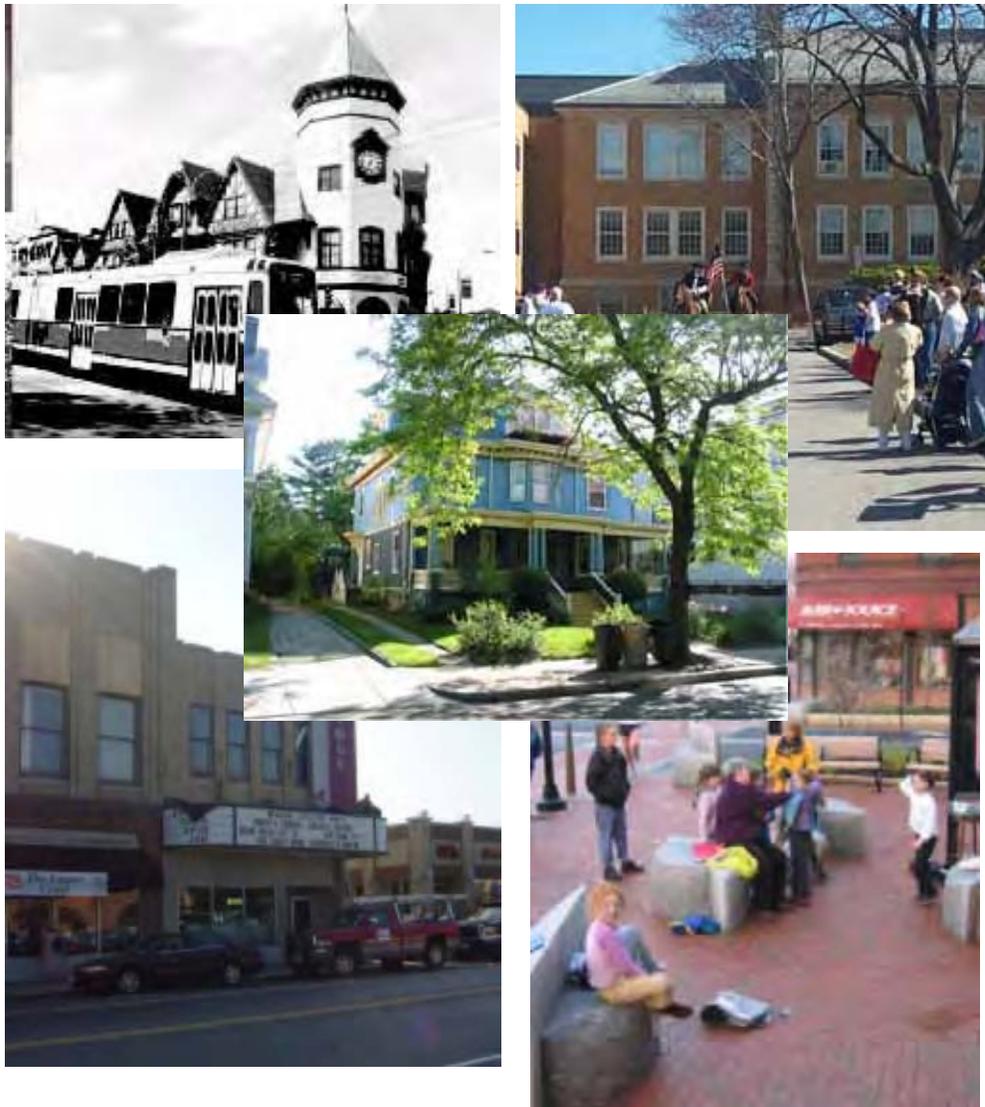


Coolidge Corner District Plan

March 2007

Coolidge Corner District Planning Council
Co-chairs Robert L. Allen and Arlene Mattison



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WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
SMART GROWTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



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Executive Summary

The district plan for Coolidge Corner is a mechanism for looking holistically at Coolidge Corner's neighborhoods and commercial core to establish policy and physical recommendations for its future. The district plan attempts to develop:

- ➔ A common vision for the district that resolves conflicting issues as much as possible based on the vision outlined in the Comprehensive Plan
- ➔ Evaluation of the likely future development of surrounding neighborhoods if no action is taken and alternatives that protect these neighborhoods
- ➔ Suggestions for possible regulatory tools such as zoning changes to help conserve neighborhoods and maintain a vibrant commercial core
- ➔ Possible public actions that should be taken to help protect neighborhoods and encourage investment consistent with this vision

This report was developed by Town staff and a District Planning Council (DPC) of residents, business owners, and members of Town Boards and Commissions. This DPC met at least monthly through 2006 and into 2007 to review materials and provide recommendations regarding the future of Coolidge Corner. The DPC recommends that it continue to provide a voice on issues of planning and development in Coolidge Corner.

