Request for Expressions of Interest For Purchase/Lease and Redevelopment Of Former Davis Thayer Elementary School 137 West Central Street, Franklin, MA

The Town of Franklin is pleased to present this Request for Expressions of Interest (REI) for the future redevelopment of 137 West Central Street, site of the former Davis Thayer Elementary School. This Request for Expressions of Interest is a preliminary document used to generate ideas for potential reuse of the land and building located at 137 West Central Street. The Town may choose to release a formal Request for Proposals later in the 2024 calendar year.

The Town-owned property consists of one (1) parcel totaling 151,588 +/- square feet (3.48 +/- acres), located on Route 140 in Franklin Center adjacent to Dean College. The Town has chosen to proceed with an REI at this time to solicit informal, yet serious proposals, subject to the process detailed herein, from qualified developers and other interested parties who wish to purchase or lease and redevelop the property.

The REI process is critical for a better understanding of existing market conditions, the formation of potential development options for the property, and the identification of community priorities. This process will provide the community with the information needed to ensure a meaningful and productive public process, which may lead to a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) later in the 2024 calendar year. The Town's primary goal for redevelopment of the former public school property is as follows:

Redevelopment of the site into a key gateway into Downtown Franklin, which will maximize short-term and long-term benefits to the Town and its residents.

Each Expression of Interest must include a letter of interest and a project description/narrative. The letter of interest must be signed by the principals, describing the proponent's interest in the property and the general intentions concerning the future use of the site. The project description must include a narrative that provides an overview of the proposal, the market niche the project intends to serve, the experience and qualifications of the development team, the capabilities the developer can marshal to achieve project objectives, and a description of expected short-term and long-term financial benefits to the Town.

The Town offers you the opportunity to learn more about the site through participation in an Information Session and Site Tour scheduled for April 17, 2024 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM or May 1, 2024 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. The Town invites you to examine the information contained within the REI document, its attachments, and related reference documents on the Town's website: https://www.franklinma.gov/davis-thayer-building-reuse-advisory-committee. This website has links to the comprehensive analysis of this site by Kaestle Boos Associates done in 2013, as well as an updated existing conditions report, "DRAFT Davis Thayer Existing Conditions Report", also done by Kaestle Boos Associates in 2023.

The Town hopes to hear from individuals and organizations who will present compelling and appropriate development proposals for the use of 137 West Central Street. <u>All Expressions of Interest must be submitted to the Purchasing Office by May 31, 2024 at 1:00 PM.</u>

Pam Vickery, MCPPO Franklin Municipal Building 355 East Central Street, Room 206 Franklin, MA 02038 Phone: 508-553-4835

FAX: 508-541-5253

pvickery@franklinma.gov

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I. Project Summary

A. An Overview

Franklin Town Council has established the Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee to evaluate potential strategies and future uses for the former Davis Thayer Elementary School property at 137 West Central Street in downtown Franklin. The town-owned 3.48+/- acre property is located at one of the key gateways to Franklin Center and is adjacent to Dean College. Attachment A includes a map of the parcel, and Attachment B contains photographs.

The Advisory Committee is currently working to evaluate potential future uses for the former public school building and the parcel of land the building is located on; for that reason the Town of Franklin has developed this Request for Expressions of Interest (REI) to solicit informal yet serious proposals from qualified developers and other interested parties who wish to purchase or lease and redevelop the property.

Through the REI process the Town hopes to identify creative redevelopment concepts for the site, assess and refine potential development options, and provide the community with the information needed to ensure a meaningful and productive public process. The REI process is critical for a better understanding of appropriate market possibilities and community priorities.

This REI presents an exciting opportunity for a developer, business, or other organization to redevelop a highly visible parcel in downtown Franklin. The Town expects that this REI process may lead to a release of a formal Request for Proposals later in the 2024 calendar year.

B. Property Description and Condition

In 1924, the existing building located at 137 West Central Street opened as Franklin High School. When a new high school was built at 224 Oak Street in 1962, the building was renamed the Davis Thayer Elementary School providing education to children in grades Kindergarten through Grade 5. The Franklin School Committee voted to close the school effective July 1, 2021 due to a decline in enrollment, the building's age, and the high cost of keeping it open. The building was taken out of service a few years ago but has remained tempered and maintained.

