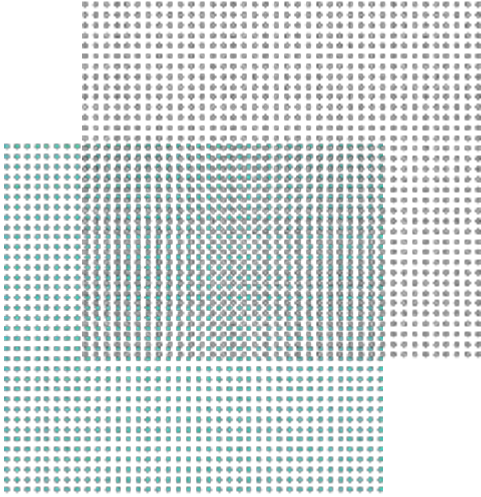




October 11, 2023

Public Input Session on Restaurant Zoning Bylaw Reform





Introduction and Welcome

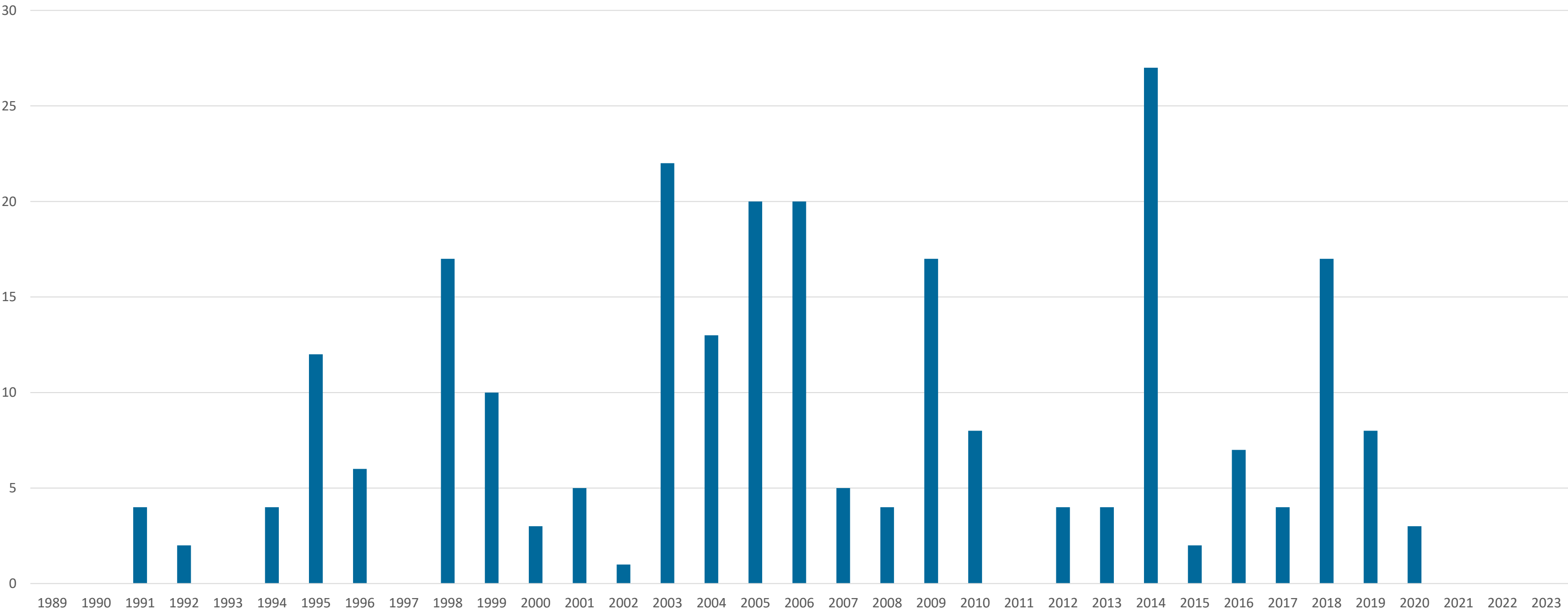
Belmont 1976 Local Growth Policy Statement

2:27 In what respects and for what reasons, is this "desired future" preferable?
To maintain the present status of Belmont as a desirable place to live. Being only 9 miles from downtown Boston it exists as an almost unique community with its tendency to resist apartment, commercial and industrial development.