This report examines the following issues:

- Current conditions and recent changes in Coolidge Corner
- Trends in residential development
- Tools for preserving residential areas
- Appropriate development in commercial areas
- Transportation and parking

It then presents an action plan of next steps for various Town Boards, Commissions, and Departments to undertake to continue to plan for the future of Coolidge Corner. The steps recommended are as follows:

- (1) **Preserve the historic look and feel of Coolidge Corner.**
 - A. Implement a new 3-family zone to help preserve approximately 90 buildings now in M zones.
 - B. Revise or eliminate the section of the Zoning By-law that does not permit reconstruction of nonconforming buildings destroyed by catastrophe.
 - C. Preserve streetscapes, private green space, and neighborhoods through exploring the use of Form-Based Zoning, Neighborhood Conservation Districts, setback requirements and other methods.
 - D. Use a wider forum to explore ways any proposals recommended for Coolidge Corner might be used in the whole Town.
 - E. Revise the public benefits section of the Zoning By-Law. Consider including "Some Public Benefits Discussed By DPC Members." Anything required by the Zoning Bylaw should not be considered a public benefit.

- F. Use other available tools and resources to preserve the historic look and feel of Coolidge Corner, including working with the National Park Service to enhance the visibility of the JFK Birthplace and to preserve his boyhood neighborhood as a significant resource for the Town, the nation, and the world.

(2) Promote and enhance the Coolidge Corner commercial district.

- A. Explore and encourage planning and zoning tools that will increase principally commercial development in Coolidge Corner.
- B. Use incentives and revise restrictions to provide Coolidge Corner employee parking in ways that increase the number of spaces available for Coolidge Corner customers, including a pilot program for the Beacon Street median west of Marion St for long term parking by Coolidge Corner employees, and exploration of locations for longer term parking by employees away from the commercial center.
- C. Improve parking signage in an aesthetically appropriate way to increase access and utilization beyond the East Centre Street Lot, such as at the Webster Street Hotel.
- D. Decrease reliance on automobile use by: (1) supporting changes that benefit pedestrians and cyclists (for example, improved street crossings); and (2) expanding the use of public transportation (for example, encouraging employers to subsidize MBTA passes and seeing that the MBTA improve and expand streetcar and bus service in the Coolidge Corner area.)
- E. Use management techniques suggested by Traffic Solutions to increase the usage of available parking, including enforcement to help provide turnover of parking spaces and exploring options for better using existing supply.
- F. Explore options for potential redevelopment of the Centre Street lot in conjunction with provision of a public green space, including further exploration of the proposed robotic parking concept.
- G. Explore tools for local business retention, expansion and diversity.

(3) Promote the creation of open spaces for community gathering in Coolidge Corner and adequate signage for open spaces that are publicly accessible.

(4) Promote the creation of community arts and cultural spaces in Coolidge Corner which, with the Coolidge Corner Theatre, would enhance Coolidge Corner as a cultural destination.

(5) Continue the Coolidge Corner District Planning Council as a mechanism for residents and merchants together to play a central role in addressing Coolidge Corner issues as they arise.

I. Introduction and Vision & Goals

Background

The Comprehensive Plan set up a system for district and neighborhood planning in Brookline for the next ten years. It described district plans as follows:

“These District Plans will look at the portions of Brookline where development pressure is more intense and the need for proactive planning is most needed. District Plans would each be developed by a District Planning Council of neighborhood representatives, Town Meeting members, small business owners, property owners and Town officials. A study area would be defined for each district. District Plans would conduct buildout analyses and alternative development scenarios for each district, and then develop a vision for a preferred future of the district. The District Plans would then develop strategies for these areas in a variety of subject areas, including regulatory tools, development preferences, transportation issues, and open space priorities. District Plans would be managed by Town staff in the Department of Planning & Community Development, with the assistance of staff in other departments and consultants as needed and as funding is available. ...

