City of Somerville
Zoning Overhaul

Zoning Workshop #9
Sustainability

5.17.16

City of Somerville
Zoning Overhaul

Process

Subject Matter Workshops: UPDATED schedule

SUBJECT	PUBLIC MEETING	L.U.C.
• Public Space	11.23.15	11/30/15
• Arts & Creative Economy	12.7.15	2/9/16
• Attainable Housing I	1.11.16	n/a
• Residential Neighborhoods	1.25.16	2/23/16
• Mobility	2.22.16	**5/24/16**
• Process	3.7.16	4/5/16
• Attainable Housing II	3.21.16	n/a
• Economic Development	4.11.16	5/10/16
• **Sustainability**	**4.25.16**	**5/17/16**
• Residential Occupancy	5.9.16	TBD
• Residential Neighborhoods II	5.23.16	**5/31/16**

Tonight's Agenda

Presentation

- Planning Context
- Sustainability in Zoning?
  - Goal
  - Current Regulation
  - Public Comments
  - Sample Regulation
  - Application in Somerville
- Other Sustainability Priorities

Discussion

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Planning Context

SomerVision

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Comprehensive Plan | 2010-2030

Somerville: an Exceptional Place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Family

584
Goals, Policies & Actions

182
Implemented through Zoning

16
Sustainability

SomerVision

Goals

- Promote mixed-use, mixed-income transit-oriented development

SomerVision

Goals

- Promote mixed-use, mixed-income transit-oriented development
- Improve our shared environmental quality
- Maximize environmental sustainability in design and implementation of all infrastructure systems and public facilities
- Improve stormwater and wastewater management systems to increasingly separate stormwater and sewerage systems and support desired levels of growth

Policies

Resources

- Plan public realm renovations with attention to energy efficiency, environmental design, visual clarity, and ease of maintenance
- Increase opportunities for urban agriculture
- Meet energy reduction goals by undertaking or requiring efficiency and renewal projects
- Reduce the urban heat island effect through the use of efficient roofing, reflections, and shading choices

Policies

Transportation & Infrastructure

- Implement transportation policies and programs that reduce automobile use
- Provide a stormwater and sewer system that is able to accommodate extreme events without flooding or causing combined sewer overflow
- Create incentives and regulations to infiltrate stormwater and to limit stormwater runoff from entering the wastewater system

SomerVision

Policies

Housing

- Promote the adoption of housing designs that incorporate green building technologies and amenities that include more open green space
- Build more housing within walking distance to transit stations
- Build mixed use development in commercial districts
- Encourage energy efficiency in housing

Neighborhoods

- Provide information and support to help residents make sound environmental choices

What Can Zoning Do?

- Zoning is only applicable to new development.

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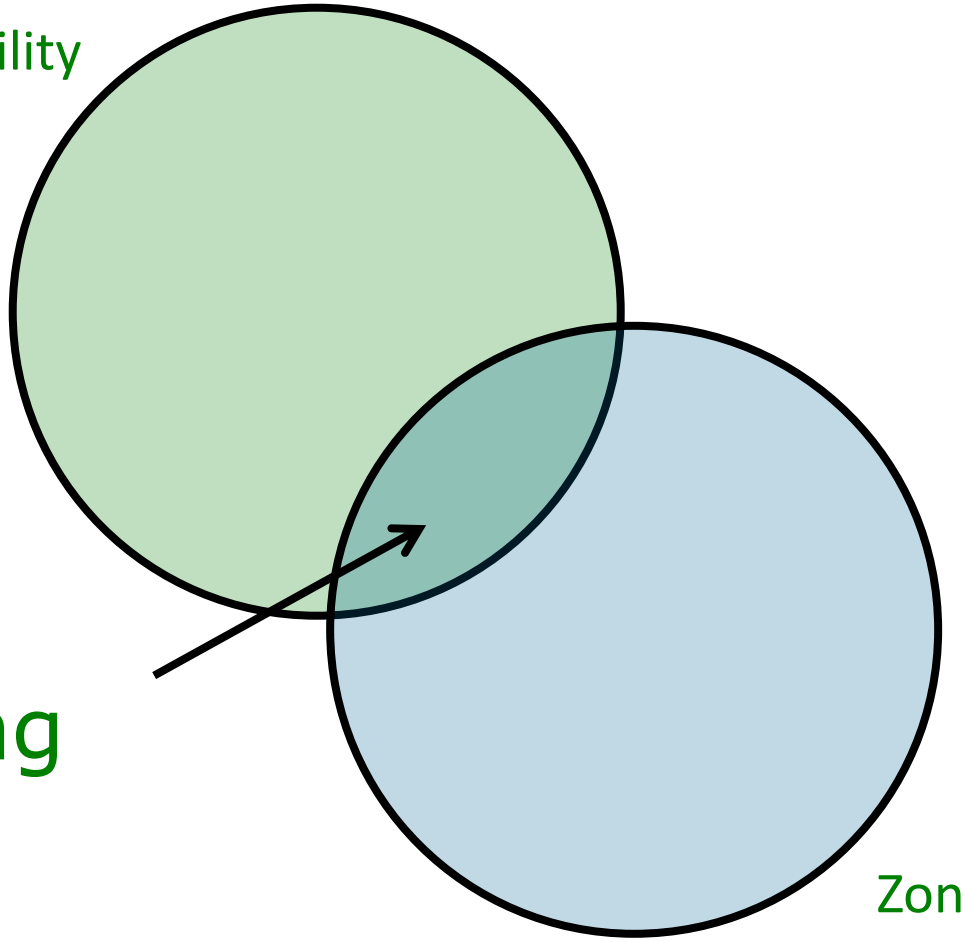
We must figure out which regulations are best for zoning or for the City’s municipal code.