The Current Belmont Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw was established in 1988, and has been amended 249 times since then



Amendment Counts to Belmont’s 1988 Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw



Source: Belmont Zoning Bylaw Amendment

This includes eleven changes focused solely on food service establishments in 2003 and 2010



2003 Changes at Special Town Meeting

1. Restaurant – replaced with a new definition (section 1.4)
2. Restaurant – Fast Food – inserted with a new definition (section 1.4)
3. Restaurant, Take Out – Inserted with a new definition (Section 1.4)
4. Catering Service – inserted with a new definition (section 1.4)
5. Restaurant Use Regulations – established current thresholds for use (section 3.3)
6. Restaurant, Fast Food – allowed by SP (section 3.3)
7. Restaurant, Take Out – Allowed by SP in LBII, LBIII, and GB (section 3.3)
8. Catering Service – established thresholds for use (section 3.3)

2010 Changes at Town Meeting

1. Outdoor Seasonal Dining – New Definition (section 1.4)
2. Patio – New Definition (section 1.4)
3. Restaurant – Exempt up to 20 outdoor seasonal seats when calculating parking requirements (section 5.1.2 d)

The EDC and VIC think our zoning bylaw amendment changes will enable Belmont to be seen as more business friendly



Private Sector Impact

1. **Business Opportunities**: Easier zoning laws for restaurants could attract more entrepreneurs to Belmont, providing residents with more dining options and creating competition, which often improves service and quality.
2. **Property Values**: Well-regulated, thriving business districts can enhance the overall appeal of the town, potentially increasing residential property values.
3. **Employment**: New businesses create jobs, which is a benefit not just for residents but also for students who may be looking for part-time work.
4. **Investor Attraction**: Simplifying zoning laws could make Belmont more attractive to external investors looking for stable and business-friendly environments.
5. **Consumer Choice**: For residents, this would mean a greater variety of dining and entertainment options without having to leave town.

And will also positively impact key aspects of Belmont's public sector services



Public Sector Impact

1. **Revenue Generation**: An active and diverse restaurant scene contributes to the local tax base, providing the town with additional revenue through property taxes, meals taxes, and other fees
2. **Planning and Development**: These zoning changes could make the town more attractive for future development projects, both commercial and mixed-use
3. **Public Services**: Increased business activity might require additional public services, like sanitation and public safety, but the cost could be offset by the increased revenue
4. **School Funding**: As mentioned, the changes could indirectly impact state aid for education, though the specifics would depend on a host of factors
5. **Community Development**: Thriving business districts could enable further public investments in infrastructure, parks, and community programs



Presentation of the Proposed Bylaw Changes

Fall: SB and Town Meeting Zoning Bylaw Amendment Adoption

- EDC and VIC – have unanimously endorsed both proposed warrant articles
- Town Day – Article 1-page distributed to members of the public and town meeting members
- Planning Board Presentation – September 19
- Business Community Engagement – Networking event October 3rd
- Planning Board Public Forum – October 10th – Recommending Favorable Action
- **Public Forum – EDC public forum – TONIGHT**
- Town Meeting – November 6, 8, and 13

Parking Description:

- This article would reduce the off-street parking requirement for restaurants from 1 space per two seats to 1 space per four seats

Formula-Based Food Service Establishments

- We aim to amend Section 1.4 Definitions and Appreciations, inserting new restaurant and food service establishment definitions and formula based establishments
- Second, we aim to amend Section 3.3 Schedule of Use Regulations to the new categories allowing food service establishments (restaurants and catering services) by right across all Belmont Business Districts. Formula Based Food Service Establishments would still require a special permit
- Lastly, we aim to amend Section 6 Special Regulations – Formula Based Food Service Establishments – allowing Belmont to categorize food service establishments (i.e. restaurants and catering services) as either formula based or non-formula based

Belmont Restaurant Openings and Closing Cadence



Closures						Year	Openings								
						2015 -	Spoodles Soup Factory	Phinix Grill - Nov	<div>Belmont has added a net +5 restaurants since 2015</div>						
						2016 -1	Shine's - Oct								
						2017 +2	Black Bear Café (Belmont Books) - July	CLC Café - Sept							
						2018 -	The Wellington - June								
Kashish - July	Seta's Café - Sept	The Loading Dock - Nov	CLC Café - Nov	Tropical Diner - Oct	Phinix Grill - Jan	2019 +1	Sweetheart - Jan	Spice Delight - Jan	Lisa's Pizza - Feb	Tropical Diner - Feb	Thai Noodle Café - May	The Vintage Tea and Cake Co - July	Jamaica' Jeff's - Oct		
						2020									
						2021 +2	La Victoria Taqueria - Feb	Trinktisch - Feb	Café Vanak - Nov						
						2022 -1	Ovenbird Café - March								
						2023 +2	Tatte - Aug	Hanami - Sept							

Belmont has added a net +5 restaurants since 2015



Public Comments and Questions



Appendix

Article XX Food Service Establishments Text (#1)



Article XX. Food Service Establishments

1. Amend Section 1.4 Definitions and Abbreviations as follows:

A. By Deleting the following definitions in their entirety:

Catering Service - An establishment that prepares, serves, and supplies food in large quantities to be delivered and consumed off premises. Deliveries of food products occur on a regular basis.

