



**City of Somerville, Massachusetts**  
**OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**  
**Joseph A. Curtatone**  
**Mayor**

**Office of the Executive Director**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Joseph A. Curtatone, Mayor

**FROM:** Michael Glavin, Executive Director

**DATE:** November 17, 2011

**SUBJECT:** An ordinance amending Zoning Districts for the areas consisting of Somerville Avenue from Wilson Square to the Somerville-Cambridge line at Porter Square, White Street, and Elm Street from White Street to Wilson Square<sup>1</sup> and amending the Floodplain Overlay District.

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The Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) respectfully requests that you forward the attached district rezoning proposal for the areas consisting of Somerville Avenue from Wilson Square to the Somerville-Cambridge line at Porter Square, White Street, and Elm Street from White Street to Wilson Square<sup>2</sup> to the Board of Aldermen (BOA) for their review and consideration. The proposal also includes a correction to the Floodplain Overlay District amendment that was approved in June of 2010.

The Porter Square proposal represents one year of effort that has involved feedback and collaboration from residents, business persons, and organizations throughout the area. The proposed rezoning is ultimately intended to support the ongoing revitalization efforts along Somerville Avenue, capture significant benefits from the nearby rapid transit station, and to provide development guidelines for gateways<sup>3</sup> with significant growth potential located next to the rapid transit station. The attached district rezoning proposal was developed on principles that retain and respect the unique character of the gateways that attract residents and businesses alike.

This report will outline the need for rezoning in the Porter Square area, the vision for the Study Area, key principles that guided the current proposal, and the identification of two new zones previously adopted by the BOA in Union Square and Broadway in East Somerville that are recommended for adoption in the

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<sup>1</sup> Wilson Square is the gateway where Somerville Avenue intersects Elm Street.

<sup>2</sup> This area will hereinafter be referred to as the "Study Area".

<sup>3</sup> Gateway is defined as an area or node that serves as an entrance to a location. It could be a structure, signature building, plaza, archway, piece of artwork, etc. It provides a 'you have arrived' feeling and instant recognition of where you are.

Study Area. The report also discusses the extensive process of community involvement that took place to ensure that all perspectives were considered as part of the preparation for the proposal before submitting it to the BOA. The unique aspects of this district rezoning proposal will be highlighted as well. Finally, the report will provide background information on the correction to the Floodplain Overlay District amendment.

## Background

With the benefit of being close to a rapid transit station, Porter Square is an area that needed to be studied to create a vision and identify the challenges that impede its growth. Generally, the focus of the study is to identify the methodology to create a vibrant community while preserving the current architecture and to create economic incentives for community-friendly development as is being contemplated in the creation of the Somerville Comprehensive Plan.

Historically, the Study Area has remained residential in Somerville but Cambridge had provided for a mix of retail and other services largely catering to the surrounding residential community. Data indicates that retail activity within a half mile radius of Porter Square accounts for a market of \$340 million in consumer spending, while existing retail sales is around \$200 million. The economic activity fueled by the rapid transit station is an attractive economic engine with significant economic impacts on the surrounding area. The absence of commercial development in Somerville represents a dramatic opportunity cost in terms of tax revenue generation, land value, jobs, and sales, when compared to the major commercial development that has occurred in Cambridge.

Since 2004, residential property taxes in the Somerville portion of Porter Square far exceed any potential commercial property tax derived from economic activity. The lack of commercial activity imposes a tax burden onto residential property owners in the area to balance the difference between commercial and residential property taxes. The net effect in land value is also quite surprising; land value in Somerville accounts for \$118.00 per square foot, while in Cambridge land value accounts for \$165.00 per square foot. While Somerville residents benefit from commercial activity spurred by Cambridge, their consumer spending helps generate commercial property tax revenue only for the City of Cambridge. A rethinking of the Porter Square neighborhood is needed to understand the economic impact of rezoning the Study Area and its contribution to job creation, land use value, potential tax revenue generation, and the local business environment.