The former Davis Thayer Elementary School property consists of one (1) parcel (Assessors Map 278, Lot 213) situated on the western edge of the downtown area, occupying a 3.48 acre (151,588+/- sf) site bounded to the south by West Central Street (Rte. 140), to the west by Union Street, to the north by School Street, and to the east by the Dean College Campus. A brick three story former school is located on the southern half of the property with an open ballfield and playground to the north.

General Description of the Building: The former school building is a four level structure with a building footprint of 14,006 square feet, and a total floor area of 44,556+/- square feet. Floor space on each level is as follows:

First Floor: 10,942+/- square feet of floor area Second Floor: 13,924+/- square feet of floor area Third Floor: 11,272+/- square feet of floor area Basement Level: 8,418+/- square feet of floor area

The multi-story structure consists of a wood framed roof, cast in place unreinforced concrete ribbed floor slabs and masonry bearing walls with steel framing for large open span areas and reinforced concrete foundation walls and footings. Attachment A contains the Assessor's Property Cards, Town Appraisal Summary Card, and parcel maps.

Major spaces in the former school building consist of a gymnasium located on the basement level, the kitchen/cafeteria located on the first floor, and the media center/library on the second floor. The media center space and gymnasium space are both 2 stories in height. Remaining spaces on the three floors above grade were previously used as classroom spaces with various support spaces for storage, mechanical systems, and toilet rooms.

Egress is provided by two stair towers at each of the main entrances on the front (south side) of the building which extend from the First to the Third Floor. Single stairs provide egress from the Basement gymnasium to the exit doors at each side at the rear (north side) of the building. There is no access by elevator provided in the building.

In 2013, a comprehensive analysis was conducted for the Franklin Public School Department by Kaestle Boos Associates Inc. The resulting report, "Study for the Davis Thayer Elementary School" includes Building Code Analysis, Existing Facilities Evaluation, Space Needs Assessment, Conceptual Designs, and Opinions of Probable Cost. More recently, the Town again contracted with Kaestle Boos Associates, Inc. to provide an updated existing conditions assessment. In March 2023, the Town released a DRAFT Davis Thayer Existing Conditions Report (March 21, 2023), which includes a Code Analysis (Section 2) and Existing Conditions (Section 3). The remaining report (Section 4, Floor Plans) will be completed once the Davis Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee provides Kaestle Boos Associates with their suggestions for building reuse.

Both documents are available for viewing and downloading on the Town's website: https://www.franklinma.gov/davis-thayer-building-reuse-advisory-committee. Combined the two documents provide a complete analysis of the former school building's condition and description of utilities and usable space. Several photographs of the property are included in Attachment B of this document, and the above mentioned 2023 Existing Conditions Report contains a substantial number of photographs, as well as building floor plans.

Roadways, Access Driveways and Parking: The parcel has just over 1,000 feet of frontage along the three roadways: 283 feet along West Central Street, 469.4 feet along Union Street, and 248.3 feet along School Street. Frontage and direct access to the site derives from West Central Street (Route 140). The current West Central Street driveway extends to the north to an entrance on School Street. Access is also provided along Union Street giving the property access and egress from three separate locations.

There are a total of 60 designated parking spaces on the site. Eleven (11) parallel parking spaces are on the east side of the driveway accessed from School Street, ending at the oak tree (by the paved school yard area). Thirty (30) parking spaces line the rest of the Dean College property line down to Rte. 140. Ten (10) angled parking spaces are along the east side of the building (two of which are HC). On the west side of the building there is a striped grid pattern for nine (9) vehicles; the western parking grid is on a steep slope down to Union Street (drop of about 5 feet). Service deliveries are made on the west side of the building, where the cafeteria and kitchen are located. Street parking (7 spaces) is available on Union Street. There is no parking at the front of the school (including on Route 140).

Location and Zoning: The former school property is located at a key gateway to the Downtown area, directly adjacent to the Dean College Campus, and within the Franklin Cultural District. The property is within the Town's Single Family Residential IV (SFRIV) Zoning District. A description of the SFRIV Zoning District and related dimensional, use, and parking regulations is summarized in Attachment C.

C. Request for Expressions of Interest Process

Franklin Town Council is cognizant of public interest in and concern for reuse and/or redevelopment of the Davis Thayer Property. Many generations of residents in Franklin have been educated at this location and hold fond memories of their time there. The property is an integral part of the Downtown area and the Town seeks input as to potential reuse and/or redevelopment.

