

Belmont Multifamily Zoning



Agenda

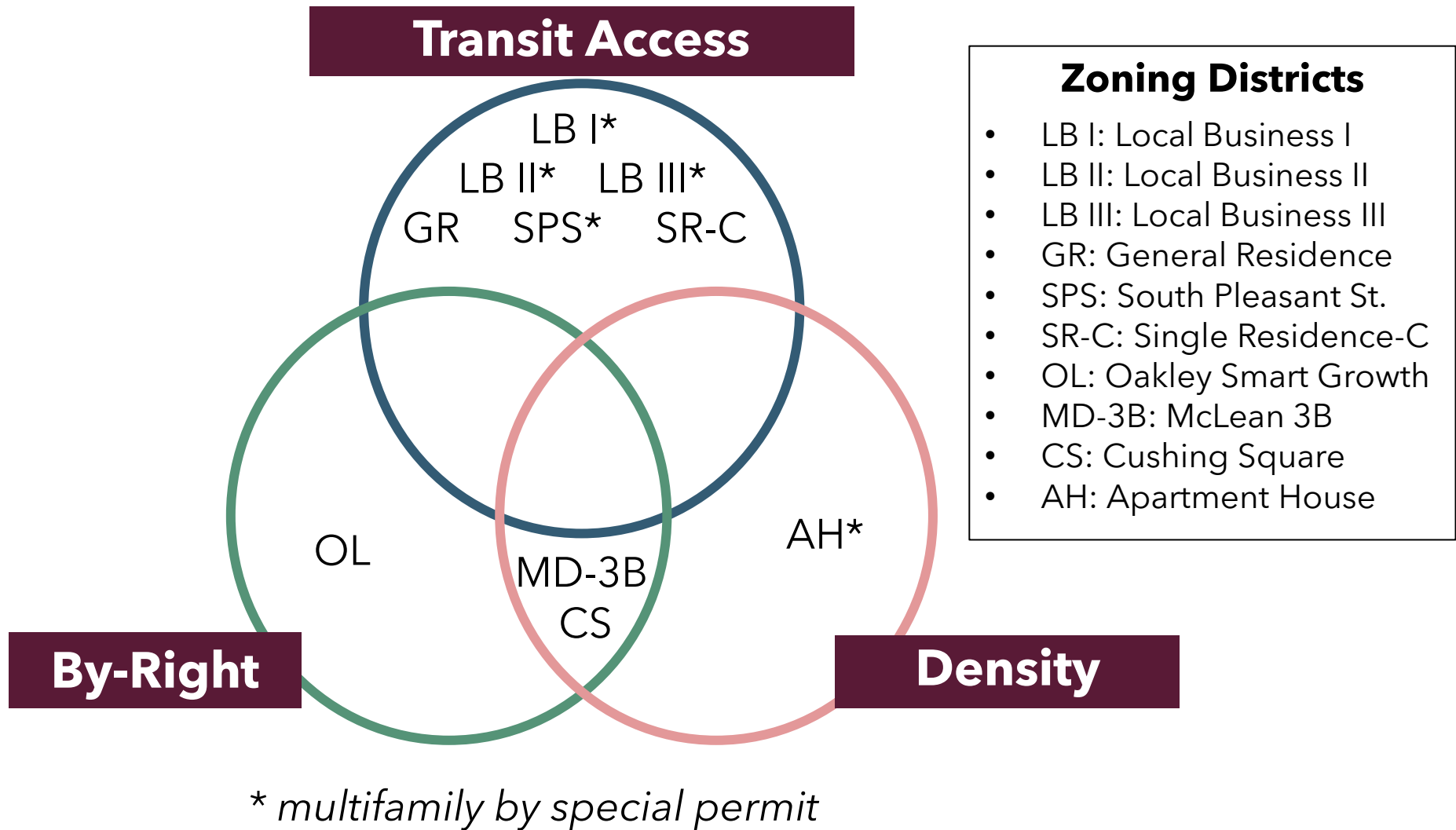
- I. Zoning Audit**
- II. Engagement Recap**
- III. Next Steps**

