



BELMONT WAVERLEY SQUARE PLANNING STUDY

Prepared for:
Town of Belmont, MA

Submitted by:
The Cecil Group, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

The Town of Belmont is a community of villages with very unique characteristics of development, building forms and uses associated with each one. Waverley Square stands out as a special village center for several reasons:

- The Square has a rich history as a center of commerce. Its prominence has been affected as commercial development occurs elsewhere and fewer changes have occurred in the Square - until recently.
- McLean Hospital and redevelopment projects are under development and will be connected to the Square adding new vitality to the Square. Changes to Pleasant Street include new road geometry, new connections to McLean, new uses and other potential projects.
- The Square is the location of one of the two MBTA commuter rail stations located in Belmont. The Square is also the terminus of one of the few remaining overhead bus trolley systems. Public parking for the station in the Square is minimal making this a station where passengers are transferring from different modes of transit.
- The Square has strong residential neighborhoods surrounding it. Certain families can claim several generations of living in the Square. The impact is a neighborhood that is very careful about what change to the Square may be appropriate.
- In terms of the physical plan of the Square, the commercial buildings have been altered and new construction has occurred, while the train station and Trapelo Road have become major dividing elements, leaving the Square without a clear definition as a typical town square with a cohesive plan.

This planning study was initiated to determine a concept for physical change that would restore the Square to its prominence and build on the elements that provide the greatest benefit to the community and neighborhood, and build on the history of the Square and its people.

The study is intended to suggest a direction for change in the taxable properties that support improvements to the public facilities and qualities that make a public place for commerce and enjoyment.



A DESCRIPTION OF WAVERLEY SQUARE

Waverley Square is a unique historic village located in the southwestern part of Belmont (see Figure 1). It lies at the intersection of Trapelo Road, a major east-west regional arterial road and the MBTA's Fitchburg commuter rail line. The other significant elements of public infrastructure that bring a high volume of traffic to the Square include Pleasant Street which intersects Trapelo Road on the western side of the Square, and the intersecting streets; mainly White Street and Waverley Street, which connect to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Waverley Square includes a mix of commercial building types. This includes:

- A historic former residential building converted to commercial use (currently Dunkin Donuts);
- Historic commercial buildings - both single story and multi-story;
- New commercial buildings - both single story and multi-story; and
- Two gasoline stations supported by the high volume of pass-by traffic.

The commercial buildings include a number of high volume/traffic retail uses including Shaws, Wheelworks, Dunkin Donuts, U.S. Post Office, and two banks. Also found within the storefronts are typical services (barbershop) and some office uses.

The Square also has some important institutional entities including the church at Waverley Street and the non-profit agency now in the Gifts store near the intersection of Trapelo Road and Lexington Street.

Recent Studies and Projects

Past and recent studies of the Square have created interest in redevelopment and have resulted in several projects moving forward. The key plans were the Fire Station Reuse Study, the historic Waverley Trail project, and the earlier MBTA Air Rights Study that may have encouraged a current private project proposal in the Square.

The Fire Station Reuse study determined that the highest and best use of the former school, library, and fire station building was for residential units, so long as the parking could be accommodated and at least one affordable housing unit was included in the mix. The Reuse Study resulted in a developer's RFP being issued and the redevelopment of the station into residential condominium units. The project proceeded and has been considered a success by most accounts.

The Waverley Trail project is a historic walk through the Square starting from the former school/fire station and running to the Square itself. The trail provides educational and points of interest elements at kiosks with images and written descriptions. The trail allows people to continue on through the adjacent park system.





Figure 1. Project Study Area

The Air Right's Study proposed a significant change to the building forms in the Square over the depressed MBTA rail lines. The study showed that buildings with parking decks, retail on the first floor, and residential units above, could be built over the tracks. Moving forward, at the time this study was proceeding, a proposal was presented by a private developer suggesting a similar concept above the MBTA train station. In the most recent iteration of a development plan, the developer has proposed an office building with first floor retail and structured parking.

PUBLIC MEETING PROCESS

The planning study involved a public process for discussion and input to allow the participants to define the character of the Square, suggest the best approaches to revitalization planning, and to respond to ideas presented in the sessions that responded to their comments and ideas. Following are short descriptions of the steps in the process.

Project Introduction and Initial Comments

The first public meeting was held in April, 2008 to introduce the study and to develop public interest in the project. The turnout was small but the discussion was started.

Interviews with property and business owners were also scheduled in the spring during the early part of the process to obtain input on the planning and determine the level of interest in seeking change to encourage revitalization.

A public meeting was held in May, 2008 to introduce a larger number of attendees to the process and to determine the range of issues and ideas that were considered by the attendees necessary for the consultants to think through. Many comments (listed in Appendix A) were focused on traffic and road safety and the quality of the area.

Visual Preference Surveys

Following the May meeting, the next public session was in June and well attended. It was designed as a Visual Preference Survey where the participants could provide input on their likes and dislikes regarding a series of images that compared existing development with potential building changes. This technique is used to allow the lay person to describe their sense of architectural design without the need for the architectural terms and language.

The results of the June meeting are attached in Appendix A. Generally, as the buildings went above 2 or 3 stories, or were less than the classical New England urban form, the response was decidedly negative.

Public Information and Response

In December, 2008 the public session was designed to discuss current zoning in Waverley Square and what it would mean to change the zoning for economic development. Several optional proposals were made by The Cecil Group for a zoning overlay on the Square. It was at this meeting that the previously presented concept of building “stepbacks” was raised as an option to obtain additional rentable square footage, but maintain a building line on the street was presented graphically as in *Figure 2: Stepback Concept*, and *Figure 3: Street Perspective*.

Meeting discussions were focused on the presentation and review of draft zoning concepts and ideas for the future revitalization of the square, building upon the comments and feedback received from previous meetings. Comment sheets were handed out to meeting participants, who were asked to fill out the sheets and return them to the planning consultants at the end of the meeting. Altogether, 31 comment sheets were filled out and returned by meeting participants (see Appendix A).

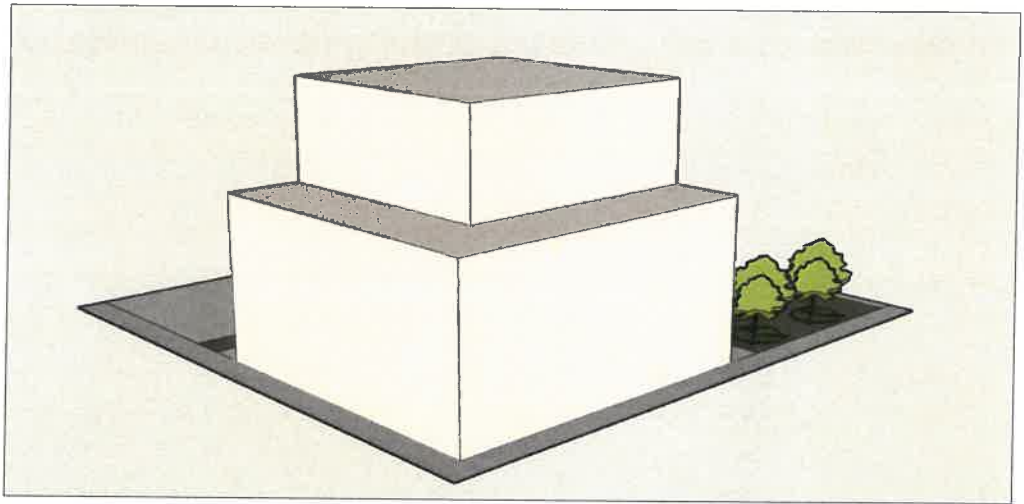


Figure 2 Stepback Concept



Figure 3 Street Perspective of Stepback

The type and scope of the comments varied widely among the different responses. However, and based on the consultants' interpretations, some important points seem to come across as part of a preliminary consensus among the participants:

- Most participants at the meeting would like to see the triangular block in the center of the square kept as green open space, and improved.
- Two- and three-story buildings would be fine. Four-story buildings could be considered if they incorporate mixed-use and setbacks.
- Five-story buildings would be too tall.
- Air-rights development could be considered, but not on the triangle.
- Off-street parking should be hidden from view.
- Development along Pleasant Street would be fine.
- Traffic mitigation should be part of any approval requirements for new development.
- If a zoning overlay is considered, it should include strict design guidelines.
- A zoning overlay or extending Business I zoning around the square could be considered as zoning options.
- Pedestrian improvements are needed to safely cross Trapelo Road.

CONCEPTS FOR A REVITALIZATION PLAN

Based on the results of the sequence of public meetings, the following questions were used to help direct the completion of this study:

- Is this the right time to pursue a zoning change in advance of formal developer proposals or should the Town wait for developers to come forward?
- Should the creation of an overlay district comparable to Cushing Square be considered?
- Should the option of extending Business I zoning around the Square be advanced?
- Should the triangle remain as parking and open space?
- Could funding be procured to improve the central open space without depending on the potential redevelopment of adjacent properties?
- Could funding be secured for pedestrian and safety improvements independently of new development?
- Should zoning changes be considered along Pleasant Street rather than Waverley Square?

The following is a discussion of the alternatives which were considered and some of the recommendations that were made.

Rezoning Options

The options for rezoning are a response to the existing zoning and the potential development that would be acceptable to the community. The history of the existing zoning as recounted to the team is that it was established as a means to define the extent of commercial land uses and partly as a response to the concern about too much commercial growth in Belmont. The existing zoning is shown in Figure 4.

Generally, the existing zoning shows a mix of commercial zones, but by dimensional standards the districts are very similar as shown in Table 1. The additional story and FAR allowed within the LB1 district could be significant. However, where the LB1 zoning is applied are the parcels that are already developed on small-sized lots and could only redevelop to these standards by aggregating lots together for a more significant project and by including structured parking to handle the parking requirements – a difficult undertaking on top of which is a special permit requirement which would put the project at significant risk for entitlement.

Table 1. Dimensional Requirements for Commercial Districts

Zoning District	Maximum FAR	Maximum Lot Coverage	Maximum Bldg Height	
			Feet	Stories
LB I	1.25 ⁽¹⁾	-	28	2 ⁽²⁾
LB II	1.05	35%	32	2
LB III	1.05	35%	28	
PL	-	-	-	-

- FAR = Floor Area ratio; the ratio of total building floor space to the lot's land area.
- In LB I Districts, up to a maximum FAR of 1.5 may be allowed by Special Permit.
- In LB I Districts a maximum building height of up to 32 feet and 3 stories may be allowed by Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, subject to Design and Site Plan Review by the Planning Board and other additional criteria.

Based on these conditions and the previous findings, three options for amending zoning over the Square were advanced and presented to the public. The proposed zoning in all alternatives was a form-based code that would direct development by the form and character of that development and not the particular uses of the buildings. In this way, mixed use development could be proposed.

