

Dear Town Meeting Members,

The Select Board has called a **hybrid Special Town Meeting (STM)** for **March 4, 2026 at the Chenery Upper Elementary (CUE) auditorium**. Please note the in-person location will be at the CUE.

Town Meeting will be asked to consider two zoning By-Law articles you may know as “the Belmont Center Overlay,” and there may be amendments.

Given the important and complex topics, we are providing three full months to help everyone be informed and prepared. **The deadline for submitting amendments is six weeks prior to the STM, at noon on January 16, 2026.**

The proposed zoning language has been finalized by the Planning Board. More documents, explainers, and reports will be sent to all Town Meeting members in the coming weeks. Please stay tuned, ask questions and remain involved. In the meantime, please review:

- **Final documents as approved by the Planning Board** on November 18th:
<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/2181/Belmont-Center-Zoning-Draft-Bylaws-and-R>
- **Final parking study**:
https://www.belmont-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11227/Revised-Final-Parking-Report_Belmont-Center_17November2025
- **Draft traffic study related to the Bottleneck Reduction program**:
<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/10888/Belmont-Downtown-Zoning-Change---Traffic-Impact-Assessment>
- **March 4th STM page and documents**:
<https://www.belmont-ma.gov/2226/March-4th-2026-Special-Town-Meeting>

Warrant

The Select Board has signed and posted the official Warrant, available on the March 4th STM page: <https://www.belmont-ma.gov/2226/March-4th-2026-Special-Town-Meeting>.

Article 2 (majority vote) adds overlay zoning for a mixed-use Belmont Center Overlay District.

Article 3 (requires a 2/3rd majority vote) creates overlay zoning for a commercial Belmont Gateway Overlay District along Concord Ave. Article 3 also includes regulations that would allow and govern hotels, if one were to be built in Belmont.

The Select Board considers both proposals essential to revitalize Belmont Center, put the Town on a more financially sustainable path, and address critical unmet need for smaller-form housing.

Amendment Deadline: January 16

The Moderator has set an **amendment deadline of January 16, 2026, at 12:00 pm**. This six-week lead time is necessary because:

- Zoning By-Laws and amendments can be complex, requiring time for Town Counsel and the Planning Board to review, analyze, and issue opinions. Planning Board review must follow Open Meeting Law requirements, including advance notice and potentially multiple meetings.
- Amendments can have complicated effects that staff, committee members, and Town Meeting members will need time to understand.
- Committees reporting on the articles and amendments need time to review, and form their opinions in time for the League of Women Voters Warrant Briefing (exact date TBD).
- School recess is the week of February 16–20.

Hybrid Format

The Select Board has approved the Moderator's request to hold the STM in **hybrid format**, allowing participation either in person or remotely. If you are able, please attend in person.

Location

Because the high school auditorium is unavailable due to a scheduled musical, the STM will be held in the **Chenery Upper Elementary School auditorium**. Please note:

- **Weak or No Cell Signal:** Cellular reception at Chenery is poor. You will need to vote using **PointSolutions over wifi** on your phone or device. Robust wifi will be provided; please connect in advance to avoid delays.
- **Health Concerns:** The auditorium cannot accommodate a roped-off seating area for social distancing. If this is a concern, please plan to participate remotely.
- **Technical Considerations:** We have not held a Town Meeting—and never a hybrid one—at Chenery in several years. With support from IT and Belmont Media, we are working through remaining technical issues to ensure a smooth meeting.

Please review the materials ahead of the **March 4th STM at the Chenery Upper Elementary School auditorium**. If you wish to submit an amendment, the deadline is **January 16th at 12 pm**. During Town Meeting, you will need to connect to the **wifi to vote**.

Thank you for your service to the Town.

Mike Crowley
Town Moderator

Matt Taylor
Chair, Select Board