The building code is hard to amend in MA, because it’s applied uniformly across the state.

What Can Zoning Do?



Sustainability through Zoning

What Can Zoning Do?

- Zoning is only one of many tools for advancing sustainability.
- Only some sustainability goals are best addressed through zoning.
- Sustainable zoning must work in concert with other plans, programs, and regulations.
- A Sustainable Zoning Ordinance:
  - Would not interfere with future goals and technologies
  - Would set minimum standards, not maximum sustainability goals

Where is Sustainability in the Code?

Everywhere:

- Landscape requirements
- Building types
- Parking standards
- etc.

Sustainability Planning

Climate Change Planning

- **Greenhouse Gas Inventory** (Completed, January 2016)
  - How much GHGs does Somerville emit, and what are the sources?
- **Climate Change Vulnerability** (Ongoing, started March 2016)
  - How will heat, flooding and sea-level rise affect Somerville?
- **Climate Change Plan** (Planned for 2017)
  - How can we become resilient and zero-out emissions?

SustainaVille
creating a resilient & carbon neutral somerville

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  - **Sample Regulation**
  - **Application in Somerville**
- Other Sustainability Priorities

Potential Issues for Zoning

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio

Green Roofs

Green Building Standards

Electric Vehicles

Renewable Energy

District Energy and Microgrids

Stormwater Management

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Goals

- Create a performance-based standard for new construction and major renovation projects that requires a mix of landscape elements, such as plants, trees, permeable pavement, and others.
  - Increase permeability and reduce stormwater runoff
  - Improve air and soil quality
  - Reduce heat island impacts
  - Enhance visual character of neighborhoods

Source: ZoningDC.org

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 8.5 - Each zoning district requires a minimum % of pervious area, a minimum % of landscaped area, and minimum square feet of front and side yards
  - Section 10.6 - Landscaping specifications, including provisions for enforcement
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 3.C - Each building type requires a minimum % of permeable surface and a minimum % of landscaped area
  - Article 6.D - Landscaping specifications, including provisions for enforcement and maintenance

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Public Comments

- Does the proposed zoning have a ratio of green space per person that it seeks to achieve or protect? Or green space per SF of development?
- The visual impact of greenery improves peoples happiness
- We should encourage property owners to preserve existing trees or replace trees that are removed during the construction process.
- Create conditions to grow plant life
- Require that parking lots be landscaped

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Public Comments

- Define what “landscaped” means with specific plant or tree requirements, etc.
- The current open space requirements are not sufficient to meet the City’s open space goals
- Developers should be able to contribute to an open space fund in lieu of developing on-site
- Differentiate between open space and green space (that is permeable)
- Improve soil quality

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Sample Regulation

- Washington, DC
  - Each zoning district has a required GAR score from 0.1 for certain commercial districts to 0.4 for certain residential districts
  - The GAR score is calculated by multiplying the quantity of each landscape element by a fraction or "multiplier," adding the results for each element, and dividing by the lot area. For example,
    - The square feet of shallow landscaped area is multiplied by 0.3
    - The number of large preserved trees is multiplied by 0.7
  - Other landscape elements include vegetated walls and roofs, permeable pavement, native plant species, harvested stormwater irrigation, and food cultivation