I. Zoning Audit

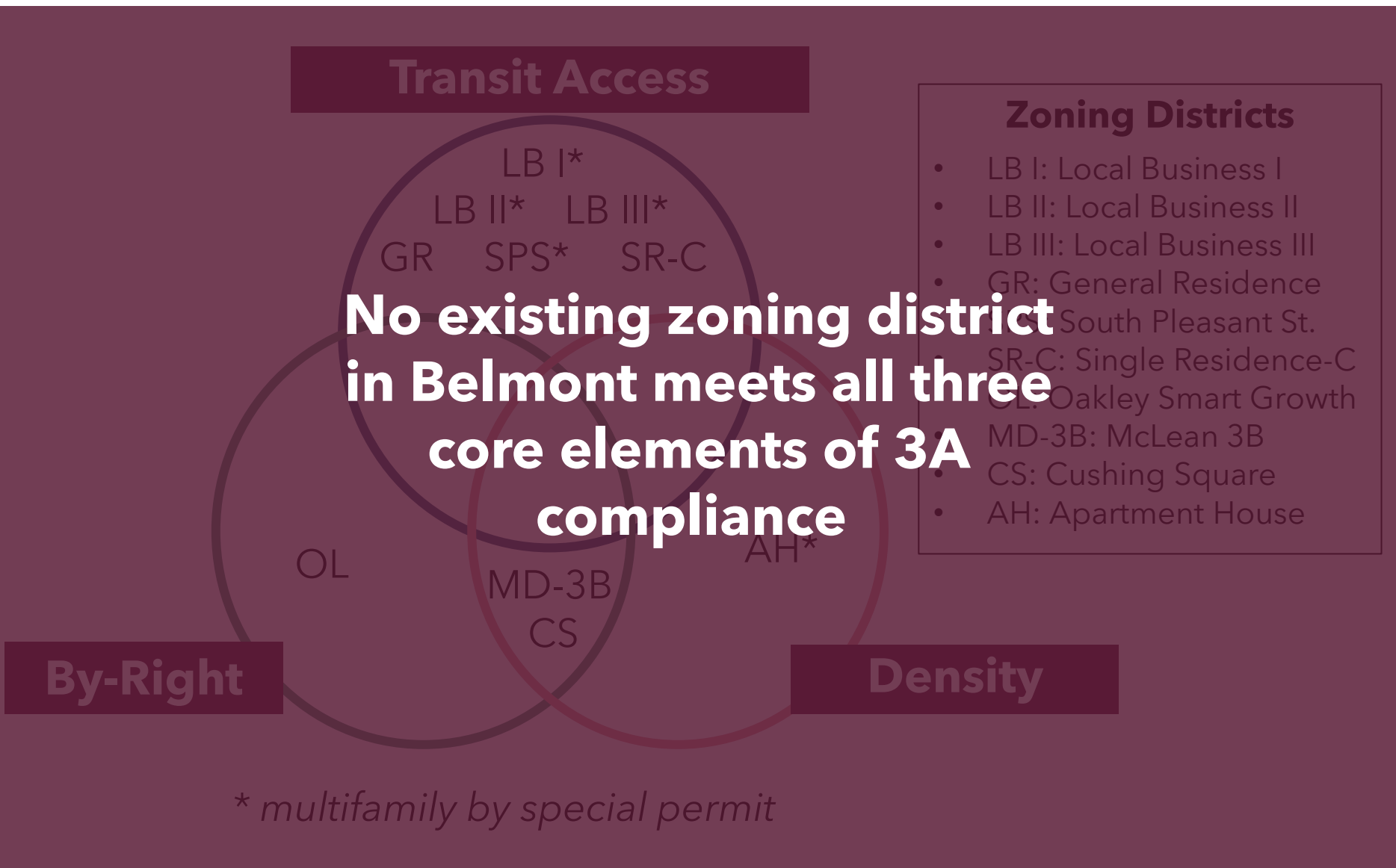
Zoning Audit Takeaways

- Single-family houses dominate allowed residential uses
- Limits on mixed-use
- Complicated permitting processes
- Limits to family-sized housing units (3+ bedrooms)
- Barriers to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- Precedent for flexible parking requirements
- Inclusionary zoning only required for special permit development

