Downtown Maynard

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL TO GROW A FOOD, CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION

Prepared for:
Town of Maynard, Office of Municipal Services

Sponsored by: MA Dept. of Housing & Community Development, MA Downtown Initiative Program

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Part One

Project Overview

1. Project Overview

1.1 Purpose and Players

The Purpose of the project is to: explore the potential for downtown Maynard to grow as a food, culture & entertainment destination and lay a foundation that will help guide future planning and decision-making.

Sponsor: MA Downtown Initiative Program

Town Department/Contact: Bill Nemser, Town Planner, Office of Municipal Services

Consultant: Peg Barringer, FinePoint Associates

Timeframe: August – November, 2014

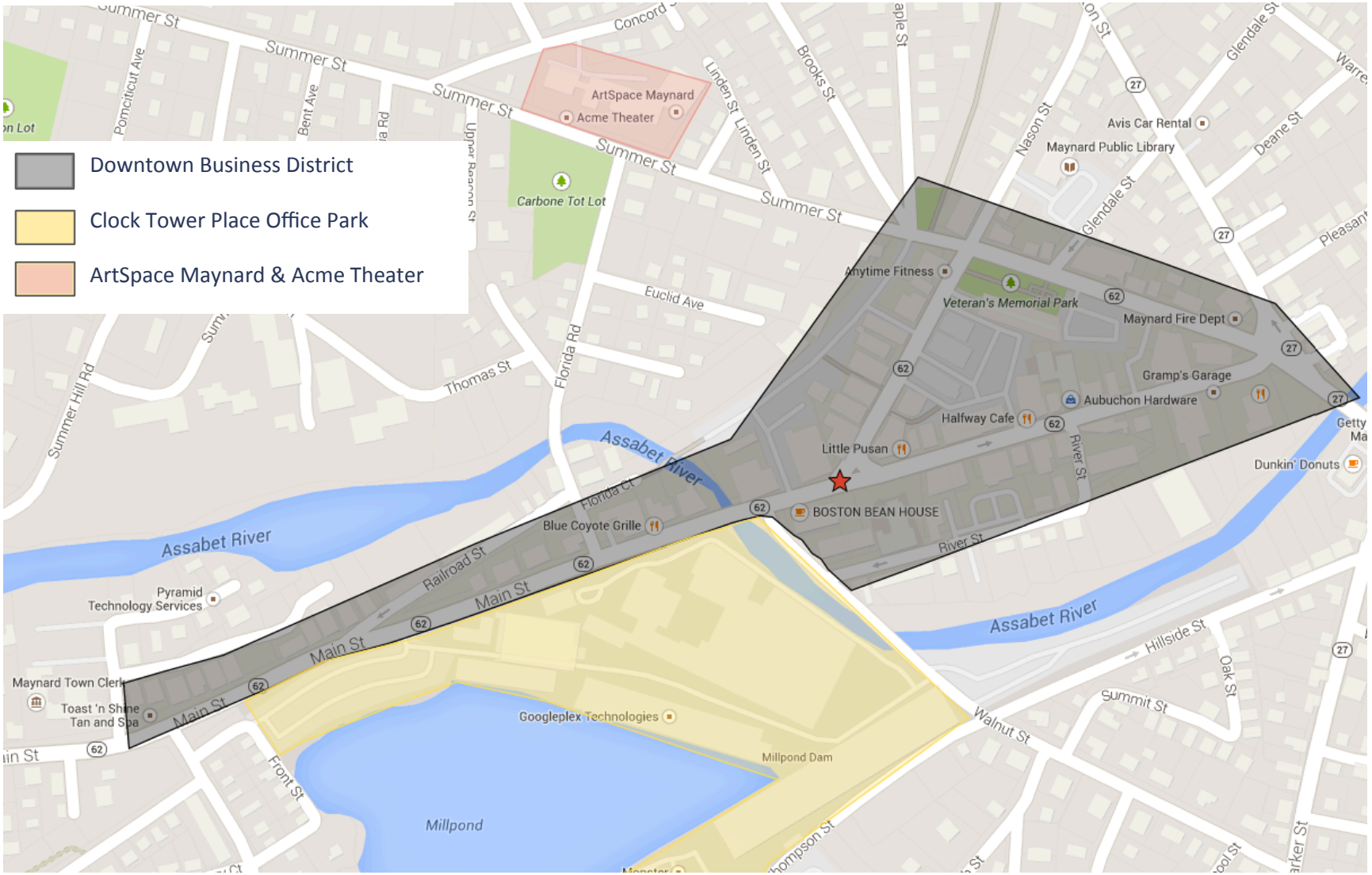
1.2 Process

The consultant performed the following tasks:

1. Reviewed existing materials, planning documents and previous studies
2. Obtained input by conducting interviews with residents, business owners, property owners, Town staff and community organization representatives, and attending Revitalize Maynard Collaborative meeting
3. Conducted several on-site assessment sessions to observe and gather information about existing conditions in the downtown
4. Identified success factors for food, culture and entertainment destinations
5. Obtained and analyzed market data and other information with regard to the potential viability of downtown Maynard as a food, culture and entertainment destination.
6. Gathered data and made observations about potential impact of two proposed development projects
7. Formulated recommendations for actions based upon findings

1. Project Overview

1.3 Description of the Study Area



* Boundaries are approximate



Part Two

Exploring Downtown as a Food, Culture and Entertainment Destination

2.1 Defining Destination and Contributing Factors

2.1.1 What is meant by "Food, Culture and Entertainment Destination"

This study will explore the potential for downtown Maynard to grow as a destination for food, culture and entertainment.

In other words . . . . a place where people will make a special trip to visit in order to get something to eat or drink, browse for hand crafted jewelry, gifts or home accessories, hear some live music, go to a performance or film, attend a special event, or just go because it is an enjoyable place to hangout or stroll.

A destination where:

- Maynard residents will visit with great frequency, and
- Visitors will be attracted from surrounding communities.

2.1.2 Factors that Contribute to Success

There are several factors contribute to the success of this type of destination.

1. Proximity to a sufficient market population with interest and income
2. Abundance of things to see and do in and near the downtown
3. Attractive, conducive, compact, and walkable physical environment with good access and ambience
4. Strong identity and promotion of the area, business and cultural offerings and events
5. Coordination among the cultural organizations and businesses

In this study, we will assess these factors relative to downtown Maynard as well as consider the potential impact of two proposed development projects.

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.1 Business District Description

Downtown Maynard is a compact, walkable business district featuring a mix of restaurants, retail establishments and services along with an independent movie theater (temporarily closed for renovations) and Veterans Memorial Park.

The Maynard Outdoor Store and The Paper Store are well established retail anchors. Restaurants range from casual quick food to full service dining, including several ethnic varieties. There is a good supply of convenience goods and services such as drugstore, liquor, post office, banks, etc. (with the exception of a grocery store). Other downtown business clusters include artisans and art-related retail stores, health, fitness and wellness services, personal care (salons), home improvement and consignment shops.

ArtSpace, located less than ¼ mile from the business district is home to 80 artisan studios, a gallery and the Acme Theater that delivers 45 live performances per year.

This pedestrian-friendly downtown hosts many special events and a seasonal farmers market.

2.2.2 Market Segments

The primary market segments for downtown Maynard include:

- **Residents** that live in Maynard and the surrounding communities, and
- **Employees** that work in and nearby the downtown business district



2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.3 Employee Market Segment

While employees remain an important market opportunity, this segment has declined in recent years. The Clock Tower Place office park (known locally as "the mill") is situated directly adjacent to the downtown business district. This converted mill complex is comprised of 13 buildings containing 1.1 million square feet of commercial space. The complex is home to 50 – 100 small companies including the headquarters of Powell Flutes.

Tenancy at the mill has declined in the last several years. Since the recent departure of a major anchor tenant (Monster.com), the space is currently less than 50% occupied. Six or seven years ago, the employee count was 2,500 – 3,000; today that number has dropped to significantly less than half. Fewer employees at the mill providing a captive audience for lunchtime convenience and food purchasing has negatively impacted the business district. This was likely a contributing factor to the very recent closing of the Walgreen's drugstore.

The mill owners are currently proposing to convert approximately ½ of the space to residential units.