Alternative Zoning Concept 1

The first alternative proposes that all parcels under any commercial zoning classification (LB I, II, or III) in the Square would be amended or remain as LB I to allow them to take advantage of the optional dimensional standards; the additional 3rd floor and a higher FAR.

The difficulty with this option is that the other limitations of lot size and existing development impact the ability to apply these standards to most of the properties, and the standards within the LB1 require application of design guidelines to create a desirable quality and character of development.

Alternative Zoning Concept 2

The second alternative proposes changes based on the expectation that the only new development in the near term will occur on the north side of Trapelo Road. In this case a new overlay district could be created to allow the change under certain design criteria. A maximum building height under the overlay district would be 50' because of the mitigation possible by stepbacks of the upper floors. Because of the depth of the parcels here, the concept of a stepback set away from Trapelo Road could be used to control the visual impact of construction on the Square. However, if the stepback is applied to the existing zoning, the consequent reduction in development potential makes it more difficult financially to build the new projects. In this case an allowance for higher buildings of four stories or 50' height is suggested.

Alternative Zoning Concept 3

The third alternative considered that Pleasant Street could be a very different environment yet still support the changes in the Square. In this case the only stretch of land that would be allowed to extend to 50' building height would be along Pleasant Street with sufficient depth for a commercial building. The existing office building on Pleasant Street is the precedent for the expected dimensioning of new development.

The public discussion on these alternatives elicited comments about the size of future development under the expanded allowances for height. In fact, comments were received from the public that the limitations on any development should remain. A summary of those comments is listed on page 5 of this study and all the recorded comments are included in Appendix A.

The discussion on these alternatives led to another consideration based on the public comments and input. The comments were about the need to maintain the visual character of the Square. Taking that concept, the consulting team reviewed the geography of the area and the future development at the former McLean Hospital properties and came to the conclusion that a key element of the quality of the Square is the hillside known as Wellington Hill, upon which McLean sits and which provides a key backdrop to the Square on the northern side.

Visibility to Wellington Hill

Wellington Hill is a significant geological land form that rises over 100' above the elevation of the Square. As a backdrop to the Square, it is also the future location of the redevelopment projects associated with McLean Hospital's master plan previously approved by the town and the Planning Board (see Photo 1).

The consultant team considered that the height of future buildings in the Square could be dimensioned to preserve views and view corridors to the hill and maintain the natural, historic backdrop to the Square itself.



Photo 1: View of Wellington Hill from Waverley Square

A dimensional study was performed to determine the heights of buildings necessary to maintain views behind them of the taller element of the natural hill. These are shown as cross sections in Figure 8. While a person standing right next to any building would of course only be able to see the sky, a person standing back from the building would be able to see above the top edge and beyond dependant on the angle. The studies concluded that a stepback and height restriction could be employed to maintain views from a person standing in the actual Square, which is currently the train station and parking.

Additional consideration was given to view corridors down the adjacent residential streets that feed into the Square.

Building Massing

Consideration was given to locating buildings by size and density. The buildings could provide the rentable space necessary to make a project economically feasible to develop, without having an impact on the streets in the Square. Also, by separating buildings the overall visual impact could be mitigated and the level of activity on the street could still be improved. The following illustrations show the range of options available to the town, which in turn could be used to define the dimensional standards of the zoning bylaw.

The illustrations on the following page show the potential massing for two conditions:

- Illustration 1 shows the largest recommended stepback from Trapelo Road, and a stepback from Pleasant Street that would allow a limited 4th floor on the buildings. This would be a partial increase over existing zoning allowances.
- Illustration 2 shows a less significant stepback that permits additional rentable floor space on the optional 4th floor.
- Illustrations 3 and 4 are views from the southern angle for each of the above conditions, respectively.

THE RECOMMENDED APPROACH

The Cecil Group recommends the following program goals, performance standards and outline for the town zoning bylaw amendments to develop. This outline was reviewed and edited by the Belmont Planning Board.

Vision:

Waverley Square is an historic center and an historic neighborhood with many reminders defining its place as a neighborhood center, with the streets, trolleys, buildings and places for shopping and services. This vision predicts the Square will be recreated with all the functionality and qualities that will redefine its place as a premier neighborhood, commercial and civic center. The future Square will become a center for neighborhood pride through reinvigoration of the existing buildings and new high-quality buildings that maintain the historic qualities and provide needed goods and services. The regional train station will be integrated into the fabric of the Square rather than remain a focal point. The streets will become more accessible for walking, biking and trolley, and open spaces will be expanded and improved to accommodate public interaction, use and enjoyment of the Square.

Goal:

Sustain and Enhance Waverley Square

Objectives:

Certain aspects of the Square must be maintained, particularly;

- Residential neighborhoods
- Residential nature of the side streets
- Clean public transit
- Historic building and street character
- Mixed used commercial center
- Overhead wires until new technology is available
- Landscape views; particularly of the Wellington Hill ridgeline

Certain aspects should be enhanced, particularly;

- Streetscape character
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Mix of uses
- Relationship with the McLean properties
- Community spaces
- Character of development and buildings
- Managed parking
- Sustainable design
- Waverley Trail

Specific steps include:

- Not only protecting the residential neighborhoods, but improving their value through:
 - maintenance of the streets,
 - management of on-street parking and through traffic, and,
 - providing supporting development within the commercial Square.
- Improving and expanding street-level building spaces that can actually be used by people.
- Designing commercial development with design and performance standards that recognize a unique location, including uniqueness within Belmont.
- Defining the building envelopes for new construction and then further refining the standards for the character of buildings and spaces.
- Encouraging structured parking for greater efficiency in use of available spaces, increase the grade-level open space, and to support adjacent uses.
- Use design elements such as wrapping the parking decks with buildings to reduce their visual impact.
- Overall design and specific projects that identify Waverley as a gateway to the town.
- Preservation of open space.

Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Strategies

Zoning:

- Create a new district for the Waverley Square District.
- Allow mixed use in the form of any possible mix of commercial uses and residential [the latter above street level on the major streets]
- Encourage retail and active uses on the major street frontages.
- Add form-based regulation, design guidelines, and performance standards specific for the Waverley Square District.
- Articulate buildings with projections, recesses, material changes, cornices, parapets, and varying rooflines to avoid monolithic building forms
- Set new height limits by feet and stories that relate to the massing diagram with stepped elevations.
- Add building setbacks for blocks with the largest buildings as a transition from adjacent blocks.
- Test shared parking within new developments to reduce parking areas.

Parking (non-zoning):

- Create additional off-street public parking
- Add requirements or sticker program for resident-only parking

Street Infrastructure (mitigation):

- Create a pedestrian-friendly sidewalk and street crossing system.
- Provide bicycle lanes.
- Increase utilization of all public transit: trolley, bus, and commuter rail.

Design Guidelines:

- Articulate buildings with projections, recesses, material changes, parapets, cornices, varying roof heights and lines.
- Design buildings with clearly defined base, middle and roofline.
- Add special features to create unique buildings and sites, such as atria, cupolas and gabled roofs.
- Use stepbacks or upper floor terraces to further articulate the buildings.
- Consider impact of height and stepbacks on the visibility of Wellington Hill ridgeline (McLean Hospital).
- Add distinctive building bases and include a high percentage of glass for storefronts.
- Include sustainable design elements (option for landscaping: the Green Area Factor)

Included in the Appendix B are drafts of zoning text considered during the course of this study which may be used to advance new zoning bylaws for consideration by the public and for eventual Town Meeting adoption.

CONCLUSIONS

Waverley Square has great potential given its location, history, and the value placed on it by residents, property owners and business people alike. And significant change is coming to the Square as the McLean Hospital redevelopment project takes shape and transforms the area with buildings and new activities on the streets.

Careful consideration of the impacts of new building on the urban form and how improvements can and should be made to create a more attractive and comfortable Square are paramount. There will also be great benefits to the residents and community with new development that supports infrastructure improvements – safer crossings, more green space in the central square, streetscape improvements, new retail, food and other service establishments. In particular, consideration should be given to creating a more comfortable pedestrian environment around the transit hub and make the Square more transit oriented and sustainable.

This study has provided a number of options and a set of criteria that could create these improvements. The recommendation is to continue a public dialog that will create the understanding of how change could benefit the Square, the neighborhood, and the community as a whole. In particular, the establishment of a team of residents and property owners who can determine their common interests for change and improvements will allow a program such as proposed to advance.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INPUT

Community Conversation: Waverley Square Vision

May 22, 2008, Butler School

Meeting Results

Issues

Gentrification

Commuter parking/Need commuter parking study

Square is for cars and commuters

Dangerous traffic conditions/ safety (5)

Too vehicle oriented

Emergency access problem

Not safe for kids to walk to school

On-street parking in residential neighborhoods

Transient nature

Vacancies/vacant store fronts

Too much bike shop

Bicycles are destination

Rents are too high for small stores

Shaw's is a big magnet but is not walkable and splits square

Trash/cleanliness (2)

Too much residential, not enough commercial (2)

Lack of identity for Square/Needs sense of place (3)

Needs to be the center of the neighborhood

No public meeting space

No trees/green space

No shade

Esthetics are not good

Coming in from 128, Belmont looks like a "Boston" village

Ideas

- Back to what it was (50 years ago)
- Restaurant (2)
- Clothing store/small unique boutique type
- Bakery
- Commercial uses should be along Trapelo only
- Smaller buildings with character
- More residential and mixed use/residential
- Character should be "village"
- Very sensitive to rezoning residential for commercial use
- Redo storefronts
- Two stories as of right, special permit for higher
- Consider commercial buildings near Sycamore
- Stronger pedestrian orientation (2)
- Aerial under/over pass for pedestrians
- Make it easier to walk to the T
- Make square child friendly
- Strike a balance of cars and pedestrians
- Reroute traffic towards Pleasant St (2)
- Restrict traffic in adjacent residential neighborhoods
- Provide free shuttle
- Remove the T station
- Use the former car dealership on Pleasant for RR station and parking
- Put T station underground and put development above
- Free parking for residents
- Eliminate on-street parking in residential neighborhoods
- Charge for, and restrict, parking on side streets
- Narrow Trapelo Road in Waverley similar to Davis Sq design for Mass Ave

Eliminate RR conflicts
Need to understand height
Connect development and balance it with green space
More green space
Sustainable development
McLean traffic controls
More efficient land use
Need proper building design/enhance buildings
Small size housing units
Note: (#) = repeat comment

Suggested Future Headlines

Study Approved for Future Use of Waverley Square
Village for Commuters
The Place To Go!
Band Concert in Waverley Square Celebrates 4th of July
Waverley Square Ranked as Best Neighborhood Urban Center
Waverley Square Bails the Town – Finally in the Black
Local Ethnic Festival Held in Waverley Square
Waverley Square Maintains the Look of Old Time Squares
Welcome to Waverley Village, a Quaint Place to Shop
The Village at Waverley Square
The Quality Magnet
Welcome to Waverley Belmont's Usable Transportation Hub with Unique Character
Transportation, Hiking and Bicycling Opportunities (Web Site Page)
New and Better Signage

