LITTLETON COMMON REVITALIZATION

Form-Based Code Zoning

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Planning Goals / Objectives

Advancing items from the Master Plan – with respect to the Common - that Littleton residents accepted last year…

- Expand Common Greenspace
- Expand/enhance business frontages
- More sidewalks, crosswalks, bike facilities, bike parking
- Rehab old mill building
- Liner buildings in front of Donelan’s plaza
- New development w/ housing over ground floor commercial space, but not too dense
- More restaurants and small shops & businesses
- Buildings up front, parking in the back
Area of Influence & Analysis

Informed By:
- Existing Zoning
- Aquifer & Water Resource District
- Existing Land Use

½ Mile Radius
Area of Influence
Area of Analysis
Project Status
Initial Tasks
(May 1, 2018 – June 30, 2018)

- MPIC Engagement
- Data Collection / Information Gathering
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Initial Redevelopment Scenarios
- Market Analysis

Recent Tasks
(June 30, 2018 - Present)

1. Public Workshop (July 17, 2018)
2. Refined Redevelopment Scenarios
3. Economic Impact
4. Initial Zoning Analysis
5. Plan Development
Scenarios
Goals of Scenario Planning

• Decision making tool for the public to evaluate the qualitative aspects of multiple potential futures
• Compare potential futures under existing regulations and different mixes of regulatory changes
• Build consensus around one scenario that best represents the intent of the community
• Provide options for an improved public realm through zoning
• “Right-size” zoning changes to balance feasibility of desired public benefits
Littleton Common Scenario Planning

What is the Master Plan Vision for the Common?

Consider allowing Additional Height for Residential Use to Incentivize Redevelopment

Reduce Parking Ratios for Retail, Office, Residential

Encourage Shared Parking and Access at Side or Behind Buildings

Allow Greater Impervious Surface Ratio (up to 80%)

Allow Expansions and/or Extensions of Historic Buildings

Encourage Retail at Street Front

Encourage On-Street Parking

Reduce Setback from 25’ to 10’ or 0’

Allow Aggregate Parcels

Match Context where Appropriate

Conant Store (Mixed-Use, 1.5 FAR)
Scenario Methodology

1. Locate the “Soft Sites”
2. Test the Soft Sites Under Scenario Constraints
3. Assess Viability of Redevelopment
4. Quantitative & Qualitative Comparison
Testing Alternative Character Outcomes

Soft Site Factors
- Building Density
- Historic Buildings & Districts
- Building Age
- Underutilization
- Ownership

Renovation Sites
Appropriate for reuse through renovation

Soft Sites

Area of Analysis
Visualizing the Scenarios

Sample Area

Site Selection Reasons:

- Difficult sizes and shapes (e.g., narrow and small)
- Variety is readily translatable to other sites
- Contiguous cluster all front Great Rd
- Most Underutilized
- Situated between small scales to the north (e.g., historic houses) and large scales to the south (e.g., Donelan’s)

Renovation Sites
Appropriate for reuse through renovation

Soft Sites

Area of Analysis
Location of Sample Area

- Vacant
- Subway
- Gulf Gas Station
- Northern Bank
- Bank of America
- Historic House
- Citizen’s Bank + Drive-Thru
Existing Conditions

Banks, Gas Stations, Small Retail, and Vacant Buildings
Scenarios 01 (without Sewer) and Scenario 02 (with Sewer)

Testing How Redevelopment Would Appear in the Future – Similar to Existing Conditions

Existing Zoning

- Up to 3 Stories Allowed
- Up to 0.6 FAR Allowed
- Setbacks:
  - 25’ from Street
  - 15’ from Side/Back
- Parking Ratios:
  - 6.67 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail
  - 4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office
  - 1.5 spaces / dwelling unit
Scenarios 03 – Version 01 “Side-By-Side”
Mixed Uses - Promoting a Walkable Common with Residential

Some Zoning Changes
- Up to **4 Stories** Allowed (from 3 Stories)
- Up to **0.9 FAR** Allowed (from 0.6 FAR)
- **Setbacks:**
  - 10' from Street (from 25')
  - 5-10' from Side/Back (from 15')
- **Parking Ratios:**
  - 4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail (from 6.67)
  - 3.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office (from 4.0)
  - 1.25 spaces / dwelling unit (from 1.5)
**Scenarios 03 Revised** (Combined “side-by-side” and “stacked”)

Mixed Uses - Promoting a Walkable Common with Residential

Some Zoning Changes
- **Up to 4 Stories Allowed** (from 3 Stories, *4 only if commercial use at ground fl)
- **Up to 0.9 FAR Allowed** (from 0.6 FAR)
- **Setbacks:**
  - **10’** from Street (from 25’)
  - **5-10’** from Side/Back (from 15’)

**Parking Ratios:**
- **4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail** (from 6.67)
- **3.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office** (from 4.0)
- **1.25 spaces / dwelling unit** (from 1.5)