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Sample GAR Scores

Washington, DC				
Landscape Elements	**Factor**		**Landscape Elements**	**Factor**
Landscaped Area (Depth < 24")	0.3		Vegetated Walls	0.6
Landscaped Area (Depth > 24")	0.6		Vegetated Roof (Growth Medium 2" - 8")	0.6
Bioretention Facilities	0.4		Vegetated Roof (Growth Medium > 8")	0.8
Groundcover (Plants < 2' Tall)	0.2		Permeable Paving (Soil or Gravel 6" - 24")	0.4
Plants > 2' Tall	0.3		Permeable Paving (Soil or Gravel > 24")	0.5
Tree Canopy of New Trees (2.5" - 6" Diameter)	0.5		Enhanced Tree Growth Systems	0.4
Tree Canopy of New Trees (> 6")	0.6		Native Plant Species	0.1
Tree Canopy of Preserved Trees (6" - 12")	0.7		Landscaping in Food Cultivation	0.1
Tree Canopy of Preserved Trees (12" - 18")	0.7		Harvested Stormwater Irrigation	0.1
Tree Canopy of Preserved Trees (18" - 24")	0.7		Approved Water Features	0.2
Tree Canopy of Preserved Trees (> 24")	0.8		Renewable Energy Generation	0.5

Sustainability in Zoning?

Site Landscaping: Green Area Ratio (GAR)

Application in Somerville

- Determine what the required GAR score will be for which districts or building types
- Determine which landscape elements will count towards the GAR score and what the multipliers will be
- Determine the process to ensure compliance, which includes the creation of a guidance document and a GAR score calculation worksheet

- **EX.** Somerville could include plants that absorb air pollutants as a landscape element in buffer zones near highways. Somerville could also have specific requirements for flood zones.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Roofs

Goal

- For new construction and major renovation projects, require or incentivize the installation of green roofs
  - Reduce stormwater runoff
  - Improve air quality
  - Reduce heat island impacts
  - Enhance biodiversity
  - Improve energy efficiency
  - Create open space

Source: TreeHugger.com

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Roofs

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 2.2 - Pervious area includes green roofs.
  - Section 7.11 - Roof farms are permitted as an accessory use.
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 12.B - Pervious area includes green roofs.
  - Article 3.G – Roof albedo guidelines set a minimum solar reflectance index for roofs.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Roofs

Public Comments

- New roofs should be required to have solar, be green, or be “cool”/reflective
- New roofs should be able to support agricultural pursuits, including greenhouses, and should be designated as civic spaces
- New roofs should be considered for playing fields
- Prioritize publicly accessible green space while encouraging green roofs, which will improve the overall environment

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Roofs

Sample Regulation

- Toronto, Canada
  - New construction and additions greater than 20,000 SF must include a green roof that covers between 20% and 60% of the available roof space
  - Exceptions
    - Residential buildings with fewer than six stories, commercial greenhouses and temporary structures
    - Industrial buildings may opt for “cool” roofs
    - Developers may make a payment-in-lieu
  - The City also offers subsidies of $7/SF (up to $100,000) as an incentive

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Roofs

Application in Somerville

- Determine whether green roofs will be a requirement or whether they will be incentivized
- Determine what the requirements or incentives will be and which buildings they will apply to

- **EX.** Many residential buildings in Somerville have pitched roofs, but new commercial and industrial buildings could be required to cover their entire roofs with green roof material, cool roof material, or solar panels, or a combination of these; or they could make a payment-in-lieu.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Building Standards

Goal

- Require that certain construction and renovation projects comply with sustainable design standards, such as LEED
    - Improve the sustainability and resiliency of the built environment

Source: MZOGroup.blogspot.com

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Building Standards

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 6.5.G.2 – Height bonus for buildings in the TOD-135 district that achieve LEED Gold certification
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 3.G.3 – Requirements for window placement and functionality to enhance the passive cooling of building interiors

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Building Standards

Public Comments

- Require green or passive building standards
- Construction and demolition “debris diversion” program

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Building Standards

Sample Regulation

- Cambridge, MA
  - New construction or major renovation projects of a certain size must comply with LEED standards. Specifically,
    - LEED for projects of 25,000 to 50,000 SF
    - LEED Silver for projects greater than 50,000 SF
    - LEED Gold for projects greater than 50,000 SF in Kendall or Central
  - Cambridge is drafting new zoning to
    - Require that projects fulfill energy efficiency standards
    - Allow projects to comply with alternative certification systems, such as Enterprise Green Communities Criteria

Sustainability in Zoning?