Belmont Waverly Square

Community Meeting

December 16, 2008

Community Response

What Concept did you like the most? Why?	Number of Responses:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Two story buildings with the third story setback for some of the square and a central visual focal point.2. None (3 people)3. Option 14. Intrigued by buildings over tracks, what could be done to the "green spot" that would help people move through the area.5. People oriented townscapes-air-rights parking facility. Ground level stores and people friendly uses. Reasonable overlays.6. The a+b+c overlays because I would like a more Cambridge-like diversity of businesses and I would like enough development to pay for keeping the triangle as 1000 sf public space (no parking)7. 3 floor zoning is okay8. 3 and 4 story buildings are okay if they are mixed use residential and business9. Keep the triangle green. Agree with buildings that are higher (3-4 stories) with setbacks if building over the tracks is economical, I would go with that.10. Off-street hidden parking.11. Open space-improve the triangle (2 people).12. Overlay district would work but need strict design guidelines.13. Development of overlay A first. B second. T parking and multi-unit residential development (apartments)14. Clearly Belmont needs more business. Not sure that Waverly Square is the best place, though.15. No construction of buildings in Waverly Square. The vistas, benches, trees, views down to see the trains, and access from Church Street and Lexington St are great. The parking is an asset and compatible with the park, benches, and the train station.16. Adding a second floor to the building on the North side of Trapelo Road. Retain and restore the triangle of the Square as a green. Unify the perimeter under Business ! zoning.	20
Which Concept did you not like? Why?	Number of Responses:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. No buildings in the current parking triangle.2. Disliked all of them3. Keep the triangle open and improve it. (12 people)4. The slide of the set-back brown building was awful-it you think that it is an option, do it again with windows, doors and trees-it was a real turn-off. (2 people commented on this)5. No higher than three stories, don't build over the rail road6. No new development.7. Five and six story buildings are not okay for area above air rights. Two to three stories would be fine.8. Overlay C-development in advance of overlay B or A because of scale and feel-should be third choice.9. The view of Trapelo Road with a five story structure on the sidewalk.10. Five stories would be suffocating-too much density and too closed in.11. Development in the business zones around Waverly Square is okay. Air rights, not over triangle,	22

are an opportunity. An overlay is okay however the business representative feels that special zoning inhibits development.	
If you did not like any of these concepts, what would you suggest?	Number of Responses:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Higher buildings on Church St and Lexington side of the Square. Two story air right building next to Shaws. Modest adjustments of current zoning to allow some mixed use. Need a variety of visuals to get a better idea of what we might want. Revitalizing the north side of Trapelo Road, improve the south side. Retain ground level area in triangle with as much green space as possible. Agree with the idea that removing the existing parking lot in the triangle would be worth allowing 5 strong density in the ring around the triangle I could see 3-5 story building with set back where car wash is, what would be a good business for that location? Plan for them to develop their space? What about developing the area along Pleasant Street from Shaws parking to the new car dealership? I also do not want a parking garage in my backyard which is one of the ideas proposed if a 3-4 story building is placed in the green space. I would love to see the Belmont Farmer's Market held in the triangle. Perhaps some limited development on the north side of Trapelo Road and revitalization on the east side of Church Street. No new development (2 people) What would draw people to Waverly Square-what business? Would anyone actually pull into a garage? Development of structures of more historical characters-like the DD building. Develop Pleasant Street. Spruce up the existing buildings on the north side. Force the building owners to do it. Get rid of green barrier fence near judo shop. 	15
Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?	Number of Responses:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Why isn't there an association of residents, business owners and building owners for Waverly? I disagree with the idea that Waverly Square is currently derelict and blighted. The shortcomings have been grossly exaggerated. It is consistent with the scale of the adjacent neighborhood and the town. It works well with the current mix of businesses and parking, it is usually reasonably busy, but I can always find a parking spot. Zoning concepts not possible until I can see visuals of what different zoning might look like from different perspectives. Need something to react to. I would like to know about cluster housing in Waverly Square, if it would help bring businesses. How does this plan affect the residential properties on the streets behind the businesses? Even before other development, improve crosswalk (no crossing light to Shaws from triangle) lights are marked for crossing but do not function to allow walking. Do not support zoning changes. (2 people) Include Pleasant Street to the Felt Property. Can we limit the non-profit rentals through zoning? Corbett Drug's 1st floor is taken up with McLean Hospital-would have been nice to have a bookstore and restaurant. The old AAA building is also now rented by a nonprofit (Beaverbook). Traffic mitigation has to be part of new zoning-if area gets developed developers must pay into a fund to make improvements. You need to show why limited development (2-3 stories) is not economically feasible so that people do not hold out for any false hopes that you can somehow do this without larger scale development. Also, a parking lot without the corresponding development is also an unrealistic 	24

wish. Focus on fee economics.

12. If you build on top of the parking lot, then Waverly Square will become a busy area with no heart and soul. There will be no "square", no focal point, no opportunity for a "center". There will only be a series of busy streets. We need to preserve the triangular area and use development of surrounding to fund its redevelopment as a green space.
13. Use Waverly Square for Town Day, a farmers market, keep parking lot as is.
14. Assistance to existing businesses to improve their building. Concerns about the T stop. Could we better develop a bus stop in Waverly Square?
15. Keep in mind that this is a bus and train station-People coming and going for short amounts of time.
16. These images seem to be similar to the last meeting without the specific building offering. Still unclear as to how this process is moving ahead or what the thinking is. There is severe confusion and discontent among the residents prior input was not discussed, details were not given. There seems to be studies that were done but details were not shared.
17. Would like to have access to concept alternatives prior to the meeting. Would like to have prior meeting feedback presented as part of presentation of concepts. Was extremely interested in the public forum process of asking for focus group feedback. Appreciated the commitment of participants to devote time and thoughts into discussion. Disappointed that this meeting did not provide any analysis and feedback of prior participant meeting input and how input was incorporated into the development process. Not clear at this point how you are incorporating resident feedback into the development process.
18. Waverly Square is dense-how does this assuage the density issue? How does any of this fit into the Comprehensive Plan for Belmont as a whole? (Money allocated to this last year). I understand the need for more business in Belmont e.g. revenue-but at what cost to the residents of W.S. I am concerned about traffic, increased density, preservation of open space and where will new residents (children) go to school? The Butler is totally full. The sight lines in the Square are very nice-hills and trees and sky-can this be preserved and still bring in some business?
19. Make the following improvements to pedestrian traffic across Trapelo Road: fix the timer for pedestrian crossing the road from the triangle to Shaws and back. Now there is traffic when the "walk" light is on. Remove the rail between the road and sidewalks and make the sidewalk level with the street. Move the rail between the road and sidewalks and make the sidewalk level with the streets. Move the pedestrian crossing with the light from between Wheelworks and the bank to the west to Church Street to encourage use of stores on the north side of Trapelo Road.
20. Have you approached the owners of the large parcel on Pleasant St. (Rt. 60) who have a large parking lot and abandoned one story-building? Perhaps a community/commuter parking lot with pedestrian right of way to Trapelo Road.
21. The presentations by the speakers should be more clearly understood by the audience.
22. Rezone the Pleasant street site to Business I Zoning with a majority of the parking requirements of this unified plan which now come close to the Business I district of Belmont Center under overlay plan for entire area, to increase the types of uses including residential mixed use; all of the above is intended to give you the flexibility in height under an overlay district to make it economically feasible.
23. If a garage over the tracks is involved keep it to the Belmont side and low profile. Three story buildings. There is a need for pedestrian safety.

The Cecil Group, Inc.

Waverley Square Improvement Plan Workshop

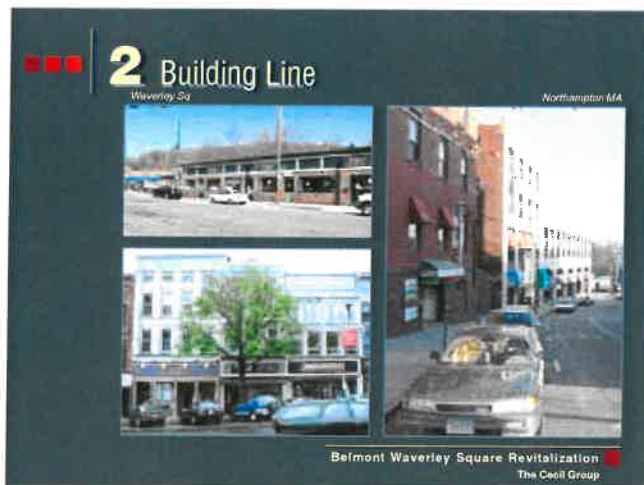
The second public workshop held July 29th was a Visual Preference survey. Images were shown that included existing locations in the Square and actual buildings in other locations that would change the appearance. Participants voted on their responses by indicating the number of 1 to 5 that they felt applied. The numbers range from 1, 'like a lot' to 5, 'do not like at all.' The range of responses and averages are located beside each image. The participants were also asked to provide written responses with positives and negatives of the image. Shown below are the summary results.



1	
Average:	2.769231
Mode:	1
Result of 1	14
Result of 2	12
Result of 3	10
Result of 4	4
Result of 5	12
No Answer	2

Positive: Brick; Picture shows 3 stories, like this!; No higher; Like the trees; Sidewalk widths

Negative: Too imposing; Design of building not exciting; Don't like the height of the bldg



2	
Average:	4.134615
Mode:	5
Result of 1	1
Result of 2	6
Result of 3	5
Result of 4	13
Result of 5	27
No Answer	2

Positive:

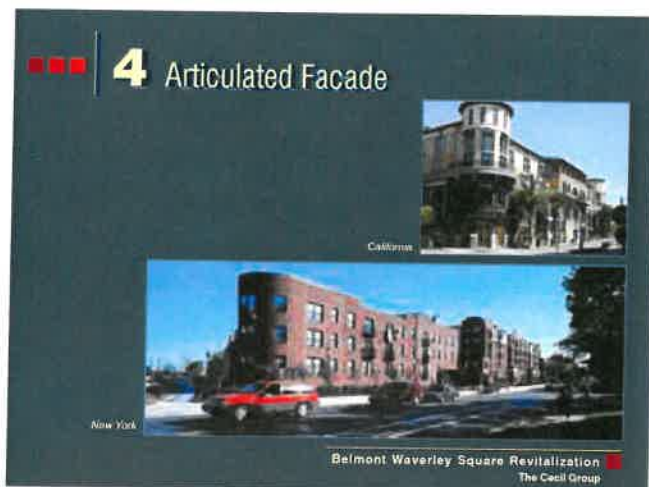
Negative: No connection to residential; Too urban; Too high, ugly design; Too tall; Too old fashioned; Too canyon like, square size is too small for this height



3	
Average:	3.230769
Mode:	5
Result of 1	9
Result of 2	11
Result of 3	7
Result of 4	9
Result of 5	16
No	
Answer	2

Positive: Mixed height is nice; Like the use of brick and clock; Note the view shed