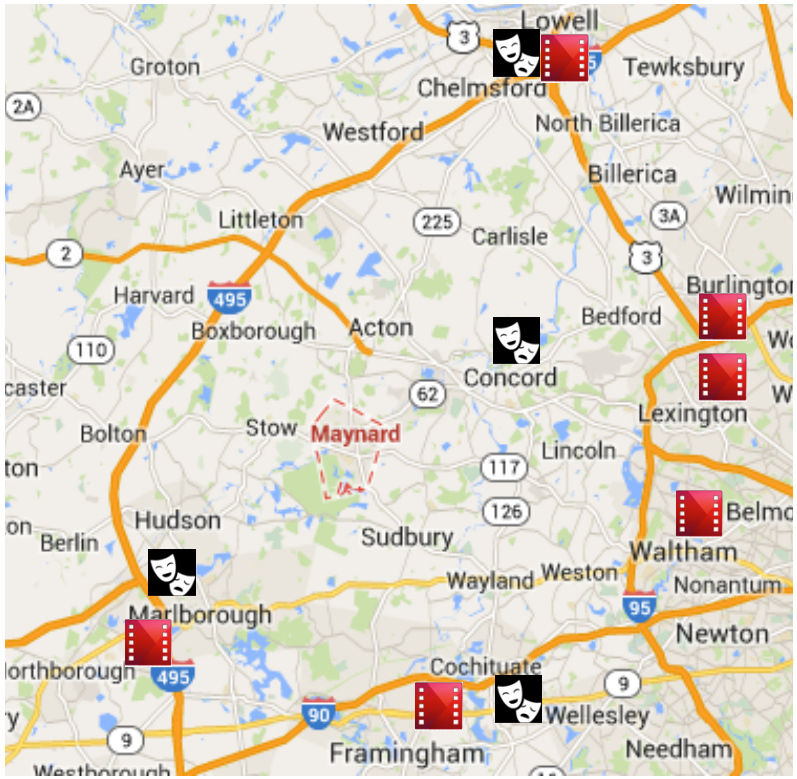

Clock Tower Place


Vacated
September 2014

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.4 Resident Market Segment

Maynard is located between I-95, I-495 and I-90, approximately 20 miles west of Boston. It is surrounded by the communities of Stow, Boxborough, Acton, Concord, Lincoln and Sudbury.

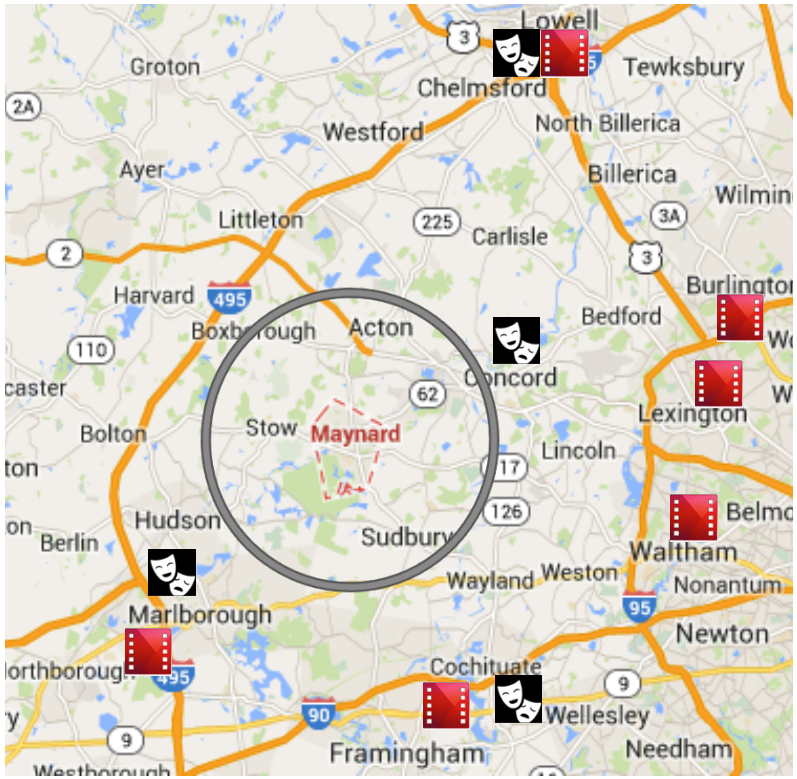


Factors Influencing the Potential Trade Area for Food, Culture and Entertainment
▪ One of Maynard's competitive advantages is its walkable downtown and "village center" feel. While several surrounding communities such as Acton and Stowe have shopping centers and stand-alone commercial development, they do not have pedestrian-focused village centers.
▪ There are many restaurants located in surrounding communities. Competition intensifies with proximity to I-95 and I-90.
▪ The closest movie theater is over 9 miles away.
▪ The communities of Lowell, Concord, Natick and Marlborough have designated Massachusetts Cultural Districts. The closest one is in Concord, approximately 6 miles from Mayn
▪ Interviews with arts and specialty retailers suggest that many customers come from Acton, Stow and Sudbury (in addition to Maynard).
▪ The Executive Director of the Acme Theater indicated that season ticket holders come from as far as Boston and even New Hampshire, but estimated that about 75% of the customers come from within a 5-mile radius.

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.5 Primary Trade Areas

The Primary Trade Area (PTA) is the geographic area where approximately 75% of the repeat customers or sales are expected to generate from. This does not mean that customers will not come from beyond the PTA -- but only that the majority of customers will likely come from within it.



Based on the factors outlined in previous section and the interviews conducted with residents, we have estimated the Primary Trade Area for two categories of goods and services:

1. Convenience Retail & Services, and
2. Arts, Culture, Dining, Entertainment & Specialty.

Goods and Service Category	Potential Primary Trade Area	Map Key
1. Convenience Retail & Services Day-to-day needs, drug store, grocery, personal services, limited-service and non-distinctive restaurants	Town of Maynard (approx. 5-minute drive time, 1-mile Radius)	- - - -
2. Arts, Culture, Dining, Entertainment & Specialty Arts and specialty/comparison goods retail, specialized services, full-service distinctive restaurants, live theater, movies, special events	5-mile Radius (approx. 12-15 minute drive time)	◯

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.6 Market Profile and Opportunity*

Convenience Retail & Services
Primary Trade Area 1: Town of Maynard

Market Profile Highlights

- The Town of Maynard is comprised of approximately 4,400 households with a total population of 10,400.
- Compared to Massachusetts overall, the population of Maynard is . . . slightly older, more highly educated, with higher incomes, and more likely to own a home.
- Median household income in Maynard is $85,074 -- 30% higher than the state.
- Approximately one-half of the Maynard population over the age of 21 has at least a Bachelor's Degree compared to only 39% statewide.

Market Opportunity

- Maynard residents currently make more than 72% of their retail and restaurant purchases out of town.
- Maynard residents spend approximately $22 million per year at eating and drinking places; more than one-half is being spent at restaurants outside of Town.
- Maynard residents spend over $3.4 million per year on entertainment fees and admissions.

Arts, Culture, Dining, Entertainment & Specialty
Primary Trade Area 2: 5-mile Radius

Market Profile Highlights

- The 5-Mile Trade Area is comprised of approximately 24,400 households with a total population of 67,200.
- Compared to Massachusetts overall, the 5-mile Trade Area population is . . . older, more highly educated, with higher incomes, and more likely to own a home.
- Median household income is $111,692 -- 70% higher than the state.
- 65% of the population over 21 has at least a Bachelor's Degree compared to only 39% statewide.

Market Opportunity

- Residents of the 5-mile Trade Area make approximately 62% of their retail and restaurant purchases outside the trade area.
- Residents of the 5-mile Trade Area spend $139 million per year at eating and drinking place; $72 million is being spent outside of the trade area.
- Residents of the 5-mile Trade Area spend over $31 million per year on entertainment fees and admissions.

