

town of  
**wellesley**  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

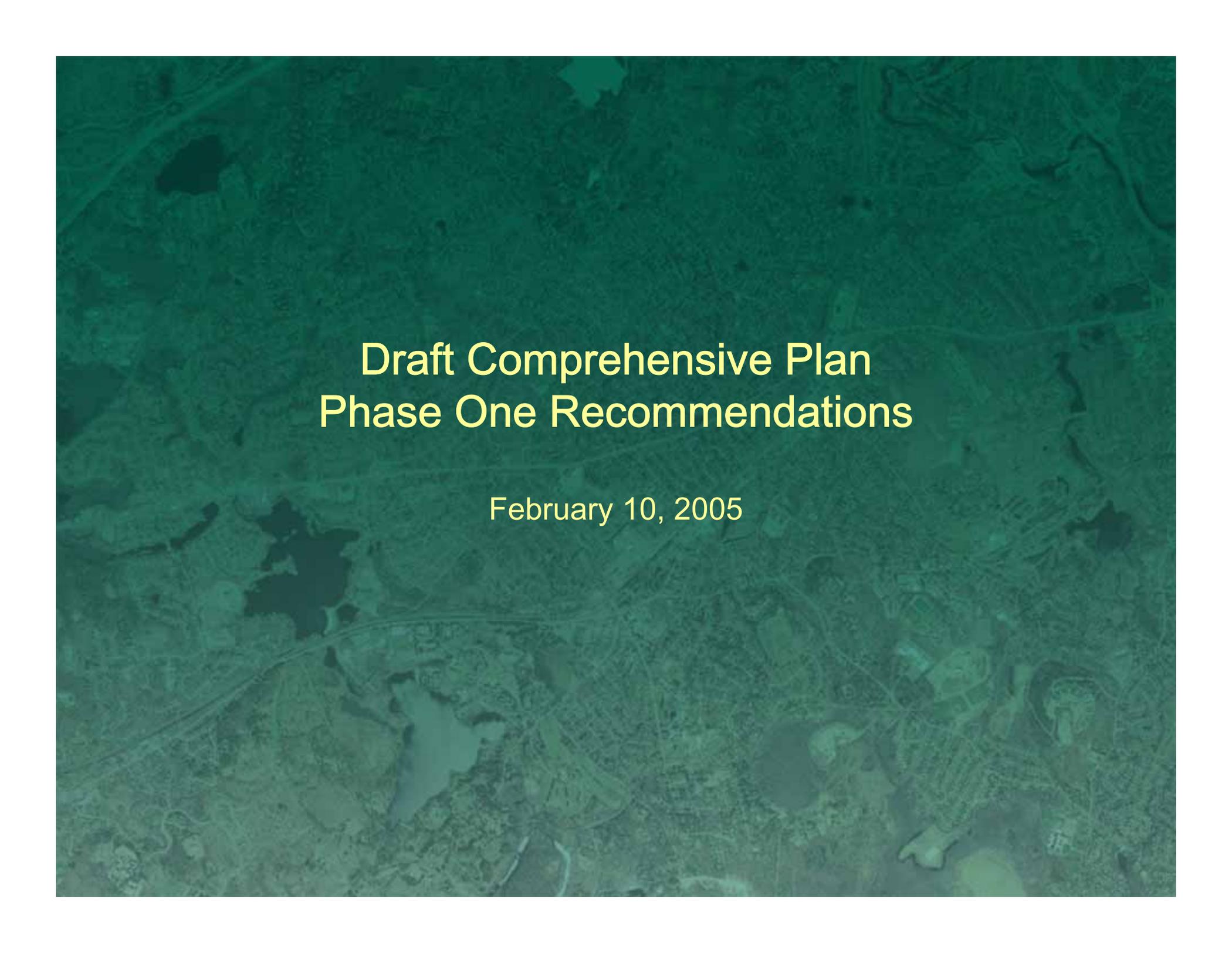
## 2004-2005 UPDATE

*Wellesley Planning Board*

*Comprehensive Plan  
Steering Committee*

*Consultant Team:*

Goody, Clancy & Associates  
Bonnie Heudorfer  
Byrne McKinney & Associates  
Beta Group



# Draft Comprehensive Plan Phase One Recommendations

February 10, 2005

# Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

## Planning Board Members

- Thomas Frisardi, Chair
- Rose Mary Donahue, Vice Chair
- James C. Meade, Secretary
- Sue Wright
- Edward Chazen
- Frank S. DeMasi