**Diverse roofscapes**
**Office in historic reuse buildings**
**Office over retail use**
**3 stories multifamily**
**Office next to retail use**

4 stories allowed only if commercial use at ground floor
Scenario 03 – Some Zoning Changes

Town Example: Concord

Town Example: Stockbridge
Scenarios 04 – More Zoning Changes

Mixed Use – Walkable with More Street Activity, Residential Plus Senior Housing

More Zoning Changes

• Up to **4 Stories** Allowed (from 3 Stories)
• Up to **1.2 FAR** Allowed (from 0.6 FAR)

• **Setbacks:**
  • **10’** from Street (from **25’**)
  • **5-10’** from Side/Back (from **15’**)

• **Parking Ratios:**
  • **2.0** spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail (from **6.67**)
  • **2.0** spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office (from **4.0**)
  • **1.0** spaces / dwelling unit (from **1.5**)

Legend:
- Retail
- Residential
- Office
- Parcel Line
- Bldg Setback Line
Scenario 04 - More Zoning Changes

**Extensive Zoning Changes**

**Height and Density:**
- Up to **4 Stories** Allowed (from 3 Stories)
- Up to **1.2 FAR** Allowed (from 0.6 FAR)

**Setbacks:**
- 10’ from Street (from 25’)
- 5-10’ from Side / Back (from 15’)

**Parking Ratios:**
- 2.0 spaces / 1000 sf of Leasable Retail (from 6.67)
- 2.0 spaces / 1000 sf of Leasable Office (from 4.0)
- 1.0 spaces / Dwelling Unit (from 1.5)
**Scenario Summary**

### Existing Condition

- Up to 3 Stories Allowed
- Up to 0.6 FAR Allowed
- 25' Setback from Street
- Parking Ratios:
  - 6.67 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail
  - 4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office
  - 1.5 spaces / dwelling unit

### Scenario 01 / 02

- Up to 4 Stories Allowed
- Up to 0.9 FAR Allowed
- Setback Adjustments
- Some Parking Relief:
  - 4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail
  - 3.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office
  - 1.25 spaces / dwelling unit

### Scenario 03 Revised

- Up to 4 Stories Allowed*
  (*4 only if commercial at ground floor)
- Up to 0.9 FAR Allowed
- Setback Adjustments
- Some Parking Relief:
  - 4.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail
  - 3.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office
  - 1.25 spaces / dwelling unit

### Scenario 04

- Up to 4 Stories Allowed
- Up to 1.2 FAR Allowed
- Setback Adjustments
- Greater Parking Relief:
  - 2.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable retail
  - 2.0 spaces / 1000 sf of leasable office
  - 1.0 spaces / dwelling unit

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*Zoning Changes*
- No change to zoning
- Scenario 2 may allow for Higher Diversity of Business Types with Sewering

*Zoning Changes*
- Some Increase in:
  - Allowed building height
  - Allowed Density

*Zoning Changes*
- Some Increase in:
  - Allowed Building Height
  - Allowed Density

*Zoning Changes*
- Additional Increase in:
  - Allowed Density

*Zoning Changes*
- Additional Parking Decrease
Great Road Street Section – Existing
Great Road Street Section – Option A
Mirrored Bike Lane, Raised Sidewalk, and Added Street Trees
Littleton Common Scenario Planning

Great Road Street Section – Option B
Parallel Parking, Planting Buffer, and Raised Bike Lanes
Feedback Received

- Connected/shared parking
- Building design
- Mixed-use: scenario 2
- Mixed-use: scenario 3
- Mixed-use: scenario 4
- More businesses
- Senior housing
- Pedestrian/traffic improvements
- Green infrastructure
- Greenspaces: parks, playgrounds
Form-Based Code
What is Form-Based Code?

Regulates land development by using physical form - rather than separation of uses - as the organizing principle for a zoning code with the goal of fostering predictable built results and a high-quality public realm.

Source: Steve Price, Urban Advantage.
## Form-Based Vs. Euclidean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Euclidean</th>
<th>FBC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>Segregates Uses</td>
<td>Physical form and relationship to surrounding uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mixed-Use</strong></td>
<td>Allows</td>
<td>Pin-points &amp; Illustrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flexibility</strong></td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Allows for design innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>Site</td>
<td>Site, street &amp; landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Neighborhood</strong></td>
<td>Uniformity</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Planning/Zoning Review</td>
<td>By-right</td>
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Why Form-Based Code?

This...

Or That...

The Planning Board shall consider the following additional design criteria in conducting Site Plan Review for the projects in the Village Common zoning district. The Planning Board may adopt additional Design Guidelines to advance the goals of the Village Common.

A. Design Goals. Buildings and renovations shall be of a design similar to or compatible with traditional architecture in the Town of Littleton in terms of scale, massing, roof shape, spacing and exterior materials. The design standards are intended to promote quality development consistent with the Town’s sense of history, human scale and pedestrian-oriented village character.

