

MEMO

To: Select Board, Town Manager Sheehan

From: Len Simon, Jack Ryan, Carl Offner, Marilyn Riepe, Frank Riepe

Re: Permitting gun shops in Sudbury

Date: January 29, 2024

At the January 23, 2024, Select Board meeting, member Jennifer Roberts made a number of comments about a proposed gun shops bylaw. She spoke about;

1. Charts the Select Board had discussed.
2. Hours of operation.
3. Zoning maps and locations for gun shops.
4. Setback distances.
5. Other niche businesses in town.
6. Proximity to businesses that sell alcoholic beverages to be consumed off premises, that is package stores.
7. Proximity to business that sell alcohol for consumption on premises – bars and restaurants.
8. Other important matters in the proposed bylaw.

Then, Ms. Roberts said, “This is very confusing for all of us. But I can only imagine what this is like for the public.” Ms. Roberts is correct.

She then touched on other points; Ms. Roberts wants to have a public information session on the gun shops bylaw to explain what is being proposed, and to answer questions from the public. Again, she is correct.

The Giffords Law Center, which has been mentioned several times, cautions about setback from all business that sell or serve alcohol. The Select Board’s latest version of the bylaw would include a setback from a package store, but not from a bar or restaurant that sells alcohol. It is not apparent why one Giffords Law Center recommendation is good, but another not so good.

The time to include the town in a confusing and complex bylaw is before it is put on the warrant, not afterwards. The time to answer resident’s questions is before

it is put on the warrant, not afterwards. The time to hear from experts is before it is put on the warrant, not afterwards. The time to include residents and other committees in the drafting of an important bylaw is before it is put on the warrant, not afterwards. The time to explain the legal ramifications of a gun shops bylaw is before it is put on the warrant, not afterwards. The time to explain the financial impact is before the article is put on the warrant, not afterwards.

If Ms. Roberts's comments are accurate, let's pause and consider the consequences of any proposed gun shops bylaw. The Select Board need not rush the decision-making process and risk a bylaw that does not reflect the town's wishes.

We urge the Select Board not to place this gun shops bylaw article on the warrant for the 2024 Town Annual town meeting.