Informational Session and Site Tour	4/17/2024	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
	5/1/2024	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Interested parties wishing to tour the site and ask questions are invited to meet by the front door of the former Davis Thayer Elementary School, 137 West Central Street. An Information Session will be held in the Cafeteria on the first floor of the former public school building, and the Site Tour will occur immediately following the Informational Session.

REI Submission Deadline 5/31/2024 at 1:00 PM

Expressions of Interest Review June, 2024

II. Development Guidelines

A. Project Goals

In requesting Expressions of Interest the Town is hoping to receive a variety of proposals and concepts that will identify potential reuse alternatives that may be appropriate for the property. The Town welcomes all serious proposals from interested parties who wish to purchase or lease and redevelop the property.

The Town's goals for redevelopment of the former public school property are as follows:

- Redevelop the site into a key gateway to Downtown Franklin.
- Maximize short-term and long-term benefits to the Town and its residents.
- Minimize negative impacts on the surrounding neighborhood and environment.

One of the Town's chief objectives in the redevelopment of this site is that the highest quality of physical planning and design be applied in all aspects of the project. Project proponents should consider that the property is at a key entrance to Franklin Center and, as such, must consider its aesthetic impacts to the area. Proposals and project concepts should consider the building's historic character and any potential impacts to historic resources.

Proposals and project concepts that include public green space, and prioritize sustainable development, including low-carbon, energy-efficient development approaches to design and construction, are preferred.

The Town of Franklin welcomes proposals for all types of development. The Town recognizes that to achieve the goals stated above, and spur on strong development proposals, the existing building may require significant redesign or total demolition by a developer. Individuals or organizations proposing projects/concepts that are not currently allowable in the SFRIV zoning district must identify any zoning relief required.

Proposals and project concepts that include public/private partnerships are welcome, and the Town is willing to consider multiple development options for the Property from a single Proposer.

B. Disclosures and Limiting Conditions

The Town of Franklin is soliciting Expressions of Interest by developers and other interested parties to lease or buy, and redevelop 137 West Central Street, subject to the process detailed herein. While all information furnished herein was gathered from sources deemed to be reliable, no representation or warranty is made as to the accuracy or completeness thereof. Prospective developers/proposers should undertake their own review and reach their own conclusions concerning zoning, physical conditions, environmental concerns, required approvals, use potential, and other development and ownership considerations.

This REI is made subject to errors, omissions, prior lease, or withdrawal without prior notice. In no way does this obligate the Town to select a specific development concept, nor does it exclude the potential for selecting alternative uses not identified by the REI process.

Proponents are asked to provide information regarding any legal or administrative actions past, pending, or threatened which could relate to the conduct of the proponent's (or its principals or affiliates) business and/or their compliance with laws.

Disclosure is required of any past or present affiliations of the proponent, proponent team members, or proponent employees with the Town of Franklin. Please describe the nature and duration of the affiliation, including a disclosure of existing or past public contracts in Franklin, the contracting parties, scope of the contract, and period of performance.

The property and building is presented in "as-is condition", free of occupants with no representations or warranties by the Town.

III. Submission Requirements

Specific submission requirements are detailed below. Each proponent is invited to submit any additional information which may improve the proposal quality as it relates to the established criteria.

A. Letter of Interest

Each Expression of Interest must include a letter of interest, signed by the principals, which includes the following:

- Description of the proponent's interest in the property and the general intentions concerning the future use of the site.
- The name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address of the representative authorized to act and speak for the proponent.
- The nature and status of the organization acting as the proponent (whether a non-profit or charitable institution, a venture, a corporation, a business association, or a joint venture) and the jurisdiction in which it is registered to conduct business.

B. Proposal Narrative and Project Description

Each Expression of Interest must include a project/concept narrative, no longer than 6 pages in length, which includes the following:

An Overview of the Project/Concept.

- Description of proposed use.
- Description of proposed alterations to the physical building and site.
- Clear definition of what the Proponent hopes to achieve.
- Possible impacts the project/concept might have on the neighborhood and Town in general
- Description of expected financial benefits to the Town, both short-term and long-term.

Fulfillment of the Town's Development Criteria

- The project/concept proposes a potential reuse alternative that is appropriate for the property
- The project/concept is in line with the Goals described in Section II.A above
- The proposal is in compliance with the guidelines and criteria set forth in this REI.

Experience and Qualifications of Proponent

- The experience and qualifications of the proposer or development team (if applicable)
- The capabilities the proposer/developer can marshal to achieve project objectives.