Zoning Audit on 3A Compliance



Zoning Audit on 3A Compliance



Zoning Pathways

Pathway 1

Keep existing
district
boundaries

Change allowed
uses

Change
dimensional
requirements

Allow by-right in
key districts

Pathway 2

Change existing
district
boundaries

Keep allowed
uses

Keep
dimensional
requirements

Extend Cushing
Square district
boundaries

Pathway 3

New district
boundaries

New allowed
uses


New
dimensional
requirements

Create new
zoning tailored to
community goals

II. Engagement Recap

Summary of Engagement To-Date

- 7 Advisory Committee meetings
- 1 public forum
 - Approximately 100 participants
 - ~30 in-person
 - ~65 virtual
 - Pre-forum office hours offered (no participants)
- 1 focus group with Town staff
- 132 registrants on project listserv
- 110 recent project webpage hits



Belmont
Multifamily Zoning

On behalf of the Belmont MBTA Communities Advisory Committee, **thank you to everyone who came to the first public forum for the Belmont Multifamily Zoning project.** Close to 100 people participated in the forum, whether in person at the Beech Street Center or online via Zoom. We received great feedback from participants and we're looking forward to the next phase of work on this project.

Forum Materials
Materials from the forum have been posted on the project webpage, and we have also included them here:


- [Public Forum Recording](#)
- [Public Forum Presentation](#)
- [Public Forum Activity Boards](#)

You can find information about the Town of Belmont's MBTA Communities Advisory Committee's upcoming meetings, which are always open to the public, [here](#).






Stay Updated
If you have not done so already, we encourage you to subscribe to the project email list so that you are always up-to-date on upcoming events and information. **You can do so [here](#).**

More Information
You can find additional information about the project on the [webpage](#). For any questions, please reach out to:

[Chris Kuschel](#), MAPC Principal Planner,
[Sarah Scott](#), MAPC Regional Planner, and
[Gabe Distler](#), Belmont Staff Planner



Public forum meeting |
Credit: MAPC



Public Forum Overview

- Gathered feedback from:
 - 1:1 conversations
 - Q+A discussion
 - Zoom chat
 - Activities
- Positive feedback largely came from in-person attendees, who liked event format and generally supported zoning concepts
- Virtual attendees experienced tech challenges and expressed more concerns with zoning
- Attendees heard about event from diverse sources



Range of Public Forum Feedback

Comments:

- "I would be happy to see two and three family homes all over town."
- "I favor triple deckers. We have those already."
- "Please add more mixed use. More places for families and young people to gather (besides CVS)."

Concerns:

- "By-right development is important, but we've just had a disaster near us with a single-family home, and the idea of giving a free pass for development is hard to accept."
- "Keep all single- and two-family zoning. No density. Need more parking."
- "Personally I pray they don't stick it in Waverley Square and bring more diversity into other places in Belmont for a change."

Sidenote

Considerations for future town-wide policy changes:

- On-Street Parking
 - "The parking by-law should be changed to allow overnight street parking."
 - "Allow overnight parking on street for streets that are not major thoroughfares. This could alleviate need for parking on site."
 - "Do not lift overnight parking ban."
- Off-Street Parking
 - "Reducing/eliminating min # of parking spots per unit in transit-adjacent zones (or the whole town!) would be great."
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
 - "I think ADU's townwide are of critical importance and an easy change to be made allowing affordable housing in all zones."
 - "We can expand affordable housing in Belmont by allowing ADUs in all zones, not just near the public transportation."

Sample Questions

- What is the enforcement action?
- Can we incentivize disability access?
- Can you recheck environmental sensitivity of Belmont Street?
- Can ADUs be used to meet compliance?
- How much parking can/should be allowed?

