



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

Planning and Permitting Committee, April 24, 2024

Voting Members

Kit Collins, Chair
Matt Leming, Vice Chair
Isaac B. "Zac" Bears
Anna Callahan
George A. Scarpelli

This meeting will take place at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor, Medford City Hall, 85 George P. Hassett Drive, Medford, MA and via Zoom.

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86945661530>

Call-in Number: +16469313860, 86945661530#

Broadcast Live: Channel 22 (Comcast), Channel 43 (Verizon), and medfordtv.org.

To submit written comments, please email AHurtubise@medford-ma.gov.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

24-033 - Offered by President Bears and Vice President Collins

Zoning Ordinance Updates with Innes Associates Team

24-083 - Offered by Vice President Collins

Affordable Housing Training - Mass Housing Partnership (MHP)

PAPERS IN COMMITTEE

To view Papers in Committee, please email ahurtubise@medford-ma.gov.

Adjournment



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE

April 24, 2024

SPONSORED BY

Isaac Bears, Council President, Kit
Collins, Council Vice President

AGENDA ITEM

24-033 - Zoning Ordinance Updates with Innes Associates Team

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that the Planning and Permitting Committee invite staff from the Office of Planning, Development, and Sustainability and Innes Associates, the Medford City Council's Zoning Consultant, to discuss our upcoming comprehensive review and update of the Zoning Ordinance.

Vice President Collins moved to refer the paper to the Planning and Permitting Committee (Councillor Scarpelli second)—referred to the Planning and Permitting Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

- I. 20240419 Zoning Memo #2

MEMORANDUM

To	Members of the Planning and Permitting Committee Alicia Hunt, Director of Planning, Development & Sustainability Danielle Evans, Senior Planner Brenda Pike, Climate Planner
From	Emily Keys Innes, AICP, LEED AP ND, President
Date	April 19, 2024
Project	23146 – Medford – Zoning
Subject	Zoning Memorandum #2
Cc:	Paula Ramos Martinez, Senior Urban Designer/Planner Jimmy Rocha, GIS Analyst/Data Scientist Jonathan Silverstein, Blatman, Bobrowski, Haverty & Silverstein, LLC

This is the second memorandum for the Planning and Permitting Committee. After the April 10, 2024 meeting, the following decisions were made:

- Phase 1: Address definitions and site plan review process for Major, Minor, Dover Amendment uses. The committee should expect to see draft text for the definitions listed in the first memo and a draft framework for the site plan review at their meeting on April 24, 2024.
- Phase 2: The consultant team will begin its analysis work on the Squares and Corridors (see memo 1). We will update the Committee on the progress of the analysis and how that informs the work post June 30 at each meeting.

This memorandum also contains an update to the status chart in the first memorandum. Finally, we've added information to that chart from Vice President Collins, recommendations from the Building Department, and PDS staff on "brainstorm" zoning changes related to climate change. We have suggested phasing for these changes and would like to hear from Councilors on their thoughts.

Status Updates (schedule)

As this table is updated, the actual zoning sections for each topic will be added. The recommended changes listed in Phase 1 are not part of this table; it is intended to be a holding document for potential changes that have not yet been addressed.

	TOPIC	PHASE
CR	Climate resiliency	II and III
HP	Housing production	I and II
HA	Housing affordability	II and III
SQR	Major squares	All three
COR	Mixed use corridors	All three
MGB	Streets/neighborhoods	II and III
ED	Economic development and business growth	All
MAP	Map and districts	All three
UDR	Uses and dimensional requirements	All three
T	Transportation/multi-modal ways	II and III

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
Refer to legal counsel for review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace Director of Community Development with “Director of Planning, Development & Sustainability” Replace “Office of Community Development” with “Department of Planning, Development & Sustainability” 	General	PDS		
Other edits from Legal Counsel	General	Jonathan Silverstein		
Accessory Dwelling Units	HP, HA	Cllr. Leming		
Transportation Demand Management	T	Cllr. Leming		
Identify changes to zoning districts – consider squares, corridors, neighborhoods.	SQR, COR, MGB, MAP, UDR		II	
Change dimensional standards to match new zoning districts and use types (including mixed-use buildings).	SQR, COR, MGB, UDR		II	
Update MUZ.	MAP, UDR			