The Expression of Interest may contain any other information which the proponent may deem vital for an understanding of the proposed use.

C. Conceptual Plans

Proponents are encouraged to prepare and submit a conceptual site plan and/or floor plan to illustrate their thinking on how 137 West Central Street should be redeveloped, especially if there is a proposed change in footprint or major alterations to the existing building. In addition, proponents are encouraged to submit site and building plans of comparable properties which the proponent has developed and/or designed.

D. Submission Deadline

Expressions of Interest must be received on or before May 31, 2024 at 1:00 PM. Please submit an electronic submission of the Expression of Interest to pvickery@franklinma.gov and submit one unbound original and ten bound copies addressed to:

Pam Vickery, MCPPO Purchasing Department Franklin Municipal Building 355 East Central Street Franklin, MA 02038 508-553-4835 pvickery@franklinma.gov

IV. Review of Proposals and Concepts Received

All Proposals and concepts received by the Town will be reviewed/examined for consistency with the Town's development guidelines, goals, and priorities as described in this REI. The Town of Franklin's professional staff and the Davis-Thayer Building Reuse Advisory Committee will review and evaluate all responses and develop a written report of the evaluation.

The Town may request clarification and further material on ambiguous submissions, and or invite individuals or organizations that have responded to this REI to attend meetings to discuss their proposals or concepts.

The Town expects that this REI process may lead to release of a formal Request for Proposals later in the 2024 calendar year.

V. Inquiries

A. Site Tour and Access

An Information Session and Site Tour is scheduled for April 17, 2024 from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM and on May 1, 2024 from 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Interested parties wishing to tour the site and ask questions are invited to meet by the front door of the former Davis Thayer Elementary School, 137 West Central Street. The Information Session will be held in the Cafeteria on the first floor of the former public school building, and a Site Tour will immediately follow.

B. Requests for Additional Information

All inquiries related to this REI shall be directed to the Town of Franklin's Chief Procurement Officer.

Pam Vickery, MCPPO Franklin Municipal Building Purchasing Department, Room 206 355 East Central Street Franklin, MA 02038 508-553-4835

FAX: 508-541-5253

E-Mail: pvickery@franklinma.gov

VI. Attachments

- A. Assessor's Property Cards, Town Appraisal Summary Card, & Parcel Diagrams
- B. 137 West Central Street Property Photographs
- C. Summary of SFRIV Dimensional, Parking, & Use Regulations

Attachment A

CAI Property Card Town of Franklin, Massachusetts



GENERAL PROPERTY INFO	RMATION	BUILDING EXTERIOR
LOCATION: 137 WEST CENTRAL ST		BUILDING STYLE: SCHOOL
ACRES: 3.48	~ =	YEAR BUILT: 1924
PARCEL ID: 278-213-000-000		FRAME: WOOD
LAND USE CODE: 931 - IMP - COUNCL		EXTERIOR WALL COVER: BRICK SOLID
CONDO COMPLEX:		ROOF STYLE: FLAT
OWNER: FRANKLIN TOWN OF		ROOF COVER: RUBBER
CO - OWNER: DAVIS THAYER ELEMENTARY	Y SCHOOL	BUILDING INTERIOR
MAILING ADDRESS: 355 EAST CENTRAL ST	REET	INTERIOR WALL: DRYWALL
FRANKLIN, MA 02038		FLOOR COVER: CARPET
ZONING:		HEAT TYPE: FORCED H/W
MassGIS LocID #: M_208088_870424		FUEL TYPE: GAS
		PERCENT A/C: 0
SALE INFORMATIO	N	SOLAR HOT WATER: NO
SALE DATE: 5/29/1924		CENTRAL VACUUM: NO
BOOK & PAGE: 1603-032		# OF ROOMS: 0
SALE PRICE: \$1		# OF BEDROOMS: 0
SALE DESCRIPTION: CONVENIENCE		# OF FULL BATHS: 0
SELLER: WHITING, JOSIE A		# OF HALF BATHS: 10
PRINCIPAL BUILDING A	DEAC	# OF ADDITIONAL FIXTURES: 32
GROSS BUILDING AREA: 42,018	REAS	# OF KITCHENS: 1
FINISHED BUILDING AREA: 42,018		# OF FIREPLACES: 0
BASEMENT AREA: 0		# OF WOOD STOVE FLUES: 0
# OF PRINCIPAL BUILDINGS: 1		17-01-W00D-010VE1120E3. 0
SKETCH		OTHER FEATURES
. 94		ATTACHED GARAGE: 0
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	Same	DETACHED GARAGE:
		POOL: NO
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Unofficial Property Record Card - Franklin, MA