The initial interest in rezoning the Porter Square neighborhood came about with the spending of \$20 million to upgrade Somerville Avenue's infrastructure and streetscape environment, to update it with current city infrastructure needs, and to make it more friendly to businesses and local residents. Despite the close proximity to a rapid transit station, there has been a lack of new construction in the area since 1995.<sup>4</sup> This rezoning effort, combined with an economic analysis of the area, represents a key strategy to catalyzing new development in the Porter Square area.

## Why Porter and Wilson Square?

Porter and Wilson Square represent a unique and important residential neighborhood of residents living in dwellings ranging from single and multi-family homes to large apartment buildings, well served by public transit and a regional road network. The neighborhood contains a major transportation hub that provides access to Boston and the greater Boston area including Belmont, Waltham, Concord, and Fitchburg, through rapid transit. The Somerville portion of Porter Square is bounded by the Porter Square Shopping Center, the Spring Hills neighborhood and North Cambridge, but it is also in close proximity to prominent educational institutions such as Harvard University, M.I.T., Tufts University, and Lesley College, as well as urban commercial centers like Davis Square, Union Square, Inman Square, and Harvard Square, all within a one mile radius.

During May 2009, the City hosted a series of meetings with community members to develop a vision for Porter and Wilson Square. After a period of extensive community work, the public formulated a vision statement that highlight the need for keeping Somerville Avenue, Elm Street, White Street and Beacon Street as safe, pedestrian oriented streets lined with mixed use buildings that have first floor retail and

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<sup>4</sup> Data indicates that investment in new construction or improvements to the existing built environment has been stagnant since 1995.

upper floor residential space. The community also recognized that the development of significant sites and the development of the MBTA Air Rights adjacent to the Porter Square Station with signature buildings could create gateways into the community.

While the Study Area poses many opportunities, it consists largely of two and three-family homes as most of the vicinity around the squares is zoned for residential purposes along with a very limited inventory of retail and small office uses. As one approaches Wilson Square there are only a limited number of commercial establishments found within some mixed use buildings. Data suggests that Somerville Avenue from Porter Square to Wilson Square represents one of the busiest pedestrian and bicycle areas in Somerville. This level of pedestrian and bike traffic provides the city with the opportunity to better plan a commercial gateway that may be suitable for new development or redevelopment, at a human scale, allowing for the interaction of mixed use development with commercial, residential, office or institutional uses. With an average cost of approximately \$18 million from federal and state funds, and over \$2 million from the city, Somerville Avenue underwent a comprehensive reconstruction project including water, sewer, utility, streetscape, and landscape infrastructure. The infrastructure and streetscape improvement project enhanced the pedestrian and bicycle environment with wider sidewalks, new trees, benches, and the addition of bicycle lanes, setting the foundation to seriously rethink the future of the Porter Square neighborhood.

Despite the advantages the Study Area possesses, its numerous opportunities, and the recent investments directed towards its infrastructure and streetscape, the Study Area still poses some challenges that precludes its growth. Commercial development has been very aggressive in Cambridge but very limited in Somerville to this point. Major investments in commercial development have occurred in Cambridge because the local land use policy there has been established to foster and capture the economic benefits of rapid transit. Development around institutional, office, and retail uses is diverse and has occurred at a large scale. Zoning has been a catalytic tool that has helped to implement a collective land use vision for the community. On the other hand, Somerville lacks substantial commercial development such as the Porter Square Shopping Center sitting directly across from the rapid transit station. While the Shopping Center primarily serves Somerville residents, the income that Somerville residents are spending ultimately becomes commercial tax revenue for the City of Cambridge. Moreover, a past administrative decision regarding a parcel within the Study Area allowed the establishment of the Porter Square Shopping Center employee parking lot in Somerville, adding no commercial tax revenue to the city and promoting increased traffic between White Street and Elm Street.

