

Welcome, my name is Jennifer Glass, I am on the Select Board and a member of the Housing Choice Act Working Group. The forums we had earlier this month were focused on the language of the zoning bylaw that we are voting on at Town Meeting, and which the Planning Board finalized on Monday, February 26th. This forum is focused entirely on the design guidelines that accompany the zoning. The forum has 2 purposes: First, we want to make sure people understand the scope of the guidelines, and second, we want to get your suggestions for making them better.

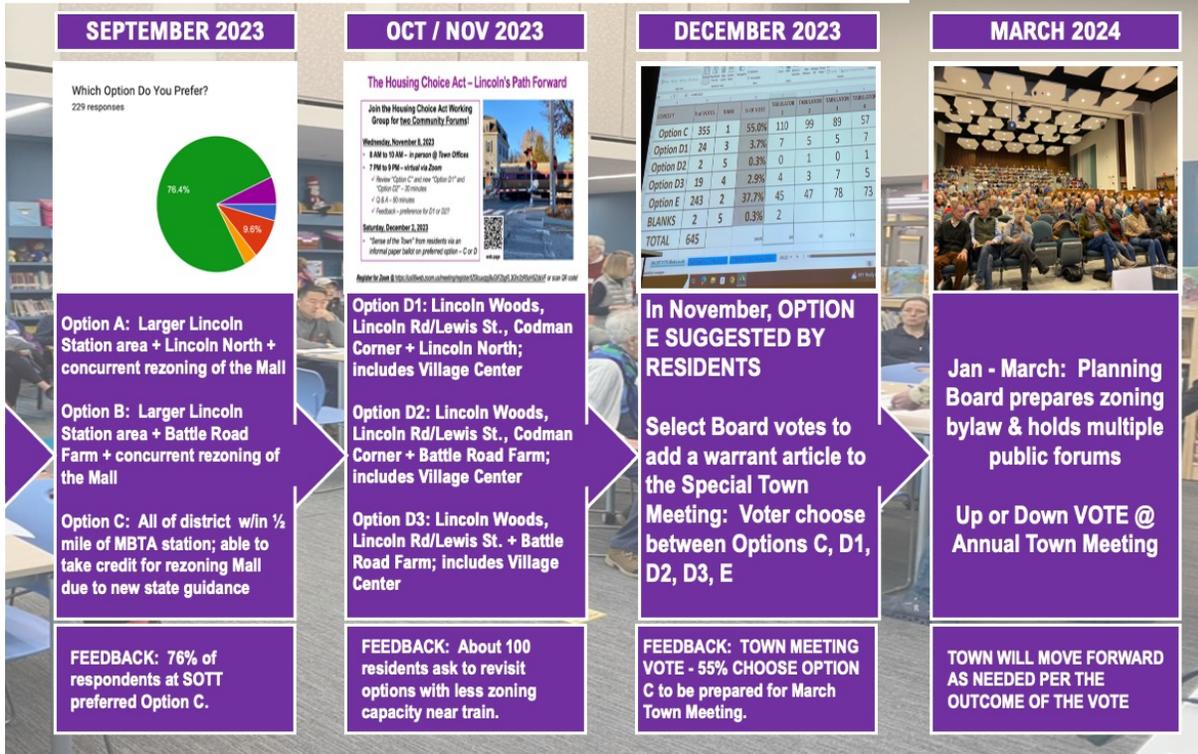


**Next Rural Land Foundation Community Forum:
Thursday, February 29th @ 7:00pm via Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86201633891?pwd=NGU0QkIHU2VDOUIrY1VZK2V1Q1A5dz09>

Meeting ID: 862 0163 3891; Passcode: 940342

Residents Shape the Process!



- Before we get to the design guidelines, I want to take a moment to address some of the questions we have heard. One set of questions essentially boils down to "Are you listening?" and the answer is yes!
- For a couple of decades before the Housing Choice law was signed, there have been conversations and studies about ways to sustain the Mall area, including ways to rezone the area to allow more housing and support commercial activity.
- Over the past two years, the work of the Housing Choice Act Working Group has built upon those earlier conversations. For example, we chose not to include some properties near the train station that currently offer more moderately priced rental units, fearing it would put these middle-income housing options at risk.

Residents Shape the Process!

SEPTEMBER 2023

Which Option Do You Prefer?
229 responses

Option A: Larger Lincoln Station area + Lincoln North + concurrent rezoning of the Mall

Option B: Larger Lincoln Station area + Battle Road Farm + concurrent rezoning of the Mall

Option C: All of district w/in 1/2 mile of MBTA station; able to take credit for rezoning Mall due to new state guidance

FEEDBACK: 76% of respondents at SOTT preferred Option C.