Green Building Standards

Application in Somerville

- Determine which projects will be required to comply with which standards for sustainable design
- Determine the process to ensure compliance

- **EX.** Somerville could require compliance with or establish bonuses for:
  - LEED BD+C Core + Shell for construction less than 25,000 SF
  - LEED BD+C for construction of 25,000 to 50,000 SF
  - LEED BD+C Silver for construction greater than 50,000 SF
  - LEED BD+C Gold for construction greater than 50,000 SF in Special Districts
  - LEED ID+C Commercial Interiors for renovations of commercial properties
  - LEED ND for Special Districts

Sustainability in Zoning?

Electric Vehicles

Goal

- For new construction and major renovation projects, require that parking areas be “electric vehicle ready” so that they can serve electric vehicles as demand increases
  - Reduce emissions
  - Increase use of renewable energy

Source: Pro.com/blog/installing-home-electric-car-charger/

Sustainability in Zoning?

Electric Vehicles

Current Regulations

- There are no regulations that specifically address electric vehicles; however, there are guidelines on parking
- In 2015, the City installed electric vehicle charging stations in Union Square, Davis Square, and at Somerville High School and City Hall

Sustainability in Zoning?

Electric Vehicles

Public Comments

- Priority of the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change

Sustainability in Zoning?

Electric Vehicles

Sample Regulation

- Palo Alto, CA
  - New single-family dwellings must include electric panel capacity and conduit for at least one potential EV parking space
  - New multi-family dwellings must include electric panel capacity, conduit, and an outlet for at least one potential EV parking space for each unit
  - New non-residential buildings must include electric panel capacity and conduit for at least 25% of parking spaces

Sustainability in Zoning?

Electric Vehicles

Application in Somerville

- Determine if appropriate for zoning, building, or municipal code
- Determine which buildings or parking lots will be required to include electric vehicle readiness components
    - Determine which components will be required (panel capacity, conduit, or outlets) and for how many parking spaces

- **EX.** New construction or renovations of parking lots for institutional, commercial and industrial uses could be required to make 25% of parking spaces "EV-ready." Residential buildings could be required to include panel capacity and conduit for each parking space.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Renewable Energy

Goal

- Encourage the use of solar energy technologies, and ensure that renewable energy systems are permitted where appropriate.
  - Increase use of renewable energy
  - Enhance resiliency

Source: Patch.com/massachusetts/somerville/check-out-somerville-s-first-net-zero-house

Sustainability in Zoning?

Renewable Energy

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 6.4.15.B - Solar and wind energy equipment are not included in building height in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District
  - Solar collectors are allowed by-right as accessory structures
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 2.A.5 - Development review for special permits includes an assessment of a new building on the solar access of existing buildings
  - Article 3.B.3 - Solar equipment is not included in building height
  - Article 6.B.2. - Solar collectors are allowed by-right as accessory structures

Sustainability in Zoning?

Renewable Energy

Public Comments

- Current permitting process for solar is slow and unpredictable
- New roofs should be required to have solar, be green, or be "cool"/reflective
- Require roofs to be PV-ready

Sustainability in Zoning?

Renewable Energy

Sample Regulation

- Tucson, AZ
  - All new one- and two-family homes must be able to accommodate solar energy and solar water-heating systems, unless the developer can demonstrate that this is impractical due to the site or orientation
  - During the review process, developers must:
    - Provide a site plan that shows the optimal location for solar systems
    - Demonstrate that the roof can support an additional load
    - Demonstrate that there is electrical panel capacity to accept the PV electrical load

Sustainability in Zoning?

Renewable Energy

Application in Somerville

- Determine which building types will be required to include solar energy readiness components
- Determine what the review process will be

- **EX.** All new construction and/or all roof renovations could be required to provide a roof layout plan that shows how the future installation of solar PV panels could be accommodated.

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Goal

- Encourage the creation of district energy and microgrids and the use of such systems by buildings in Somerville
  - Improve energy efficiency
  - Enhance resiliency
  - Reduce emissions

Source: bostonglobe.com/business/2014/05/18/back-future-french-company-revives-combined-heat-and-power-boston/

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 7.11 – Substations and pumping stations are a sub-category of the Communications, Utility and Transportation Use category. They are allowed by special permit in mixed-use and industrial districts.
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 5.B.4 – Minor utility facilities are a sub-category of the Civic and Institutional Use category. They are allowed by special permit with mixed-use buildings.