However, the challenges of the area are not only centered around land use policy, they also include land size and form. The Study Area includes a few key, shallow parcels in critical opportunity areas that retain residential uses. These parcels hold great potential for redevelopment that would bring economic vitality to the community, but their asymmetrical shapes, sizes, and forms limit any potential for mixed use development in these locations. One of these locations is the Air Rights over the MBTA rail tracks. This is a long, narrow parcel that is currently vacant and divides the neighborhood from the Beacon Street area and Cambridge. The property has no open space, no pedestrian connections, and residents found the site disconnected them from the neighboring areas. A site with such close proximity to rapid transit requires changes to preserve the residential fabric of the neighborhood while at the same time allowing for additional neighborhood scale retail and restaurant uses to be established.

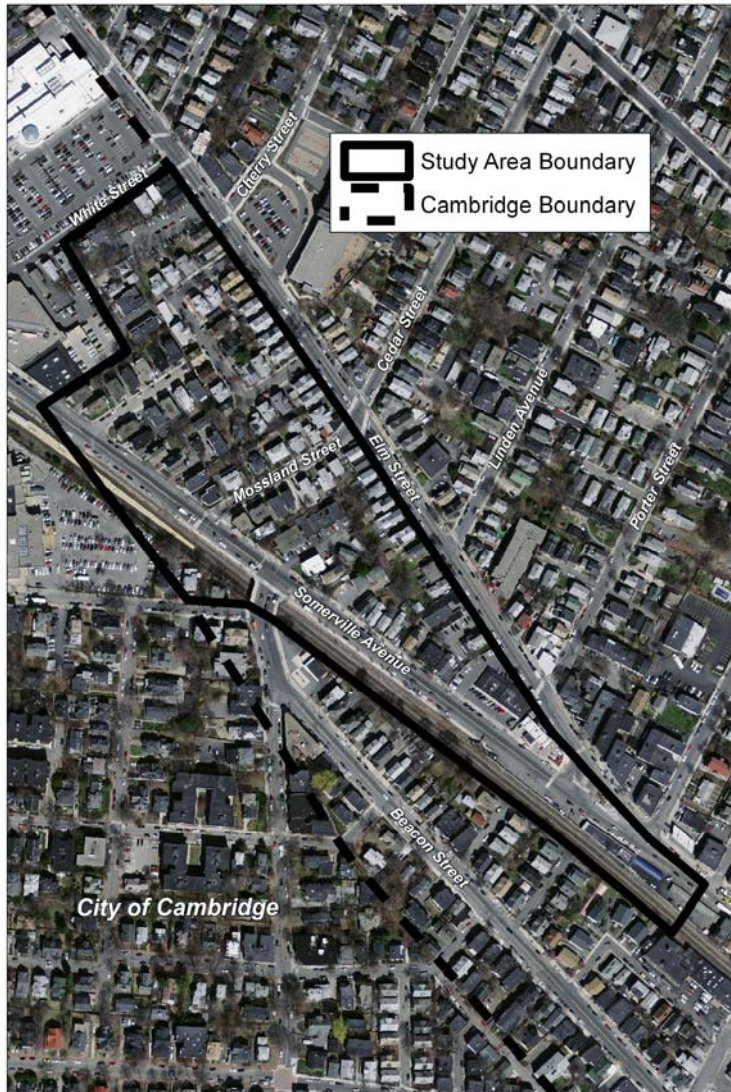
Presently, the largest challenge for economic development – necessary to relieve the tax burden from residential owners – is caused by the existing restrictive zoning regulations. The current zoning of the Study Area (see the Study Area section below) includes areas of BA Commercial Districts, and RB and RC Residential Districts. The biggest concern related to the existing zoning is that it limits design flexibility and options for redevelopment or new development to fit into the context of the existing neighborhood and the urban character of the area. The proposed district rezoning will dictate which areas of the neighborhood are conserved, which are enhanced, and which are transformed to support neighborhood scale mixed use, transit oriented development. The proposed district rezoning will also enhance the value of properties by allowing owners more flexibility to make alterations to their buildings



or to redevelop their parcels entirely. Furthermore, the proposed district rezoning would establish a land use policy centered around human scale development that would produce economic benefit for the community in the form of new businesses, jobs, and tax revenue for the city.