OCT / NOV 2023

The Housing Choice Act – Lincoln's Path Forward

Join the Housing Choice Act Working Group for Two Community Forums!

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

- 8 AM to 10 AM – in person @ Town Offices
- 7 PM to 9 PM – virtual via Zoom
- Review "Option C" and new "Option D1" and "Option D2" – 30 minutes
- Q & A – 30 minutes
- Feedback preferences by 5:00 PM 2023

Starting December 2, 2023

*Some of the "New" town residents via an informal paper ballot or preference option - C or D

Option D1: Lincoln Woods, Lincoln Rd/Lewis St., Codman Corner + Lincoln North; includes Village Center

Option D2: Lincoln Woods, Lincoln Rd/Lewis St., Codman Corner + Battle Road Farm; includes Village Center

Option D3: Lincoln Woods, Lincoln Rd/Lewis St. + Battle Road Farm; includes Village Center

FEEDBACK: About 100 residents ask to revisit options with less zoning capacity near train.

DECEMBER 2023

OPTION	C	D1	D2	D3	E	TOTAL	
Option C	355	1	55.0%	110	99	89	57
Option D1	24	3	3.7%	7	5	5	7
Option D2	2	5	0.3%	0	1	0	1
Option D3	19	4	2.9%	4	3	7	5
Option E	243	2	37.7%	45	47	78	73
BLANKS	2	5	0.3%				2
TOTAL	645						

In November, OPTION E SUGGESTED BY RESIDENTS

Select Board votes to add a warrant article to the Special Town Meeting: Voter choose between Options C, D1, D2, D3, E

FEEDBACK: TOWN MEETING VOTE - 55% CHOOSE OPTION C to be prepared for March Town Meeting.

MARCH 2024

Jan - March: Planning Board prepares zoning bylaw & holds multiple public forums

Up or Down VOTE @ Annual Town Meeting

TOWN WILL MOVE FORWARD AS NEEDED PER THE OUTCOME OF THE VOTE

- When the working group began public outreach last June, we proposed two options that put about 40% of the zoned units near the train station, and about 60% either at Battle Road Farm & Lincoln North OR at The Commons & Oriole Landing.
- The feedback we heard was “This law is aimed at transit-oriented housing, so please develop an option that zones more of the units near the train.” We also heard that rezoning The Commons could be complicated, and we heard a range of views from residents at Battle Road Farm about rezoning Lincoln North.
- As a result, we developed 2 options that put roughly 70 -75% of the zoned units near the train, eliminated The Commons & Oriole Landing, and included either Battle Road Farm or Lincoln North.
- We had always planned to rezone the Mall as part of this process, and after a state rule change, we incorporated those plans into a new option that put all of the zoned units near the train. At the September State of the Town Meeting, we presented Options A, B, and C, and received

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- But at State of the Town and in the days afterwards, we also started hearing from residents that they would like us to revisit the options with less zoning near the train.
- So, during the month of October, we developed 3 options that offered between about 65 to 80% of the zoning near the train with the rest in the north of town.
- In November, the Select Board decided to let the town weigh in by putting the options to a vote at the December Special Town Meeting. Also, the Housing choice working group voted to recommended that a fifth option that had been proposed by residents be added to those developed by the working group.
- At the December town meeting, a system was in place to hold a series of votes until one of the 5 options received at least 50% of the vote, with the explicit expectation that whichever option was chosen would be prepared for the up or down vote we will be taking at the March Town Meeting. At the Meeting and in the first round of voting, 55% of voters chose Option C in a secret ballot.
- Since then, the Planning Board has finalized the zoning

How Public Input Has Shaped the Bylaw

- **Maximum Density**
 - Resident questions about maximum unit capacity on properties with a lot of wetlands resulted in a conversation with the state and substantially lowered units/acre maximums:
 - Lincoln Woods: 20 units/acre to 8 units/acre
 - Codman Road: 18 units/acre to 10 units/acre
 - Lewis Street/Lincoln Road: 18 units/acre to 11 units/acre
- **Building Footprint + Parking Limit**
 - In all subdistricts except the Village Center, no more than 50% of the site may be covered by the building footprint + parking. (This limit does not exist in our default single-family home zoning.)
- **Village Center Subdistrict:**
 - **Building Height:** Resident feedback limited maximum height to 42' in mixed use buildings.
 - **Maximum Stories:** The Special Permit allowing a 4th story and 48' feet in height was removed from the zoning.
 - **Commercial Space:** Bylaw requires 33% commercial space; community input removed threshold of 45,000 SF in order to waive 33% requirement.
 - Added new requirements to grant a Special Permit to alleviate existing commercial space requirements. Documentation of significant periods of vacancy or non-payment of rent, and an independent study required.



