the appropriate cutoff date for historic building protections, considering dates such as 1950 or the formation of the redevelopment authority, and requested data on the number of buildings affected by different cutoff years.

Councillor Taylor emphasized the importance of visual aids, such as maps and before-and-after examples, to help digest proposed changes and understand their impact, especially for the upcoming meeting. She will schedule the next meeting for Monday at 6:00 PM, inviting stakeholders and affected groups to participate, and discussed the need to balance this topic with other council priorities like the budget.

257-26

Communication from Mayor Christenson regarding Commercial Street
Economic/Zoning Analysis

Attachments: [Mayor's Letter and Commercial Street Analysis](#)
[260518 Presentation Econ Dev Policy Package](#)
[EcDevPresentation CommercialSt V5](#)

Alex Pratt, Director OSPCD talked about the Mayor's letter proposes extending the CBD to Charles St. and allowing greater investment in commercial and industrial uses along Commercial Street, covering parcels like the National Grid property, while clarifying that residential uses are not being proposed for most of the area.

Councillor Simonelli asked what would be examples of Industrial use on Commercial Street

Zach Lemel, Deputy Director of Economic Development discussed moving away from single-story warehouses toward multi-story commercial, industrial, and light manufacturing uses, citing 200 Exchange as an example of the desired height and modern industrial development. He noted that single-story warehouses currently yield low tax values and emphasized the need to increase property value by allowing greater density and height for commercial and industrial uses.

Councillor Simonelli suggested looking at the Rte 60 corridor for building up space because people like easy on and easy off. The fact of the matter is you get a huge tax base out of all the businesses along the corridor.

Councillor Taylor said right now we are only looking at this space and we will have more opportunities to talk about this next week

Councillor Winslow Councillor Winslow discussed the importance of accommodating businesses like plumbers and electricians, suggesting multi-tiered buildings with space for fabrication and storage, and considering how to combine these uses for greater convenience and value. He feels that would be a good mix. We attract people as a community to do that.

Other Business

Adjournment

A motion was made by Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Luong, that this meeting be adjourned at 6:05 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

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