## Study Area

The Study Area is just under ½ mile in length and is generally bounded by Elm Street, White Street, and Somerville Avenue. Its boundary starts at the intersection of Elm Street and White Street and runs down the center line of Elm Street all the way into Wilson Square (the intersection of Elm Street and Somerville Avenue). The boundary continues southeasterly down the centerline of Somerville Avenue to the



intersection of Ibbetson Street and then runs southwest until it reaches the far side of the rail track right-of-way. The boundary then runs northwest to the intersection of Beacon Street and Somerville Avenue and then crosses Beacon Street to include the three Somerville parcels on the north side of Roseland Street. The Study Area boundary then continues northwest following the Somerville-Cambridge boundary, crossing back over Somerville Avenue, heading up White Street Place, still following the municipal boundary, bisecting White Street all the way back to the intersection of White Street and Elm Street.

Most of the Study Area is currently zoned RB which contains primarily two- and three-family homes with some multi-family dwellings in the area. The northwestern and southeastern ends of the Study Area, as well as the area around the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Beacon Street, are all currently zoned BA. Planning Staff's rezoning proposal for the Study Area would introduce zoning districts into the area that already exist in other parts of the City.

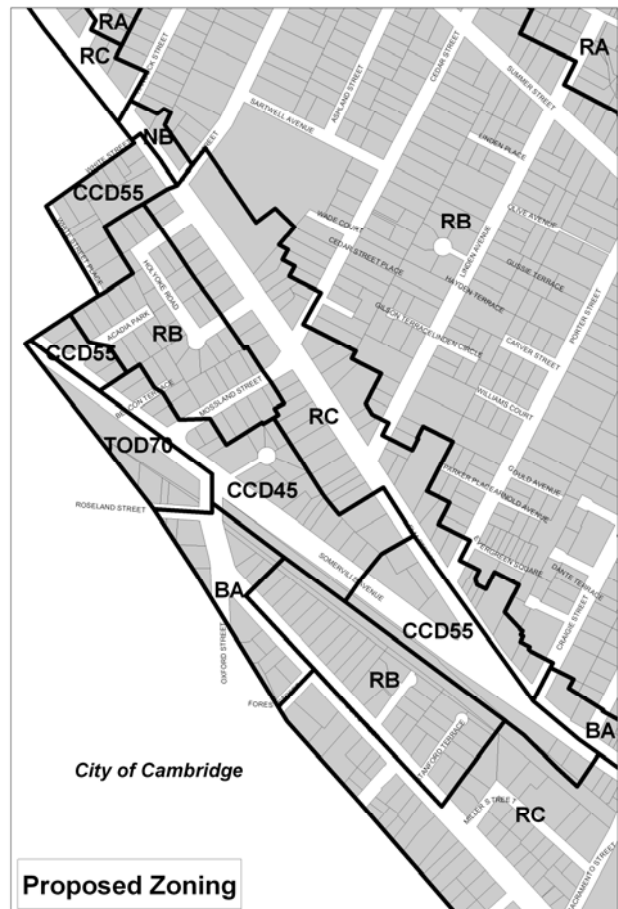
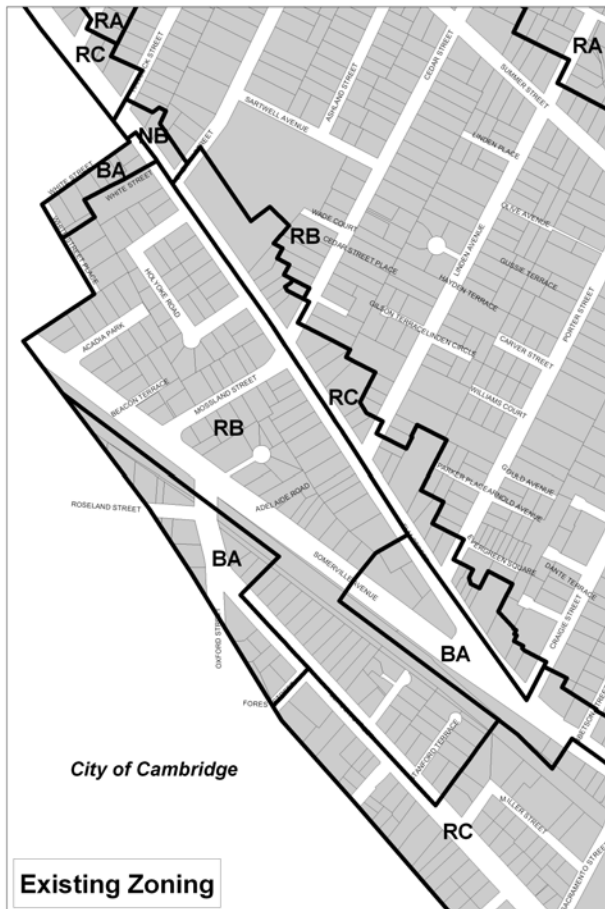
One of the new districts that will be introduced would be the Corridor

