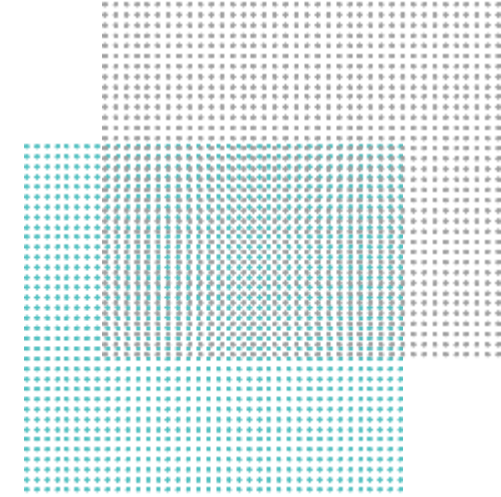




May 11, 2023

Economic Development Committee – Hotel Zoning



- The Economic Development Committee (EDC) was formed in 2020 by the Select Board following the completion of the Belmont Business Strategy. The role of the Belmont EDC is to develop, implement, and update the recommendations in the Belmont Business Strategy, in conjunction with Town staff and departments

Question 1

- What specific zoning regulation should be implemented for hotels in Belmont, considering the town's character, preferred locations, and size limitations?
- Goal – prompt discussion about types of hotels (boutique, chain, B&B, etc) that would be a good fit for Belmont and the areas where they could be developed

Question 2

- How should the zoning bylaws address short-term rentals such as Airbnb or other temporary housing options within the town?
- Goal – open up discussion on possible restrictions, regulations, and potential impact on the local community, as well as whether specific zoning regulations should be created for short-term rentals

Question 3

- What measures should be taken to ensure that the development of hotels and short-term rentals will not negatively impact the surrounding residential areas, such as noise, traffic, and parking concerns?
- Goal – prompt potential strategies to minimize any negative effects on the community while still promoting economic growth through the introduction of hotels and short-term rentals

Existing Hotel and Accommodation Mentions within the Zoning Bylaw



Existing Bylaw

- The only mention of Hotels within the Zoning bylaw has to do with parking (5.1.2 section c)

5.1.2 section C

- “Hotels, motels, room and board, other commercial accommodations: one parking space for each guest unit, plus one parking space for each eight units or fraction thereof.”

Adding comprehensive language to the zoning bylaw will allow Belmont to better manage the growth and development of hotels in town, ensuring they align with the community’s vision and goals. The current language in the zoning bylaw is not sufficient to address the any aspects of hotel development except for parking

Comprehensive
Regulation
Introduction

Encourage
Investment

Preserve Town
Character

Address Community
Needs

Promote
Sustainable Growth

Boutique Hotels

Smaller, unique hotels that typically offer personalized services and upscale amenities

- How large should boutique hotels be allowed to be in terms of the number of rooms or sqft
- Specific design or architectural guidelines?
- Preferred locations?

Chain Hotels

Well-known hotel brands that offer standardized rooms and amenities. Often larger than boutique hotels and cater to a broader range of guests

- Restrictions on number or size?
- Town aesthetic guidelines?
- Preferred locations?

Extended-stay Hotels

Designed for guests who need accommodations for longer periods (1 week or more)

- Should Belmont encourage the development of extended-stay hotels to accommodate business travelers or others?
- Aesthetic considerations?
- Possible locations?

Bed & Breakfasts

Small, owner-operated establishments that provide accommodations and breakfast in a home-like setting

- Should Belmont encourage the development of bed and breakfasts as an alternative to larger hotels?
- Are there specific areas or neighborhoods where bed and breakfasts would be most appropriate, such as historic districts or residential areas?
- Should there be specific regulations or guidelines for B&Bs (number of guest rooms, etc.)

Potential Areas of Zoning Code Regulation Focus

Area of Focus	Description	Example	Comments	Belmont Impact
Location and District Regulations	Specify the zoning districts where different types of accommodations (B&Bs, boutique hotels, chain hotels) are allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">B&B could be permitted in residential or historic business districts, boutique hotels in commercial or mixed-used district, and chain hotels in specific commercial areas like the Pleasant St overlay		
Size and Height Limitations	Establish limitations on the size (number of rooms) and height of hotels based on their category and location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">B&B could have a maximum of 4 to 10 rooms, boutique hotels could range from 20 to 75 rooms, and chain hotels could have 100+ rooms.Height limitations could vary by district		
Architecture Design Standards	Require that new hotels meet specific architectural and design standards that align with the town's character and aesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Could include guidelines for building materials, façade treatments, and landscapingCould also include sustainable building practices		
Parking & Transportation Requirements	Develop or keep existing parking requirements for hotels based on size and location, ensuring the need of guests and employees are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Could include requirements for off-street parking, shared parking arrangements, or provisions for alternative transportation options		
Community Benefits and Impact Mitigation	Encourage hotels to provide community benefits such as public amenities, open space, or contribute to local infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish impact mitigation measures for issues like noise, traffic, and environmental impacts		
Short-Term Rentals	Establish regulations for short-term rentals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Could include registration, inspection, and limitations on the number of days per year a property can be rented		