Restaurant - An establishment at which the principal activity is the preparation, service, and sales of food for consumption on the premises

Restaurant, Fast Food - An establishment whose primary business is the sale of food for consumption on the premises which is: (a) primarily intended for immediate consumption rather than for use as an ingredient or component of meals; (b) available upon a short waiting time; (c) packaged or presented in such a manner that it can be readily eaten outside the premises where it is sold; (d) which, because of the nature of the operation sells large volumes of food; but not including drive-up windows

Restaurant, Take Out - An establishment whose primary business is the sale of food for consumption off the premises which is: (a) primarily intended for immediate consumption rather than for use as an ingredient or component of meals; (b) available upon a short waiting time; (c) packaged or presented in such a manner that it can be readily eaten outside the premises where it is sold; (d) which, because of the nature of the operation sells large volumes of food; (e) commonly generates a large volume of vehicular traffic, but not including drive-up windows

B. by adding the following definitions in alphabetical Order:

Food Service Establishment, Formula Based A Food Service Establishment that conforms or substantially conforms to a set of common design and operating features that serve to identify the establishment as one of a group of establishments for business, marketing, or public relations purposes. A Food Service Establishment shall be considered a Formula Based Food Service Establishment if it shares at least two (2) of the following three (3) characteristics with ten (10) or more other establishments worldwide (regardless of ownership or location)”:

1. Trademark, service mark or logo, defined as a word, phrase, symbol, or design or combination thereof that identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods or services from others;
2. Standardized building architecture including but not limited to façade design and signage;
3. Standardized color scheme used throughout the exterior of the establishment, including color associated with signs and logos.

Food Service Establishment – Any establishment at which the principal activity is the preparation, service, and sales of prepared food intended for consumption on or off the premises, and regardless of whether the establishment provides facilities for on-site consumption. This definition includes restaurants and catering services, but excludes establishments serving customers through drive-up windows.

Article XX Food Service Establishments Text (#2)



2. Amend Section 3.3 Schedule of Use Regulations by DELETING the following ENTRIES under the heading “BUSINESS”

USES	DISTRICTS							
	SR-A,B,C,D	GR	AH	LB I	LB II	LB III	GB	PL
Catering Service	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
➤ Up to 10,000 square feet	N	N	N	SP	SP	SP	N	N
➤ More than 10,000 square feet								
Note S 3.3 was amended by Article 10 of the 2003 Special Town Meeting								
Restaurants	N	N	N	Y	Y	SP	SP	N
➤ Up to 10,000 square feet	N	N	N	SP	SP	SP	SP	N
➤ More than 10,000 square feet								
Note S 3.3 was amended by Article 10 of the 2003 Special Town Meeting								
Restaurant , Fast Food	N	N	N	SP	SP	SP	SP	N
Note S 3.3 was amended by Article 10 of the 2003 Special Town Meeting								
Restaurant, Take Out	N	N	N	N	SP	SP	SP	N
Note S 3.3 was amended by Article 10 of the 2003 Special Town Meeting								

and inserting the following ENTRIES in their place:

USES	DISTRICTS							
	SR-A,B,C,D	GR	AH	LB I	LB II	LB III	GB	PL
Food Service Establishment	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Food Service Establishment, Formula Based See Section 6.13	N	N	N	SP	SP	SP	SP	N

Article XX Food Service Establishments Text (#4)



4. Amend Section 6 Special Regulations by adding a new section 6.13 Formula Based Food Service Establishment to read as follows:

“Section 6.13 Special Permit Review for Formula Based Food Service Establishments

6.13.1 Purpose. The purpose and intent of the Formula Based Food Service Establishments regulation is to address the adverse impact of standardized businesses on Belmont villages, commercial, and historic areas. Formula Based Food Service Establishments can detract from the overall village experience, appearance, and character, and the proliferation of Formula Based Food Service Establishments will have a negative impact on the town’s economic diversity, historical relevance, unique character, and economic vitality. These uses are therefore restricted in order to maintain the unique character of the zoning districts in which they are eligible to be located .

