

# WELCOME TO THE CHOOSE FRAMINGHAM NEWSLETTER



*Choose Framingham Newsletter  
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## Downtown Framingham Gets a Little Help from Harvard Graduate School of Design

As Framingham continues working to redevelop its downtown area, it is soliciting feedback in an effort to revitalize the neighborhood and make sure it has something to offer everyone. Now, it will also have the insights and recommendations of six local Harvard Graduate students from the university's [Graduate School of Design](#).

Each year, Harvard Professor Richard Peiser leads a group of students for a semester in his class, [Field Studies in Real Estate, Planning, and Urban Design](#), focusing on redevelopment efforts and intended to bring real world solutions to real world problems, through the classroom.

Each year, the class chooses a site in two cities - one of which is always located in the Boston Metro area. This year, the class chose downtown Framingham. Each of the students have architecture and planning design backgrounds and they recently presented a report of their findings to their professor - and to Framingham.

Like any planning and design team, they began their project with data collection, research, site visits and meetings, and analysis. The six students were divided into two teams - both focusing on how to make the downtown area most attractive and livable while also focusing on creating more green space and a more walkable/pedestrian friendly neighborhood. Each proposal included affordable housing options but remained consistent with what residents and other members of the public supports for development efforts. Recommendations for shops and restaurants were included as well.

## Choose Framingham Q&A with Mayor-elect Yvonne Spicer



*Dr. Yvonne Spicer, Mayor-elect of Framingham*

*Choose*

*Framingham had the honor of interviewing Mayor-elect Yvonne Spicer, Framingham's first mayor, as she prepares to assume the office in January about her plans for the City of Framingham and its*

*economic development. Many thanks to the Mayor-elect for taking time out of her busy schedule to speak with us.*

### **Congratulations on your election! First, tell us a little about why you decided to run for Mayor of Framingham?**

As I saw us transitioning and thinking about the election as the charter passed, and the opportunity to run for office appeared, I thought that I had experiences that could translate. I was a former town meeting member and on the Ways and Means subcommittee and I saw the skills I brought to the table, and thought it would be good for the mayor. I had worked with nonprofits, business leaders, and others very successfully at the Museum of Science over the last several years, especially in a start up program of the museum, and I felt I could use that experience.

So I spoke to my boss at the Museum of Science and told him what I was thinking about. I realized I brought a lot to the table and decided I could bring that to the City of Framingham.

### **What do you think are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing Framingham as it transitions to a new form of government?**

First of all, moving our whole community to become one, comprehensive city. One of the challenges was that 50 percent of the people who voted [this Spring] wanted Framingham to be a city, but 50 percent didn't. I think I brought to the table the fact that I wasn't polarized on the issue. But I kept saying, "if we are going to be a city, let's be the best city we can be." We are not going to lose the richness and the value that this community has had for more than 300 years.

Part of that is thinking about the challenges we have, including economic development. How can we grow our

"It was really interesting to see the opportunities for downtown Framingham through a fresh set of eyes," said Erika Jerram, deputy director of Framingham's Community and Economic Development division. "We are at an exciting juncture in downtown Framingham's history, and we appreciated hearing the creative ideas from Harvard's graduate students as we move forward."

The final report included the two teams' analyses and recommendations, which - after review by Professor Peiser - was given to Framingham officials for their review. It is the students' hope that their work will help support and assist Framingham in their efforts to redevelop and revitalize the downtown area.

## 2017 Year in Review: Business Profiles

### Choose Framingham Profiles Framingham Businesses and Organizations

*Editor's Note: Framingham has a diverse business community - we're home to major multinational corporations and interesting and innovative start ups. Throughout the year, [Choose Framingham](#) has profiled the businesses, sectors, and organizations that are critical to making Framingham a vibrant community and a great place to do business. As we end 2017, we wanted to make sure you had a chance to read about the people doing interesting work in our town. If you are a Framingham-based business interested in being profiled in Choose Framingham or you know of one, please email us at [chooseframingham@framinghamma.gov](mailto:chooseframingham@framinghamma.gov)*

### [January 2017 - Creative Economy Sector](#)

In January, Choose Framingham held an event highlighting Framingham's

opportunities - how can we bring new businesses, like life sciences and technology, while also supporting our current businesses?

Also, another priority is our education system, how can we move some of our more fragile schools? Additionally, we also need to think about a new middle school and overall how we can support our students.

