



MBTA Communities Multifamily Zoning

MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

Community Forum #4

April 11, 2024

Agenda

1. Welcome and Brief Introduction
 - Rachel Heller, Co-Chair (Housing Trust)
 - Roy Epstein, Co-Chair (Select Board)
2. Background—Overview of Law and Minimum Requirements for Zoning
3. Committee Recommendation to Planning Board
4. Next Steps

Process Team



Town of Belmont

- Christopher Ryan, Director Office of Planning & Building and Town Planner
- Delia Ferguson, Staff Planner



Belmont MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

- Rachel Heller, Co-Chair (Housing Trust)
- Roy Epstein, Co-Chair (Select Board)
- Thayer Donham, Clerk (Planning Board)
- Paul Joy (Economic Development Committee)
- Drew Nealon (Historic District Commission)
- Julie Wu (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Implementation Committee)
- Patrick Murphy (Board of Assessors)



Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

Please refer to our Committee Report for a complete listing of project participants.

utile

Utile Architecture and Planning

Belmont MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

- The Advisory Committee's charge was to recommend zoning that complies with 3A and works best for Belmont.
- The recommendations and responsibilities for preparing the zoning for Town Meeting now lie with the Planning Board.
- The final vote on the zoning is expected to take place at a November 2024 Special Town Meeting.

3A Overview

- Develop zoning that is in compliance with the Multifamily Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities under Section 3A of M.G.L. Chapter 40A (“Section 3A”)
- Section 3A requires Zoning Bylaws in 177 MA communities to provide:
“...at least one district of reasonable size in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right, with no age restrictions, and is suitable for families with children.”

Defining Terms

At least one district of reasonable size in which multifamily housing is permitted as of right, with no age restrictions, and is suitable for families with children.

- **“Reasonable size”** is defined (for Belmont) as a minimum of 28 acres
- **“Multifamily housing”** is defined as 3+ units
- **“Permitted as of right”** may include site plan review but excludes subjective and discretionary reviews such as special permits
- **“No restrictions”** for age of residents or who could live there



Section 3A Requirements for Belmont

Units

Minimum multifamily unit capacity: **1,632**

Minimum transit area unit capacity (50%): **816**

Area

Allowed units from mandatory mixed-use: **408**

Minimum gross land area (acres): **28**

Other

Minimum transit area (50%) (acres): **14**

Minimum contiguity (of total proposed area): **50%**

Minimum dwelling units per acre: **15**

Allowed affordability: **Up to 10%; up to 20% with additional Economic Feasibility Analysis (EFA)**

Committee Guiding Goals and Principles

Goal 1 – Be informed and guided by prior relevant town reports, plans, and studies

Goal 2 – Be equitable and context sensitive with distribution of sites and unit counts

Goal 3 – Use good planning principles and best practices

Goal 4 – Be strategic and flexible in creating a final proposed option

Goal 5 – Maximize economic development opportunity without compromising other key goals

Goal 6 – Protect the essential character and scale of Belmont to the extent possible

Goal 7 – Meet key housing benchmarks and metrics

Goal 8 – Adopt a meeting and communication framework

Note: None of these goals are intended to be of greater weight than any other and are intended to be considered comprehensively and together to develop a solution that works best for Belmont. They were developed by consensus by the boards and committees making up the Advisory Committee.