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Public Comments

- Require Tufts to operate a CHP facility

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Sample Regulations

- Seattle, WA
  - Identified four districts that are the most promising for the development of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) systems
    - Based on their density, development potential, anchor institutions, current heating systems, and energy use intensity
  - Strategized to remove barriers and enhance support for CHP
    - Reduce infrastructure costs (by reducing permitting fees and tailoring infrastructure requirements)
    - Encourage green buildings (with hydronic heating systems and high energy performance)

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Sample Regulations

- Remove Barriers
  - Explicitly permit district energy and microgrids in specific districts (Chicago, IL)
- Create Incentives
  - Waive permitting fees for the installation of district energy or microgrids (Tucson, AZ)
  - Grant density bonuses of 5-10% of FAR for buildings that utilize district energy or microgrids (Burnaby, Canada)

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Sample Regulations

- Prescriptive Requirements
  - In targeted districts, new construction and renovations greater than 20,000 SF must install hydronic HVAC systems (Vancouver, Canada)
- Performance-Based Requirements
  - New construction and major renovations must meet a standard for energy usage (Chicago, IL)

Sustainability in Zoning?

District Energy and Microgrids

Application in Somerville

- Determine which districts are most suitable for district energy and microgrids
- Identify barriers to district energy and microgrids in those districts and the role of local zoning
- Set development standards for buildings in those districts

- **EX.** Major development proposals in the Brickbottom Special District could be required to submit a feasibility study for district energy and microgrids. New buildings in the District could be required to be compatible with district energy and microgrids.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Stormwater Management

Goal

- Require new construction or major renovations to meet performance standards for absorbing or containing stormwater runoff
  - Reduce stormwater runoff
    - Prevent flooding
    - Improve water quality
    - Reduce combined sewer overflow (CSO)

Source: akumalsands.com

Sustainability in Zoning?

Stormwater Management

Current Regulations

- In the current zoning ordinance:
  - Section 8.5 - Each zoning district requires a minimum % of landscaped area, and minimum front and side yards
  - RA and RB districts require a minimum % of pervious area
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance:
  - Article 3.C - Each building type requires a minimum % of pervious area, a minimum % of landscaped area, and minimum front and side yards

Sustainability in Zoning?

Stormwater Management

Public Comments

- Driveways and parking areas should be required to be permeable
- Impermeable surfaces should not count towards open space requirements
- How much permeable surface will be lost by the proposed zoning and what will be the effect on flooding?
- 100% permeability or keep water on-site with catchments (resident-advocates)

Sustainability in Zoning?

Stormwater Management

Sample Regulation

- Los Angeles, CA
  - All development and redevelopment projects must submit a Low Impact Development (LID) plan as part of the design review process
  - The plan must demonstrate that, through infiltration, evapo-transpiration, capture and use, or treatment through biofiltration, the site will treat at least the volume of water calculated as:
    - 85th percentile 24-hour storm event runoff,
    - 90% of annual runoff, or
    - 0.75 inch storm event runoff

Sustainability in Zoning?

Stormwater Management

Application in Somerville

- Understand the stormwater implications of new development
- Review data on pervious surfaces, soil quality, watersheds, and flood zones in Somerville
- Determine what the requirements will be for which area (and what the methods will be for measuring runoff)
- Create a comprehensive guide to support Low Impact Development

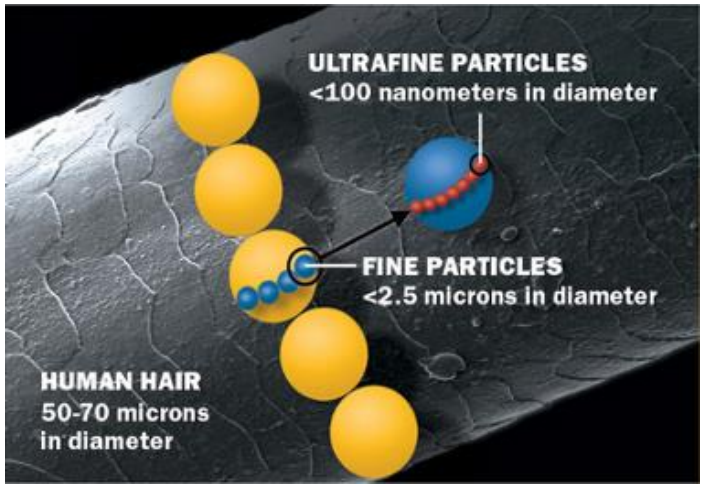
- **EX.** In areas with soils that do not percolate water, Somerville could require on-site catchment systems. In areas with soils that do, Somerville could require that areas of a lot that are not covered by buildings have permeable surfaces.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Goal