Commercial District (CCD). The CCD has two sub-districts which are distinguished solely by their respective height and density regulations. CCD-45 provides for mixed-use or commercial development at a small to mid-rise scale and the CCD-55 provides for the same development but at a mid-rise scale. Both CCD sub-districts encourage a mix of business activities while ensuring street-level uses such as retail, restaurants and small offices. The CCD Districts will allow buildings to increase their height between five and 15 feet, depending upon the particular location of the new proposed district, CCD-45 or CCD-55, and the existing zoning district in the area. CCD Districts also allow for an increase in a building's Floor Area Ratio (FAR), a measure of a building's bulk, from the 1.0 or 2.0 maximum, depending upon the existing zoning, to 2.5 or 3.0. Additionally, any new structure built in a CCD District

would require a 20 foot setback from a residential district line, with the area directly adjacent to the residential district being landscaped green space.

The other new district being introduced into the Study Area is the Transit Oriented District (TOD). As with the CCD District, the TOD has several sub-districts but only the TOD-70 would be introduced into the Study Area. TODs also encourage a mix of uses as well as promote sustainable development, the use of green building standards, and well-designed pedestrian access near transit nodes and commercial squares. Structures within the TOD-70 would be permitted up to 70 feet in height, which is 20 feet taller than what is currently permitted in the area. The maximum allowable FAR would also be increased in this area from 2.0 to potentially as high as 4.0 if the structure is a certified Green Building. Additionally in the TOD Districts, all new parking must be in structures - no surface parking is permitted.

The existing BA Commercial District in the northwest portion of the Study Area would become a CCD-55 District that would also include the three parcels that front onto White Street Place, as well as the Porter Square Shopping Center employee parking lot on Elm Street. A second CCD-55 District would be created along Somerville Avenue closest to the Porter Square T Station that would include the last four parcels heading out of Somerville into Cambridge, which were formerly properties in the RB Residential District. A third CCD-55 District would be created in Wilson Square where there is currently a BA Commercial District. The CCD-55 District would include the four parcels in Wilson Square bounded by Elm Street and Somerville Avenue where the Cumberland Farms and small strip mall are currently located. The district would extend along Somerville Avenue and also include the Somerville Car Wash parcels adjacent to the rail track right-of-way.



A new CCD-45 District would be created along the north side of Somerville Avenue between two of the new CCD-55 Districts. This district would include the two parcels just northwest of the new CCD-55 District in Wilson Square along Elm Street and a small area on the south side of Somerville Avenue



which includes some of the rail track right-of-way. The southern boundary of this CCD-45 District is determined by the existing BA Commercial District boundaries in that area. The new TOD-70 District in the Study Area would run from the road centerlines of Roseland Street and Beacon Street, include the Somerville parcels on the north side of Roseland Street, and cover the rail track right-of-way all the way to the Cambridge city line bounded on the north by the centerline of Somerville Avenue. This area is currently zoned RB in its northern half and BA in its southern half.

The residential core of the Study Area, the neighborhood between Elm Street and Somerville Avenue, would remain an RB Residential District. This would basically include all of the parcels that do not have frontage on Elm Street or Somerville Avenue. All of the parcels along Elm Street between the new CCD-55 District by White Street, and the eastern most extremity of the CCD-45 District would be rezoned to an RC Residential District from their current RB Residential District zoning. These parcels on the southwest side of Elm Street would then match the zoning of the parcels directly across from them on the northeast side of Elm Street and be combined into the same RC Residential District.