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
Fences/ Visibility Requirements.	General, UDR			
Non-conforming Uses and Structures	UDR			
Parking and Loading/ Landscaping, Buffers, and Screening	UDR			
Signage				
Inclusionary Housing	HA	Mayor	I and II	
<p>Incorporate policy suggestions and goals from Medford Climate Action & Adaptation Plan (2022), Medford Comprehensive Plan (2023), Medford Housing Production Plan (2022), and Medford Bicycle Infrastructure Master Plan (2016)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review policy suggestions from all Plans to ensure inclusion and alignment in relevant parts of our zoning code. Ensure that conditions on large developments are consistent with goals and policies put forward in these Plans. 	All	Vice President Collins	II and III	
<p>Review/update of Zoning map and districts towards stated community goals from above plans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business development in Medford Square Multimodal transit/access into Medford Square Residential development especially near transit hubs and university buildings Mixed-use business/residential development along key commercial corridors (i.e. Mystic Avenue) 	All	Vice President Collins	II and III	
<p>Tree Ordinance (19-070)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of our in-progress Tree Ordinances touches on tree canopy protection, replacement, and/or mitigation for private property developments of different size thresholds. I would like to review that during our conversations about dimensional requirements and conditions for large resident and housing developments to ensure that ordinance goals are implemented in the zoning code, where appropriate. 	CR, MGB	Vice President Collins	II and III	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
<p>Condo Conversion Ordinance (23-077)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an in-progress ordinance project, initiated in 2023, that would create a permitting and licensing process for conversion of rental units into condominiums by certain types of developers. I would like to review it in context of our other housing-related zoning changes to ensure alignment with housing production goals and use/dimensional requirements. 	HP, HA, UDR	Vice President Collins	II and III	
<p>Complete Streets/Vision Zero</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review aspects of zoning ordinance governing conditions and site plan review for larger developments to ensure alignment with Complete Streets Policy and to advance Vision Zero policy for all streets, corridors, and neighborhoods. Consider alongside Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policy proposal. 	MGB, T	Vice President Collins	II and III	
94-12.0 Expand the definition of terms with language as follows; Terms or words not defined herein but defined in the Building Code shall have meanings given therein, unless a contrary intention clearly appears, otherwise as the meaning quoted in the latest edition of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
94-5.0 Re-introduce use of Finding, rather than Special Permits; for judging changes to nonconforming preexisting use and structures. Ch40A specifically views Special Permits as addressing Uses allowed in Districts that need additional review to add conditions for safeguards and limitations on tie and use.	Process	Building Department	I and II	
Reviewing Nonconforming Use and Structures for changes are more concerned with whether a permanent change is 'substantially more detrimental than what currently exists'.	Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-5.9 Add language to address an ability to limit merger doctrine where it would be in the City's best interest for lots held in common ownership; perhaps as a Variance.	Process	Building Department	I and II	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
94-4.2.4 Clear up ambiguities in this section regarding the many parts and pieces specified in Paragraphs 4 & 5.	Check!	Building Department	I and II	
Fencing – Consider allowing fencing up to 7’ high to be zoning exempt in concert with the Building Code.	Dimensions	Building Department	I and II	
94-4.3 (4) clarify pool setback as ‘to the water’s edge’ to limit arguments that the concrete skirting around a pool is part of the setback.	Definitions/ Dimensions	Building Department	I and II	
94-5.2 Clarify if extension of a use includes accessory structures on a single lot. Also clarify if a nonpermitted, nonconforming use can be allowed by the passage of time being viewed as not substantially detrimental.	Definitions/ Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-5.4 Expand the definition and criteria by which a Variance is granted in accordance with Ch40a.	Definitions/ Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-6.0 Consider removing parking from the use table and consolidating within this Chapter.	Format	Building Department	I and II	
94-6.2.9 Sign Renewal Permits? Feasible?	Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-7.4 Review solar energy systems for conformity to newest energy codes.	Consistency	Building Department	I and II	
94-7.7 Consider adding fall zone setback requirements to WTF’s.	Dimensions	Building Department	I and II	
94-8.1.8 Inclusionary Housing – review language the controls a developer ability to subdivide, ANR or otherwise alter a property prior to creating a development so to avoid compliance by adding ‘common control’ in addition to common ownership.	Process	Building Department	I and II	
Consider requiring an agreement be reached, and recorded, prior to issuance of a building permit in lieu of waiting for occupancy. This should not be contravened in the event a permit is issued without an agreement having been reached and recorded.	Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-8.2 Review whether an accessory structure can be converted to a dwelling unit and how that	Definitions/ Dimensions	Building Department	I and II	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