Lexington Short-Term Rental Bylaw

Lexington Short-term Rentals and Belmont Discussion Questions



Lexington Factsheet	
What is considered a short-term rental?	A Short Term Rental, or STML, refers to the rental of any dwelling unit or bedroom as a residential accommodation for a duration of less than 30 consecutive days. Common hosting platforms used are Air BnB, VRBO, Craigslist, HomeAway, Boston Rentals, Couch Surfing, and FlipKey
If I operate a short-term rental, what do I need to know?	<p>A resident, classified as an Operator-Occupied or Operator-Adjacent, will be allowed to rent a whole dwelling unit, or up to three bedrooms within their own dwelling unit for no longer than thirty (30) consecutive days, within a 120-day limitation per calendar year, when the operator is not present.</p> <p>Property owners would need to apply for annual registration and will be subject to an inspection by the Building and Zoning Office before issuing a Certificate of Registration</p>

Q1: Should Belmont adopt a similar definition of short-term rental as Lexington, referring to rentals of dwelling units or bedrooms for less than 30 consecutive days? This would establish a clear guideline for what is considered a short-term rental in the town

Q2: Should Belmont follow Lexington’s example and allow residents to rent whole dwelling units or up to three bedrooms within their won dwelling unit for no longer than 30 consecutive days, within a 120-day limitation per calendar year when the operator is not present? Discussing the duration of rentals and annual limitations will help to create a balanced approach to short-term rentals in Belmont

Q3: Should Belmont implement a registration and inspection process for short-term rental operators? This would ensure that all operators comply with safety and zoning regulations, as well as allow the town to maintain oversight of short-term rental properties.

Q4: Are there any additional restrictions or requirements that Belmont should consider for short-term rentals? This could include rules related to parking, noise, or other factors that may impact the surrounding community.

Q5: Should Belmont consider implementing a local tax or fee for short-term rentals to generate additional revenue for the town? This could help offset any potential costs associated with regulating and enforcing short-term rental bylaws

Source: Work-based Learning Alliance website, MA press release, EDC discussions

Appendix – Key Questions



Question	Key Follow-Up Questions
In which zoning districts should hotels be permitted?	Should a boutique hotel be allowed in a residential area, or only in commercial districts?
What height limitations should be established for hotels in different districts?	Should a hotel in a residential area (like a B&B) be limited to two stories, while a hotel in a commercial area be up to four or five stories?
What should the minimum and maximum number of rooms be for hotels in Belmont? By hotel-type?	Should a B&B have a max of 10 rooms, while a chain hotel could have up to 100+ rooms?
What architectural and design standards should hotels follow to maintain Belmont’s character?	Should hotels in historic districts use traditional building materials and designs to blend in with the surrounding area?
What parking requirements should be established for hotels based on their size and location?	Should a small boutique hotel provide one parking space per guest room, while large chain hotels provide one space for every two guest rooms? Or should we leave it up to the developer and operator?
How can hotels be encouraged or required to incorporate sustainable building practices and green infrastructure?	Should hotels be required to insall solar panels, use energy efficient windows and insulation, or have EV chargers?
What community benefits should hotel sbe encouraged to provide?	Should hotels contribute to the development of public parks, plazas, or streetscape improvements in their vicinity?
What impact mitigation measures should be established for hotels?	Should hotels be required to conduct a traffic study and implement measures to reduce potential congestion around their site?
What regulations should be implemented for short-term rentals in Belmont?	Should short-term rentals be required to register with the town and be subject to inspection for safety and compliance? Is this happening now?
How can the town ensure that hotels provide adequate accommodations and amenities for guests with disabilities?	Should hotels be required to have a certain % of guest rooms that are accessible and provide necessary amenities for guests with disabilities?

Source: Work-based Learning Alliance website, MA press release, EDC discussions

LEONARD ST., BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS

BELMONT BUSINESS CENTER 1930'S

Source: Belmont Historical Society