- Create a performance-based standard for new or significantly rehabilitated residential developments near highways and major roadways that requires mitigation of traffic related air pollutants (TRAPs) in indoor air.
  - Reduce health impact of TRAP exposure, specifically exposure to ultrafine particles (UFP) in near highway neighborhoods



Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Current Regulations

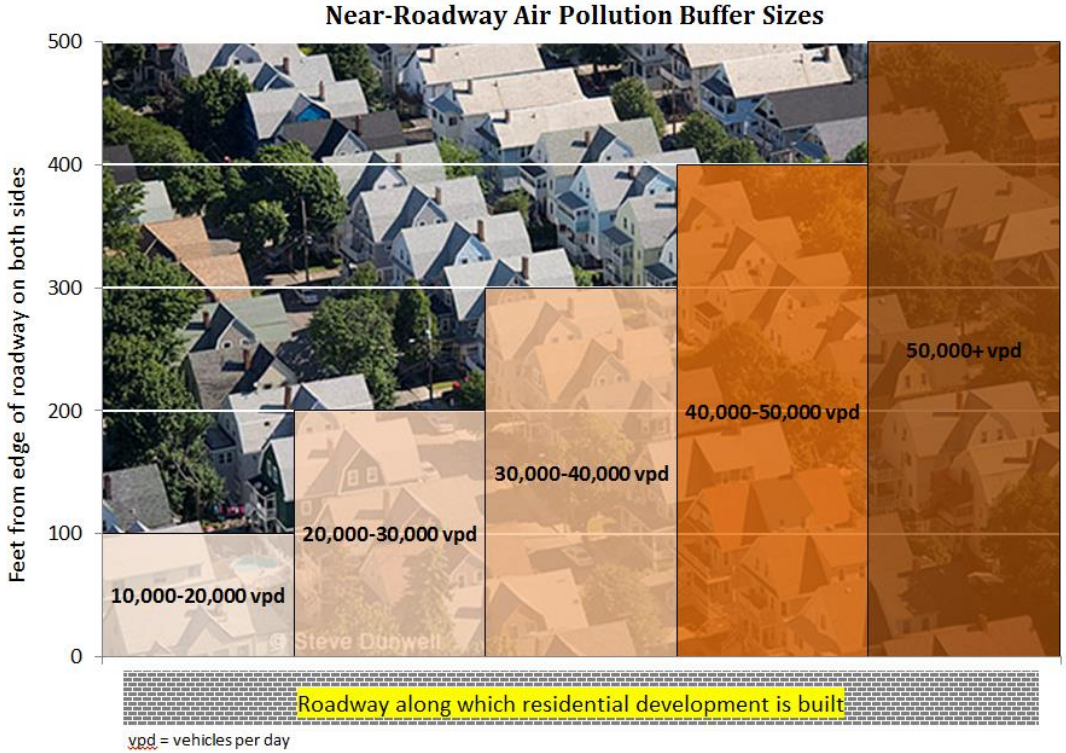
- In the current zoning ordinance: None
- In the first draft of the proposed zoning ordinance: None
- Components of TRAP such as CO, NOx, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$ are regulated regionally in outdoor air through National Ambient Air Quality Standards set by the Clean Air Act, but there are currently no regulations for UFP and no laws regulating TRAP levels in indoor air.
- Related Regulations:
  - 2015 LA Municipal Code amendment requiring MERV 13 filtration in buildings ≤ 1000ft. from freeways
  - 2003 California senate bill 352 prohibits new school siting ≤ 500 ft. from busy traffic corridors unless mitigation measures are taken.

Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Application in Somerville – Proposed Housing Covered

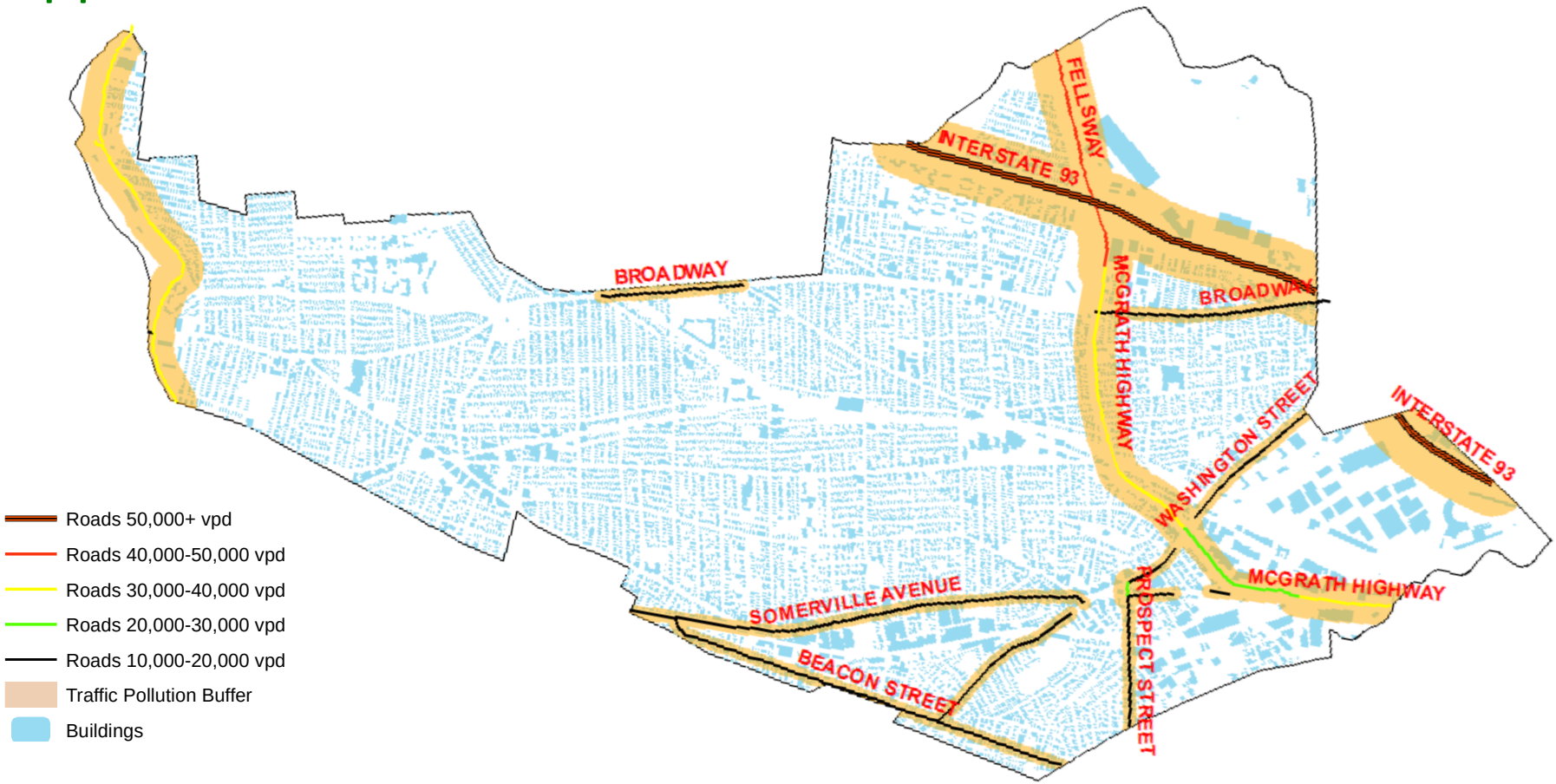
- Applied to:
  - Residential new construction and housing units that undergo rehab in excess of $100,000 within 2 years' time.
  - Housing within buffer zones of between 100-500ft. from roadway edge depending on traffic volume of roadways



Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Application in Somerville – Possible Buffers Based on Traffic