**Consider adding to
FAQ and/or
addressing at future
engagement events**

Visual Preference Activity



A.

Triple
decker

B.

3-4
unit

C.

Town-
houses

D.

3-story

E.

4-story

F.

5-story

G.

Mixed
use

H.

Adaptive
Reuse

Visual Preference Activity Results



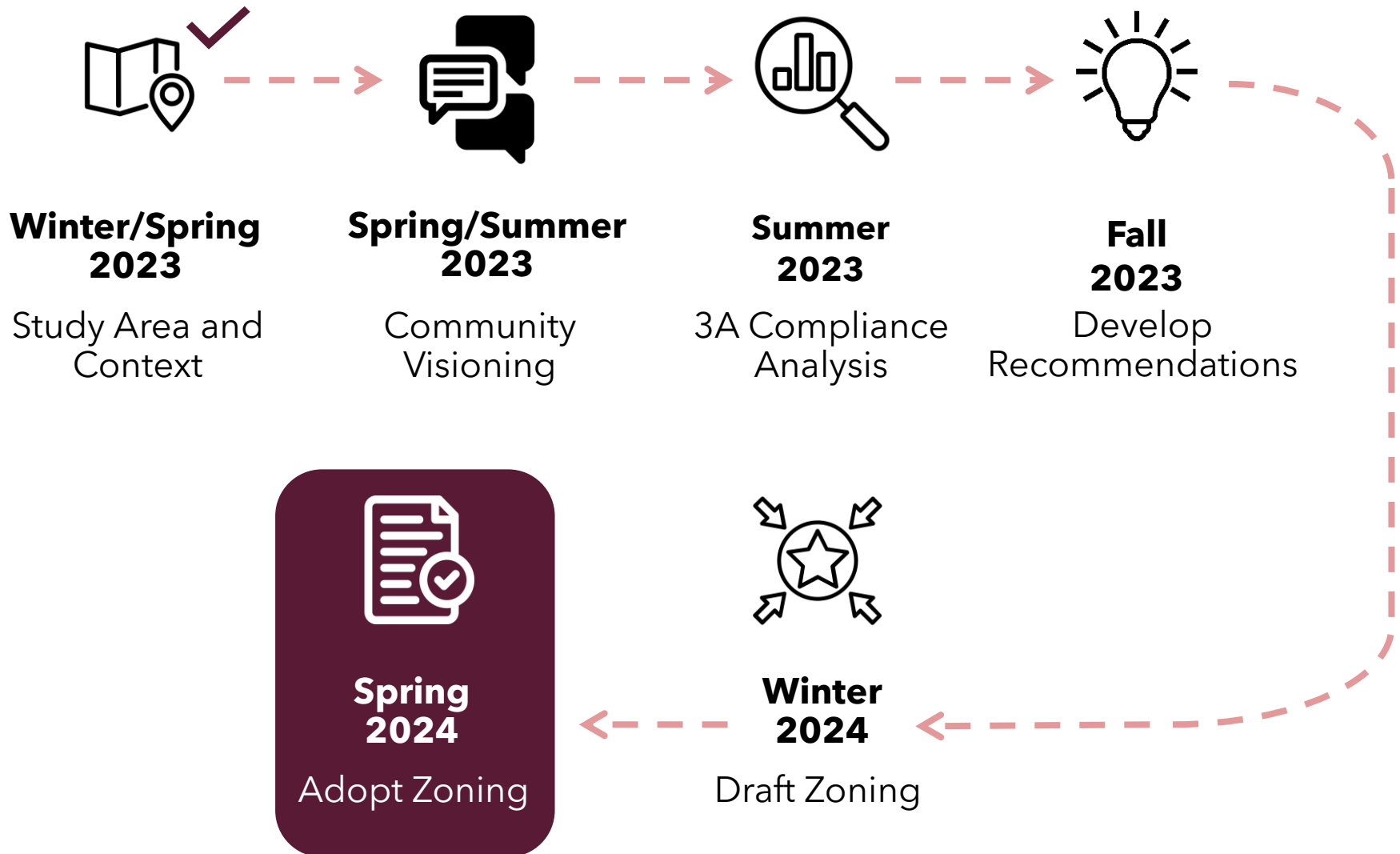
Reflection

What do you think went well? Not so well?