## Town Meeting Precinct Representatives

- Gerald C. Hume, Precinct A
- Richard McGhee, Precinct B
- Jacqueline Hatch, Precinct C
- Joellen Toussaint, Precinct D
- Henry Lysaght, Precinct E
- Barbara McMahon, Precinct F
- Judith Hull, Precinct G

# Agenda

- Planning process
- Draft goals, objectives, and policies
- Discussion of draft recommendations
  - Housing
  - Economic Development
  - Land Use and Illustrative Scenarios
- Further comments
  - Comment sheet
  - Email, fax, telephone
- Contact information on the Comprehensive Plan web page
  - <http://www.ci.wellesley.ma.us/pln/compplan/index.htm>

## Process and progress so far

- Public participation
  - Town-wide survey
  - Four public meetings – town wide and by precinct
  - One meeting with business and institutional stakeholders
  - Identification of priorities
- Draft goals, objectives, and policies
- Steering Committee meetings
- Committee member visits to Town boards and commissions to review progress and gain additional input
- Draft recommendations and scenario illustrations

# Draft goals, objectives, and policies

- Based on public meetings and survey
- Covers all plan elements – not just Phase One elements
- Subject to revision after more detailed Phase Two work

| WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2005-2015<br>DRAFT GOALS—OBJECTIVES—POLICIES  |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| GOALS   | OBJECTIVES   | POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS  |
| <b>LAND USE</b>   |  |   |
| • Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines, and their enforcement to ensure continuity of Town character and quality of life  | • Establish common ground among property owners, builders, and Town government to ensure consensus agreements  | • Harmonize zoning provisions that are barriers to creation of mixed use and diversified housing in commercial districts<br>• Create on-going design and regulatory marketing and information strategy to educate stakeholders on land use issues related to Town character |
| • Improve the appearance of Town gateways that need enhancement   | • Distinguish Wellesley's identity at the major entrance corridors to Town   | • Focus on enhancements to the Lower Falls gateway and creating a plan for the Natick line area   |
| • Promote a mixture of land uses, including diverse types of residences, in commercial areas  | • Meet the Town's need for more housing diversity and to increase the market for a mix of slope and services in commercial districts   | • Create guidelines for mixed-use land uses and pursue projects appropriate for Wellesley   |
| <b>NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES</b>   |  |   |
| • Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for habitat protection and enrichment of community character  | • Identify town landmarks for protection and preservation  | • Manage Morse Pond to avoid eutrophication and to maintain its use as a swimming destination<br>• Apply appropriate Best Management Practices to ensure preservation of natural resources  |
| <b>OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION</b>  |  |   |
| • Ensure continuation of Wellesley's recreational facilities as major community assets  | • Retain Morse Pond as recreational asset  | • Preserve a balance between active and passive recreation  |
| • Continue expansion of the trail system to link open space to town destinations  | • Identify opportunities for new trails and enhancement of existing trails   | • Support volunteer trail creation and enhancement  |
| <b>HOUSING</b>  |  |   |
| • Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley's housing stock   | • Preserve the existing housing type on neighborhood streets of single family homes  | • Focus additional multifamily housing in mixed-use areas or arterial roads   |
| • Maintain the physical form of Wellesley's residential neighborhoods by balancing community standards with individual interests  | • Define neighborhood character through a set of neighborhood change studies in collaboration with residents to identify the distinctive physical characteristics of each neighborhood | • Explore new ways to maintain neighborhood character such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts, form-based zoning, advisory design guidelines, zoning changes, and other options managing form advisory to regulatory  |
| • Promote the creation of housing units other than single family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size and needs, while complementing Town character | • Work towards creating town houses, condominium and rental units in commercial districts and other appropriate locations  | • Encourage developers to create mixed-use projects and residential projects that diversify the housing stock in Wellesley and provide residential options for elderly and young family households  |
| • Promote the creation of a moderate number of housing units permanently affordable to households with incomes at 80% or below the area median income.  | • Adopt a plan with numerical targets to meet the Chapter 40B goal of ten percent affordable units   | • Support the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation and seek developers who will develop mixed-income housing that meets the Town's needs and complements town character  |