- Beyond the process, public feedback has also shaped the language of the zoning bylaw.
- **Maximum density:** We had a few residents who dug deeply into the state's model and asked good questions about how unit capacity is calculated on properties with a high percentage of wetlands. This led our consultant to press the state and to fine tune the calculations. This meant we could reduce the maximum densities in the Lincoln Woods, Codman Road, and Lewis Street/Lincoln Road subdistricts.
- There were concerns about losing green space, especially in the Codman Road subdistrict, so we added a rule that limits the total area that can be occupied by a building + parking. A rule that does not exist in our current residential zoning.
- And in the Village Center, resident feedback led the Planning Board to remove the special permit for a 4th story and additional height up to 48'.
- Also, in an effort to balance different opinions, provisions have been put in place that protect the current amount of commercial space while giving the RLF flexibility based on economic conditions.
- As a reminder, the design guidelines are referenced in the zoning by-law, this is what gives them teeth.

Other Community Questions

- **Is there a way to protect important trees? Yes!**
 - MA General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 87 outlines the powers of the Tree Warden and governs removal & planting of public shade trees.
 - M.G.L. Chapter 40, Section 15C adds additional requirements for trees on Scenic Roads.
 - Lincoln Site Plan Review requires owners to identify all trees over 12" diameter for discussion
 - *Some towns have adopted additional protections, which Lincoln could consider.*
- **Traffic Study: A traffic study was completed just before the pandemic; posted on the HCAWG web page.**
- **Massing Study: RLF is showing massing studies for the only project currently under consideration; anything else makes assumptions about private property.**
- **Financial Analysis: Completed by the Finance Committee and presented at its last meeting; posted on FinCom & HCAWG web pages.**



- And finally, these are some of the other questions we have heard over the past couple of months.
- One has been about the protection of trees. There are currently two sections of Massachusetts General Law that protect trees that are in the public way. Some other towns have adopted additional rules to protect trees during construction or those of a certain size, and that is something we could consider at a future town meeting.
- There is a traffic study that looked at the addition of up to 270 units of housing and concluded that there would be minimal impact on traffic during peak times of day.
- There has been a request for a massing study for a full build out, but it requires too many assumptions about private property over time to be relevant. The work the RLF is doing now is an important massing study for their proposal at the Mall.
- And finally, the Finance Committee conducted a financial analysis and concluded that there is most likely a small net financial positive from the addition of housing over time. That information is posted on the HCAWG website.

Design Guidelines Principles – All Districts

- Promote the area around the MBTA station as a vibrant commercial area
- Encourage increased opportunity to live in the village center
- Enhance connectivity to the commuter rail station and roadside path/trail network
- Ensure new buildings are in keeping with the scale and context of the area

Zoned Units = 648

Delta w/Existing Units = 463

Modeled Density = 15.3 U/A

“unlikely” units to be developed = 262

“under discussion” + “possible over time” = 386



- Here is the map of our Housing Choice 3A District.
- Goal: Ensure new buildings are in keeping with the scale and character appropriate for a village center and support the high quality of design and connection to the outdoors that Lincoln values.



Design Guidelines: Open Space & Building Placement

- Open space is a valued asset in Lincoln
- Buildings should relate to the landscape
- If more than one building on the site, group to have a meaningful relationship to each other
- Front setbacks are a visual amenity

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Goal: A thoughtful site layout can create welcoming spaces, encourage walking and pedestrian activity, support healthy and vibrant retail districts, and ensure that new development contributes to the creation of a neighborhood and feels like an integral part of existing neighborhoods.

Design Guidelines: Sidewalks & Parking

- **Roadside paths and trails = important Lincoln asset**
- **Buildings should connect to a sidewalk or path**
- **Safe, accessible travel by foot to the MBTA station and retail**
- **Parking should be planned to have minimal visual impact**
- **Minimize curb cuts to reduce asphalt, promote safety, and improve aesthetics**



The parking should have a minimal visual impact while encouraging commercial activity in mixed use areas.
The design guidelines direct parking to the sides and back of buildings while keeping flexibility for individual sites and properties.

Design Guidelines: Pedestrian and Bike Connectivity



- **Projects should enhance connectivity both internally and externally**
- **Sidewalks and paths should foster comfort, safety and accessibility**
- **All sidewalks and paths must be a minimum of five feet wide for strictly pedestrian use and 6'-10' for shared use paths.**

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The design of sidewalks and paths should promote and encourage walking and biking. Connectivity should be a defining feature of the Center area and should be included along all streets. Pedestrian paths and sidewalks within the site shall connect with those of adjacent developments and with adjacent Town trails.



