

February 11, 2009

PROPOSED REGULATORY CODE FOR WAVERLEY SQUARE

Outline and Draft Content

Purpose of Code

Vision:

Waverley Square is an historic center and an historic neighborhood with many reminders defining its place as a neighborhood center, with the streets, trolleys, buildings and places for shopping and services. This vision predicts the Square will be recreated with all the functionality and qualities that will redefine its place as a premier neighborhood, commercial and civic center. The future Square will become a center for neighborhood pride through reinvigoration of the existing buildings and new high-quality buildings that maintain the historic qualities and provide needed goods and services. The regional train station will be integrated into the fabric of the Square rather than remain a focal point. The streets will become more accessible for walking and biking, and open spaces will be expanded and improved to accommodate public interaction, use and enjoyment of the Square.

Goal:

Sustain and Enhance Waverley Square

Objectives:

Certain aspects of the Square must be maintained, particularly;

- Residential neighborhoods
- Residential nature of the side streets
- Clean public transit
- Historic building character
- Mixed used commercial center
- Landscape views; particularly of the Wellington Hill ridgeline

Certain aspects should be enhanced, particularly;

- Pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Mix of uses
- Relationship with the McLean properties
- Community spaces
- Character of development and buildings
- Managed parking
- Sustainable design

Specific steps include:

- Not only protecting the residential neighborhoods, but improving their value through maintenance of the streets, management of on-street parking and through traffic, and supporting development within the commercial Square.

Street Code

- Improving and expanding street-level spaces that can actually be used by people.
- Designing commercial development with design and performance standards that recognize a unique location.
- Defining the building envelopes for new construction and then further refining the standards for the character of buildings and spaces.
- Encouraging structured parking for greater efficiency in use of available spaces and to support adjacent uses.

Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Strategies

Zoning:

1. Create a new district overlay for the commercial areas.
2. Allow mixed use in the form of any possible mix of commercial uses and residential [the latter above street level on the major streets]
3. Require retail and active uses on the major street frontages.
4. Add form-based regulation, design guidelines, and performance standards specific for the commercial blocks.
5. Articulate buildings with projections, recesses, material changes, cornices, parapets, and varying rooflines to avoid monolithic building forms
6. Set new height limits by feet and stories that relate to the massing diagram with stepped elevations.
7. Add building stepbacks for blocks with the largest buildings as a transition from adjacent blocks.
8. Require shared parking when possible

Parking (non-zoning):

1. Encourage shared parking
2. Create additional off-street parking
3. Requirements or sticker program for resident parking

Street Infrastructure (mitigation):

1. Create a pedestrian-friendly sidewalk and street crossing system.
2. Provide bicycle lanes
3. Increase utilization of the trolley

Design Guidelines:

1. Articulate buildings with projections, recesses, material changes, parapets, cornices, varying roof heights and lines.
2. Design buildings with clearly defined base, middle and roofline.
3. Add special features to create unique buildings and sites, such as atria, cupolas and gabled roofs.
4. Use stepbacks or upper floor terraces to further articulate the buildings.
5. Base height and stepbacks on the visibility of Wellington Hill ridgeline (McLean Hospital).
6. Add distinctive building bases and include a high percentage of glass for storefronts.
7. Sustainable design (Green Factor?)