6.13.2 Review Criteria. The following shall be the basis for decisions on Special Permits to allow Formula Based Food Service Establishments:

- a. Approval of the Formula Based Food Service Establishment will not detract from the unique character of the District;
- b. Approval of the Formula Based Food Service Establishment will contribute to a diverse and balanced blend of businesses available to serve residents and visitors in the District;
- c. Approval of the Formula Based Food Service Establishment will complement those businesses already in the District and help promote and foster the local economic base as a whole; and
- d. The Formula Based Food Service Establishment will be compatible with existing surrounding uses, and has been designed and will be operated so as to preserve the area’s existing architecture and unique aesthetic experience.

6.13.3 Design and Site Plan Review required. Notwithstanding Section 7.3.2(c) of these By-Laws, Design and Site Plan Review under Section 7.3.2(a)-(b) shall be required for a Formula Based Food Service Establishment to the same extent as it would be for a a non-formula-based Food Service Establishment.”

Article XX Food Service Establishments Text (#5)



5. Conforming amendments.

A. Amend Section 1.4 Definitions and Abbreviations as follows:

By deleting the word “restaurant” from the definition of “Outdoor Seasonal Seating” and replacing it with the words “Food Service Establishment.”

B. Amend Section 5.1 Off Street Parking and Loading as follows:

By deleting the word “Restaurant” from Section 5.1.2 d) and replacing it with the words “Food Service Establishment.”

C. Amend Section 8.2.1 Uses Permitted in the Cushing Square Overlay District as follows:

By deleting the words “Restaurant up to 12,000 square feet, but not including fast food or take out restaurants” from Section 8.3.2 A)(ii) and replacing it with the words “Food Service Establishment up to 12,000 square feet.”

D. Amend Section 8.3.2 Parking Requirements as follows:

By deleting the word “Restaurant” from Section 8.3.2 A)(ii) and replacing it with the words “Food Service Establishment.”

Article XX Off Street Parking



Article xx Off Street Parking

Amend Section 5.1 Off Street Parking and Loading as follows:

Amend Section 5.1.2 d) by deleting the words “2 persons seating capacity” and replacing it with the words “4 persons seating capacity”.

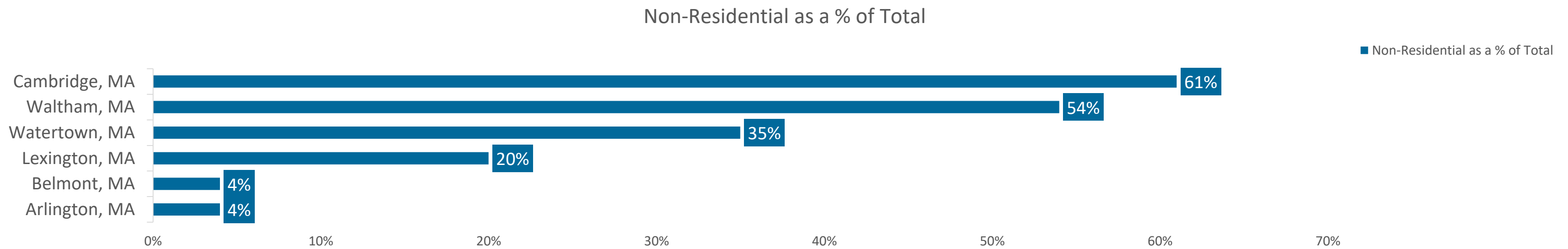
Belmont Statistics: Vehicle Statistics



Belmont Vehicle Stats

Year	# Vehicles	Average Daily Miles Driven	Total Daily VMT	% ICE	% Hybrid	% BEV	% Passenger	% Commercial	% Municipal
2020	17,808	21.4	380,558	93.2%	4.85%	1.17%	94.93%	4.4%	0.9%
2021	17,436	20	348,922	92.3%	5.2%	1.5%	94.9%	3.98%	0.9%
2022	17,323	22.2	384,277	90.6%	5.93%	2.15%	95.1%	3.79%	0.9%
2023	17,403	21.6	376,602	89.1%	6.44%	2.93%	95.2%	3.83%	0.9%

Neighborhood Tax Levies Benchmark



Source: Mass Vehicles Census, MA Division of Local Services

LEONARD ST., BELMONT, MASSACHUSETTS

BELMONT BUSINESS CENTER 1930'S

Source: Belmont Historical Society