Design Guidelines: Landscape

- Landscape should be intentional and be a visual asset to the neighborhood.
- Landscape shall incorporate best practices for storm water management and use Green infrastructure techniques
- Only non-invasive plants are permitted. Native plants and drought tolerant plants are strongly encouraged

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- Site Plan review currently and will continue to include
 - Limit of work
 - Documenting all trees with a diameter above 12" that will be removed
 - Storm water management
 - Lighting – in the zoning bylaw
 - All plantings and hardscape
- State law allows us to hire independent professionals, charging the cost back to the developer, to review various aspects of the plan. The planning board routinely requires independent review for large projects
- The planning board has a site plan review checklist that is updated from time to time. The checklist will be added to the HCA page soon.
- State law supports

**Guidelines:
Massing**

**new
within context
built environment
should complement
existing structures
varied heights & step-
up massing
early visible and
distinctive pathways
building entries can provide
transition from outdoor to**



Goal: Architectural elements such as varied heights, bays, or step-backs can be used to reinforce the scale, massing, and proportions of the Center's established forms of development. A hierarchy of details and forms can draw the eye to important building elements, bringing the building to a human scale and reducing the appearance of height and bulk.



Design Guidelines: Articulation & Windows

- Articulated façades provide visual interest
- Blank walls must be $\leq 20'$
- Expanses more than 50' must be broken into bays or articulation to reduce massing
- All windows must be transparent



Goal: Building articulation is the way in which various building elements and details come together to form a cohesive whole. In a well-articulated building, the various façade elements are used to reinforce human-scale proportions and reduce the visual impact of larger building massing.



Lewis Street / Lincoln Road Subdistrict Possible Multi-Family Housing Types

Adaptive reuse of buildings is encouraged! In the top you can see an older one-story brick building that has been adapted to be part of a new building. On the top left you see a single-family home that was converted into multiple condos.



Here you see a number of multi-family building types that are consistent with our design guidelines: there is articulation, a variety of architecture, and an appealing streetscape.



**Lincoln Woods
District:
Family**

- **Parking is allowed on interior roads per the approved site plan.**
- **The front yard is the front setback as measured from the front lot line on Lincoln Road.**

Lincoln Woods is an example of how Site Plan Review might shape a project. The parking was allowed on the interior roads because it made sense with the layout and design.



Design Guidelines: Mixed-Use Buildings

- In a mixed-use building minimum 12' first story to ground building
- Parking on side or in rear; or as approved by site plan review
- Orientation of building should be to the street
- Entrances to upper floor(s) separate from retail entrances



- Our goal is to maintain the existing commercial space at the Mall. 33% of gross square footage of all the buildings on the lot must be commercial.
- Outdoor spaces in mixed use buildings should be a public amenity – inviting spaces that contribute to the sense of a neighborhood

Design Guidelines: Outdoor Spaces

- Front setbacks must be designed to be a public amenity
- All new developments should include accessible public space such as restaurant seating, public gathering space, and street furniture.
- Public access should be clearly communicated



Here you see some example amenities. The upper left photo shows the greenspace at the mall, and the others show different ways of creating gathering spaces and outdoor seating.



**Design Guidelines:
Examples for Village
Center**

- Façades of ground floor retail facing Lincoln Road and primary access road must be at least 60% transparent.
- Ground floor windows must be at least 5 feet tall.

All windows in all buildings must be clear glass.
The design guidelines require that 60% of the façade of the ground floor of a mixe- use building be transparent.



Design Guidelines: Examples in Village Center

- **Parking** – Majority should be screened from Lincoln Road; parking plan per Site Plan Review (most parking in the back preferred)
- **Bicycles** – prominent parking visible from main building entrance; shared bicycle parking facility for multiple tenants encouraged

Design Guidelines: Miscellaneous

- **Public Directional Signage** – should follow current town signage design
- **Outdoor Displays** – must be approved by the Planning Board
- **Bicycle Racks** are required
- **Sustainability** is required through the Town's Specialized Stretch Code and Ten Town Pilot Program.



The design guidelines are referenced in the zoning bylaw – the board can and will enforce them just it enforces the existing site plan review requirements found in our Site Plan Review checklist.

Breakout Session – 10 minutes for 10 words

In 10 or fewer words: What do you hope the design guidelines will achieve? (write your answers on your index card)

Possible examples:

“Safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists; include public gathering spaces.”

“Maximum commercial parking; varied architecture; protect big trees.”



Thank you! Questions?