Allowed Affordability

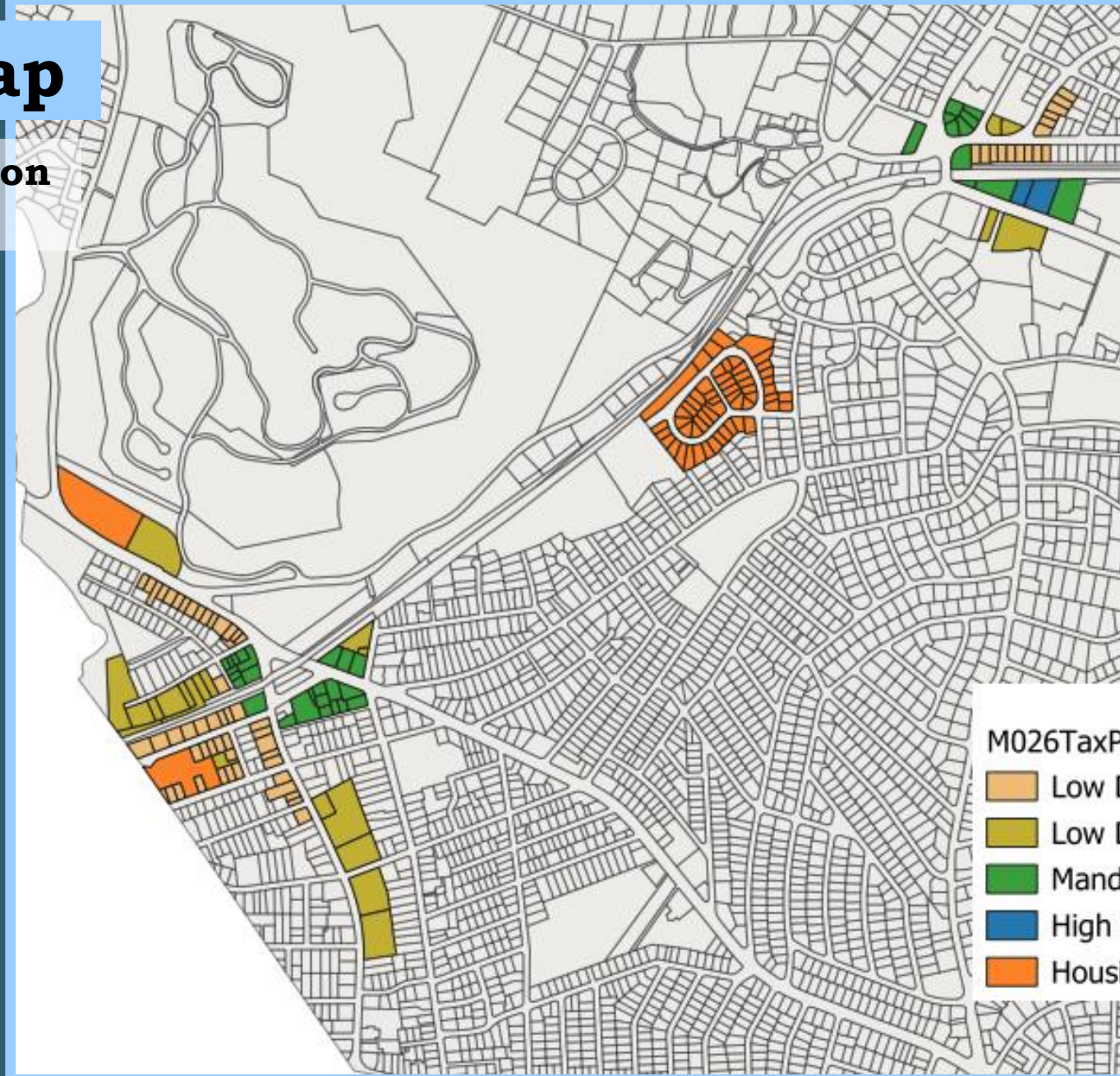
- Affordability is not required
- Up to 10% affordability is allowed to be applied without conditions
- Up to 20% is allowed with additional financial feasibility modeling referred to as an Economic Feasibility Assessment (EFA)
- Also, MGL 40R districts can be used for 3A with up to 25% affordability
- However, affordability is one of a set of goals the Committee deemed important in framing their approach and does warrant consideration as a factor impacting strategies.