** Data items in this section are 2014 estimates, unless otherwise noted.*
Sources: Nielsen Company, U.S. Census, InfoUSA, American Community Survey, Social Explorer, www.FinePointAssociates.com

2.2 Market Analysis

Primary Trade Area 1 (PTA1): Convenience Retail & Services = Town of Maynard

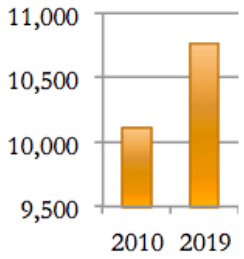
Residents spend
145 million
per year at stores & restaurants**

More than **$104 Million**
is being spent outside of Maynard

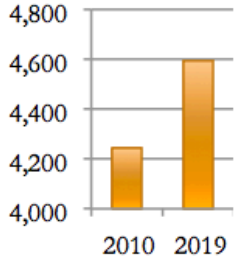
$18 Million spent at non-store retailers

2014 Population	2014 Households	2014 Household Income Median	2014 Household Income Average
10,392	4,399	$85,074	$104,145

Population



Households



Median Household Income Comparison

1.3 X Massachusetts

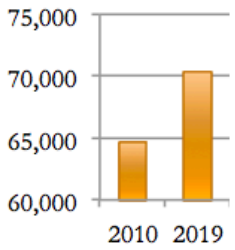
Primary Trade Area 2 (PTA2): Arts, Culture, Dining, Entertainment & Specialty = 5 Mile Radius

Residents spend
954 million
per year at stores & restaurants**

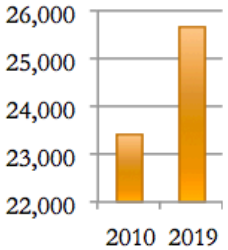
More than **$590 Million**
is being spent outside of the PTA2

2014 Population	2014 Households	2014 Household Income Median	2014 Household Income Average
67,159	24,412	$111,692	$149,146

Population



Households



Median Household Income Comparison

1.7 X Massachusetts

** PTA is where most steady, repeat sales are likely to generate, typically, where 75% of customers live.*
*** Vehicle and gasoline purchases are not included.*

2.2 Market Analysis

Residents

Median age is **42** in Maynard and **44** in PTA2 compared to 39.5 in MA and 33.7 in U.S.

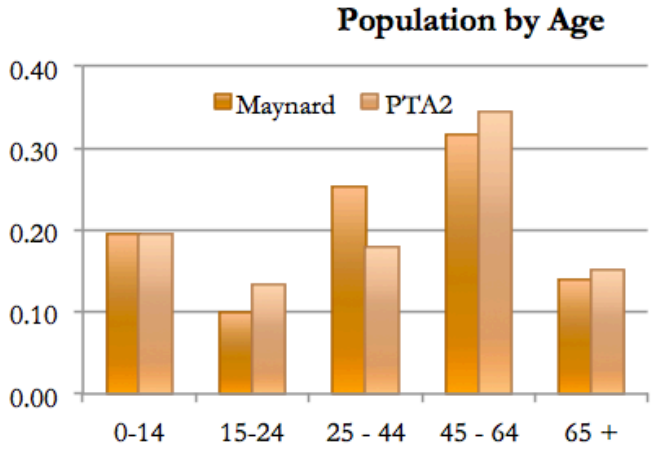
62% Families in Maynard
63% in MA

30% of households in Maynard and **40%** in PTA2 contain children compared to 31% in MA

10%

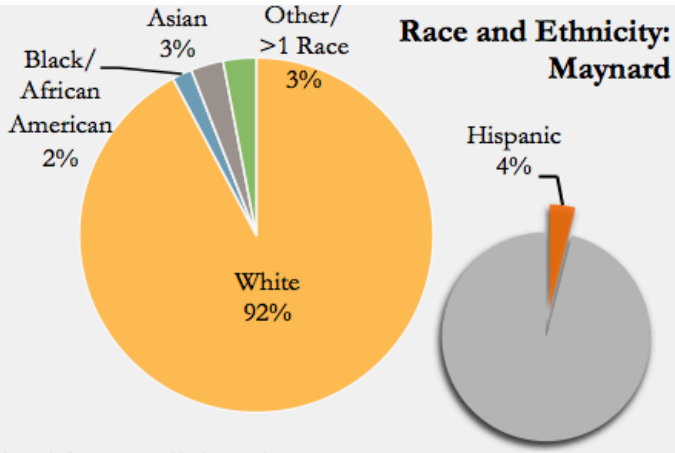
New Customers in the Neighborhood?

of Maynard residents live in a different home than 1 year ago (7% moved within county, 1% from different county in MA, 2% from out of state, <1% from out of the U.S.



Cultural Diversity

Race & Ethnicity	PTA1	PTA2	MA
White Alone	92%	87%	79%
Black/African American	2%	2%	7%
Asian	3%	9%	6%
Other/More than 1 Race	3%	3%	8%
Hispanic	4%	3%	11%



13% of Maynard residents speak a language besides English at home
Asian/Pacific Islander Language – 2%, Indo/European Language – 5%, Spanish – 5%, Other – 1%

2.2 Market Analysis

Lifestyle

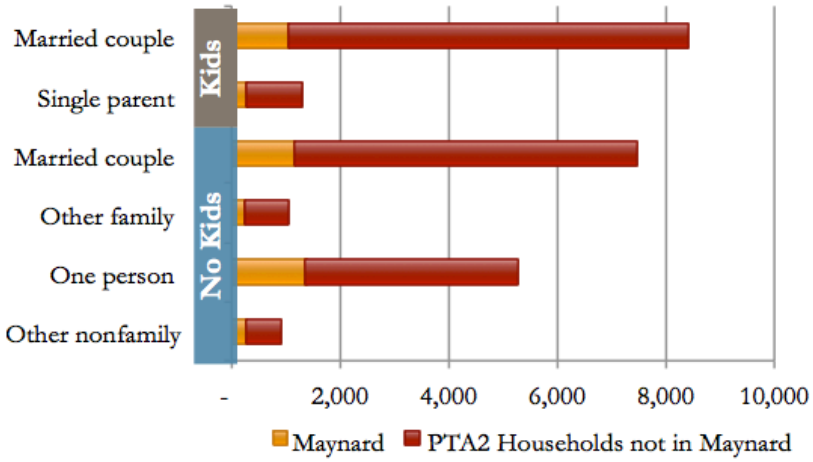
71%

Homeowners in Maynard and 82% in PTA1

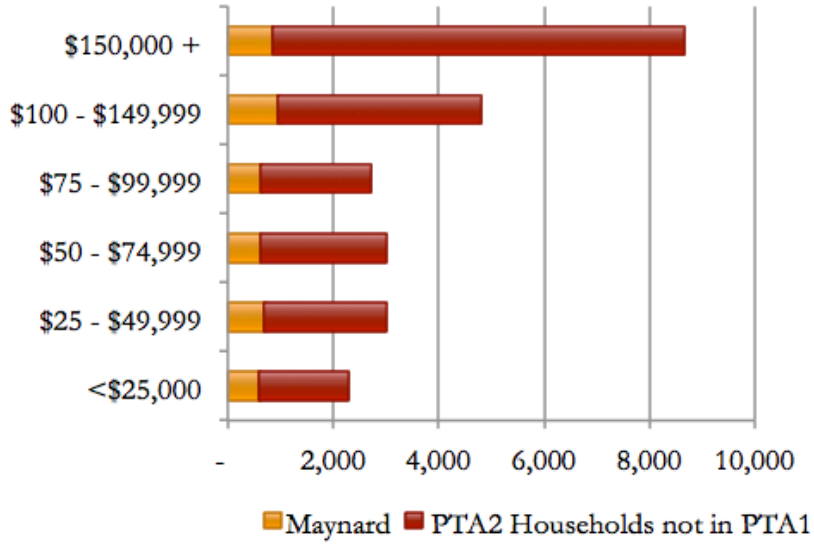
2.4 Persons per Household in Maynard and 2.7 in PTA2 compared to 2.5 in MA

Foot Traffic **5% car-free** households in Maynard likely shop close to home

Households by Composition



Households by Income



2,457 households (56%) in Maynard with income > $75,000
Median household income is $85,074 compared to $65,763 statewide.

58% of residents in Maynard and 69% in PTA2 have Associates Degree or higher compared to 40% in MA and 36% in U.S.

Sources: Nielsen Company, U.S. Census, InfoUSA, American Community Survey, Social Explorer, www.FinePointAssociates.com

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.7 Market Demand for Restaurants & Entertainment

Annual Expenditures	Maynard Residents	5-mile Trade Area Residents
Eating & Drinking Places	$22,152,953	$139,347,758
Fees and Admissions for Entertainment	$3,484,008	$31,139,947
Movie Tickets* (subset of admission and fees, estimate)	$425,552	$2,750,161

Sales Leakage	Maynard Residents	5-mile Trade Area Residents
Eating & Drinking Places	$11,726,029	$72,484,896

2.2.8 Restaurant & Entertainment Trends

Restaurant Trends

- Baby Boomers and Seniors are patronizing restaurants more often than younger folks these days. They want comfortable seating, less noise and a menu that is easy to read.
- Consumers want healthful menu offerings
- Fine dining has recovered from the recession
- Menu innovation (like pretzel buns) attracts Millenials and younger
- In the Northeast, people eat lunch out an average of 1.5 times per week and spend an average of $11.40.