B. Building Scale. The size and detailing of buildings shall reflect the community preference for moderate-scale structures that resemble homes or barns, and do not resemble "big box shopping centers." New buildings and/or substantial alterations shall incorporate features to add visual interest while reducing the appearance of bulk or mass. Such features include varied facades, rooflines, roof heights, materials, and details such as brick chimneys or shutters. Buildings shall relate to the pedestrian scale by:

- Including appropriate architectural details to add visual interest along the ground floor of all facades that face streets, squares, pedestrian pathways, parking lots, or other significant pedestrian spaces.
- Arterials the base, middle, and top of the facade separated by cornices, string cornices, step-backs or other similar features.
- Continual lengths of flat, blank walls adjacent to streets, pedestrian pathways, or open spaces shall not be permitted.

C. Roof Form. New construction, including new development above existing buildings and/or substantial alterations, shall incorporate gables or other traditional pitched roof forms which will be consistent with the historic architecture of the Town of Littleton. Flat roofs are discouraged.

Mechanical equipment located on roofs shall be screened, organized and designed as a component of the roof design, and not appear to be a leftover or add-on element.

D. Entrances. All primary commercial and residential building entrances shall be visible from the right-of-way and the sidewalk, and shall have an entrance directly accessible from the sidewalk.

Doors shall not extend beyond the exterior facade into pedestrian pathways.

E. External Materials and Appearance. Predominant wall materials shall have the appearance of wood, brick or stone painted or cost in a (natural) raw metallic finish. Cladding materials should be consistent on all facades with the exception of special design elements such as gables or dormers.

Arrows and canopies shall be compatible with the architectural style of the building. Colors and patterns used for arrows and canopies shall be subdued and compatible with existing materials on adjacent buildings.
Why use w/in the Common?
Why use w/in the Common?

- Consider allowing Additional Height for Residential Use to Incentivize Redevelopment
- Reduce Parking Ratios for Retail, Office, Residential
- Encourage Shared Parking and Access at Side or Behind Buildings
- Allow Greater Impervious Surface Ratio (up to 80%)
- Allow Expansions and/or Extensions of Historic Buildings
- Match Context where Appropriate
- Encourage Retail at Street Front
- Encourage On-Street Parking
- Reduce Setback from 25' to 10' or 0'
- Allow Aggregate Parcels
FBC Components

1. Form-Based Zoning Code: a separate Article to be incorporated into the existing Zoning Code or a Separate Zoning Ordinance can be developed.
FBC Components

2. Regulating Plan: district-specific plan to illustrate mixed-uses
FBC Components

3. Regulations:
   a. Building Form
   b. Streetscape and Open Space

5.20 STANDARDS SPECIFIC TO FRONTAGES

5.20.070 SHOPFRONT STANDARDS

A. Description and Intent

1. Description. The shopfront is the storefront type for buildings with ground floor commercial retail uses. Large openings are inserted along ground level facades and filled with transparent windows. Depending on the zone, streets or all of the facade is to the front or at the property line. The building entrance is at sidewalk grade and provides direct access to ground floor commercial retail uses. The basic architectural elements comprising the shopfront are large windows, doors with glass, clerestory glass and a solid face (built-out). Optional elements include awnings, cornices, raised cornice or cornice, lighting and canopies. Awnings, sheds, roofs, or canopies may extend into the public right-of-way and cover the sidewalk within a few feet of the curb.

Landscaping may be provided in tree pockets or planter boxes at the building facade as allowed by the zone.

Signage may be located a variety of places ranging from the curbside and wall to street level. In addition, signs that project over the sidewalk as well as sidewalk signs not as allowed by the zone.

2. Examples of Intended Physical Character. The following examples are illustrative of the range of physical characteristics for the shopfront type in the zones allowed by this Code.

   Above. Example of large windows that extend to display a wide variety of merchandise and to let in natural light. Further detail of the store, office or restaurant.

   Above. Example of using available window space by recessing the entry between flanking shopfronts while removing windows and connecting with the sidewalk.

   Above. Shopfronts can always display even up to a maximum of 42 inches from the sidewalk grade.

   Above. Shopfront windows receive the grade of the sidewalk and are larger than windows located higher on the facade.

B. Design Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.20.070 SHOPFRONT STANDARDS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shopfront facades are subject to the following, as applicable:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Height (m)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
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<td>2.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.80</td>
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- The horizontal area of the facade shall be between 2.0 and 7.5 square meters.
- The horizontal area of the facade shall be between 150 and 800 square meters.

- Shopfront doors shall extend along facades per C.3. of the code standards.

- Shopfront windows may have glazing elements.

- Stained glass windows shall be clear without reflective glass treatments or die-stamping.

- Shopfront windows shall not exceed 50% of width.

- Shopfronts shall provide at least 1.8 meters of vertical clearance along sidewalks.

- Awnings and canopies shall extend into the public right-of-way up to a few feet from the adjacent curb line.

- The design of awnings, canopies shall be consistent with the design and style of the building.
Discussion

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