



TODD CROWLEY
PLANNING BOARD

Caucus Nominee: Yes

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INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

My name is Todd Crowley. I am asking for your vote for a seat on the Planning Board for a 3 year term beginning in March of 2022. My wife Mary-Ann, and our 2 daughters (aged 9 and 13) have lived in Bedford for 18 years now. Both of our girls are going through the Bedford School system. I was on the Lane Advisory Council for 2 years while my oldest was at Lane. I have also assisted the Council on Aging and many of its members with computer issues via email, phone, and (pre-pandemic) house visits.

For the past 10 years I have been on the Zoning Board of Appeals. I have been chair for 6 of those years. While chair I presented at the Town Meeting a Limited Business District bylaw change, which was approved. While I have enjoyed my time on the ZBA and working with my fellow board members, I now believe the time is right for me to switch gears.

As a Planning Board member, I will work to ensure that regulations will be written in a way that gives the ZBA the tools they need to navigate the grey areas they have to address. In addition to the regulatory work, I am also very eager to expand into the planning and policy side for Bedford. I feel that my ZBA experience will help guide me in making solid choices, especially regarding zoning for the town. I would like to continue the effort towards increasing the diversified housing stock in Bedford (the **Bedford Housing Study** (*) is an excellent guide to help the Planning Board with this challenging task). I will also keep local businesses in mind with all Planning Board decisions. As an aside, it would be great to someday revise the sign bylaw in the future.

The environment (and our impact on it) is an important aspect in all of our lives. In every decision before me while on the Planning Board I will take this into consideration. This includes considering climate resiliency for buildings, as well as the need for green spaces and finding the balance between the town's needs, the people's needs, and the sustainability for the Earth and our future generations.

I would like to continue to give back to Bedford, the town that is helping Mary-Ann and I raise our two children. Thank you for your consideration.

*https://www.rhsohousing.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif421/f/uploads/bedford_housing_study_2019_-_final_march_11.2019.pdf

REPLIES TO THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS QUESTIONS

Q1—What is your assessment of Bedford’s capacity to develop more economically diverse housing particularly in light of new State regulations that will tie future MBTA service to increasing low-income housing options?

Bedford has the ability and capacity to develop more economically diverse housing over the next few years. The state is currently planning on removing access to various funding methods for MBTA towns * (Bedford included since it has MBTA bus service) if the towns do not create a new high-density zone of fairly substantial size allowing multi-family housing by right. This is a good forcing function to push Bedford to consider multi-family housing in many different areas of the town, and to reassess what Bedford has currently zoned for housing. The Planning Board has already begun discussing multi-family homes as well as 2 family homes. They are also continuing to discuss other housing options, such as potential modifications to current accessory dwelling unit zoning regulations. I feel the state’s regulations will help shape the Planning Board’s discussions which will in turn force the board to come up with appropriate areas to have different types of housing in Bedford (which must be approved at Town Meeting). Having more two-family (note: single-family houses that existed in 1945 can be converted to a two-family) and multi-family housing will help Bedford reach its goals of having more economically diverse housing stock.

* <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities>

Q2—What do you identify as the three primary issues the Planning Board needs to address during the next three years?

1. *Expanding housing options within Bedford*
2. *Balancing town needs with environmental needs*
3. *Supporting Local Businesses*

Bedford needs to expand its housing options to have a more economically diverse housing stock available. Having more 2-family and multi-family housing available will assist with this goal. Having the state push the MBTA towns towards having multi-family housing by right will also spur discussion and action. I am also encouraged by the Carlisle Road / North Road intersection housing plan that discussed at the 2/8/22 Planning Board meeting.

As I stated in my Initial Statement, I feel that we all must always consider the environment when making plans for our town. I know this can be challenging at times, but in the end, we need to make sure that we do the best job we can to limit our impact on the Earth, and always look for ways to make things sustainable.

The third issue is to make sure the town does everything it can to support local businesses. This is a fairly new area for me, but I feel maintaining strong relationships with local businesses, and expanding opportunities to attract businesses should be a priority for Bedford.

Q3—How would you balance the interests of developers, neighbors, and the town in general when making decisions on proposed new or modified developments?

Crowley: Having been on the Zoning Board of Appeals for the past 10 years, I am very familiar with having to balance the interests of developers, neighbors, and the town when making decisions regarding residential lots (and business lots as well). All parties need (and deserve) a chance to speak their mind about what they feel is important, then compromises need to be made by everyone. Most times everyone will have to give a little, but in the end on the ZBA we have always been able to come up with a compromise that will make everyone satisfied. People in town do need to understand that sometimes things need to change, as the times have changed in the world. But it is also good to always remember where the town came from, to keep things in perspective. Again, I am encouraged by the proposal given to the Planning Board on 2/8/22 regarding the Carlisle Road and North Road intersection, as the initial proposal had a healthy mixture of various sizes of single-family homes and a large building dedicated for senior living.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

My name is Todd Crowley. I am asking for your vote for a seat on the Planning Board for a 3 year term beginning in March of 2022. I have lived in Bedford for over 18 years now, for the last 10 years I have been on the Zoning Board of Appeals. I have seen first-hand how the decisions that we have made as a community effect the types and sizes of houses that are being built in town. I know that we must be pro-active in both short-term and long-term planning in order to shape Bedford in the years to come. The decisions we make (on the Planning Board and as a Town) will determine how Bedford evolves in the future.

On the ZBA I have been able to gain valuable skills finding a balance between developers', residents', and the Town's needs and desires. This experience will help me with making decisions on the Planning Board that must take into consideration property rights and Town interests.

Here are some of my thoughts about current Planning Board issues in Bedford:

- Bedford's 2013 Comprehensive Plan (https://www.bedfordma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf6866/f/file/file/comprehensive_plan_12_10_2013_1.pdf) and Bedford's 2019 Housing Study (https://www.rhsohousing.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf421/f/uploads/bedford_housing_study_2019_-_final_march_11.2019.pdf) are great starting points. I will use these documents as a basis for decisions I make on the Planning Board.
- Multi-Family Housing: with the MBTA communities' regulations (requesting high-density zone(s) of multi-family housing by-right) a lot of discussion is occurring on the Planning Board and in town regarding increasing the diversity and stock of multi-family housing. I feel this discussion is long overdue, and the MBTA regulations will be a great forcing function to ensure that Bedford does everything it can to diversify its housing stock over the coming years.

- Environmental Needs: Our zoning bylaws should motivate developers to build commercial and residential buildings that consider all aspects of the environment, ideally having net zero buildings where applicable. Our goal should be carbon-neutrality as soon as possible.
- Mixed-Use Zoning and Local Businesses: Mixed-use zoning can benefit the community. More people can live closer to where they shop and eat, it can add to our stock of affordable housing, and it can help local businesses. I am also eager to find more ways to help local businesses thrive in Bedford.

In conclusion, if elected, I am looking forward to addressing Bedford's current and long-term planning challenges. I am hoping to have the opportunity to serve on the Planning Board to help plan Bedford's future that we would all like to see. I ask for your vote on March 12th 2022 at the Town Election. Thank you.