



Citizens for a Palmer Rail Stop

Press Release

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2/15/19

At its meeting last Monday (2/11/19), Palmer Town Council voted unanimously to have the UMass Center for Economic Development (CED) “implement a community-informed feasibility study to support the town’s efforts to “make the case” to the State that there should be a passenger rail stop in the Town of Palmer.”

This is phase one of a three-part process to study and plan for the proposed downtown rail stop in Depot Village. The scope of work in phase one includes:

- ◆ Kick-off meeting with Town of Palmer officials and staff
- ◆ Review of existing information, data, reports related to the project
- ◆ What is Community thinking? A Community Meeting/Charrette
- ◆ Interviews with local stakeholders/focus group
- ◆ Asset Analysis and SWOT Report
- ◆ Demographic/Market Demand Study (projection for next 20 years)
- ◆ Review of relevant similar situations/comparable rail projects
- ◆ Draft and Final Report

A team of UMass Amherst regional planning professors will perform the work:



John Mullin



Michael Di Pasquale



Henry Renski

The work of phase one has immediate importance since the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and its consultants are currently engaged in the East-West Passenger Rail Study that includes Palmer as the suburban station between Worcester and Springfield.

The UMass CED has proposed two other steps to follow phase one:

- ➔ Phase two “will provide a Planning Study that addresses the proposed rail stop and its relations to downtown and the greater Palmer area. We expect that this phase will include a downtown Transit Oriented Development study, and/or downtown Land Use Plan.”
- ➔ Phase three “will provide an Implementation Plan that addresses a range of technical, design and cost issues related to “next steps.” As part of this phase, we envision an additional charrette to gather up-to-date community input on the rail stop, and a range of related issues.”