

**TOWN OF BELMONT
PLANNING BOARD**

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**PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON THE SR-C ZONING DISTRICTS
November 17, 2015**

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Present: Elisabeth Allison, Chair; Barbara Fiacco, Vice Chair, Joseph DeStefano; Karl Haglund; Raffi Manjikian

Staff: Jeffrey Wheeler, Office of Community Development

7:00 p.m. Meeting called to order

Ms. Allison reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on what is occurring in the Single Residence C Zoning Districts. Mr. DeStefano highlighted the potential zoning amendments.

A discussion amongst the audience members and the Board followed the presentation. The discussion followed the outline of the potential amendments.

- Reduce height: All comments were positive.
- Require front setback to be average of buildings on either side: Brief discussion about how different setbacks can be a nice change for a neighborhood and concern about too much uniformity was raised. All agreed, however, that this was an issue for neighborhoods with small lots as opposed to large lots, which can handle the different fluctuations in setbacks.
- Increase side setbacks: Question was raised about what this would mean for narrow, non-conforming lots. All agreed that this would require better design so that the house was not simply pushed back in a straight line like a railroad car.
- Limit location of outdoor mechanical equipment: All agreed to prohibit placement of mechanical equipment in the front yard. Some concern was raised about heat pumps, compressors, and other mechanical equipment that is recommended by MassSave and needs to be put outside in side yards. The Board agreed that this needed to be further researched. The audience did not have much awareness of the use of propane tanks.
- Definition of grade: Only a few positive comments were made.

A general discussion followed about grandfathering and the breadth of the Special Permit language. Many expressed concern with the equitable treatment of new structures and additions. All agreed that further education was needed regarding the legal threshold for granting a Special Permit - "more detrimental than the existing nonconforming structure."

A brief discussion occurred about the possibility of adding a sunset provision. The Board agreed to discuss this further.

8:45 p.m. Adjournment