A small clerical edit was also made to one parcel (8 Cedar Street) near the intersection of Elm Street and Cedar Street at the north edge of the RC Residential District. On the existing zoning map (Map Section 9), the parcel is zoned both RB and RC. It is unknown as to why the parcel is zoned for both districts, but old zoning maps clearly show the parcel as being located in the RC district as late as 2003. Based off of this information and in an attempt to rectify this zoning map error, Planning Staff is proposing to zone this parcel only within the RC Residential District.

### **What is the Vision for Porter and Wilson Square?**

Building upon the commerce history of the area plus the impact of the MBTA Red Line and Commuter Rail station, Porter and Wilson Square in Somerville have tremendous unmet potential. The elements of the proposed community vision for the future of the Study Area are captured in the vision statement and highlighted as follows:

- Safe and pedestrian oriented streets;
- A mix of businesses that would be attractive to nearby residents envisioned as retail and small businesses on first floors with residential or commercial uses above;
- Signature buildings that accentuate gateways around Wilson Square, White Street at Elm Street, and Somerville Avenue;
- Reconnected neighborhoods through appropriate air rights development; and
- Creation of a gateway to the City.

When the vision is realized, the Study Area will remain a neighborhood-serving commercial corridor – a place where local residents can walk down to the corner and buy milk, bread and fresh produce. There will be a balanced mix of small offices, retail shops and restaurants that will line the gateways in a pedestrian friendly manner with additional office or residential space located above to support human-scale development, encourage local businesses growth, and prevent uses that do not match the fabric of the community from locating in the area. New residences will have been constructed with 1, 2, and 3+ bedroom units and a percentage of these will be made available to low income buyers or renters. Workers and residents will have easier access to open space throughout the area both on private land and in public parks.

### **What Principles Guided the Rezoning Process?**

Overall, the zones that are proposed will move the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO) away from use-based zoning and towards a form-based or building-based zoning. This means that the highest level of scrutiny will occur when a new building is proposed to ensure that its character is aligned with the City's vision and that it is designed in a way that is compatible with its surroundings. Once the building is

constructed, the operator will have flexibility in finding tenants for the space.

More specifically, the guiding principles for the rezoning process were:

- Facilitate (or channel) development into opportunity areas
- Respect the transition between commercial and residential development
- Provide a balanced approach to traffic and pedestrian circulation
- Ensure design quality and compatibility
- Provide greater certainty to developers and community members

Generally, this means that lower scale infill development respectful of the character of existing buildings is anticipated for the majority of the Study Area. Larger scale development will occur on properties located in the distinct gateways that hold the most potential such as Wilson Square, along Somerville Avenue, White Street, and those parcels closest to the rapid transit station. Development standards and design guidelines will give developers a clear picture of what the Porter Square community is looking for and they will know, in turn, if they follow that picture, they will be able to move through the permitting process with relative ease.

### **Process to Develop Rezoning**

In May 2009, OSPCD in consultation with the Ward Aldermen, Maryann Heuston and Sean O'Donovan, held a kickoff meeting to work with neighborhood residents and property owners to develop a vision and strategy to bridge the scar formed by the railroad, and to sew the community back together with catalytic projects and improved roadway and pedestrian access.

Staff, as encouraged by Aldermen Heuston and O'Donovan, convened four community meetings to create a vision for the area. These meetings helped identify challenges, opportunities, and strengths of the existing gateways in the community and ultimately assisted in the development of a vision statement document that was taken back to the community for further feedback. The public meetings included residents, the business community, property owners, community organizations, and OSPCD staff. Four meetings were held in May 2009, often for up to 3 hours at a time, to create a vision for the area and to articulate it in a statement. The process concluded in June 2009 with the development of a vision statement for the Porter Square area.

