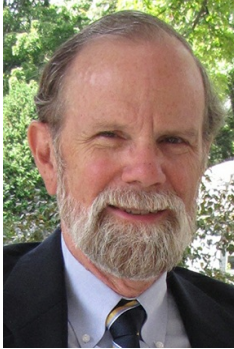


# DENNIS BIDWELL

CITY COUNCIL ★ WARD 2

[www.dennisbidwellcitycouncil.com](http://www.dennisbidwellcitycouncil.com)

June 16, 2016



To Neighbors and friends, Ward 2 and elsewhere,

I want to share a few updates and announcements about:

[Round Hill/Clarke School Development Update](#)

[This Saturday, see what Downtown Northampton could look like - with a range of physical changes](#)

[Downtown Economy Public Forums Continue](#)

[Save Our Public Schools - June 22 Public Forum, JFK](#)

[LED Streetlights Update](#)

[Remember to Vote July 7!](#)

## Round Hill/Clarke School Development Update

Last week the Planning Board made its decisions on the revised site plan for portions of the former Clarke School campus, as proposed by Jim Hebert and the Historic Round Hill development group. I shared my reactions to that decision earlier this week in a [letter to Round Hill residents](#). Bottom line: I am generally supportive of the revised plans, which include numerous conditions attached by the Planning Board after hearing considerable input from abutters and other neighbors.

## This Saturday, see what Downtown Northampton could look like - with a range of physical changes

The City's Planning Department has been developing alternative visions for what Downtown could look like if sidewalks were widened, if mini-parks were created, if traffic lanes were narrowed, if a dedicated bike lane were added. This coming Saturday, June 18, from 11-3, please visit Main Street in front of City Hall to see what these possibilities might look like and feel like. [More information](#).

## Downtown Economy Public Forums Continue

The City Council's Community Resources Committee will continue to sponsor forums on Northampton's economy, focusing on the downtowns of Northampton and Florence. Upcoming forums, with their themes:

- June 20, 5:30 pm: Downtown Workers and Residents
- June 27, 1:00 pm: Downtown Workers
- July 18, 5:30 pm: Property Owners, Leasing, Arts & Tourism

*All forums will take place in City Council Chambers behind City Hall.*

### **Save Our Public Schools - June 22 Public Forum, JFK**

On Wednesday June 22, at 6:00 pm (music and pizza start at 5:30), at JFK Middle School, there will be a Save Our Public Schools public forum. Speakers including Mayor Narkewicz will discuss the November ballot question on raising the cap on charter schools. Last week, the Northampton School Committee passed a Resolution opposing the lifting of that cap. Fact: Northampton is projected to spend almost \$2.5 million in outgoing charter school tuition in the coming year. This far exceeds the budgets of any of our four elementary schools.

I am a strong advocate of our excellent public schools and will have more to say about the Charter School cap matter in the months ahead.

### **LED Streetlights Update**

I met with the Mayor to urge a slowing down of the decision making process on LED lights, in order to fully take in to account the input from James Lowenthal and others.

I made a similar request of Chris Mason, the City's Energy and Sustainability Officer, at a meeting of the Energy and Sustainability Commission. I believe the process has indeed been paused, but I do understand that there are substantial financial consequences associated with further delaying the City's decision.

### **Remember to Vote July 7!**

A special election for At-Large City Councilor will be held Thursday, July 7. Polls will be open from 7 am to 8 pm. Absentee ballots are now available at the City Clerk's Office. I am supporting Ryan O'Donnell, currently Ward 3 City Councilor.

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