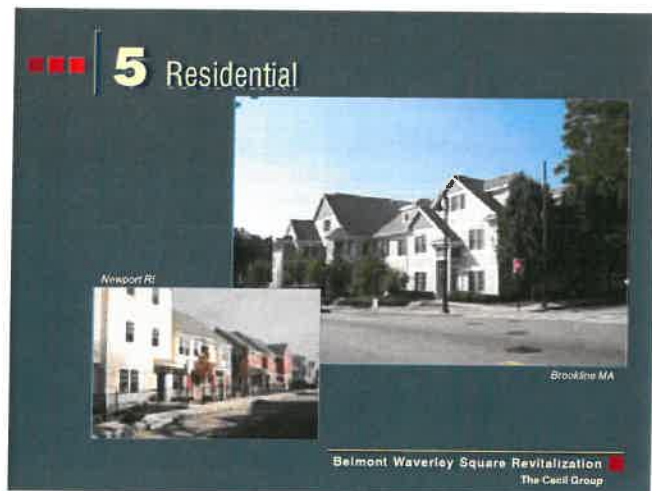
Negative: Too high; Sight lines-blocking sun



4	
Average:	2.867925
Mode:	2
Result of 1	10
Result of 2	18
Result of 3	7
Result of 4	5
Result of 5	13
No	
Answer	1

Positive: I like the variety and roundness-CA side is nicer; Character is important; Architectural diversity is important

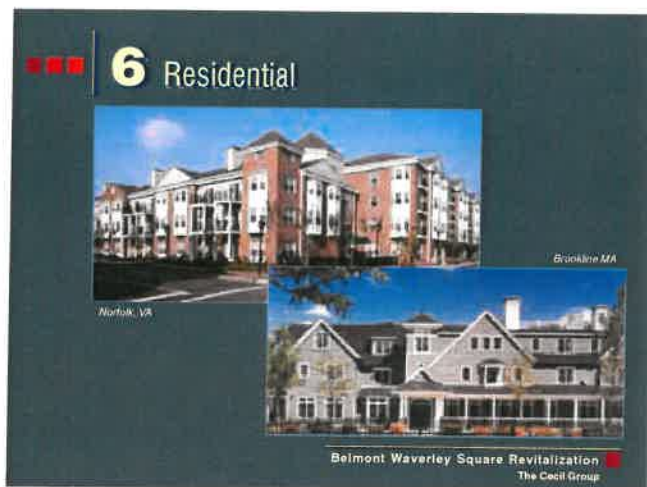
Negative: NY ugly design, CA better, interesting; Too much like a factory mentality



5	
Average:	3.36
Mode:	5
Result of 1	4
Result of 2	14
Result of 3	7
Result of 4	10
Result of 5	15
No Answer	4

Positive: Very nice use of architecture, mixed use, residential; Like Brookline, more in line with Waverly; Residential as part of commercial is nice

Negative: I don't like the Newport image; Cookie cutter; Not relevant; Big one in Brookline doesn't fool anyone; I detest bump outs; Too residential



6	
Average:	4.058824
Mode:	5
Result of 1	3
Result of 2	3
Result of 3	8
Result of 4	11
Result of 5	26
No Answer	3

Positive: Belmont needs more variety of housing models; Nice architecture

Negative: Looks like planned retirement living; Brownline is better; Density too high; Too much like a nursing home



Positive: Nice design; Falmouth is good although too dense

Negative: Too big; Too intensive for the area; Too dense

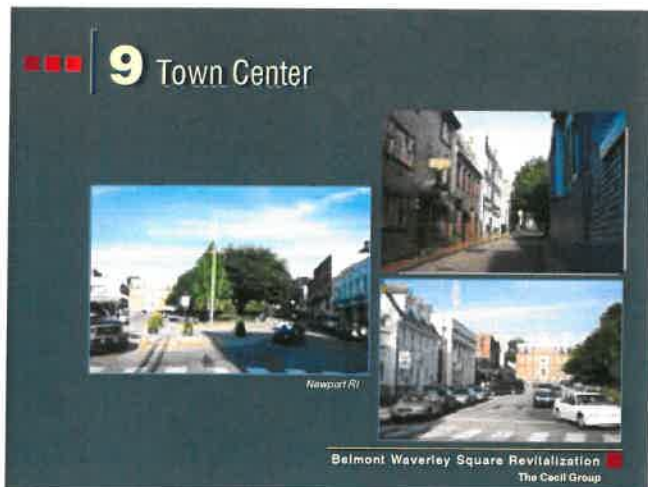
7	
Average:	3.576923
Mode:	5
Result of 1	5
Result of 2	7
Result of 3	11
Result of 4	11
Result of 5	18
No	
Answer	2



Positive:

Negative: Hotel?; Too industrial and too tall; Too dense; Ugly factory mentality; Overpowering; Too dense; Much too big; Hulking

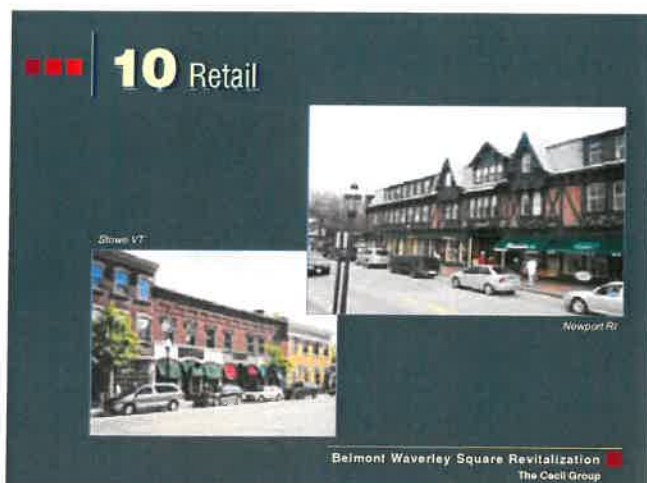
8	
Average:	4.54
Mode:	5
Result of 1	2
Result of 2	2
Result of 3	1
Result of 4	7
Result of 5	38
No	
Answer	4



Average:	2.7
Mode:	1
Result of 1	12
Result of 2	12
Result of 3	11
Result of 4	9
Result of 5	6
No Answer	4

Positive: Green is good; Keep green space in center of Waverly; Color of buildings create warmth; like the green

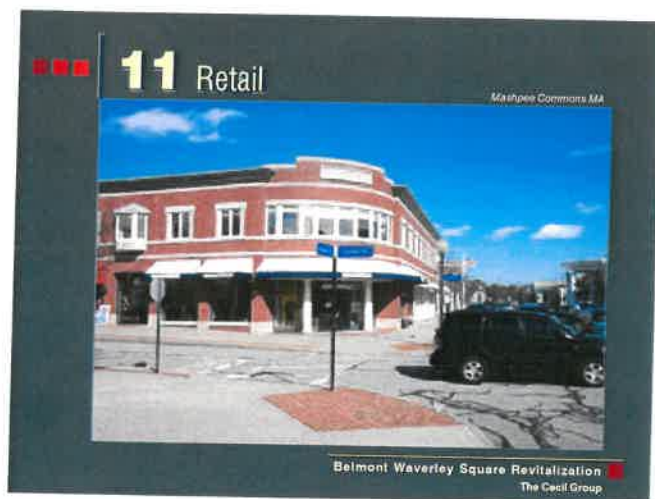
Negative: Canyon effect is not nice; Choppy, narrow sidewalks



10	
Average:	2.392157
Mode:	2
Result of 1	14
Result of 2	16
Result of 3	12
Result of 4	5
Result of 5	4
No Answer	3

Positive: Like the mixed use concept, Stowe is nice but Newport is better; Classier looking; Visually attractive; Nice feel

Negative: As master plan slide indicates, this only works if it is genuine



11	
Average:	3.480769
Mode:	5
Result of 1	3
Result of 2	13
Result of 3	9
Result of 4	10
Result of 5	17
No	
Answer	2

Positive: Great scale and balance, needs residents though

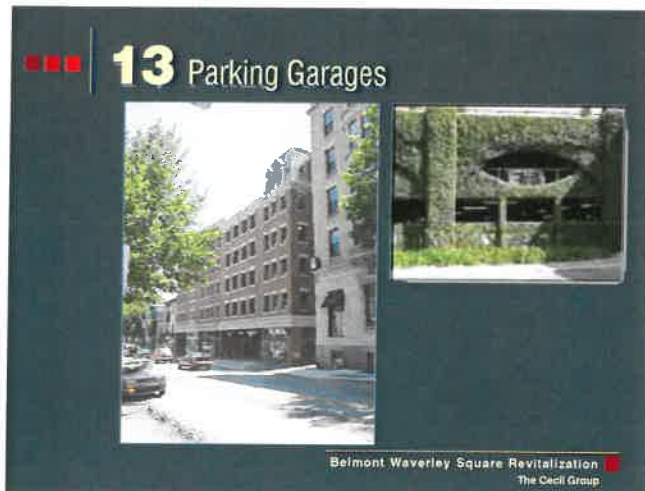
Negative: But more green; Ugly design; Too homogeneous looking; Too overbearing; Too big; Too new, no historic value; Looks fake; Bland; Sad-poor design for alternative; Weird



12	
Average:	4.269231
Mode:	5
Result of 1	3
Result of 2	1
Result of 3	7
Result of 4	9
Result of 5	32
No	
Answer	2

Positive: Scale okay

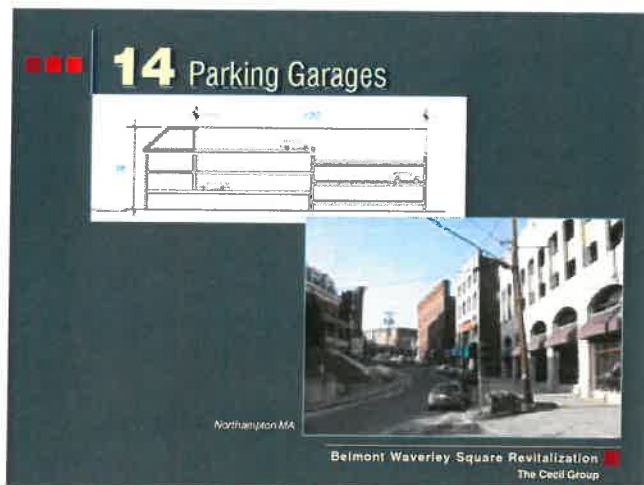
Negative: Too big and not distinct; Too much traffic to a big box store; Too much of a wall; Not a change



13	
Average:	3.82
Mode:	5
Result of 1	3
Result of 2	9
Result of 3	3
Result of 4	14
Result of 5	21
No	
Answer	4

Positive:

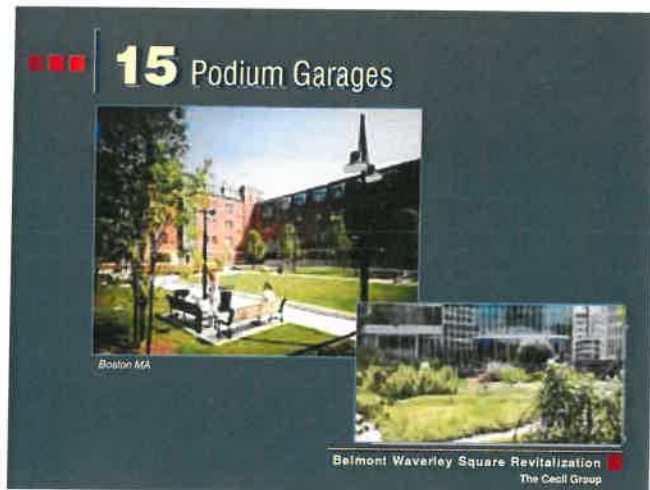
Negative: Too high commuter parking; Absolutely not, ivy covered better; Parking fine but too tall; Horrible; Ugly and would attract too much traffic; Any garage needs to be below ground or behind buildings; Hide it with green; Underground; Mixed use is better; We need parking garage but not this big



14	
Average:	3.403846
Mode:	5
Result of 1	10
Result of 2	4
Result of 3	8
Result of 4	15
Result of 5	15
No	
Answer	2

Positive: Better design and use of structure; Buffer and hidden softens it; Great; Need to use airspace over MBTA

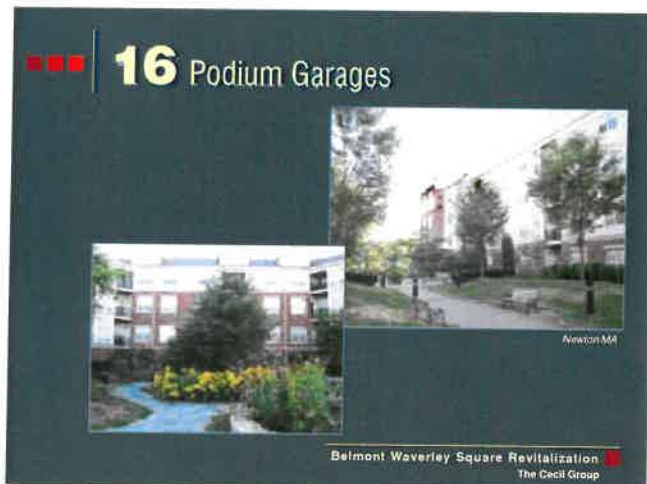
Negative: Better than image 13 but still too much traffic; Underground; Not good for walking



15	
Average:	2.54902
Mode:	1
Result of 1	15
Result of 2	13
Result of 3	11
Result of 4	4
Result of 5	8
No	
Answer	3

Positive: Interesting concept; Better looking and green is good; Green is better for a square; Great; Best case for parking

Negative: Can Waverly handle the increase in traffic; Only works if terrain makes it possible; Buildings are approaching massive



16	
Average:	2.755102
Mode:	1
Result of 1	12
Result of 2	12
Result of 3	8
Result of 4	10
Result of 5	7
No	
Answer	5

Positive: Great idea

Negative: Only works if terrain makes it possible

17 Parking at Storefronts



Belmont Waverley Square Revitalization
The Cecil Group

17	
Average:	2.784314
Mode:	3
Result of 1	11
Result of 2	11
Result of 3	13
Result of 4	10
Result of 5	6
No	
Answer	3

Positive: This could work in front of d. donuts/bank; More convenient for shopping; yes! Diagonal store front parking; Good but have a limit to keep commuters away; Like the angled parking

Negative: Too dense; No parallel on Trapelo!; only very limited quantity-no strip malls; Streets are not wide enough for this

18 Sidewalk and Parking



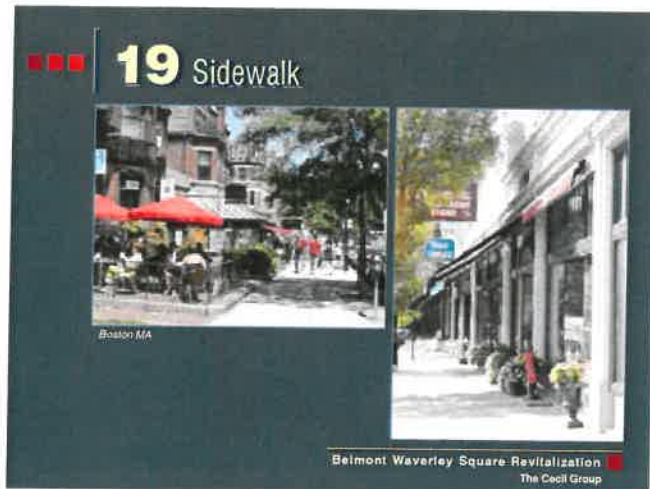
Mashpee Commons

Belmont Waverley Square Revitalization
The Cecil Group

18	
Average:	2.568627
Mode:	2
Result of 1	9
Result of 2	20
Result of 3	11
Result of 4	6
Result of 5	5
No	
Answer	3

Positive: I like the brick along the edge; Bump outs are a great idea; Cars and walkers should share space; Sidewalks are nice and brick is nice-small change, big impact; It could make walking easier

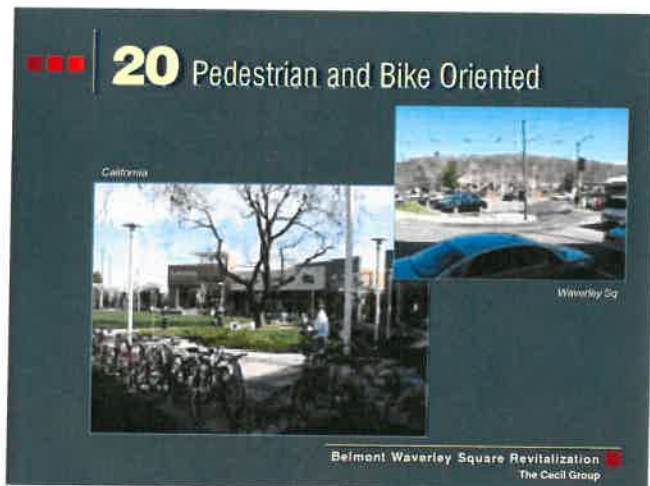
Negative: Where would this room come from?



19	
Average:	2.12963
Mode:	1
Result of 1	22
Result of 2	15
Result of 3	9
Result of 4	4
Result of 5	4
No	
Answer	0

Positive: Better for the community; Need the space to do this!; Lends itself to a community gathering place; More human; Need sidewalk softening; Great but need to coordinate with corridor redesign; Accessible and inviting; I love it!;

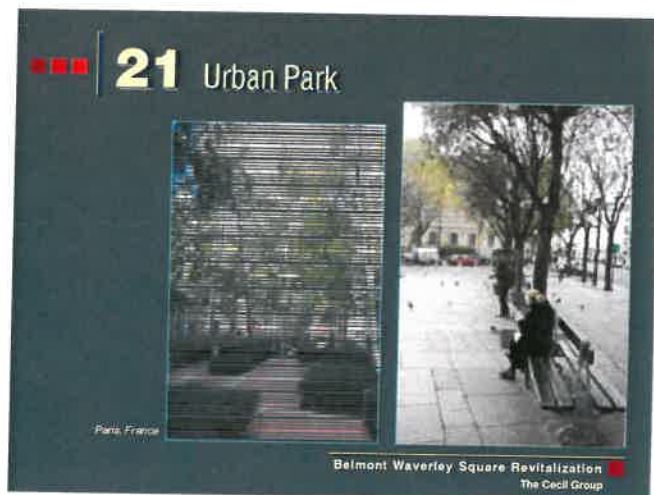
Negative: Too trendy, Waverly is blue collar



20	
Average:	2.583333
Mode:	1
Result of 1	15
Result of 2	10
Result of 3	10
Result of 4	6
Result of 5	7
No	
Answer	6

Positive: Definitely need more bike racks; Must be friendly for non-car activities

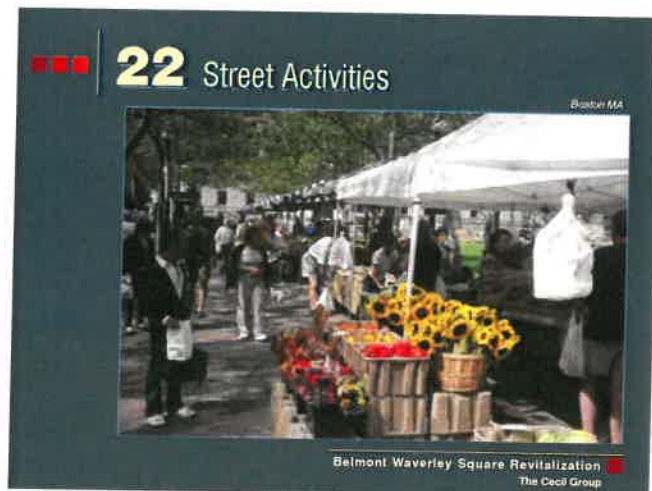
Negative: Who wants to look at bikes, enough now; No malls; Nice idea but too much traffic for sidewalk cafe



21	
Average:	2.403846
Mode:	1
Result of 1	20
Result of 2	8
Result of 3	12
Result of 4	7
Result of 5	5
No	
Answer	2

Positive: Green-much better than other options; They got it right!; Waverly would be perfect for urban path; Best! Love this and potential for modern lines, sculpture, and movement of people

Negative: Needs more trees and flowers; Waverly is not urban, don't just plant trees near obvious buildings that are too tall; Small public parks would be very desirable



22	
Average:	2.411765
Mode:	1
Result of 1	18
Result of 2	14
Result of 3	7
Result of 4	4
Result of 5	8
No	
Answer	3

Positive: If there is enough space, this could work well, such as in a green area; Waverly square is already too busy but I like the idea of community gathering-yes for the outdoor cafes and use of community; Farmers' market?

Negative: Trapelo Rd is not conducive to this!; Nice idea but no room now; More park space would allow for more activities too-not just plain sidewalk

APPENDIX B: PROPOSED ZONING BYLAWS

WAVERLEY SQUARE ZONING DISTRICT

Draft Outline and Suggested Text –

Prepared by The Cecil Group for Review and Comment February 25, 2009

General Purpose Vision:

Waverley Square is an historic center and an historic neighborhood with many reminders defining its place as a neighborhood center, with the streets, trolleys, buildings and places for shopping and services. This vision predicts the Square will be recreated with all the functionality and qualities that will redefine its place as a premier neighborhood, commercial and civic center. The future Square will become a center for neighborhood pride through reinvigoration of the existing buildings and new high-quality buildings that maintain the historic qualities and provide needed goods and services. The regional train station will be integrated into the fabric of the Square rather than remain a focal point. The streets will become more accessible for walking, biking and trolley, and open spaces will be expanded and improved to accommodate public interaction, use and enjoyment of the Square.