Entertainment Trends

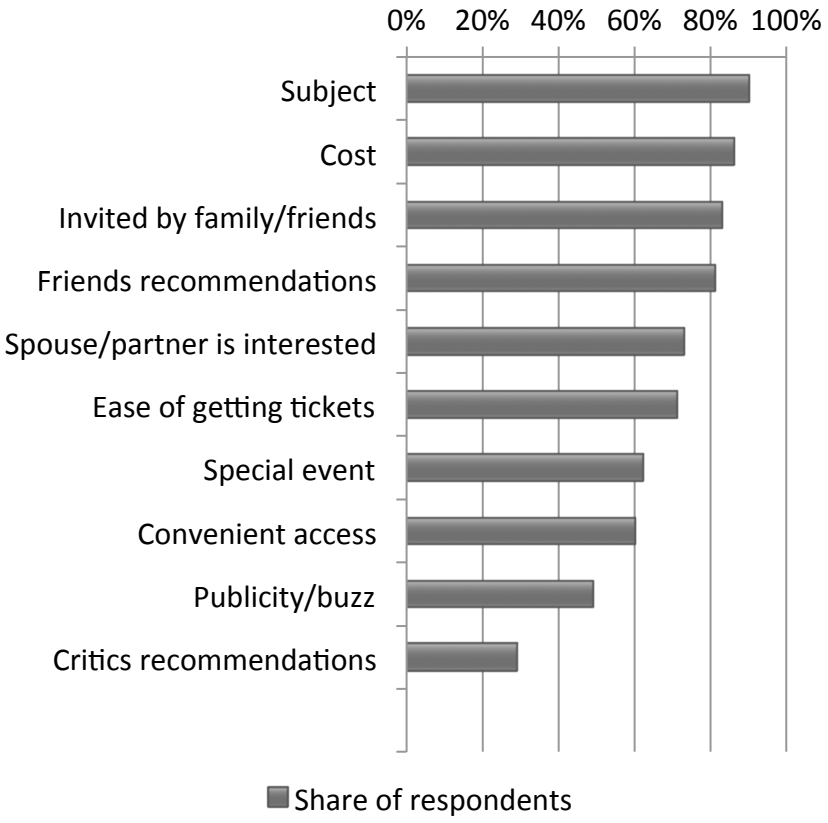
- Consumers have cut back to some degree on out-of-home entertainment spending and found many at-home replacements.
- Consumers are increasingly looking for community-based and affordable entertainment options. Major tourism destinations and big entertainment venues are not faring as well as smaller more close to home options.
- *Could this mean less demand for Disney and more demand for Downtown activities?*

Sources: Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, The NPD Group, National Restaurant News, Forbes, Veronis Suhler Stevenson

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.9 Culture Trends & Economic Impact

Motivators for Attending Cultural Activities (2014)



People are defining culture more broadly and are open to new experiences

% that define as a cultural activity (2014)	
National, state or municipal park	79%
Broadcast of a live performance at a movie	66%
Street art	64%
Food and drink experiences	64%
Independent film at a theater	56%
Live or recorded lecture online	41%

Arts Events Generate Revenue for local Businesses

Average amount spent per attendee in addition to cost of admission (2010)	
Meals and snacks	$13.44
Gifts, souvenirs	$2.74
Clothing, accessories	$1.31

Sources: Culture Track 14, National survey conducted by LaPacaCohen, April 2014, Arts & Economic Prosperity, Americans for the Arts, 2010

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.9 Culture Trends & Economic Impact (cont'd)

Special events held in and near downtowns can generate positive economic impacts.

An Economic Impact Study of events such as such as farmers markets, street festivals, and first Friday events showed the following economic impacts:

- **Events increase awareness of local businesses**
  37% of attendees discovered new businesses they did not previously know were located in the commercial district
- **Event attendees visit local businesses**
  On average, attendees visited 2 businesses on their way to, from or during the event.
- **Attendees plan to come back on non-event days**
  95% of attendees said they planned to come back to the business area on a non event day

Source: Economic Impact Analysis: A Study of Main Street Sponsored Events, FinePoint Associates, 2013, www.FinePointAsociates.com





2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.1 Cultural Assets

Art Performance & Event Venues	Acme Theater (70-seat theater) Fine Arts Theatre Place Maynard Public Library Veteran's Memorial Park
Art Galleries, Art Retail	Art & Soul ArtSpace (gallery, holiday, open studios) Earth Changes Pottery Gallery Seven Frame Shop & Fine Art *New shop being planned by artists
Art Production	ArtSpace Maynard – 80 Artist Studios) Studio Twenty One (architect) InSitu Studio Architects Marquee Photoworks
Art Instruction	Miss Tricia's Dance Studio Paint-n-Pour









2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.1 Cultural Assets (Cont'd)

Historic Assets	Historic Buildings -- Assabet Wool Mill Clock Tower - oldest, still-working, hand-wound clock in the country. The clock tower was constructed in 1892 by Lorenzo Maynard as a gift to the town. The weights that power the tower clock and bell-ringing mechanisms are wound up once a week. The process takes one to two hours.
Recreation	Bike Trail (Planned) – will go thru downtown Wildlife Refuge (outside of downtown)







Challenges/Opportunities:

- Connect ArtSpace, Acme and Library with downtown
- Make people aware of all that Maynard has to offer
- Tell a good story, celebrate and shine a spotlight on assets (e.g., clock tower winding could be an event)
- Coordinate & cross promote
- Use broad definition of arts & culture
- Public art (mural is proposed)

2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.2 Eating & Entertainment

Restaurants

- Over 20 eateries; mostly moderate priced
- Several ethnic selections (e.g., Thai, Korean, Mexican, Indian), bakery café/coffee shops, pub restaurants, pizza, subs, fast food

Potential Complementary Businesses:

- Yogurt/ice cream shop
- Bistro café
- Brew Pub
- Health focused/local food/farm-to-table
- More American and ethnic variety











2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.2 Eating & Entertainment (cont'd)

Entertainment

- Fine Arts Theatre (previously closed for renovation, re-opened November 5, 2014) shows main stream and independent films; hosts annual environmental film festival
- Acme Theater, less than ¼ mile from the downtown, produces 4 main stage shows per year, hosts Improv Company shows and a New Works event for a total of 45 performances per year
- Serendipity Café has live music Saturday & Sunday with open mic on Fridays
- Roasted Red Peppers occasionally hosts events (e.g. hypnotist show in September)
- Pleasant Café hosts live music and trivia games
- Morey's Tavern hosts live music







Challenges/Opportunities:

- Consistent, continuous menu of varied activities
- Need for well-publicized entertainment schedules

2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.3 Special Events

Sampling of Events	
May	Spring Art Walk
Sept.	MaynardFest Open Studios at ArtSpace
Oct.	OctoberFest Downtown Trick or Treat
Dec.	Holiday Sip & Stroll Christmas Parade
On-going	Farmers Market (& first day costume parade) Author talks, films & more at library Community Band Concerts in Memorial Park Second Saturday events at ArtSpace Souled Out Storytelling Events