| OBJECTIVES  | POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DECISION MAKERS   |
|---|--|
| • Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community and local institutions | • Leverage opportunities for new public-private-institutional partnerships to provide mutual benefits to all stakeholders  |
| • Support and enhance the likelihood potential of non-residential property                                      | • Increase tax revenue from non-residential property   |
| • Manage traffic to enhance traffic flow on Washington Street and other high-traffic roads                      | • Reduce the impact of local or through-traffic on local road network  |
| • Create intra-town routes as alternatives to vehicle traffic   | • Increase the safety of and links in existing pedestrian network<br>• Create a town-wide pedestrian/bicycle plan<br>• Explore shared use of streets as part of an intra-town transit system |
| • Manage parking to support commercial districts  | • Enhance customer access and traffic flow   |
| • Seek improvement of traffic flow on regional routes   | • Reduce the rate of increase of traffic congestion  |
| <b>COMMUNITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES</b>  |  |
| • Maintain school quality   | • Provide an excellent education for Town young people   |
| • Create a five-year plan to fix schools and other public buildings and to allow for flexible use               | • Accommodate the changing needs of the Town, including use of schools as neighborhood community centers   |
| • Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community and local institutions | • Support use of staff and committee time to create and maintain Town-Business-Institution community links and partnership strategies  |
| • Support and enhance the likelihood potential of non-residential property                                      | • Consider increasing density in existing non-residential areas based on a study of potential benefits and adverse impacts   |
| • Manage traffic to enhance traffic flow on Washington Street and other high-traffic roads                      | • Support traffic calming programs   |
| • Create intra-town routes as alternatives to vehicle traffic   | • Include pedestrian and bicycle needs in all traffic and transportation improvement studies and projects  |
| • Manage parking to support commercial districts  | • Identify opportunities for new structured parking and shared parking near commercial areas   |
| • Seek improvement of traffic flow on regional routes   | • Work with state and neighboring towns to identify further opportunities for improvement of through-traffic flow  |
| • Maintain school quality   | • Continue supporting the Town's strong school department  |
| • Create a five-year plan to fix schools and other public buildings and to allow for flexible use               | • Explore innovative use of school facilities for after school activities and other community needs  |

## Housing and Residential Character: What we heard

- Most of Wellesley should remain a single-family residential area
- Wellesley needs more options for other housing types – townhouses, condos, apartments – especially for empty-nesters
- Tear-downs and “mansionization” change neighborhoods in ways many people dislike
- Wellesley needs more permanently affordable housing
- Commercial districts are the best places to locate condos, townhouses, or apartments

## Housing Recommendations: Neighborhood Character

- Site plan review for houses three or more times larger than the houses they replace