Goal:

Sustain and Enhance Waverley Square

Objectives:

Certain aspects of the Square must be maintained, particularly;

Residential neighborhoods

Residential nature of the side streets

Clean public transit

Historic building and street character

Mixed used commercial center

Overhead wires until new technology is available

Landscape views; particularly of the Wellington Hill ridgeline

Certain aspects should be *enhanced*, particularly;

Streetscape character

Pedestrian and bicycle safety

Mix of uses

Relationship with the McLean properties

Community spaces

Character of development and buildings

Managed parking

Sustainable design

Waverley Trail

Specific steps include:

Not only protecting the residential neighborhoods, but improving their value through: maintenance of the streets, management of on-street parking and through traffic, and, providing supporting development within the commercial Square.

Improving and expanding street-level building spaces that can actually be used by people.

Designing commercial development with design and performance standards that recognize a unique location, including uniqueness within Belmont.

Defining the building envelopes for new construction and then further refining the standards for the character of buildings and spaces.

Encouraging structured parking for greater efficiency in use of available spaces, increase the grade-level open space, and to support adjacent uses.

Use design elements such as wrapping the parking decks with buildings to reduce their visual impact.

Overall design and specific projects that identify Waverley as a gateway to the town.

Preservation of open space.

Boundary

The Waverley Square District (WSD) boundary is shown in the Waverley Square District Map and is generally described as the area bounded by ..., and also including Parcel XX-XXX as listed on the Town's Tax Assessors Map.

Authority

The Planning Board shall have Design and Site Plan Review authority for all projects in the WSD. As part of its Design and Site Plan Review authority under this section, the Planning Board may waive some or all of the use, dimensional and parking requirements set forth herein if, in its determination, such waiver will result in an improved design. The Planning Board is also the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for WSD developments requiring a Special Permit.

Uses

Uses permitted in the WSD:

Mixed use development projects consisting of a combination retail, office, professional services, restaurant or residential, and commercial off-street parking facility

Commercial parking facility

General office

Professional services including healthcare related services

Retail sales

Restaurants

Outdoor, café style seating and dining facilities

Residential units

Any use which already exists on the premises proposed for a WSD development project shall be allowed to remain as part of the development project.

Performance and Design Standards

All development projects proposed within the WSD require Design and Site Plan Review by the Planning Board to ensure conformance with the following Performance and Design standards:

Performance Standards

A) Mixed Uses

The mix of uses shall be balanced and contribute to a vibrant atmosphere, including first floor street-front uses comprised of retail, restaurants and supporting outdoor café-style and dining seating.

1. Ground Floor Uses

The ground floor of any building shall be reserved for allowed business and parking uses except for office uses or professional services, which could be allowed by Special Permit.

B) Dimensional Regulations

1. Height of Structure and Required Setbacks

Buildings of up to 36 feet and three stories above the sidewalk grade will be permitted subject to the following setback requirements:

Front: Front setback shall be zero feet for the front and street side facades.

Side: The minimum side setback shall be zero feet. When abutting a residential district,

the minimum side setback shall be either: a) 10 feet or; b) the resulting square footage of the side yard shall be equal to or greater than a side yard resulting from a 10 foot setback, subject to Design and Site Planning Review.

Rear: Rear yard setbacks shall be 10 feet, except when abutting a rail corridor. When abutting a residential district, the minimum rear yard setback shall be 20 feet.

Open air parking structures that accommodate roof level parking on top of the third story shall be subject to the above height and setback requirements.

In Subdistrict A only, buildings of up to 48 feet and four stories above the sidewalk grade will be permitted subject to the above and following additional setback requirements:

Front of Fourth Floor: Shall be set back an additional 25 feet from the face of the third floor on each side facing a street.

Side: When abutting a residential district, the minimum side setback shall be either: a) 10 feet or; b) the resulting square footage of the side yard shall be equal to or greater than a side yard resulting from a 10 foot setback, subject to Design and Site Planning Review.

Rear: Rear yard setbacks shall be 10 feet, except when abutting a rail corridor. When abutting a residential district, the minimum rear yard setback shall be 20 feet.

Open air parking structures that accommodate roof level parking on top of the fourth story shall be subject to the above height and setback requirements.

In Subdistrict A only, buildings of up to 60 feet and five stories above the sidewalk grade will be permitted subject to the above and following additional setback requirements:

Front of Fifth Floor: Shall be set back an additional 50 feet from the face of the third floor on each side facing a street.

Side: When abutting a residential district, the minimum side setback shall be either: a) 10 feet or; b) the resulting square footage of side yard shall be equal to or greater than a side yard resulting from a 10 foot setback, subject to Design and Site Planning Review.

Rear: Rear yard setbacks shall be 10 feet, except when abutting a rail corridor. When abutting a residential district, the minimum rear yard setback shall be 20 feet.

Open air parking structures that accommodate roof level parking on top of the fifth story shall be subject to the above height and setback requirements.

Building height shall be defined as the vertical distance from the grade to one of the following: top of parapet, the midpoint between the lowest and highest points of the roof for gable, hip and gambrel roofs, the point of change in roof slope for slope of mansard roofs

C) Parking Requirements

1. *Number of Spaces*

Parking spaces shall be provided for new building area in the WSD, as follows:

Restaurants: One parking space per every 4 persons seating capacity. Additional parking requirements for outdoor café seating available to the public at large and not restricted to business establishments on the premises may be waived, subject to determination by the Planning Board.

Other service establishments, retail businesses and offices: One parking space per 250 square feet of ground floor net retail/commercial area, plus one space per 300 square feet of net usable area on other office/commercial floors. Excluded from these calculations shall be floor area used for parking, loading, outdoor café seating, public spaces, stairwells, mechanical rooms, corridors, public bathrooms and lobbies.

Residential: One parking space per each residential unit, plus one additional parking space per every 4 residential units.

Mixed use development: The number of spaces shall be determined by adding each separate use together.

The above parking requirements may be achieved either within the structural confines of the building housing the proposed use or in an adjacent parking structure.

2. Reduction of Parking

The above parking requirements shall be reduced based upon the consideration of the following:

Availability of shared parking on another property within 300 feet.

The Planning Board may reduce the number of required parking spaces due to considerations as staggered hours or other opportunities for shared parking among different uses.

A maximum reduction of 20% in required parking may be allowed as part of shared parking agreements subject to approval by the Planning Board.

Waiver agreement between the applicant and the town in which a fee is paid by the applicant which would be set aside for creation for future parking facilities,

Uses within 250 feet of public transportation shall be eligible for a 10% reduction in required parking.

3. Bicycle Parking

Long term bicycle parking, at least 50% sheltered from the elements, shall be provided for all new mixed use development projects in the WSD, according to the following requirements:

At least one bicycle parking or storage space for every two residential units.

At least one bicycle parking space for every 2,000 square feet of net usable office/retail area.

OPTIONS FOR DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN THE PROPOSED WAVERLEY SQUARE DISTRICT

Prepared by The Cecil Group – April 13, 2009 (Revised on April 15, 2009)

Option 1 (maximum building height of 4 stories)

Subdistrict A (North of Trapelo Road and west of MBTA right-of-way)

Maximum Building Height:

46 feet or 4 stories

46 feet or 5 parking levels above grade for garages

Setbacks:

5' setback along the front property line (facing both streets in a corner lot) – This setback should be used to expand and enhance the existing sidewalk. The proponent shall provide trees along the sidewalk, planted at a 4' distance from the curb and spaced at a distance of 30'-40' from each other

15' setback along any side yard abutting a residential property

30' setback along any rear yard abutting a residential property

Stepbacks:

No stepbacks are required for buildings up to 32' or 3 stories high

Building stories higher than 32' above grade and all garages should be stepback 60' from the front property line along Trapelo Road

Building stories higher than 32' above grade along Pleasant Street should comprise a floor area no larger than 75% of the floor area of the story immediately below. The location and configuration of the resulting stepbacks will be aimed at allowing view corridors towards Wellington Ridge, and will be subject to design review and approval through the permitting process.

Subdistrict B (North of Trapelo Road and east of MBTA right-of-way)

Maximum Building Height:

46 feet or 4 stories

32 feet or 4 parking levels above grade for garages

Setbacks:

5' setback along the front property line (facing both streets in a corner lot) – This set-

back should be used to expand and enhance the existing sidewalk. The proponent shall provide trees along the sidewalk, planted at a 4' distance from the curb and spaced at a distance of 30'-40' from each other

15' setback along any side yard abutting a residential property

30' setback along any rear yard abutting a residential property

Stepbacks:

No stepbacks are required for buildings up to 32' or 3 stories high

Building stories higher than 3 stories or 32' above grade should be stepback 15' from the edge of the third floor elevations fronting Trapelo Road and White Street

Subdistrict C (South of Trapelo Road)

Maximum Building Height:

32 feet or 3 stories

32 feet or 4 parking levels above grade for garages

Setbacks:

No setbacks are required along the front property line

15' setback along any side yard abutting a residential property

30' setback along any rear yard abutting a residential property

Stepbacks:

No stepbacks are required

Option 2 (maximum building height of 5 stories)

"Pleasant Street" Subdistrict or Subdistrict A (North of Trapelo Road)

Maximum Building Height:

52 feet or 5 stories

32 feet or 4 parking levels above grade for garages

Setbacks:

5' setback along the front property line (facing both streets in a corner lot) – This setback should be used to expand and enhance the existing sidewalk. The proponent shall provide trees along the sidewalk, planted at a 4' distance from the curb and spaced at a distance of 30'-40' from each other

15' setback along any side yard abutting a residential property

30' setback along any rear yard abutting a residential property

Stepbacks:

No stepbacks are required for buildings up to 32' or 3 stories high

Building stories higher than 32' above grade should be stepback 120' from the front property line along Trapelo Road

Building stories higher than 32' above grade should be stepback 15' from the edge of the third floor elevations along White Street. Building stories higher than 32' above grade along Pleasant Street should comprise a floor area no larger than 75% of the floor area of the story immediately below. The location and configuration of the resulting stepbacks will be aimed at allowing view corridors towards Wellington Ridge, and will be subject to design review and approval through the permitting process.

"Church/Lexington Street" Subdistrict or Subdistrict B (South of Trapelo Road)

Maximum Building Height:

32 feet or 3 stories

32 feet or 4 parking levels above grade for garages

Setbacks:

No setbacks are required along the front property line

15' setback along any side yard abutting a residential property

30' setback along any rear yard abutting a residential property

Stepbacks:

No stepbacks are required

Additional Provisions for Any Option

Primary building use at the ground floor level shall include retail and commercial activities oriented to pedestrians and allowing direct public access from the street sidewalk (comprising a minimum of 60% of the entire building frontage).