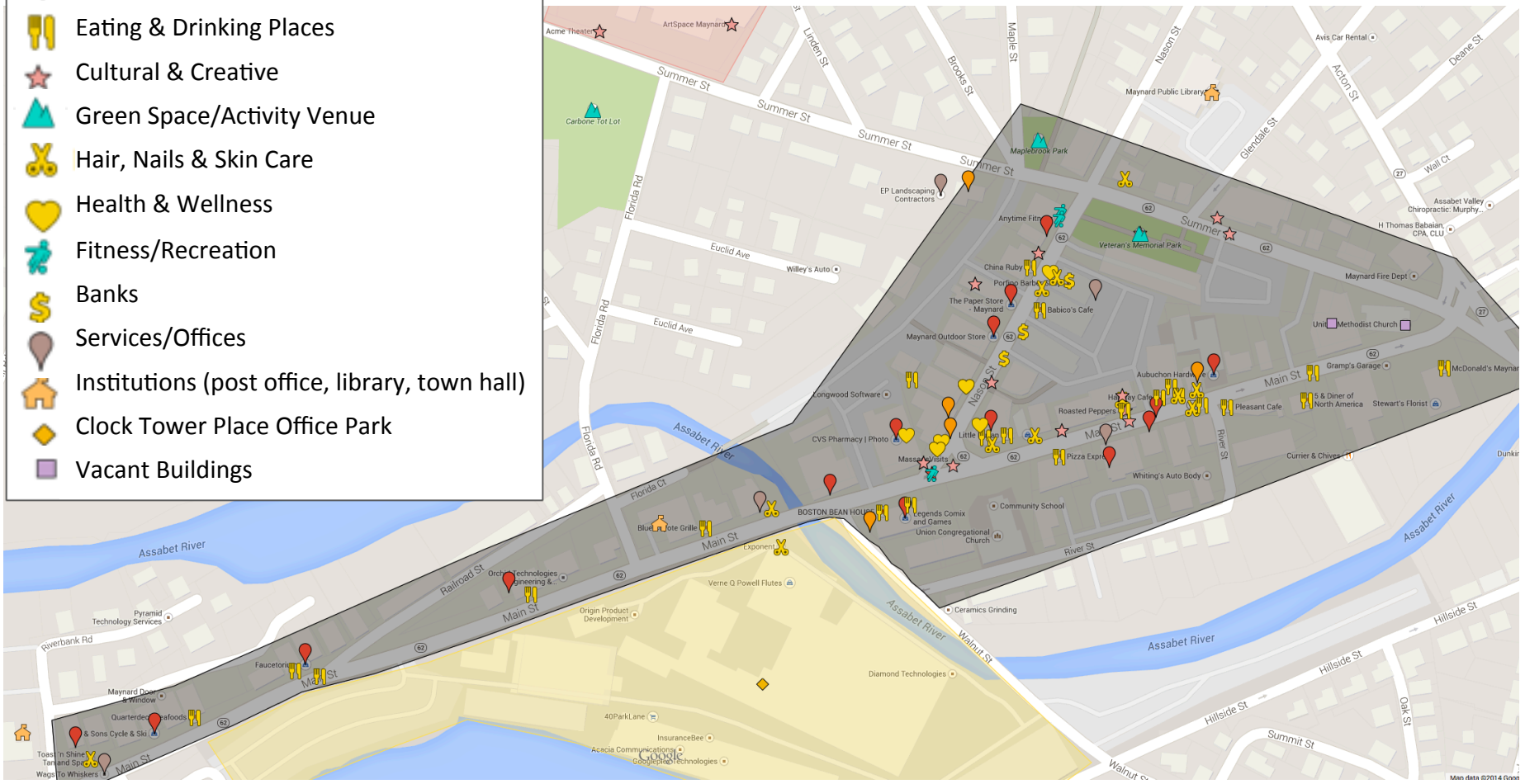
Challenges/Opportunities:

- Make economic development connection; ensure activities increase awareness of businesses and promote local sales
- Unique activities for wide draw
- Effective marketing of events
- Continuous calendar of events

2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.4 Business Mix beyond Dining, Culture & Entertainment

- Retail
- Retail – Used Goods/Consignment
- Eating & Drinking Places
- Cultural & Creative
- Green Space/Activity Venue
- Hair, Nails & Skin Care
- Health & Wellness
- Fitness/Recreation
- Banks
- Services/Offices
- Institutions (post office, library, town hall)
- Clock Tower Place Office Park
- Vacant Buildings



2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.4 Business Mix beyond Dining, Culture & Entertainment (cont'd)

- Downtown has a few well-established anchors. The unique Maynard Outdoor Store and The Paper Store draws customers from many surrounding communities
- Business clusters include: convenience retail & services, health, fitness & wellness, artists & art retail, home improvement, consignment shops, personal care (salons)

Challenges/Opportunities:

- More commercial density, "Browsing" retail to complement arts, culture & dining (see 10+10+10 rule)
- Customer awareness of what businesses are in downtown
- Encouraging cross patronage
- Consistent/later business hours









2.3 Things to See & Do in and Near Downtown

2.3.4 Business Mix beyond Dining, Culture & Entertainment (cont'd)

10 + 10 + 10 Rule

A study of 40 downtowns conducted by Destination Development International indicated that for a downtown to be a destination, the minimum critical mass required in 3 blocks is:
10 places that serve food,
10 destination retail shops, and
10 places open after 6 PM (preferably entertainment).

Downtown Maynard does not yet meet this critical mass threshold and the retail and restaurants are somewhat spread out rather than concentrated. This is not an absolute rule and pertains more to larger downtowns, however, it provides some useful guidance and the take-away is to aim for for more commercial density.

2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.1 Physical Layout & Gateways

Downtown Maynard is **compact & walkable**

- Distinct competitive advantage over most surrounding towns; only Concord/West Concord has walkable Town Center
- In the main triangle, businesses are concentrated with only limited sidewalk interruption
- One of the residents interviewed said “I can get most all my errands done within a 1/4 mile.”





Challenges/Opportunities:

- ArtSpace and Acme Theater are located a few blocks outside the business district & not visually connected.
- Although pedestrians can cut through the ” basin” parking lot to go between Main and Nason Streets, this route is not attractive or well identified.
- One way pattern limits visibility of Nason Street businesses.
- Western leg of Main is not well connected to core.
- Several individuals interviewed mentioned the negative appearance of the property at the gateway to town at intersection of Routes 27 and 62.

2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.2 Seating Areas, Social Gathering Spots, Streetscape & Sidewalks

Seating areas & social gathering spots

- There is a pleasant seating area in the 100 Main Street block.
- Veterans Memorial Park is a great venue for events.

Streetscape & Sidewalks

- Downtown street trees and greenery contribute to a pleasant pedestrian environment.
- Community gardeners have provided some very attractive streetscaping.









Challenges/Opportunities:

- Not many seating areas or small social gathering spots
- Some sidewalk areas have better streetscaping than others
- One business owner cited an issue with inadequate snow clearance
- One resident mentioned that pedestrian safety issues need attention

2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.3 Outdoor Dining

- Several restaurants offer outdoor dining
- Adds vitality to the street, can help provide festive atmosphere
- Provides visual interaction between diners and pedestrians





Challenges/Opportunities:

- Sidewalks are narrow in many areas







2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.4 Public Parking & Way Finding

- Several large centrally located parking lots in addition to street parking
- Good way-finding signage identifying parking areas

Challenges/Opportunities:

- The “basin” parking lot could be more aesthetically pleasing with landscaping. Businesses could open rear entrances and/or improve the facades which face the parking lot.
- One resident interviewed mentioned the need for a handicap parking space on Main Street.
- No way-finding signage/kiosk to identify businesses.
- Bike racks?









2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.5 Storefronts and Signage

- Many welcoming storefronts add to the visual appeal of downtown
- Several attractive window displays





Challenges/Opportunities:

- Some storefronts have covered windows. The lack of transparency detracts from a vibrant feel -- adds to a sleepy appearance, doesn't make the district look fully open for business.
- One person interviewed cited an issue with difficulty and length of time it takes for a business to get a sign approved. This has resulted in the extended use of a temporary banner sign in the case of at least one new business.
- Some storefronts and buildings are less than appealing and/or in need of renovation.





2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.6 Water Features

- The Assabet River runs thru downtown.
- The Mill Pond provides a picturesque vista driving toward the downtown.



Challenges/Opportunities:

- The waterfront is underutilized.
- River is not visually or physically accessible (lost opportunity)





2.4 Physical Environment

2.4.7 Vacancies

There are several vacant properties in the downtown, including:

- Recently-vacated Walgreens building
- Large vacant Methodist Church
- Few vacant storefronts on Nason Street and Main Street



Challenges/Opportunities:

- Several vacancies contribute to a sleepy appearance
- Big vacant spaces offer opportunities for larger footprint uses







2.5 Identity and Promotion

2.5.1 Perceptions and Identity

Most residents spoke with enthusiasm about the Town of Maynard. In particular, newer residents seem very positive about what the Town has to offer. There appears to be many active committees and volunteer groups with a great deal of civic pride.

As evidence of this . . . one of the RMC members made her own bumper sticker: "Maynard, the town that feels like a neighborhood"

Many interviewees mentioned they had friends in other towns that like coming to downtown Maynard for the village center experience.

Some interviewees said that people from out of town might think of Maynard as "the bar town" from its reputation of years past or more accurate for today "a place to get something to eat".