### Can you share with us your economic development plans for Framingham?

These are some of the things that the transition team is thinking about now, which is exciting. Clearly economic development supports our tax base, so we are thinking about growth and how we can grow our businesses. Especially for downtown Framingham, we want to think about developing and nurturing those anchor businesses that can offer growth, training, and more jobs.

We also need to look at transportation, especially the train station, and how that also anchors our downtown businesses. We are looking at the restaurants, microbreweries, and other businesses that are attractive to young people, and thinking about how we are making downtown Framingham a destination. Part of that is also looking at how we can make downtown a place where people want to live. How do we make the downtown walkable, accessible, and attractive for both businesses and for people to live there? That's some of what we are looking at.

### What do you want to do first when it comes to economic development?

In terms of things we initially want to do - let's look critically at what has been done up to this point. Certainly, I believe that meeting with the business community is important. I met with members of the business community during the campaign, but I want to meet with them more systematically. I also want to meet with the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC), the 495/Metrowest Corridor Partnership and our own [Division of Community and Economic Development] and figure out how we can map out our roles, work together comprehensively and hit the ground running on day one.

### Tell us a little more about your background - how long have you lived in Framingham? What changes have you seen?

I have lived in Framingham for 32 years - I came here when I

creative economy sector, including photographers, graphic designers, architects and more. You can read the recap of that event in our [January newsletter](#).

### [February 2017 - Depot 417 Restaurant](#)

In February, we highlighted the delicious food options available at the Depot 417 Restaurant in downtown Framingham. Read more about their food and entertainment in our [February newsletter](#).

### [March 2017 - Framingham Makerspace](#)

In March, Choose Framingham reported on Framingham Makerspace's plans for expansion. Read more about how the Makerspace operates in our [March newsletter](#).

### [April 2017 - Helping the Businesses of Old Path Village Complex](#)

In April, Choose Framingham highlighted how municipal officials and others are working with businesses at the Old Path Village complex who were destroyed by fire rebuild. Learn more about Framingham's cooperative efforts with state and local officials in our [April newsletter](#).

### [May 2017 - Globoforce and Sofa Cafe](#)

In May, Framingham celebrated two openings - software company Globoforce opened its new headquarters in Framingham, while Brazilian café Sofa Café debuted its new downtown Framingham location. Read more about both in our [May newsletter](#).

### [June 2017 - ListEngage](#)

In June, Choose Framingham featured a guest column from digital marketing

was 23 years old to teach. My first teaching job was in the middle school. I first lived on the south side of Framingham, with a little apartment, and then eventually taught in the high school, as well.

I never felt the need to leave Framingham because it was such a convenient and diverse place to live. One of the things I love about the community is the people. The core of what makes Framingham so unique is diversity. The town itself is diverse. You can be at a farm with sheep, and then drive and suddenly you are in downtown Framingham. That diversity is what I find absolutely fascinating about Framingham - there are 30 different languages spoken here.

But particularly downtown - I have seen it ebb and flow, go through downturns and come back. Those are the kinds of changes I have seen.

### **What are your favorite things to do in Framingham? Favorite places to go?**

I am fascinated by all of the great ethnic restaurants in Framingham. Recently I have developed a love fest for Terra Brasilis - I frequent both locations. But I love exploring these new up-and-coming restaurants, like Sofa Café and B Sisters. I love exploring all of these different restaurants.

### **Anything we missed?**

I am deeply humbled and excited to become Framingham's first mayor. I know I have my work cut out for me but I am up for the challenge.

## **Framingham is Open for Business:**

*9/90 Corporate Center Offers High Quality Class A Space In An Easy to Access Location*



Looking for new office space in 2018? If the answer is yes, then check out some of the area's best Class A workspace, with recently refreshed amenity spaces and easy access to two of the region's major

company, ListEngage. Read more about what they love about Framingham in our [June newsletter](#).

### [July 2017 - Avidia Bank](#)

In July, we gave our readers a sneak peek at the new Framingham location of Avidia Bank, which opened in September. Read more about why Avidia Bank chose to grow in Framingham in [July newsletter](#).

### [August 2017 - HomeSense and MutualOne Bank](#)

Framingham celebrated when The TJX Companies launched its new home store concept, HomeSense, in Framingham. Additionally, we profiled MutualOne Bank, a Framingham institution. Read more in our [August newsletter](#).

### [September 2017 - Trebl and the Suites at 550](#)

In our [September newsletter](#), Choose Framingham looked at Trebl, a soccer-inspired clothing start up founded by three alums of Framingham High School, and the Suites at 550, which provides space and support services for growing companies.