Any garage facing Trapelo Road, Church Street or Lexington Street shall be coated with retail uses at the ground level (comprising a minimum of 80% of the garage frontage). The triangle shall remain as a combination of parking, transit station and public open space.

Figure 4: Existing Zoning



Figure 5: Alternative Zoning Concept 1



Figure 6: Alternative Zoning Concept 2

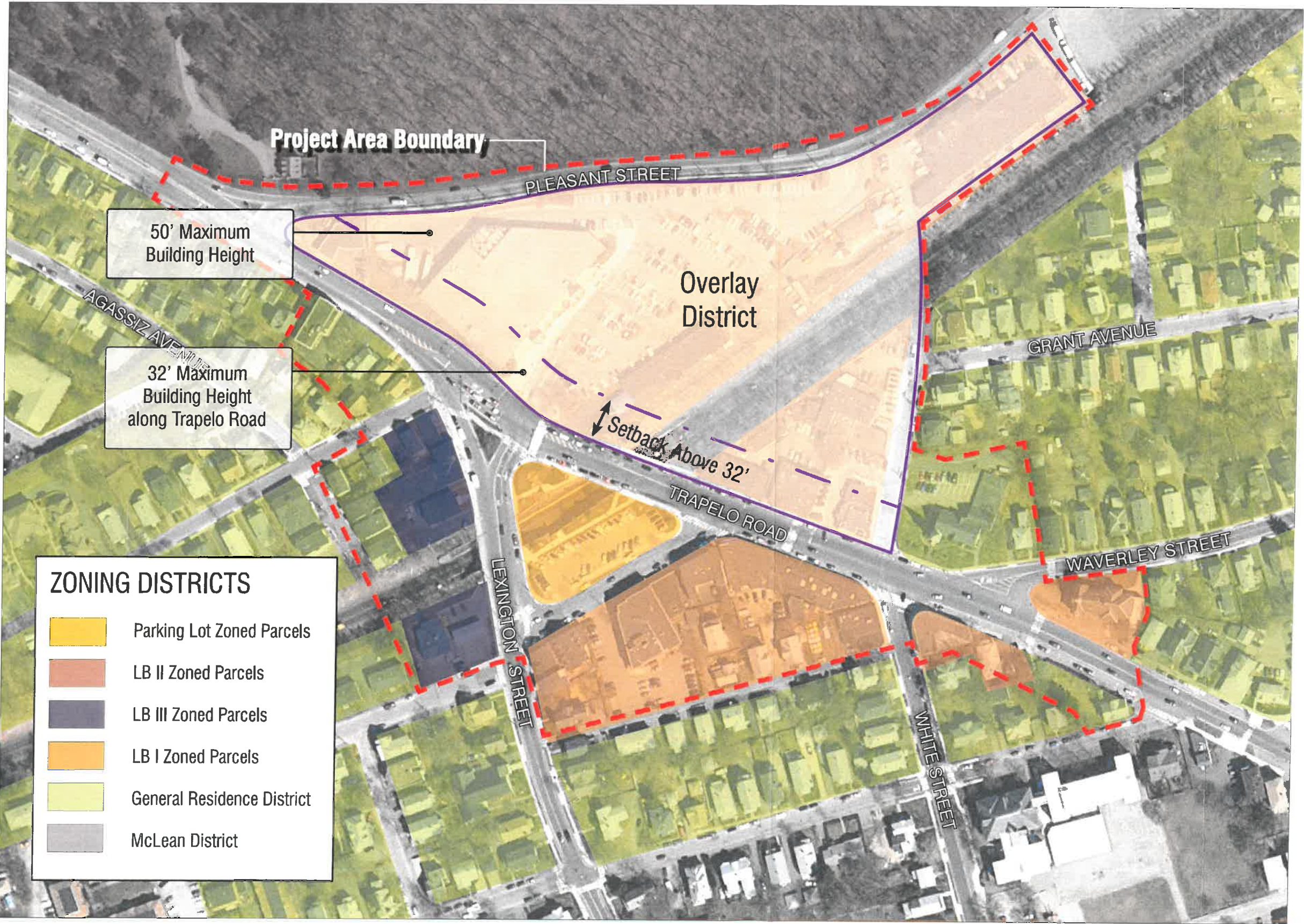