Challenges/Opportunities:

- Downtown Maynard has potential but has not yet firmly established an image as a fun, edgy, artsy place to go for food and entertainment.
- Some multi-generation residents might not not share the positive outlook about the town as newer residents that consciously chose Maynard for their home.
- Residents from out of town may be largely unaware of Maynard's offerings. Special events can help. Participants might come for an event and be enticed to come back.
- There may be a perception on the part of potential customers that Maynard is too far and it would take too long to get there from surrounding communities. (Acme Theater has started to combat this perception by promoting itself as only "x" miles from Waltham, "x" miles from Groton , etc..)
- Potential business tenants may also be unaware of what Maynard has to offer as a business location. Perceptions might include that the market is too small or the residents lack spending power.
- Potential business tenants might mistakenly equate an affordable place to live with residents that do not have disposable income to spend. But, in fact, the median income in Maynard is 30% higher than the state.

2.5 Identity and Promotion

2.5.2 Promotion

There are several Internet sources that provide information and promote events happening in Maynard.

Examples:

http://web.maynard.ma.us

https://www.facebook.com/RevitalizeMaynard

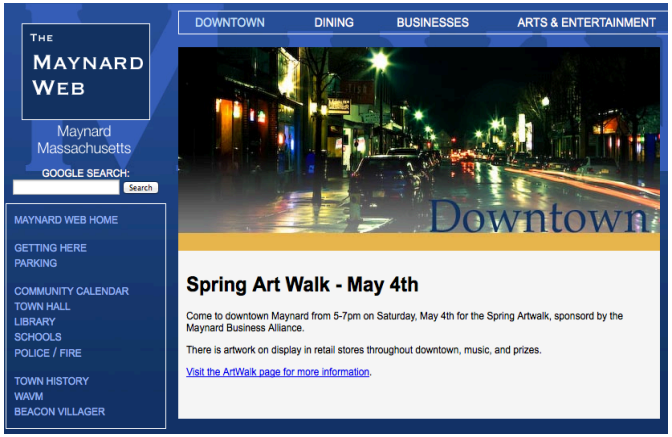
http://www.artspacemaynard.com

http://maynardgrapevine.blogspot.com

http://maynard.wickedlocal.com

http://maynardcommunityband.com

The Town recently received an Adams Art Grant to help develop a promotional strategy for the Cultural District and this work has been initiated.



www.web.maynard.ma.us

Challenges/Opportunities:

- Downtown Maynard needs to become known as a place to go.
- For downtown to grow as a cultural, dining & entertainment destination, there should be a promotional strategy and a website that specifically focuses on downtown and those activities (i.e., serves as an arts, entertainment and dining guide, perhaps with shopping tie-in). Existing town and organization websites are good and it is important to deliver information thru multiple channels, but these sites are either very specific to one organization or they offer too much other information. Users may have to hunt for specific entertainment/event information. And, no one single source appears to contain all up-to date event information.
- Currently, there is not a unified master calendar of cultural events that is searchable or presents information in a way that people looking for entertainment could easily find something to do. The community calendar on the Maynard Web is a very useful community tool, however, as currently formatted, it is less useful as an entertainment guide for residents and visitors because it appears heavily weighted with information pertaining to school schedules and community meetings.
- Several people mentioned that they always hear people saying " I didn't know about that" referring to some event or offering in downtown.

2.6 Coordination among Organizations

There are many arts and culture organizations in Maynard that have performances, put on shows, hosts lectures, exhibits, festivals, etc. that currently happen or could be programmed to happen in or near downtown.

Examples:

- ArtSpace Maynard
- Acme Theater
- Fine Arts Theatre Place
- Maynard Community Band
- Maynard Historical Society
- Souled Out
- Maynard Public Library
- Community Gardeners

There are also at least two resident and business organizations that focus on issues related to downtown:

- Revitalize Maynard Collaborative
- Maynard Business Alliance

The Revitalize Maynard Collaborative (RMC) attempts to be a coordinating umbrella organization for the entities involved in downtown. They have done a great job and accomplished a great deal with limited resources and all volunteers. RMC and its members are responsible for activities such as downtown cleanup, farmers market and the recently initiated field guide to Maynard project.

Maynard Business Alliance (MBA) is also an active organization that puts on key events such as the Art Walk and Sip & Stroll.

Challenges/Opportunities:

- It seems there may be some activities and organizations that are not well coordinated and connected, resulting in lost opportunities for collaboration and creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

- As Maynard progresses toward the establishment of a cultural district, there may be a benefit to having a more formalized incorporated entity to serve as an umbrella organization that is inclusive of more arts and culture organizations. This could be the next step for RMC or entail the creation of a new organization. An umbrella organization could help ensure a continuous and growing amount of cultural programming in downtown, jointly promote events, coordinate schedules, advocate as necessary with town government, etc.

2.7 Other Factors: Potential Impact of Proposed Development Projects

There are two proposed development projects in Maynard that could have an impact on the potential for downtown Maynard to grow into a food, culture and entertainment destination.

1. Residential development at Clock Tower Place
2. Mixed use development at 129 Parker Street

In this section, we will describe the proposed development projects and discuss general potential impacts. There are two caveats to keep in mind:

- These projects are still in the planning stages and specific development plans are evolving. Therefore, the information provided is the most accurate data that we could obtain at the present time however, it is subject to change.
- This review is not intended to be a detailed impact analysis, as that is beyond the scope of this study, but rather an attempt to provide more general observations and considerations as plans move forward.

2.7 Other Factors: Potential Impact of Proposed Development Projects

2.7.1 Clock Tower Place





Proposed Project

The owners of Clock Tower Place are currently seeking financing to convert approximately ½ of the space to residential units. They have zoning approval for up to 500 units but Clock Tower's representative told us that they do not expect to develop that many units. He indicated that they plan to take a phased approach and build 25 to 50 units at a time. The representative stated that they would prefer to keep the property commercial/ industrial but they have not been able find and retain sufficient commercial tenants. They feel that converting to residential is a less risky proposition, especially in light of the recent loss of a major tenant (Monster,com).

The current plan includes developing apartments (i.e., studios, 1 and 2-bedrooms) that are affordably-priced for the region (not subsidized). The price point will be lower than the surrounding communities currently offering rents over $2,000 per month and higher than the local apartment buildings offering units with no amenities and rents around $900 to $1,000 per month.

The target market segments for the housing units include:

- Young men and women that are working at Clock Tower Place. have not yet established families, and would like to work, live and and play in downtown Maynard
- Middle class individuals that might have gone through divorce and are in need of a new housing situation
- Senior citizens that are downsizing their housing and like the idea of living near a walkable downtown

2.7 Other Factors: Potential Impact of Proposed Development Projects

2.7.1 Clock Tower Place (cont'd)



Potential Impacts/Considerations

Residential development in downtown could have many positive impacts.

- Residents add to the liveliness of a commercial area with more people on the street at all hours, providing a 24-hour vitality. Lively areas tend to attract more customers -- people want to be where there are people. And, more foot traffic helps to attract more businesses.
- Residents provide a built-in potential market for food, entertainment, retail and services. Residents that live in and near the downtown are more likely to patronize local restaurants and stores. And, more residents increase market demand. For example, the addition of 300 to 400 new housing units (containing the types of tenants described as the target market segments) would result in more than $1 million of additional annual restaurant demand.
- Residents provide more eyes on the street and increase the security of a commercial area and the perception of safety.



The trade off, in this case, is that the proposed residential units will replace office/industrial space that otherwise might potentially house businesses and create jobs for the community. Once commercial space is converted to residential space, you cannot get it back. The conversion would increase the number of residents in downtown but may result in curtailing the future potential for employees. Employees can be an important market segment for a commercial area. They provide a market for meal and snack purchases as well as convenience retail goods and services before, during and after work hours.

Opportunity

- There may be opportunities to develop some space at Clock Tower Place for uses that would be very complementary to growing downtown as a food, culture and entertainment destination. The unique architecture and waterfront setting could lend itself to restaurant possibilities. For example, with the growing trend in craft beers and distilleries, perhaps there may be an opportunity to recruit a micro brewery/brew pub.

2.7 Other Factors: Potential Impact of Proposed Development Projects

2.7.2 Development at 129 Parker Street



Source of Plans: www.capitalgroupproperties.com/portfolio-view



Proposed Project

The Southborough-based firm, Capital Group Properties, is planning to develop the former Digital Equipment site at 129 Parker Street. The 600,000 s.f. mixed use project is being planned under the working title "The Shoppes at Maynard Crossing".