In December 2010, OSPCD responded to the vision statement and called for an implementation process to further advance a rezoning proposal to establish a development framework for the future of the area. OSPCD held a well attended kickoff meeting in December 2010 to establish the vision implementation process. Existing conditions related to land use, economic activity, and proximity to rapid transit were revisited and opportunities, challenges, and strengths were identified.

A second meeting was held in January 2011 where the vision statement was broken down by topics, each of them convening its own discussion: safe and pedestrian oriented streets, a mix of businesses attractive to nearby residents, signature buildings that accentuate gateways, reconnected neighborhoods through appropriate air rights development, and the creation of a gateway to the city. Furthermore, OSPCD introduced the Study Area, including three gateways mainly integrated by Somerville Avenue from Wilson Square to the Cambridge-Somerville line at Porter Square; the intersection of Elm Street and White Street; and Wilson Square. Sample images of buildings were distributed to the audience and participants were asked to review the images and place them into portions of the Study Area where they thought the image would fit into the neighborhood fabric.

This interactive process took two additional meetings. During these meetings, the community furthered their vision for the area, evaluated blocks and potential sites for redevelopment, infill, or preservation, and discussed potential uses for the gateways of the Study Area. Dimensional requirements such as height and



density for potential structures near existing residences were also discussed, all the while the keeping in mind the existing architecture, neighborhood fabric, and desired feel of the community. A discussion of potential development over the MBTA Air Rights took place as well.

Transit Realty Associates (TRA), the real estate agent for the MBTA joined the conversation, and presented some insight about possible development over the air rights site. Utile, Inc., an architectural design and planning firm engaged by TRA, developed a conceptual design for potential development and found that the technical and financial feasibility of developing this site relies on first building a deck structure over the rail tracks to support any structure above. This deck structure would not only need to support the weight of any building over the rail tracks, but it would also need to be high enough to allow for the trains below to pass underneath building. The deck structure would be erected from the street level and would need to measure approximately 8 feet in height. As required in the proposed TOD, the building would also need to accommodate structured parking requiring an additional 14 feet of height atop the supportive deck. At the height of 22 feet above the street level, the potential structure would be able to take shape and usable development space could be constructed. The development above the initial 22 feet would need to offset the cost of construction of the supportive deck over the rail tracks and the structured parking level. Moreover, the site in question narrows from 70 feet to 50 feet traveling east along Somerville Avenue. This limits the maximum potential width of any structure over the rail tracks and to compensate for this restriction additional building height for usable space is needed. To recuperate the costs of the supportive deck and the structured parking, a certain amount of building height and usable space is required. According to Utile, Inc.'s analysis, a development would need no less than 66 feet of height to make the project feasible.

On June 13, 2011, after an extensive period of collaborative work, OSPCD staff returned to the neighborhood and presented a draft district rezoning proposal which integrated the proposed elements for new development that participants had reached consensus on as appropriate for the scale and fabric of the neighborhood. Key community principles such as facilitating development in opportunity areas; respecting the transition between commercial and residential districts; balancing circulation amenities; ensuring design quality and compatibility; providing greater certainty to applicants and abutters; and encouraging sustainable development; were incorporated into the rezoning proposal.

Major gateways of the Study Area were proposed to be rezoned as either Corridor Commercial Districts or Transit Oriented Districts. The western end of Somerville Avenue near the Porter Square MBTA station, along with some parcels facing White Street adjacent to the city limit were proposed to be rezoned to CCD-55. Properties on the northeast side of Somerville Avenue between Porter and Wilson Square were proposed to be rezoned to CCD-45. Wilson Square, at the intersection of Elm Street and Somerville Avenue, was proposed to be rezoned to CCD-55. Additionally, the parcels along Elm Street between the White Street-Elm Street intersection and Wilson Square were all proposed to be rezoned to RC from their current RB zoning. At this meeting, the Air Rights over the MBTA rail tracks were proposed to be rezoned to a TOD District, but the height of this particular district was left open for discussion.

A comment period was then opened between June and September 2011, during which the public was encouraged to provide feedback on the overall visioning and implementation process, as well as the rezoning proposal itself. In mid September 2011, OSPCD staff presented a second draft rezoning map to the community which included a proposal for the Air Rights over the MBTA rail track to be rezoned to TOD-70.

