

To: Belmont Planning Board
From: Belmont Housing Trust
Date: August 16, 2018
Re: South Pleasant Zoning

Recommendation: Create an overlay district rather than simply changing the zoning to LB1.

Features would include:

- Making the following uses allowable: multi-family, assisted living, and mixed-use development; including a boutique hotel or one for short-term stays, potentially as part of a mixed-use building.
- Offering increased density and height to developers, and perhaps reduced parking requirements in exchange for additional affordable housing units and/or affordability reaching to 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or even 30% of AMI.
- Design and site plan review, and possibly special permits for bonuses around density, height, and parking.

In considering the creation of an overlay district for South Pleasant Street, the Planning Board should consider creating a 40R district. The state's Chapter 40R program provides financial incentives for communities that create zoning overlay districts that encourage smart growth housing development, including as-of-right density of at least 8-20 homes per acre, are located near transportation or town centers, and include affordable homes. Communities with qualifying 40R districts receive a:

- One time Zoning Incentive Payment of \$10,000 - \$60,000 for adopting the overlay district. The range depends on the increase in as-of-right units as a result of the 40R overlay over previous zoning;
- A \$3,000 per unit payment when building permits are issued;
- Potential school reimbursement funding under Chapter 40S if there is an increase in students due to the homes that are developed in the 40R district;
- More favorable consideration for state discretionary grant programs; and
- Consideration of the 40R zoning if the community opposes a project application under Chapter 40B.¹

While 40R districts have an affordability requirement of 20%, 22 of the 44 districts created across the Commonwealth require 25% affordability to provide more affordable housing opportunities and to maximize their count on the state's Subsidized Housing Inventory.²

¹ Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, *2018 Update: The Use of Chapter 40R in Massachusetts*, 2018, page 6.

² Citizens' Housing and Planning Association, *2018 Update: The Use of Chapter 40R in Massachusetts*, 2018, page 9.