Allowed Units from Mandatory Mixed-use

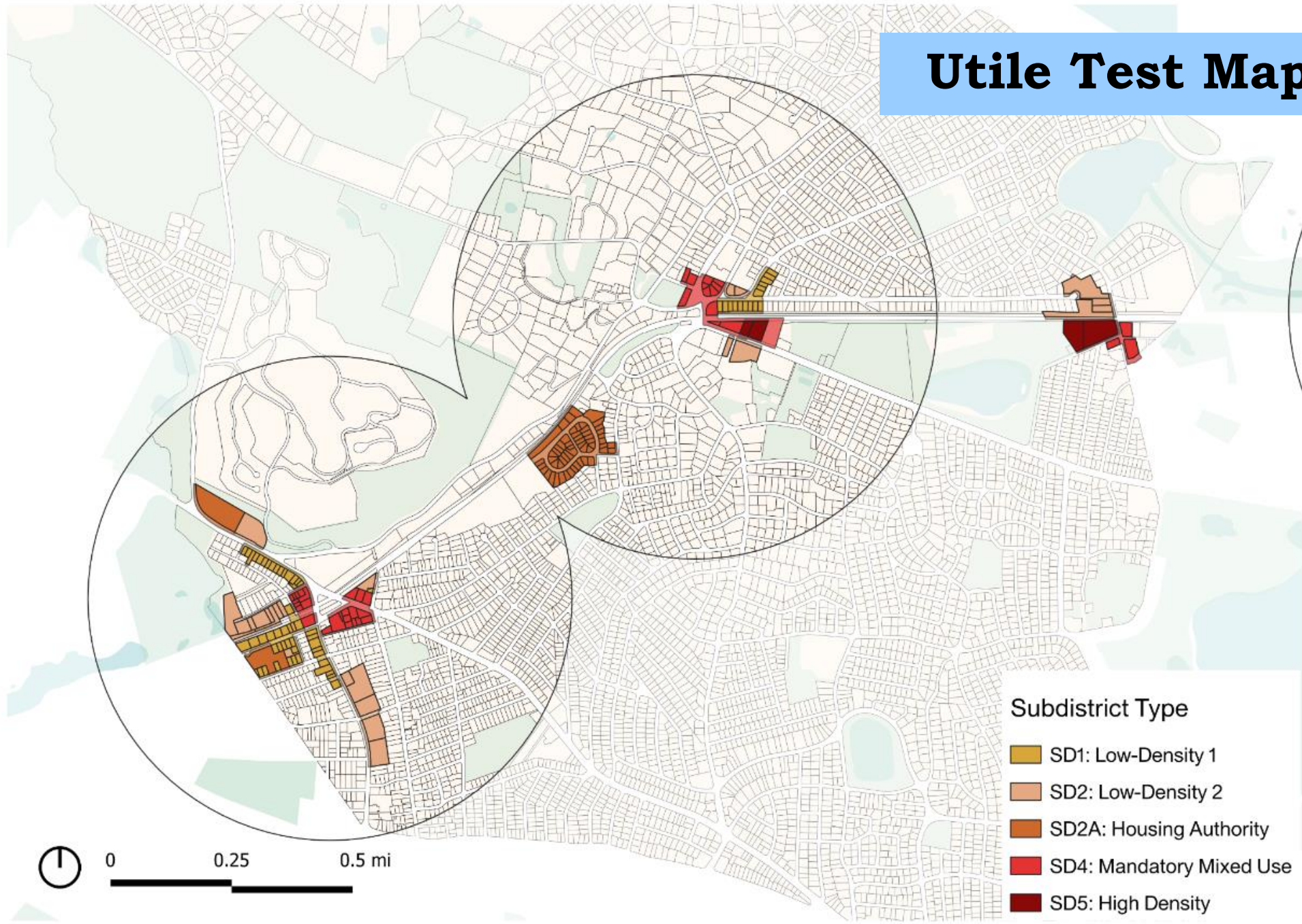
- Mixed-use cannot be required...
- ...except in a “Mandatory Mixed-use District” (MMU) which would count toward the zoned unit capacity (up to 25%) but not count for the acreage required
- For contiguity, MMU is “connective” but not “contributing”
- Conditions for approval of MMU

The Recommended Map

Final Map Selected and Voted on
April 1, 2024



Utile Test Map – 4/10/24



3A Compliance Check Results

District	3A vs. MMU	Model Inputs										Model Outputs			
		Max Units per Lot	Min Lot Size	Max Stories	Max Lot Coverage	Min. Open Space Coverage	Front Setback (ft)	Side Setbacks (ft)	Rear Setback (ft)	Min. Parking Spaces per Unit	Max Parking Area	Unit Capacity	Acreage	Density Denominator	Density
SD 1 - Low Density	3A	3	2,700 sf	3	35%	30%	10	7.5	15	1	45%	189	12.2	12.2	15.5
SD 2 - Low Density	3A	n/a	6,500 sf	2	35%	30%	10	7.5	20	1	45%	575	20.5	20.0	28.8
SD 2A - Low Density (Housing Authority)*	3A	n/a	6,500 sf	3	35%	30%	10	7.5	20	1	45%	385*	16.4	16.4	23.5
SD 5 - High Density	3A	n/a	n/a	3	75%	20%	n/a	n/a	15	0.5	30%	311	5.2	5.2	60.3
SD 4 - Mandatory Mixed Use**	MMU	n/a	n/a	3**	75%	20%	n/a	n/a	15	0.5	30%	376	13.9	13.9	27.0
Total w/o MMU												1,460	54.2	53.6	24.8
Total w/ MMU												1,836	68.2	53.6	24.8
Does it meet the +10% target?												113%			
Compliance Targets												1,632	28		15
Compliance Target +10%												1,795			
MMU % check (3A alone must achieve 75% of compliance target)												89%			
50% Land Area within Station Area Requirement												69%			
50% Unit Capacity within Station Area Requirement												59%	67%		
50% Contiguity Check												52%			

* For SD 2A, Utile calibrated the model inputs to approximate the “hard-wired” unit counts for Sherman Gardens and Belmont Village.

** For SD 4, Utile assumed that the maximum number of stories is three stories (two residential levels + one non-residential level).