### [October 2017 - Volturno Pizza](#)

There's a new gourmet pizza location in town, and Choose Framingham profiled it in October. Read more about Volturno Pizza in our [October newsletter](#).

### [November 2017 - Howard Street Studios](#)

In November, Choose Framingham highlighted new studio space available to local artists at the Howard Street Studios. Learn more about this creative space in our [November newsletter](#).

*We look forward to profiling more great Framingham businesses in 2018.*

highways. [9/90 Corporate Center](#), just minutes away from Exit 12 on the Mass Pike and on Route 9, is available to businesses looking to expand in the Metrowest's newest city, Framingham.

Six office buildings occupy 9/90 Corporate Center; two are currently vacant. 9/90 is close to major national headquarters such as Bose Corporation and Sanofi Genzyme, and Boston Heart Diagnostics and Globoforce occupy space in the corporate campus. With an on-site Marriott Residence Inn and Bright Horizons day care, 9/90 is an ideal location for a wide variety of businesses, including life sciences, high tech companies, healthcare, back office operations and financial services.

At 100 Crossing Boulevard, owner National Development has just invested \$1.5 million to update the common space. The building's lobby and conference space has been completely renovated and now includes a fitness center, beautifully landscaped patio and a café run by Foda, a pop up concept where the menu changes daily. Starting next month, yoga classes will be offered. Businesses in need of 10,000 to 100,000 square feet should put this three-story building on their list.

9/90's 200 Staples Drive is also available. This two-story, 60,000 square foot building can easily be converted to wet lab use and was built to accommodate a third floor. Originally built as a call center, the robust building has two different power sources and extensive parking available. Companies looking for between 15,000 and 60,000 square feet should consider this facility an option. The building is also available for purchase for companies who prefer to own versus lease.

"These buildings are strategically located between communities to the east and the west," says William Kennedy, Asset Manager at National Development. "We think that this space is comparable in quality and amenities to anything you'll find on 128 but at a much more affordable rate and without the traffic congestion associated with areas to the east."

If you are interested in learning more about these facilities, please contact Kevin Hanna at Cushman & Wakefield at (617) 279-4535.

# Choose Framingham Highlights #ShopLocal Options This Holiday Season

On Friday, December 8, [Choose Framingham](#) highlighted the numerous #ShopLocal options throughout the community, documenting our tour on our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages. Stay tuned in 2018, when we'll be conducting additional tours of businesses and economic sectors on our social media pages. If you aren't yet following *Choose Framingham* at [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), please take a few minutes to do so.

It's no secret that Framingham has no shortage of excellent shopping options available - our #ShopLocal holiday shopping tour reinforced the idea that there is a store in Framingham for whatever you may need.

We kicked off our tour at [Panza Shoes](#), a local shoe store -and Framingham institution - in downtown Framingham, which has been in business since 1944. Whether you are looking for dress shoes, work shoes, hiking boots, or sneakers - Panza has it all.

A quick drive brought us to [Jack's Abby](#) -where not only do they have great beer and food, they have a gift shop! We found hats, gloves, t-shirts and sweatshirts, and flannel pants. If that wasn't enough, they also sell beer soap! Yes, that's soap made with beer.

We then took our tour over to Route 9 with a stop at [Bedrock Comics](#).

This local comic bookstore has been in business for decades and prides itself on staying true to its original roots. In addition to comic books, the store also has pop culture memorabilia available for purchase.

While [HomeSense](#) and [Sierra Trading Post](#) may be national stores, that are also local Framingham businesses! The TJX Companies opened the flagship HomeSense location in Framingham over the summer, as well as Framingham's first Sierra Trading Post. We stopped in at both of these stores and found excellent selections - HomeSense has all the décor and fun house items you could ask for while Sierra

Trading Post has all of your outdoor needs - jackets, snow gear, camping gear, and everything you need for snow sports like snowboarding, skiing, and sledding.

We wrapped up our tour at [Chocolate Therapy](#), also on Route 9, and were not disappointed by the vast selection of beautiful and delicious chocolates or the hot chocolate.

This is just a small sample of the many local businesses and stores Framingham has to offer. Next time you are looking to get some shopping done or need that perfect gift, try one of our local stores and #ShopLocal.

Read more about our #ShopLocal tour on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



FraminghamEDIC

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The [Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Corporation \(EDIC\)](#) was established in 1995 to stimulate economic development and expand employment opportunities in the Town of Framingham in accordance with the town's approved economic development plans.