Several different mixed use plans have been proposed over the last few years. There has been opposition from residents regarding various aspects. The developers have been working with the town and an Ad Hoc Committee to come to consensus on the project. A rezoning proposal was turned down in 2013. Plans have evolved over time.

The current plans appear to include:

- 250 residential units, some portion may be set aside for income-eligible residents (e.g., 20%)
- 250,000 s.f. of retail space, including a supermarket
- Other uses such as medical offices and assisted living facility

2.7 Other Factors: Potential Impact of Proposed Development Projects

2.7.2 Development at 129 Parker Street (cont'd)

Potential Impacts/Considerations

Retail and restaurant development at 129 Parker Street may compete with downtown for market demand. In particular, if destination restaurants are developed at 129 Parker, this could have an impact on the potential for downtown to grow as a food, culture and entertainment destination. While there appears to be substantial unmet demand for restaurants in the 5-mile trade area with current sales leakage of over 50%, there are still only so many expenditures available to capture.

For downtown to develop as a food and entertainment destination, unique restaurant offerings and specialty retail should be recruited to the downtown. There is a risk that restaurants and entertainment businesses (as well as stores) that might otherwise consider locating in downtown Maynard might be attracted to 129 Parker instead. This could make it more difficult to recruit businesses to downtown that could provide the commercial density and diversity needed to establish downtown as a destination. Large format retailers could not be accommodated in downtown but smaller stores and restaurants that could find a home in downtown might also be attracted to 129 Parker.

There is also a risk that existing downtown businesses might relocate to the 129 Parker site. A new supermarket and other commercial development would guarantee a certain amount of foot traffic and therefore may entice existing businesses to move to 129 Parker. When Derby Street Shoppes opened in Hingham, some of the downtown businesses relocated to the "lifestyle" shopping center.

Opportunity

- For downtown to succeed as a destination, the dining and shopping experience offered by downtown Maynard should remain distinctly different than what will be offered at the Shoppes at Maynard Crossing. It would be beneficial if the 129 site was tenanted with larger format retail while unique destination restaurants, entertainment businesses/venues, and smaller specialty stores were directed to downtown.
- There may be an opportunity to negotiate a development agreement with the developer that would provide funding that could help mitigate potential negative impacts on downtown. For example . . . . the developer could agree to provide funds on an annual basis to be used by a Downtown Business Improvement District, Community Benefit Area, Main Street Organization or some other type of Downtown Organization that could be used to promote downtown, recruit businesses, coordinate cultural activities, etc. This was done in Taunton and North Attleborough where mall developers agreed to pay annually into a special fund targeted for downtown development. In Natick, mall developers provided initial funding to establish Natick Center Associates, a successful non profit corporation that works to maintain a vibrant downtown and is the governing organization for the Natick Cultural District.



Part Three

Recommendations

4. Recommendations

The following section outlines suggested strategies to increase the potential for downtown Maynard to become a food, culture and entertainment destination. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of actions but instead, point out some potential action areas for consideration. Additional ideas can be gleaned from reviewing the "Challenges/Opportunities" sub-sections scattered throughout the body of this report.

These recommendations are being presented for further consideration. They are the product of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of Town government or any organization and have not been adopted or sanctioned. These suggested strategies have been developed as a result of data collection and analysis, interviews with residents and business owners, and the author's experience with other downtowns and cultural districts.

The recommendations could be undertaken by various parties, including: the newly-formed Town Economic Development Committee, the Revitalize Maynard Collaborative, the Town Planning Department, the Cultural Council, or the Maynard Business Alliance. It is beyond the scope of this study to suggest assignment of any tasks to any specific entity. We present these recommendations to spark additional creative thinking and strategizing.

A listing of recommendations is provided at the right. More detail is presented in the following section.

1. Keep up the good work! Continue existing efforts to create a Cultural District, develop branding and promotional strategies and pursue Massachusetts designation.
2. Capitalize on the waterfront location; explore opportunities to open visual and physical access to the river.
3. Facilitate re-opening and on-going success of the Fine Arts Theatre; encourage promotional tie-ins with local businesses and multiple events/users at the site.
4. Increase event programming and entertainment in downtown.
5. Help create a story and celebrate what is uniquely Maynard --- can clock winding be turned into an event or celebrated in some way?
6. Create a map, downtown directory and signage/kiosk that promotes and reinforces the connection between downtown businesses, Acme Theater and ArtSpace.
7. Work with landlords to help rent up vacant properties.
8. Recruit appropriate businesses to downtown especially restaurants, art-related/creative economy businesses, entertainment businesses/ venues and specialty retail.
9. Explore potential for recruiting/developing a children's theater/art center.
10. Encourage development at 129 Parker Street that would be complementary and support the downtown's growth as a food, culture and entertainment destination.
11. Explore possibility of negotiating a Development Agreement with the developers of 129 Parker that would provide ongoing funding for downtown revitalization.
12. Create an online Downtown Dining & Entertainment Guide with Cultural Event Master Calendar. (Maynard Web is a Great Start)
13. Work towards creating an organizational structure that could coordinate & manage downtown revitalization & cultural district activities.
14. Make improvement in the basin parking lot area facilitate connection between Main Street and Nason Street and create more attractive sub-area.

4. Recommendations

1. Keep up the good work! Continue existing efforts to create a Cultural District, develop branding and promotional strategies and pursue Massachusetts designation

The cultural district can be a critical centerpiece, around which, to coalesce destination-building efforts. Maynard has an abundance of cultural assets and a very active artisan community -- essential building blocks for a cultural district. Branding and promotion are a critical ingredient for successful cultural districts as well as all dining and entertainment destinations, so the current branding work being sponsored by the Adams Grant is very important.

As efforts move forward, attention should be paid to ensuring that there is a fundamental understanding and consensus among the cultural organizations, artisans and business owners with regard to the economic development objectives of the cultural district. Often, the goal of expanding cultural offerings is well understood while there is sometimes a need for more education around economic development goals. As partners plan and implement projects, it is important that they keep in mind the objectives of encouraging local spending and creating employment and business opportunities.

2. Capitalize on the waterfront location; explore opportunities to open visual and physical access to the river

Making better use of the water would be one way to distinguish downtown Maynard from other commercial centers. Opening visual and physical access to the river would go a long way to help develop the downtown as a dining, cultural and entertainment destination. Waterfront/water-view dining would provide a unique value proposition.

Ipswich is a good example of a downtown that completed infrastructure improvements to increase access to their riverfront. The town created a delightful RiverWalk and are continuing to look for more ways to take advantage of the water. (Ipswich is similar to Maynard, in that, the downtown also contains a large mill property.)

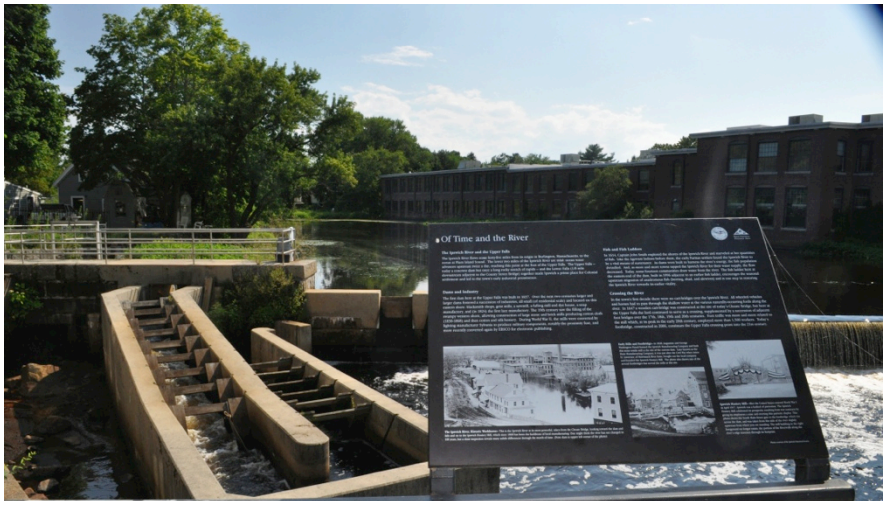


Downtown Ipswich RiverWalk

4. Recommendations



Downtown Ipswich RiverWalk



Residents that were interviewed also suggested increasing the use of the mill pond and/or river for cultural/recreation events such as the kinetic sculpture events (hand-crafted boat races) that are held in some communities.



www.kinecticbaltimore.com



Humboldt Bay, Eureka, California

4. Recommendations

3. Facilitate re-opening and on-going success of the Fine Arts Theatre; encourage promotional tie-ins with local businesses and multiple events/users at the site.

