



City of Methuen, Massachusetts
Department of Economic & Community Development
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Mayor

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Director

To: Ronald Marsan, Chairman, City Council

From: Stephen F. DeFeo, Jr., Chairman, Community Development Board

Date: November 17, 2025

Re: 122- 133 Pleasant Valley Street – proposed zoning map change from RC to BH

On February 13, 2025, Paula H Otto Casas Paula LLC submitted a request to the City Council to rezone 121 -133 Pleasant Valley Street from Residential C (RC) to Business Highway (BH) on behalf of the property owners at 122-133 Pleasant Valley Street to allow for a broader range of commercial uses. The City Council reviewed the proposal at their meeting on April 7, 2025 and referred the petition to the Community Development Board to schedule a joint public hearing. On September 25, 2025, Francisco Rosa, Esq. and Paula Otto, Compass, submitted a comprehensive package of information to the City Council regarding the proposed rezoning on behalf of the property owners. The City Council and Community Development Board held a joint public hearing on November 12, 2025.

Based upon the packet of information submitted, the presentation made and public testimony at the public hearing, the Community Development Board voted 4-1 to recommend unfavorable action on the zoning change petition.

Chairman Stephen DeFeo, Jr., Vice Chair Micheal Comei, Members Shadi Kassis and Heather Plunket voted to recommend unfavorable action on the petition. The proponents based their rezoning request on the high level of traffic and accidents along this stretch of Pleasant Valley Street without providing any concrete data from the Police Department or other sources. They presented no data-based proof that the proposed zoning change would reduce traffic and/or accidents. The Board members expressed the continued need to maintain housing of all types in the city and noted that there are unfilled commercial spaces and undeveloped commercial sites in the city.

Secretary Neal Hunter voted to recommend favorable action on the petition. He based his decision on the following: the second goal (1B) of the Methuen Master Plan is to promote economic development through community-based planning. Pleasant Valley Street and Old Ferry Road are two of the corridors identified in the plan. Achieving this goal will require overcoming challenges in transitioning from residential to commercial zones along these suggested corridors.

This proposal includes several positive aspects that support economic development. Much of Pleasant Valley Street, from Howe Street to the 495 overpass, is already zoned for business and industrial use, and local property owners are in favor of this change. Additionally, the properties feature a natural buffer that will help protect the neighboring residential areas.

He acknowledged the concerns expressed by residents on Chippy Lane regarding current and future traffic issues as commercial properties are developed. He recommends that the city and state take action to update this section of Pleasant Valley Street, addressing traffic-related issues and enhancing safety for pedestrians and cyclists.