General Property Data

Parcel ID 278-213-000-000

Prior Parcel ID -074-235-

Property Owner FRANKLIN TOWN OF

DAVIS THAYER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Zip 02038

Mailing Address 355 EAST CENTRAL STREET

City FRANKLIN

Mailing State MA

ParcelZoning

Account Number 074-235

Property Location 137 WEST CENTRAL ST

Property Use IMP - COUNCL

Most Recent Sale Date 5/29/1924

Legal Reference 1603-032

Grantor WHITING, JOSIE A

Sale Price 1

Land Area 3.480 acres

Current Property Assessment

Card 1 Value Building Value 2,760,800

Building Style SCHOOL

Year Built 1924

Building Grade AVERAGE

of Living Units 1

Building Condition Good

Finished Area (SF) 42018

of 3/4 Baths 0

Number Rooms 0

Xtra Features Value 29,700

Land Value 1,970,700

Total Value 4,761,200

Building Description

Foundation Type SLAB

Frame Type WOOD

Roof Structure FLAT

Roof Cover RUBBER

Siding BRICK SOLID

Interior Walls DRYWALL

of Bedrooms 0

of 1/2 Baths 10

Flooring Type CARPET

Basement Floor NO BASEMENT

Heating Type FORCED H/W

Heating Fuel GAS

Air Conditioning 0%

of Bsmt Garages 0

of Full Baths 0

of Other Fixtures 32

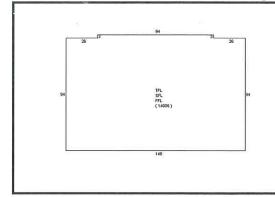
Legal Description

DEV-BLDR LOT PLAN

Narrative Description of Property

This property contains 3.480 acres of land mainly classified as IMP - COUNCL with a(n) SCHOOL style building, built about 1924, having BRICK SOLID exterior and RUBBER roof cover, with 1 unit(s), 0 room(s), 0 bath(s), 10 half bath(s).

Property Images



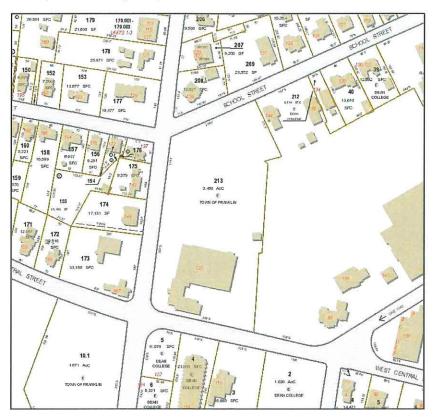


Disclaimer: This information is believed to be correct but is subject to change and is not warranteed.

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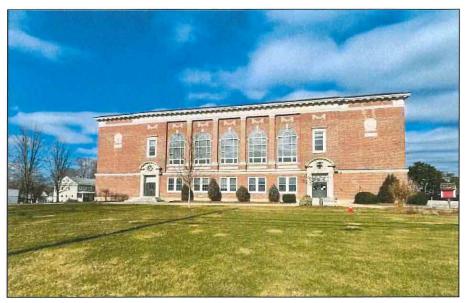
Assessor Parcel Map 278, Lot 213





https://www.axisgis.com/FranklinMA/

Property Photographs 137 West Central Street



Three photographs from West Central Street sidewalk on south edge of property.



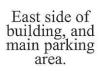


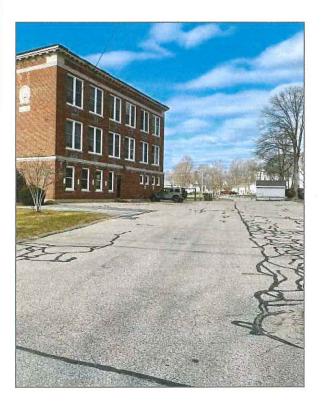
Southeast corner of building.





East side of building.



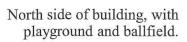




North side of building.

