

Rezoning of Bedford Marketplace, Great Road

The proposed rezoning of the Bedford Marketplace that is being presented at Monday's Special Town Meeting should be of interest to all Bedford residents. It has the potential to change the face of Bedford.

The difference between Limited Business and General Business needs to be understood. Limited Business, is the zoning along Great Road, limits the size of any store to 2,000 square feet and a setback of 35 feet from the street. General Business, is in the back portion of the property, allows larger stores, including big box stores and they can be 10 feet from the street. The same is true of the Great Road Shopping Center (Stop & Shop). Blake Block is in Limited Business as is Blue Ribbon Plaza (Starbucks).

The concept of Limited Business is to provide space for small, locally owned stores and to limit the size so that the area can retain the small town look and charm. General Business district allows big box stores right on the road – think Route 1! Directly across from the Memorial Park!

Unlike small businesses, big box stores generate traffic. Therefore, regardless of what the proponent is telling us, traffic will increase! Great Road and connecting roads will be in gridlock all weekend and during the holiday season. This is easy to judge based on how much traffic the new Ocean State Job Lots generates on Saturday.

This rezoning will allow the building of a major retail store, Wal-Mart, Costco or other national chain to be 10 feet from Great Road! This will impact all of Bedford and change the Town's look and quality of living for all residents. Is this what Bedford needs?

To save what small town charm Bedford still has, I urge all Bedford residents to come to Town Meeting Monday night and vote against this Article.

Douglas E. Miller