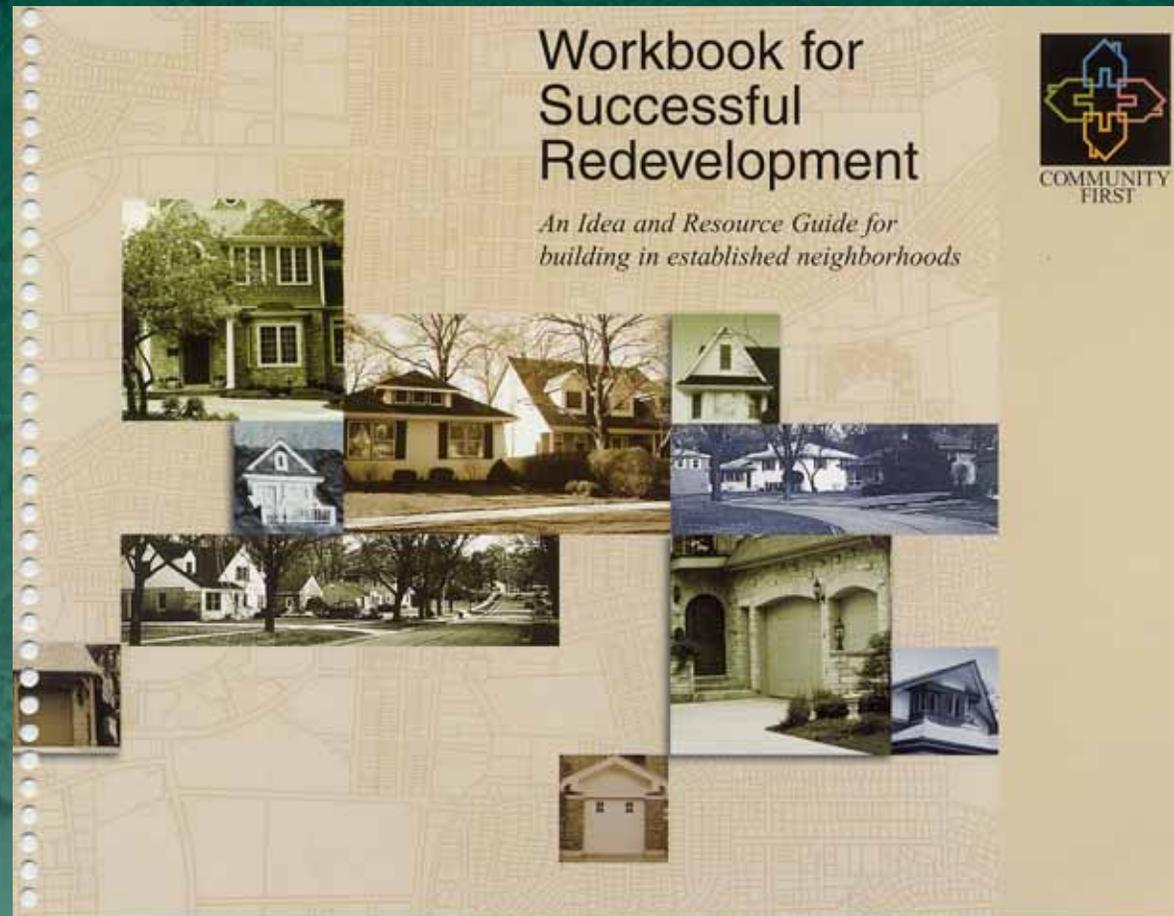


## Housing Recommendations: Preserve residential character

- Define, promote, and/or protect neighborhood identity and character
  - Consider additional local historic districts
  - Neighborhood studies to analyze/define neighborhood character
  - Voluntary guidelines for additions/new construction
  - Neighborhood Conservation Districts

# Housing Recommendations: Preserve residential character

- Example of educational materials and voluntary guidelines from Naperville, IL

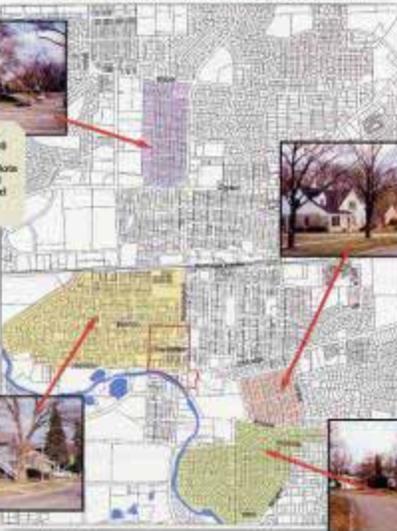


Naperville, Illinois is made up of many distinct and diverse neighborhoods.  
What characteristics define your neighborhood?



**Naperville Heights**  
• Built between 1922-1966  
• Straight streets  
• Small homes on small lots  
• Mostly aluminum sided ranch or small cape cod houses  
• AE RTD

**West Side**  
• Built from 1888 to present  
• Straight streets  
• Large diversity of home styles  
• Many homes close to street with some alleys  
• RTB, R2, and R1A



**Midtown**  
• Predominately built in the 1920's  
• Big streets  
• Ranch, cape cod and some two story homes  
• Lots are long and narrow  
• AE RTB



**East Highlands**  
• Subdivision built in the 1960's  
• Curvy streets  
• Very consistent home styles  
• Medium sized ranch, bi-level and two story homes  
• Lots are wider than deep  
• RTB and R1A



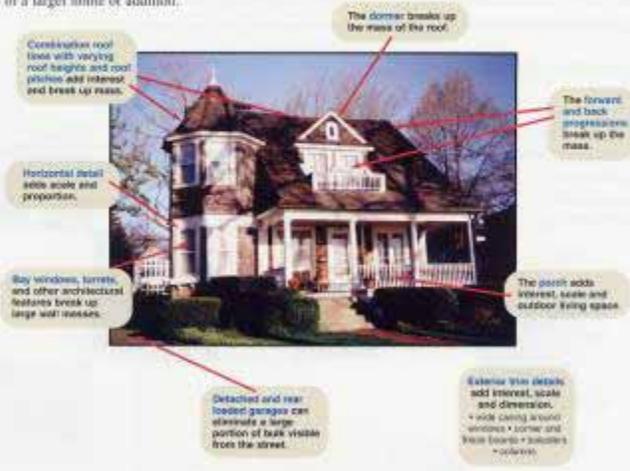
This is just one of many maps available from the city.

## Perception of Bulk

Proper scale, proportion and details are essential to blending any home or addition into an established neighborhood. Today's homes are typically larger. These are some ideas for reducing the perceived bulk of a larger home or addition.