The movie theater is a key component to the establishment of downtown Maynard as a dining and entertainment destination. The closest movie theater is over 9 miles away. Therefore, the theater could serve as an anchor, drawing from a broad trade area.

Investigate to see if there are opportunities to mitigate obstacles or provide assistance that could help facilitate re-opening and support the on-going success of the theatre. Encourage cross promotions with other local businesses.



** We made attempts to contact theater representatives for an interview but were unsuccessful.*

In commercial districts, movie theaters and restaurants are a very symbiotic coupling. Downtown Waltham is a great example of a "dinner and movie" destination. The Coolidge Corner Business District in Brookline is another good example, with its independent non profit movie theater and large variety of eateries. Movie theater customers often patronize other businesses in the commercial district on their way to or from the theater. A market study conducted by FinePoint Associates in 2014, showed that 81% of the Coolidge Corner movie-goers also visited a restaurant, coffee or yogurt shop. This same study also showed that 36% of movie goers were from outside of the Town.

There are two strategies being implemented in Coolidge Corner that might also be successful in downtown Maynard.

1) The Coolidge Corner Theater has a successful membership program that includes discounts at local merchants and helps to promote local shopping and dining.
2) The theater hosts a large and diverse array of events and programming (e.g., live performances, author events sponsored by local bookstore, partner events with a local performing arts theater, sing-alongs, etc.)



Courtesy of http://gregsdigital.com

4. Recommendations

4. Increase event programming and entertainment in downtown

Events can help change the perception of a commercial area. People come to an event, have a positive experience, discover business offerings they did not know existed and are more likely to come back and visit again.

An economic impact study of cultural events in seven business districts conducted by FinePoint Associates in 2013, showed that . . .

- On average, people visited 2 businesses on their way to, from or during events, and
- Close to 40% of attendees discovered businesses they were not previously aware of.

Suggested actions for consideration include:

- Obtain a pledge from arts & cultural organization partners to increase events, street performances, exhibits etc. at locations in the downtown. Partners could include: Acme Theatre, ArtSpace, dance schools, individual artisans, musical groups, etc. Use a broad definition of arts.
- Consider creating a small fund and implementing a "Call for Producers" model to encourage creative events
- Encourage businesses to host in-store/in-restaurant entertainment and events; assist businesses to promote their events

5. Help create a story and celebrate what is uniquely Maynard --- can clock winding be turned into an event, celebrated in some way?

According to the Hidden History of Maynard by David Mark, the Clock Tower contains the oldest, still-working, hand-wound clock in the country and the mechanisms have to be wound once per week. Does everybody know that? Is it celebrated? Do bells ring each week? Could this somehow be turned into part of the Maynard story that visitors would remember?

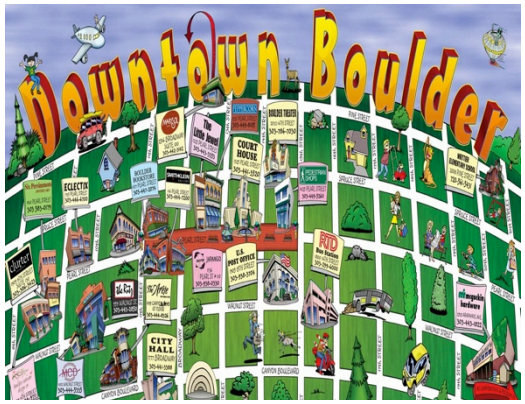
Union Square in Somerville has a Marshmallow Fluff Festival. Downtown Providence has a monthly Waterfire event. Could Maynard make more out of this famous clock?



4. Recommendations

6. Create a map, downtown directory and signage/kiosk that promotes and reinforces the connection between downtown businesses, Acme Theater and ArtSpace.

It is important to make customers aware of all that the downtown has to offer. Even though the downtown is fairly compact, it would not be immediately apparent to visitors that there could be interesting offering along the western leg of Main Street. And, downtown customers might be completely unaware of the theater and gallery located just a few blocks away.







4. Recommendations

7. Work with landlords to help rent up vacant properties

- Determine if there are obstacles that can be resolved or incentives provided that could help move landlords to fill spaces.

8. Recruit appropriate businesses to downtown especially restaurants, art-related/creative economy businesses, entertainment businesses/venues and specialty retail.

- Develop promotional package/digital fact sheet/brochure about the downtown as a desirable business location targeted to potential business prospects and would-be entrepreneurs. At a recent RMC meeting, it was suggested that perhaps the High School could create a downtown business recruitment video as a community service project.

- Create a business recruitment subcommittee to promote downtown, identify and approach business prospects. Specific business targets might include:
  - Microbrewery/brew pub
  - Yogurt/ ice cream shop



9. Explore potential for recruiting/developing a children's theater/art center

A children's theater would make a great complement to the existing cultural assets in Maynard. Children's theater draws audiences on a frequent and consistent basis. A facility that provided an array of children's art instructional programming could be a destination for customers from surrounding towns.

Research the existing network of children's theater and art organizations and potential demand for this type of space in the region. Explore the potential for acquisition and adaptive reuse of the vacant Methodist church for this type of use.



4. Recommendations

10. Encourage development at 129 Parker Street that would be complementary and support the downtown's growth as a food, culture and entertainment destination.

Explore options to:

- Help ensure that the dining and shopping experience in downtown Maynard fills a unique niche, distinct from the offerings that will be available at the new development at 129 Parker, and
- Mitigate the potential loss of downtown's ability to attract and retain restaurants, cultural/entertainment businesses and specialty retail.

11. Explore the possibility of negotiating a Development Agreement with the developers of 129 Parker that would provide ongoing funding for downtown revitalization

Investigate the potential to negotiate a development agreement that would provide funding to help mitigate potential negative impacts on downtown.

For example . . . . the developer could agree to provide funds on an annual basis to be used to:

- ☑ help fund a downtown/cultural district organization
- ☑ promote downtown as a food, culture and entertainment district,
- ☑ recruit appropriate businesses,
- ☑ coordinate cultural activities,
- ☑ fund special projects, etc.

There is precedent for this in Massachusetts communities. In Taunton and North Attleborough, mall developers agreed to pay annually into a special fund targeted for downtown development. In Natick, mall developers provided initial funding to establish a non profit corporation, Natick Center Associates, that works to maintain a vibrant downtown and is the governing organization for the Natick Cultural District.

4. Recommendations

12. Create an online Downtown Dining & Entertainment Guide with Cultural Event Master Calendar – The Maynard Web is a Great Start

- Create a vehicle to promote events; work toward establishing a user-friendly master calendar specifically pertinent to cultural events/entertainment in and near downtown.
- The current Community Calendar on the Maynard Web serves a different purpose. It contains a large volume of school and community information (meetings, early release dates, etc.) mixed in with some events. However, a different vehicle or format could better it serve as an efficient guide where someone, especially from out of town, looking for something to do, could quickly see what is going on.

13. Work towards creating an organizational structure that could coordinate & manage downtown revitalization & cultural district activities

As Maynard, progresses toward establishment of a cultural district and attempts to develop as more of a dining and entertainment district, there may be a benefit to having a more formalized incorporated entity with an executive committee (e.g., 501(c)3 corporation). This might be the next step/ evolution for RMC or entail the creation of another organization.

4. Recommendations

14. Make improvements in the basin parking lot area to facilitate connection between Main Street and Nason Street and create more attractive sub-area

This area could be an interesting sub-area of downtown instead of just a parking lot and provide a strong pedestrian connection between Main Street and Nason Street.

- The parking lot could be more aesthetically pleasing with additional landscaping.
- Consider providing design assistance (and perhaps financial incentives) to improve facades that face the parking area and encourage businesses to open rear entrance.
- Explore design treatment that would encourage pedestrian flow through the basin from Main Street to Nason Street.
- Consider opportunities for public art in this area.

In Gloucester, a local artist created a fishnet mural that turned an alley into an artistic walkway.



Fishnet Mural by James Calderwood in Gloucester



Basin Parking Lot Area