Packet for Planning Board Handover

1. Map
2. Report

MBTA COMMUNITIES ZONING PROJECT REPORT TO THE PLANNING BOARD



Submitted By: The Belmont MBTA Communities Advisory Committee

April 11, 2024

Next Steps

- Planning Board Process (April-November 2024):
 - Confirm model compliance
 - Draft zoning language
 - Submit proposed MMU zoning for EOHLC review
 - Prepare EFA Report
 - Submit zoning for EOHLC pre-review
 - Planning Board Public Hearing
- November 2024 Special Town Meeting vote

MBTA Communities Committee Meeting	1-Apr-24	✓	Committee vote on scenario to convey to Planning Board
MBTA Communities Committee Meeting (Last Formal Meeting)	3-Apr-24	✓	Take final vote on narrative memorandum for Planning Board handover
Utile Zoning Meeting #2	9-Apr-24		Discussion of final map, compliance, and subdistricts
Submit Map and Zoning Plan to Planning Board	9-Apr-24		Send packet to PB, cc: SB
Planning Board Meeting - First w/ MBTA in PB Jurisdiction	9-Apr-24		Planning Board begins jurisdictional authority over MBTA Communities work
MBTA Communities Public Forum	11-Apr-24		Committee still interested in a final forum.
Submit Mandatory Mixed Use Review to EOHLC	Est. Mid-April 2024		Packet prepared and Planning Board gives green light to submittal.
Initiate Economic Feasibility Analysis (EFA) Project w/ MAPC	16-Apr-24		Coordinate two weeks prior to this date
Select Board Meeting	18-Apr-24		3AAC Makes final report to Select Board; 3AAC is dissolved.
Planning Board Meeting	23-Apr-24		Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
Town Meeting 1a	29-Apr-24		ATM Session 1a - Possible Planning Board Report on MBTA
Continue Outreach Activities	Apr/May 2024		Update website, create/update additional materials, other ideas?
Town Meeting 1b	1-May-24		ATM Session 1b
Town Meeting 1c	2-May-24		ATM Session 1c
Town Meeting 1d	8-May-24		ATM Session 1c
Town Counsel Full Bylaw Review	13-May-24		Review of full Bylaw for any potential MBTA conflicts.
Planning Board Meeting	14-May-24		Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
Planning Board Meeting	21-May-24		Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
Planning Board Meeting	4-Jun-24		Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
Refinement of Public Information Materials	June/July 2024		Posted on website and hard copies for library, Town Hall
Discussion w/ Warrant Committee	August/Sept. 2024		Joint meeting with WC, SC, CCBC, SB
Planning Board Meeting	18-Jun-24		Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
MBTA Communities Open House Event	19-Jun-24		Hosted by Planning Board, Utile, Staff
Submit Application for Pre-Compliance Review from EOHLC	13-Jun-24		90-day turnaround from EOHLC

Legal Ad Submitted to Newspaper of Record	9-Aug-24	Begin Public Hearing Process Timeline
First Notice in Newspaper of Record	15-Aug-22	Not less than 14 days before Public Hearing (not counting 14th day)
Posting of Notice in Town Hall	15-Aug-24	Not less than 14 days before the date of Public Hearing
Continue Public Outreach	July-Sept. 2024	
Town Counsel MBTA Draft Zoning Review	July/August 2024	Internal legal review for MBTA Compliance and other issues
Second Notice in Newspaper of Record	22-Aug-24	One week after first notice
Planning Board Meeting	16-Jul-24	Planning Board continues MBTA Communities work
Zoning Final Draft Due From Consultant	12-Aug-24	Utile Final Draft Deliverable Date
MBTA Communities Fiscal Impact Analysis Due	August 2024	Estimate based on scope
Planning Board Meeting - Public Hearing Opens	10-Sep-24	Planning Board opens public hearing and discusses draft zoning (9/3 is election)
Receive EOHLC Determination	11-Sep-24	June 13 + 90 days
Planning Board Meeting	17-Sep-24	Discuss any edits to zoning from EOHLC
Planning Board Meeting	1-Oct-24	Discuss any edits to zoning from EOHLC
Planning Board Meeting - Public Hearing Closes	7-Oct-24	SPECIAL MTG - Vote to recommend favorable action on map and zoning plan and close Public Hearing
Planning Board Report Submitted	9-Oct-24	Week following close of PB Public Hearing
Final Language for Warrant Articles	11-Oct-24	To be determined
Warrant Closes for STM 2024	11-Oct-24	To be determined
Planning Board Meeting	12-Oct-24	In Reserve
Federal Election	5-Nov-24	No Town Meetings
Planning Board Meeting	12-Nov-24	In Reserve
Town Meeting (Proposed)	18-Nov-24	Must occur within six months after Planning Board Public Hearing
Submit Final Zoning, Map, and Vote to EOHLC for Compliance Determination	20-Nov-24	Requires time after STM to assemble and review packet
Effective Date	Date of TM Action	Subject to posting by Clerk and AG approval