What did you learn?

III. Next Steps

Timeline



Where We're At



**Summer
2023**

Community
Visioning + 3A
Compliance
Analysis

Deliverable

Public forum

Zoning audit

Subdistrict
development

Focus group

Initial 3A
compliance
modeling

Timeline

Done!

Today

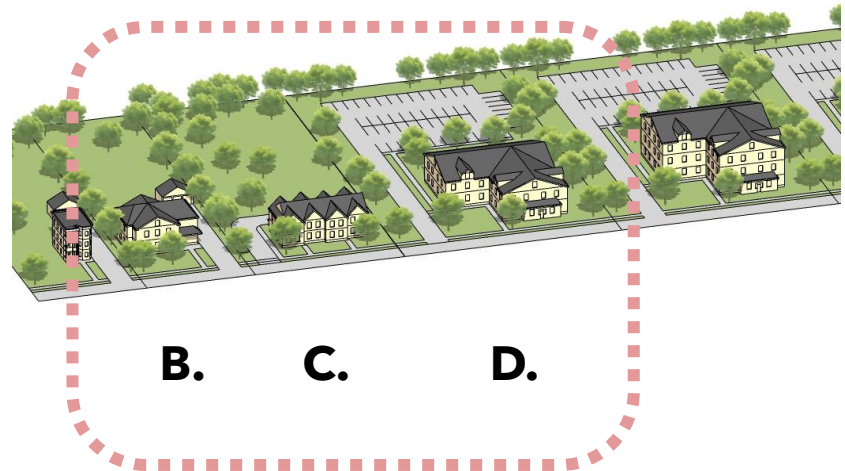
July-August
2023

August 2023

September
2023

Subdistrict Approach

- Develop 3-5 subdistrict typologies that will be used throughout 3A areas
- Each subdistrict will have a distinct character to guide place-based development
- Standardization of subdistrict approach makes town-wide implementation predictable for Town staff, property owners, developers, and residents
- Example: Small Multifamily Subdistrict
 - Uses:
 - 3-4 unit (B)
 - Townhouses (C)
 - 3-story multifamily (D)
 - Dimensions:
 - Small lot sizes
 - 3 story height
 - Small setbacks
 - Low minimum parking



Subdistrict Development Process

1. Develop zoning concepts for each subdistrict, including:
 - Allowed uses
 - Building form and massing
 - Site design
 - Parking
 - Open space
2. Match subdistrict types to pre-selected 3A areas:
 - Waverley
 - Belmont Center
 - Pleasant Street
 - Brighton Street
3. Determine subdistrict boundaries

Future Engagement

- Development stakeholders focus group
 - Meet with affordable housing and market-rate housing developers, architects, landscape architects, planners
 - Discuss barriers and opportunities regarding housing development in Belmont
 - Summer 2023
- General public
 - Wait until we have zoning recommendations and have completed initial compliance modeling
 - Likely October/November 2023

Initial 3A Compliance Modeling

- Parcel analysis
- Preliminary zoning scenarios
- Unit capacity modeling
- Financial modeling for affordability (inclusionary zoning)
- Redevelopment scenarios for up to three sites

Next MAPC/Advisory Committee Meeting

- Suggestion: host an in-person working session modeled off of a design charrette
- Goal: collaboratively identify subdistrict location and boundaries
- Timing: September/October 2023



Thank you, Chris!



Project Info + Resources

Webpage: mapc.ma/BelmontZoning

DHCD 3A Guidelines: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/section-3a-guidelines>

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- Gabriel Distler, Town of Belmont Staff Planner
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