### QUICK REFERENCE:

- Dormers
- Porches
- Window placement and treatments
- Bay windows
- Turrets
- Deep front setbacks
- Gables trim details
- Horizontal details
- Forward and back progressions
- Varying & contrasting roof heights and pitches
- Separate garage doors
- Detached and rear loaded garages
- Not stacking home
- Landscaping



## Remodeling

Remodeling is a viable option to consider. These are some remodeled homes which have used design ideas that are sensitive to the established neighborhood. Each home addition has been outlined. All ideas suggested in this workbook should be considered when remodeling an existing home to help blend your project into the neighborhood.



**Existing landscape is maintained.**

### QUICK REFERENCE:

- Refer to all pages in Part 6
- Perception of Bulk
  - Height
  - Front Setback
  - Window Treatments
  - Columns & Shutters
  - Landscaping
  - Greenhouse

# Neighborhood Conservation Districts

- Authorize establishment of Neighborhood Conservation Districts
  - Citizens petition the Planning Board or Historical Commission
  - Appoint committee to do a neighborhood character study
  - Create a neighborhood-specific form of review – from purely advisory to regulation – for demolition and exterior changes to buildings

## Housing Recommendations: Diversify housing in type and cost

- Promote development of condominiums, townhouses and apartments suitable for empty-nesters who want to stay in Wellesley



## Housing Recommendations: Diversify housing in type and cost

- Attract rental developments with affordable units to identified sites through “friendly 40B”
- Consider joining regional HOME consortium
- Inventory appropriate town-owned parcels and buildings for contribution towards affordable housing



## Housing Recommendations: Diversify housing in type and cost

- Modify zoning by-laws to encourage housing diversity in type and cost
  - Affordable accessory units
  - Affordable units on non-conforming lots
  - Extend inclusionary zoning to residential subdivisions
- Offer amnesty for illegal apartments in exchange for conversion into affordable units
- Adopt state law promoting affordable housing on tax title properties
- Consider adopting an Affordable Housing Planned Production Plan to work towards meeting the Chapter 40B goal.

# Economic Development: What we heard

- Residents want to retain independent businesses and businesses that serve daily needs
- Retaining the character of village commercial districts is important
- Additional development should focus on commercial areas
- The Town has good relationships with businesses, but more systematic communication would be valuable



# Economic Development Recommendations

- Continue commercial district planning and implementation process to cover all commercial areas
  - Review Lower Falls Village Commercial District Guidelines for possible increase in incentives
  - Amend zoning in Wellesley Hills Square
  - Create a plan for the Natick Line commercial area
  - Complete or create plans for small commercial areas (Fells, Cedar Street)



# Economic Development Recommendations

- Encourage housing development as part of a mixed-use strategy for commercial districts
- Plan and take the initiative to attract housing development in commercial areas



# Economic Development Recommendations

- Provide town funding to support staff time for economic development activities
  - Consider creating a half-time economic development specialist position

# Economic Development Recommendations

- Create a system of regular communication among economic development stakeholders
  - Enhance Town-business contacts for public-private partnerships
  - Consider developing a Wellesley Retail Action Plan (WRAP) to create/coordinate implementation of retail strategy

# Economic Development Recommendations

- Support and enhance the build-out potential of non-residential property to increase Town's tax revenue
  - Study the potential impact of allowing additional development capacity in Wellesley's office parks
  - Study the benefits and costs of establishing a split tax rate



## Land Use

- Make adjustments to zoning to clarify language and provide flexibility.
  - Review the General Residence district to allow a special permit option for projects with higher densities that meet town design standards and other requirement
  - Review the language allowing mixed-use buildings in commercial districts to clarify the requirements for setbacks and similar standards.
  - Create an overlay district with design standards for multifamily, nonresidential and mixed uses from Natick Line to Russell Road.
  - Make a plan to recodify the Zoning Bylaw in the next ten years.
- Raise public awareness about and understanding of land use issues in Wellesley.

# Fitting New Development into Commercial Areas

There is room for well-designed mixed-use projects in Wellesley's commercial areas.

For example....



# Fitting New Development into Commercial Areas

## Grossman's Site





# Fitting New Development into Commercial Areas

## Motor Inn/Natick Line Sites



# Fitting New Development into Commercial Areas

## St. James's Site



## Next steps

- Review of the draft phase one plan
  - Steering Committee
  - Relevant Boards and Commissions
  - Public
- Revisions
- Print Phase One Plans
- Powerpoint Presentation for Town Meeting
- Outline for Phase Two for Town Meeting
- Phase Two to begin after Town Meeting