Figure 7: Alternative Zoning Concept 3

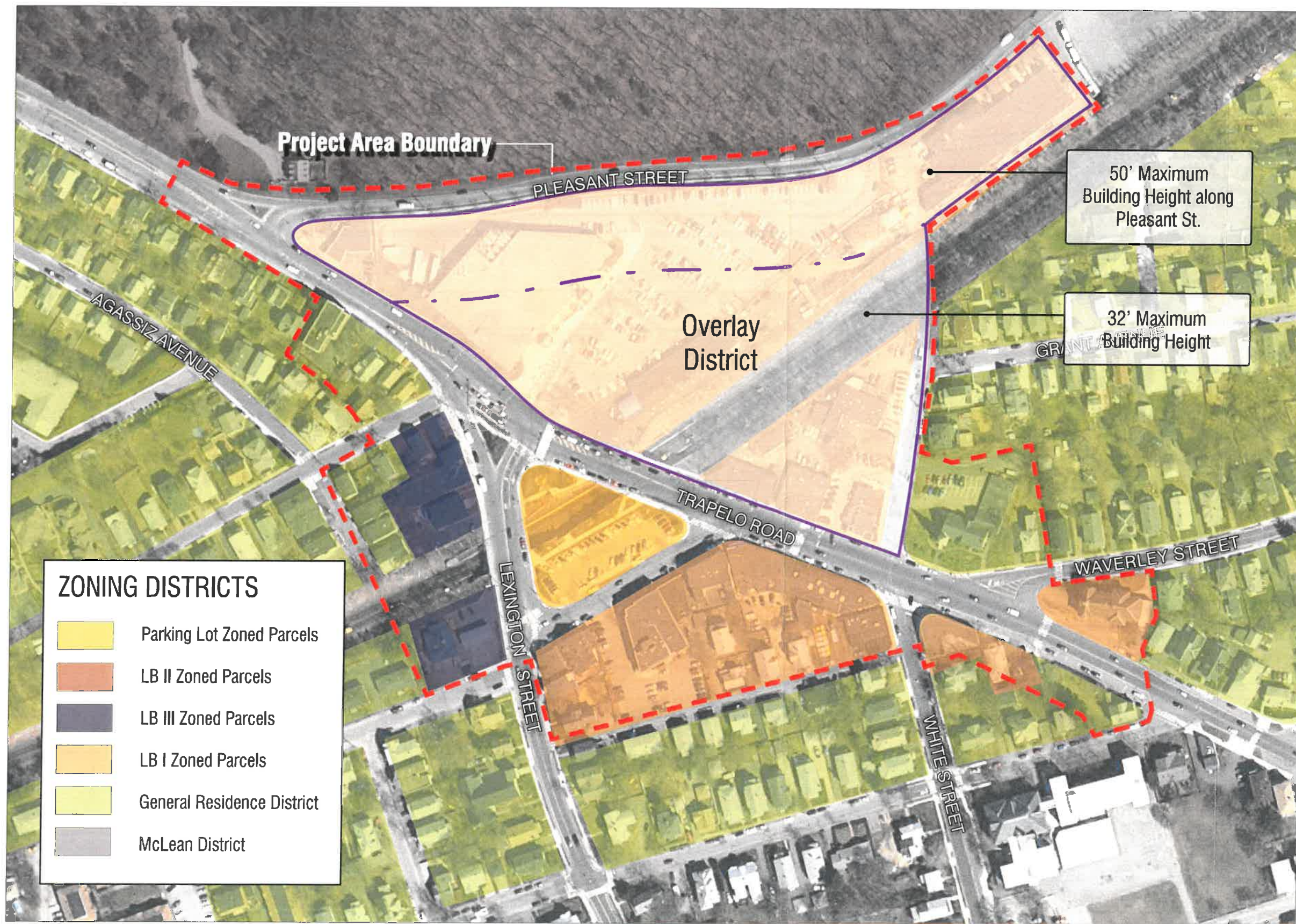


Figure 9: Building Massing Illustrations

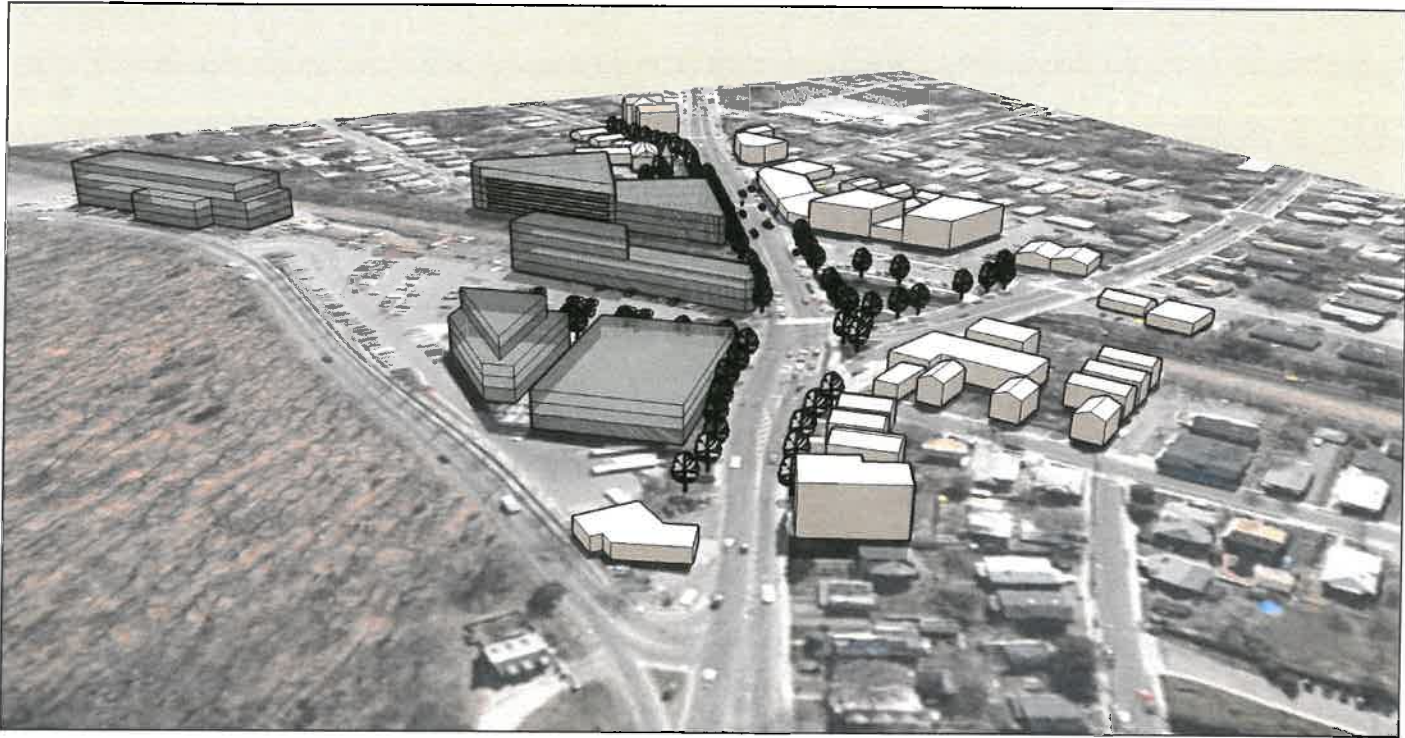


Illustration 1: Large Stepbacks

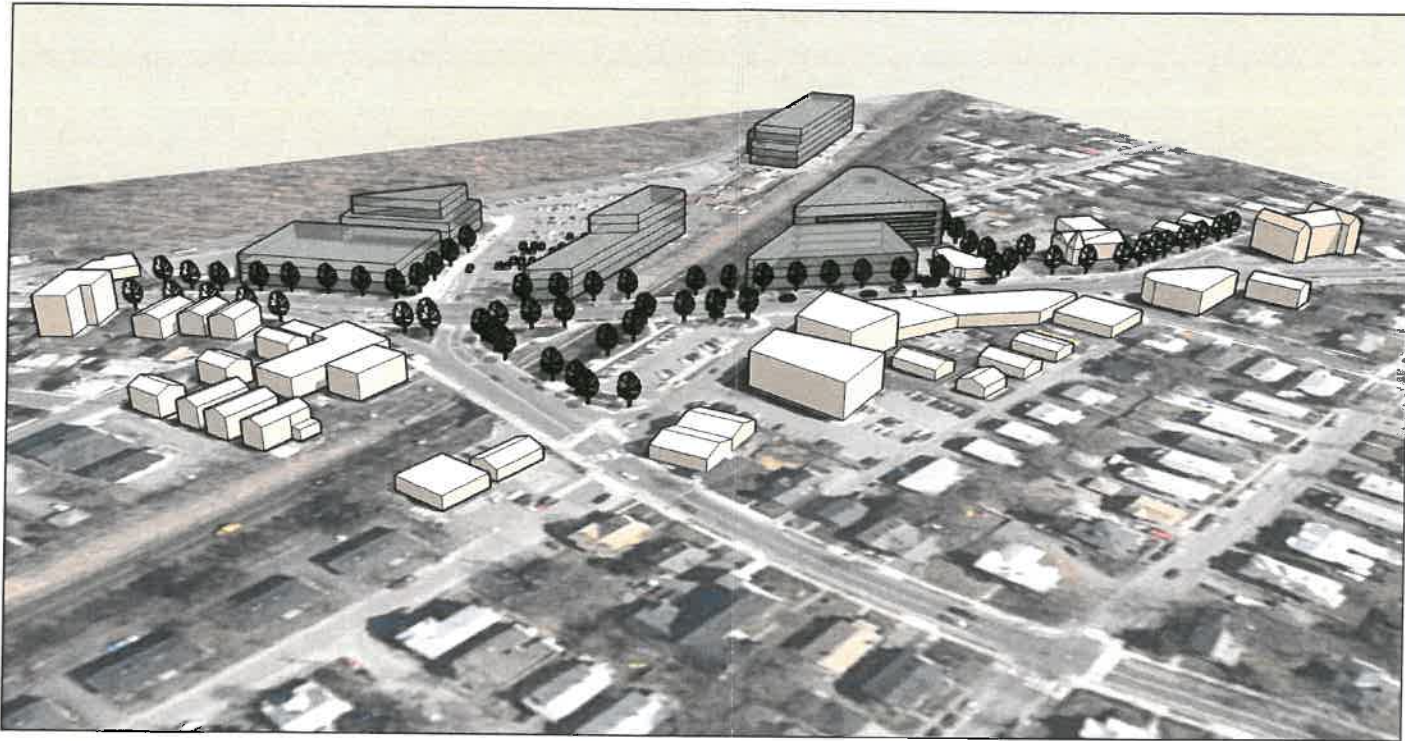


Illustration 3: Large Stepbacks; second view

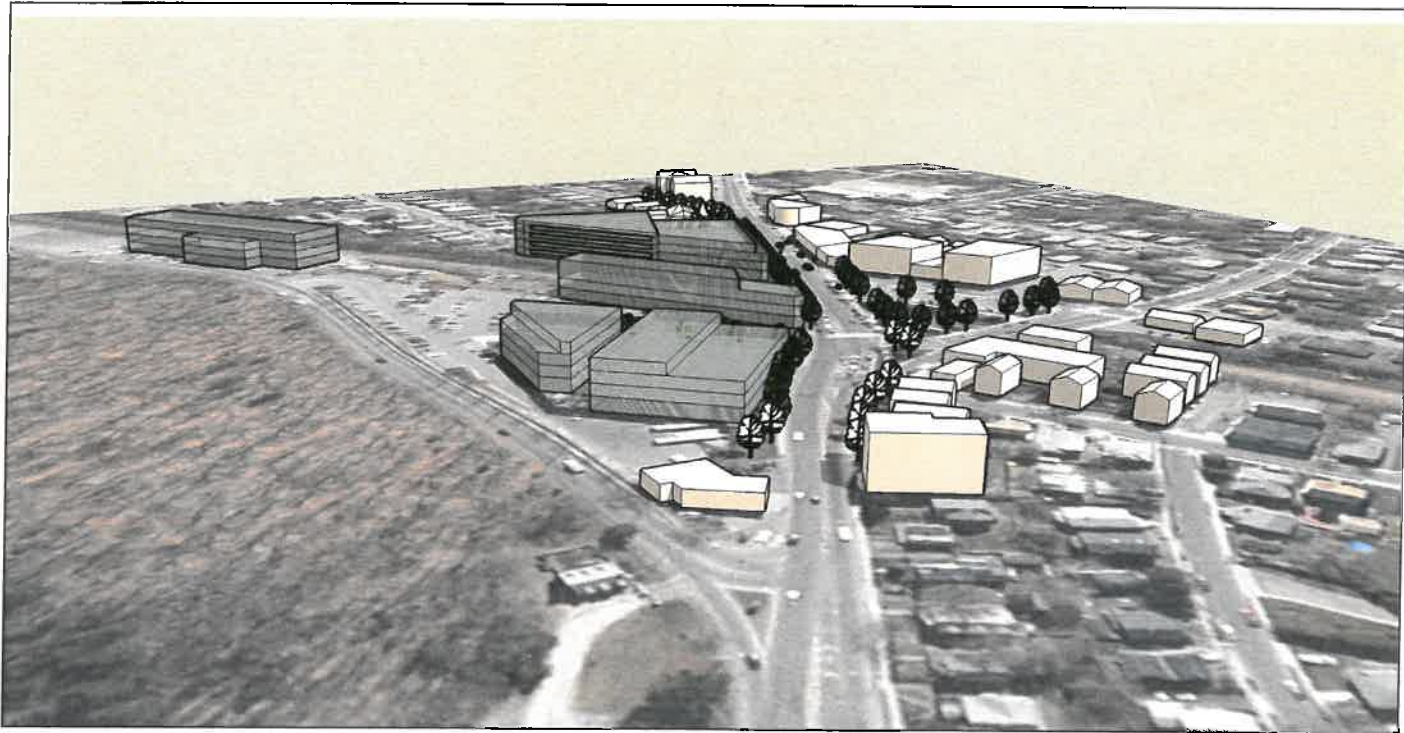


Illustration 2: Smaller Stepbacks

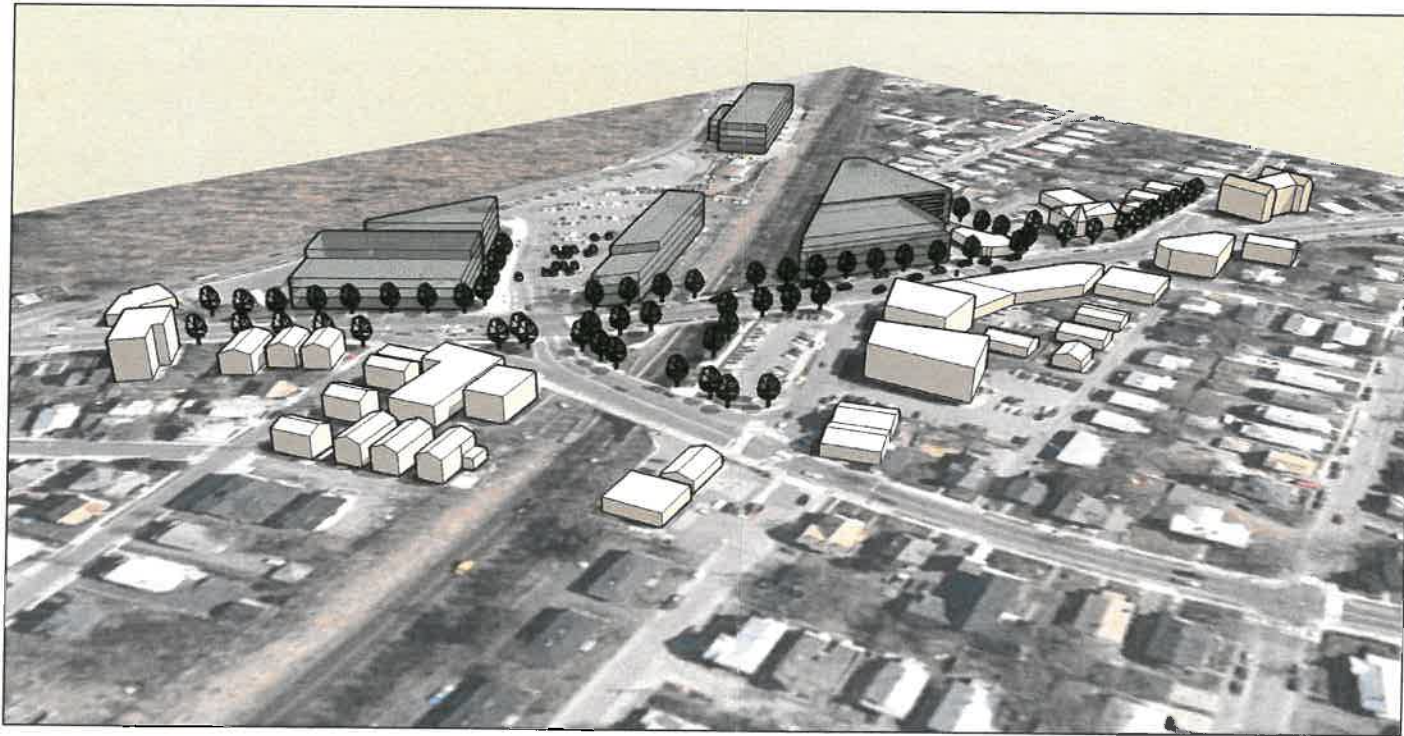


Illustration 4: Smaller Stepbacks; second view