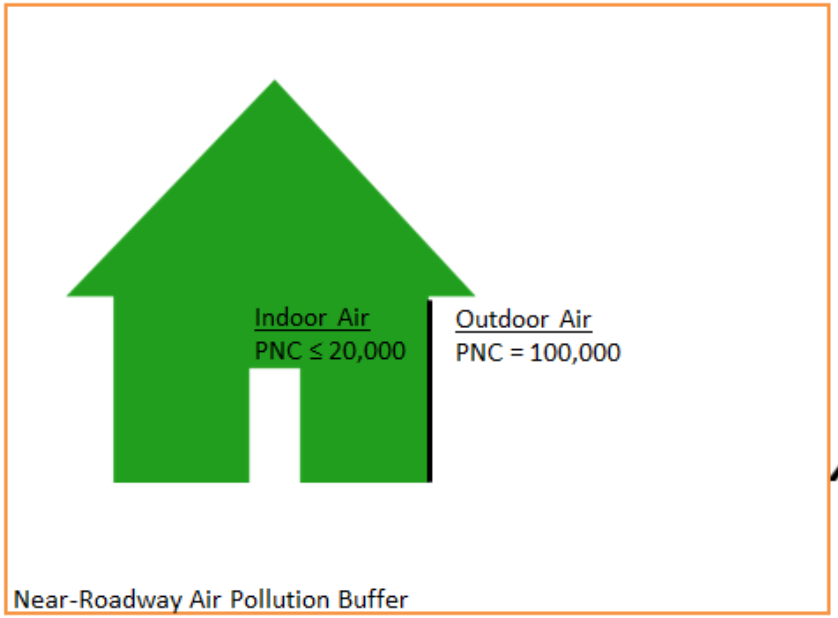


Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Application in Somerville – Proposed Performance Standard

- Owners of housing units covered by the ordinance shall use preventive measures of their choosing to reduce indoor UFP levels by ≥80% relative to outdoor UFP levels.



Near-Roadway Air Pollution Buffer

PNC – Particle Number Concentration = particles/mL

Sustainability in Zoning?

Traffic Air Pollution Exposure Mitigation

Application in Somerville – Proposed Compliance Procedure

- Owner would be responsible for hiring a consultant to verify compliance through indoor/outdoor testing prior to occupancy.
- Proposed credits* for mitigation not captured in indoor/outdoor testing:

Mitigation Tactic	Specifications	Reduction Credit	Notes
Land Use Buffer/Distance* **		0-100 ft. – no credit 101-200 ft. – 10% 201-300 ft. – 15% 301-400 ft. – 20% 401-500 ft. – 25%	Credit is based on the distance from the edge of the roadway to the point on the building closest to the roadway.
Structural Barriers	Must be a solid structure or barrier, including another building, built on the roadway side of the parcel and be continuous along the roadway side of the parcel.	< 3 m – no credit 3 – 4 m – 10% 4 – 5 m – 13% 5 – 6 m – 16% > 6 meters tall – 20%	If adjacent building is one or more full stories above the structure or barrier, no credit is applied.
Air intake locations	Situated on the far side of the building away from traffic	10%	
Vegetation Barriers	Must be dense vegetation, greater than 4 ft. wide, with few large visible gaps from ground to canopy level; must be continuous along the roadway side of the building parcel; must be evergreen vegetation; must be maintained for the lifetime of the building	< 3 m – no credit 3 – 4 m – 5 % 4 – 5 m – 6.5 % 5 – 6 m – 8 % > 6 meters tall – 10%	If adjacent building is one or more full stories above the vegetation, no credit is applied.

*credits lower the percent reduction necessary to comply with indoor/outdoor testing requirements

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Discussion

Other Sustainability Priorities

Wind and Geothermal Energy

Enhance resiliency

Increase use of renewable energy

Water Conservation

Enhance resiliency

Reduce stormwater runoff

Urban Agriculture

Enhance visual character of neighborhoods

Proposed zoning would allow by right

Other Sustainability Priorities

Comprehensive Stormwater Management

Ongoing studies (Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and potential ordinance)

Partnership with Office of Capital Projects and Engineering Department

Green Streets and Alleys

Requires further study (urban design plan)

Partnership with Transportation and Infrastructure Division

Solid Waste Recycling

Building-Based Trash, Recycling, and Organics Collection

Zoning can mandate where trash is placed on a property,

but not how it is collected

Partnership with Dept. of Public Works

Other Sustainability Priorities

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Requires further study (on appropriate locations)

Partnership with Dept. of Traffic and Parking and Transportation and Infrastructure Division

Efficient Outdoor Lighting

Cannot be regulated by zoning

Partnership with Dept. of Public Works

Building Energy Disclosure Requirement

Separate ordinance, cannot be regulated by zoning

Partnership with Mayor Curtatone and the Board of Alderman

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• Economic Development	4.11.16	5/10/16
• **Sustainability**	**4.25.16**	**5/17/16**
• Residential Occupancy	5.9.16	TBD
• Residential Neighborhoods II	5.23.16	**5/31/16**

City of Somerville
Zoning Overhaul