fits with allowing two principal structures on a lot.				
94-11.1.5 Entry rights as written are constitutionally vague and can create problems. See also 94-11.3	Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-11.2 Do we really post a sign?	Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-11.4.2 Revisit the ZBA ability to grant use variances; provide definition to that term.	Definitions/ Process	Building Department	I and II	
94-12.0 Review definitions for medical uses, eating places,	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Should 'Keeping of Animals' include doggie daycare; should doggie daycare be a Special Permit?	Definitions/ Process	Building Department	I and II	
Lot Frontage – clarify to confirm avoiding overlapping rights.	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Mobile home – is this an RV, Tiny home, or manufactured home (as HUD has called mobile homes since 1976)? Most of these come with dimensional clarifications.	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Motor Vehicles – Class 3 for junkyards?	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Story Half – review for conformance to building code	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Yard v Lot definitions?	Definitions	Building Department	I and II	
Table of Uses – Consider exempting City from Zoning compliance, with conditions.	Process	Building Department	I and II	
Zoning incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Density bonuses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero design Certifications include Architecture 2030's Zero Code Low embodied carbon Lower parking ratios [lower than Medford already has?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable housing Near transit 	CR	PDS	II and III	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floor area ratio exclusions [would these be included in FAR in the first place?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Window shading/overhangs Exterior insulation Green roofs Heat pump condensers Driveway solar canopy Setback exemptions [would these even require an exemption?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat pump condensers Energy storage Window shading and overhangs Exterior insulation Driveway solar canopy Height exemptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat pump condensers Solar PV Solar thermal Micro-scale wind Expedited site plan review (with checklist and specific timeframe promised) [for certain size projects?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero design Passive house [part of specialized code for four stories and above, but we do want to make it as simple as possible] Low embodied carbon Use variances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero design Low embodied carbon Reduced permit fees (CDB, in rules and regs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net zero design Low embodied carbon 				
Eco-roof ordinance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require solar PV, solar thermal, small-scale wind, green roof, cool roof, blue roof, or mechanical equipment? [see Somerville] 	CR	PDS	II and III	
By-right allowances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV charging stations Ultra-low emissions building systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat pump condensers Battery storage Renewables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar PV [is this already by right?] Solar thermal Driveway solar canopy Micro-scale wind 	CR	PDS	II and III	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small-scale green infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Window and roof gardens Permeable paving Composting 				
<p>Green code (points checklist for stormwater requirements) [compare against Medford's stormwater ordinance and Somerville's]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stormwater requirements? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green roof, blue roof Permeable paving Increase green area ratio Rain garden, bioswale, retention pond Rainwater barrels and right-sized gutters 	CR	PDS	II and III	
<p>Overlay districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood zones [but Medford doesn't have many buildings in these?] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elevate mechanical systems Elevate first floor and entries Grade highest around base of building Rain garden, bioswale, retention pond Permeable paving Rainwater barrels and right-sized gutters Backflow valves Wet or dry floodproofing Sump pumps Density zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including exterior ADU by right and allow adding second floor to existing exterior ADU? Unit square footage limits District energy zone [are there areas that are good prospects for this? Riverside] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-locate residential and commercial Car-free zone (with exceptions for delivery trucks at certain times) [does Medford have districts where this would be appropriate?] Net zero zone [does this make sense anymore, with updated building codes and the state reserving emissions standards and reporting for itself?] Anti-heat island zone [do any of these impinge on code?] 	CR	PDS	II and III	

Proposed Change	Topic	Origin	Phase	Status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minimum SRI for roofs and top level of parking lots ▪ Preserve existing trees and require tree planting for larger sites ▪ Window shading ▪ Covered parking ▪ Cool roof/green roof ▪ Passive cooling – operable windows, design for airflow 				
Energy efficiency requirements (or at least reporting) for rental units? [Medford doesn't currently have rental licensing?]	CR	PDS	II and III	
Increased EV ready requirement, with performance path for automated load management system (approved in Brookline).	CR	PDS	II and III	