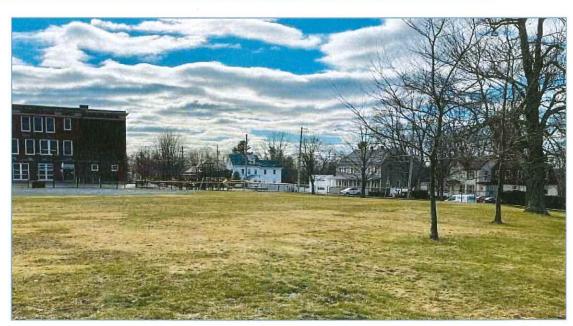


Attachment B





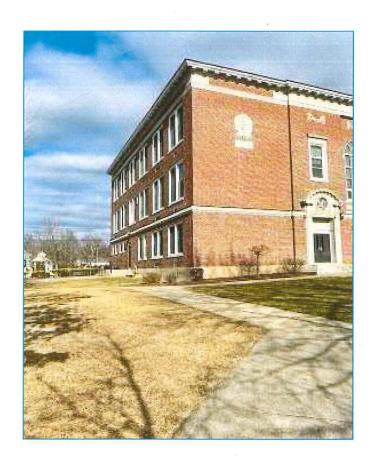






West side of building.

Delivery area and 9 parking spaces.



Southwest corner of building.

Town of Franklin Code, Chapter 185 Zoning Summary of Dimensional, Parking, and Use Regulations Single Family Residential IV (SFRIV) Zoning District

The former Davis Thayer Elementary School property is within the Single Family Residential IV (SFRIV) Zoning District. A general description of the SFRIV Zoning District and related dimensional, use and parking regulations is summarized below. Contact the Franklin Town Clerk's office for a current copy of the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Intent of Zoning District.

The Single-Family Residential IV District is intended primarily for single-family and two-family residential uses in a semirural and suburban environment. Generally commercial and industrial uses are not permitted; however some limited commercial uses are permitted by-right or special permit.

Dimensional Regulations.

Minimum Lot Dimensions	
Minimum Lot Area (square feet)	15,000
Continuous Frontage (feet)	100
Depth (feet)	100
Lot Width, minimum circle diameter (feet)	90
Minimum Yard Dimensions	
Front (feet)	30
Side (feet)	20
Rear (feet)	20
Maximum Height of Building	
Stories	3
Feet	35
Maximum Impervious Coverage (of Existing Upland)	
Structures	30
Structures Plus Paving (Total Impervious)	35

Parking Requirements.

The number of parking spaces required for particular uses in the SFRIV Zoning District are detailed in §185-21Parking, loading and driveway requirements of the Town's Zoning Bylaw. In general, residential buildings require two spaces per dwelling unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms. Commercial uses including retail, medical, legal and real estate offices require one space per 200 square feet of gross floor area, plus one space per separate enterprise. Offices and banks require one space per 250 square feet of gross floor area.

Please note, a request to provide a reduced number of parking spaces below that required in §185-21 <u>may</u> be approved by the Planning Board; see §185-21A(4) of Franklin's Zoning Bylaw.

Use Regulations.

Principal and accessory uses allowed either by-right or special permit within the SFRIV Zoning District are listed below. Please note, additional uses may be allowed; contact the Franklin Town Clerk's office for a current copy of the Town's Zoning Bylaw.

Uses Allowed By Right in SFRIV

Principal Uses

- Nursery, greenhouse
- Tourist home
- Bed-and-breakfast
- Library, museum, art gallery
- Public use
- Religious or educational use
 - Exempt from local Zoning Bylaws (See MGL c. 40A, §3)
 - o Dormitories

Accessory uses

- Boarding
- Home occupation

- Outdoor commercial amusement, recreationLight
- Public recreation
- Single-family Residential
- Two-family Residential (Lot area must be at least 25% greater than that required for a singlefamily dwelling)
- Professional office, studio
- Other customary accessory uses

Uses Allowed By Planning Board Special Permit in SFRIV

Principal Uses

- Multifamily, with Three Housing Units (Lot area must be at least 25% greater than that required for a single-family dwelling).
- Garden center
- Office (excluding office park)
 - o Bank or credit union
 - o Medical or dental
 - o Professional

Accessory uses

- Catering
- Function hall

- Catering
- Function hall
- Indoor commercial amusement, recreation, assembly
 - o General
- Outdoor commercial amusement, recreation
 - o General

Uses Allowed By ZBA Special Permit in SFRIV

Principal Uses

- Animal kennel, hospital
- Animal day care, training
- Animal grooming

Accessory uses

Animal grooming

- Two-family, by Conversion
- Accessory Dwelling Unit