## **Rezoning Proposal**

The Corridor Commercial Districts (CCD) – CCD-45 and CCD-55 – and the Transit Oriented District (TOD-70) would be amended to further refine the districts that they were adopted in April of 2009 and amended in February of 2010. The proposed amendments include the following:

- The Zoning Map changes described in the Study Area section of this report.
- (§6.5.F) Inserting Use Cluster K into the dimensional and use standard table for the TOD-55, -70, -100 and -135. Use Cluster K, Large Retail and Service (more than 10,000 net square feet), was a use cluster that was created after the use clusters were originally approved in April of 2009. The cluster was identified in the text as an approved use in the TODs; however, the amendment did not add this cluster to the appropriate table. The current proposal will fix this error.
- (§7.14) A Pedestrian Oriented Use Requirements Map was added for the TOD-70 along Somerville Avenue in the Study Area.
- (§8.6.23) Clarifying the footnote language to state that a reduction of FAR and height limit for shallow lots abutting residential districts shall only apply to those lots in the CCD-55 Districts, while only a reduction of FAR will apply to shallow lots abutting residential districts in the CCD-45 Districts. The footnote will read: “Reduction of FAR and height limits for shallow lots abutting residential districts in CCDs: Lots with a depth of fifty-five (55) feet or less shall have a maximum FAR of 2.0 and height limit of forty-five (45) feet in the CCD-55 Districts. Lots with a depth of fifty-five (55) feet or less shall have a maximum FAR of 2.0 in the CCD-45 Districts. In the event that a parcel has a varying depth, the shallow lot FAR and height limit shall apply to that part of the property less than fifty-five (55) feet in depth.”

### **Floodplain Overlay District Amendment**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) updated the Flood Insurance Rate Map. The Board of Alderman approved an amendment to the Floodplain Overlay District, to incorporate the change and bring the City into compliance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 60.3(d) of the National Flood Insurance Program regulations on June 10, 2010. The original ordinance submitted to the Board of Alderman did not include the Notification of the Watercourse Alteration Section because this section was going to be incorporated into the Conservation Commission’s regulation. After further review, Staff determined that the notification requirement is best placed in the zoning ordinance. The Planning Board recommended approval of the zoning amendment (dated Draft 6-1-10) that included a new Section, 6.1.18.H, that incorporated the notification requirement to adjacent communities and the NFIP State Coordinator and Program Specialist. The Board of Alderman received the updated amendment; however, the vote was taken on the originally submitted ordinance that did not include Section H. In order to comply with FEMA’s notification requirement, the current proposal includes the addition of Section H to the Floodplain Overlay District.

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### **Conclusion**

The proposed district rezoning in Porter and Wilson Square represents nearly a year’s worth of work and contribution of constructive feedback from numerous members of the Somerville community. The process for developing the proposed district rezoning has been highly collaborative and all public comment has been seriously considered.

The overall process started with convening a series of meetings to create a vision for the area, identifying challenges, opportunities, and strengths of the existing gateways, and ultimately assisting in the development of a vision statement for the Study Area. After the vision statement was established, a vision implementation process helped lay the foundation for how the vision statement could be implemented, which resulted in the proposed district rezoning.

The proposed district rezoning comprehensively addresses the existing challenges and opportunities facing the Study Area and strives to establish a framework within which the proposed vision can be realized.

The amendment also edits the Floodplain Overlay District to include the Notification of the Watercourse Alteration Section in order to be in compliance with FEMA's requirements.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Aldermen adopt the proposed district rezoning establishing, Corridor Commercial District 45 and 55 (CCD-45, CCD-55) and Transit Oriented District 70 (TOD-70) in the Porter Square area, realigning some existing zoning boundaries, mapping those districts in specified areas in the Porter Square area of Somerville, and making an edit to the previously amended Floodplain Overlay District.

### List of Attachments

1. Study Area Boundaries
2. Existing Zoning Map
3. Proposed Zoning Map
4. Comparison of Zoning Districts Table