District and neighborhood plans need to be consistent with the goals and policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. In some cases where a District or Neighborhood Committee concludes that it is unable to meet an expectation of the Comprehensive Plan due to limited resources or specific local conditions, the Committee may submit a well-argued case for seeking relief from doing so. Such a case will be considered by the Planning Board during the process of adopting a local plan. Any district or neighborhood plan—even with an agreed amendment—in all other respects will still need to be consistent with Town goals and policies.” (page 34)

The Action Plan determined that Coolidge Corner should be the first district plan. This district plan follows in the tradition of Town-wide work done on the current and previous Comprehensive Plans, and also on the work done in the 1960’s by well-known urban designer Kevin Lynch. Lynch looked at the Town as a whole and made an effort to map the perceived character of Brookline. An excerpt of his work, showing the area around Coolidge Corner, is shown on the following page. There have also been at least three previous studies of Coolidge Corner conducted by or for the Town:

- *Beacon Street Development Study (1970-71)*
- *Prospects for “The Block” in Coolidge Corner (1979)*
- *Coolidge Corner: From the 1970’s into the 1980’s (1980, revised 1983)*

None of these studies took a holistic approach to the district as a whole, however, in the same way that Kevin Lynch’s work and the recent Comprehensive Plan did for the Town. This study is the first effort to take such a look specifically at Coolidge Corner.

In order to guide development of the District Plan, the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting authorized and appointed a District Planning Council (DPC). The DPC consisted of a variety of stakeholders, including representatives from Boards, Commissions, Town Meeting Members from Precincts in the Coolidge Corner district, and representatives from neighborhoods associations. As per the language outlined by Town Meeting in their approval of the Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD), each organization was permitted to select its own representative, who was then affirmed by the Board of Selectmen.

The District Planning Council had the following charge:

“The District Planning Council will provide input to Town staff and consultants as to the key issues and opportunities in the Coolidge Corner area, comment on draft documents prepared as part of this project; work with Town staff and consultants at public meetings and workshops as part of this project; and complete the various elements of a District Plan, including recommendations for neighborhood preservation and a common vision for sites that are likely to be developed in the next 5 to 10 years in Coolidge Corner.”



**IMAGE OF COOLIDGE
CORNER AREA FROM 1965
KEVIN LYNCH STUDY**

District Planning Council Membership

The DPC currently consists of the following members (alternates in parentheses):

- Board of Selectmen: Bob Allen – *Co-chair*
- Brookline GreenSpace Alliance: Arlene Mattison – *Co-chair*
- Coolidge Corner SouthSide Neighborhood Association: Patricia Connors
- North Brookline Neighborhood Association: Chuck Swartz (Harriet Rosenstein)
- Brookline Neighborhood Alliance: Diana Spiegel
- TMM Precinct 1: Steven Kanas (Karen Lief)
- TMM Precinct 2: Judy Mason (Chris Kahl)
- TMM Precinct 3: Myra Trachtenberg
- TMM Precinct 7: Susan Cohen [formerly Ilene Bezahler (2005-2006)]
- TMM Precinct 8: David-Marc Goldstein (Peg Senturia)
- TMM Precinct 9: Joyce Jozwicki (Bruce Moore)
- TMM Precinct 10: Jonathan Davis
- TMM Precinct 11: Monica Sidor
- Business/Commercial property owners: Gregory Stoller - Property Owner (Richard Tuck), Kenneth Jaffe - Finance, Joe Zina – Service (Derick Anderson), Dana Brigham – Retail (Bob Kelly).
- Preservation Commission: Jim Batchelor
- Planning Board: Marc Zarillo
- Economic Development Advisory Board: Anne Meyers
- Transportation Board: Gus Driessen [formerly Fred Levitan (2005-2006)]
- Housing Advisory Board: David Rockwell
- Council on Aging: Shirley Radlo

Interim Controls: Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay District

As a first step in this process, Town Meeting approved a Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) to manage development pressures in the study area during the planning process. The creation of IPOD's in Brookline is authorized by Section 3.09 of the Town Zoning Bylaw, which was added to the Bylaw by Town Meeting in Fall of 2004.

The Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) was designed to create a reasonable level of interim land use control in the Coolidge Corner area while a district plan was developed. The proposed IPOD applied to the M and G districts near Coolidge Corner. It was originally designed to be in effect for one year following its passage, after which time it was anticipated that final zoning and/or other regulatory tools would be put in place to help achieve a shared vision for Coolidge Corner and its surrounding neighborhoods. However, after a year, the IPOD was extended for an additional six months to provide time for the process of developing this report to be completed.

The IPOD did two things. First, it limited new residential development to two units per lot by right, and up to five units by special permit. Second, it instructed the Planning Board to create new design guidelines that will apply to all special permit applications,

commercial or residential, in the affected area. These design guidelines addressed the relationship of any proposed development to the surrounding neighborhood; its relationship to the streetscape; and the appearance of the proposed development.

The Department of Planning and Community Development did considerable public outreach during the development of the IPOD, including meeting with stakeholders and reviewing the feedback gathered during the development of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, Planning and Community Development staff has met with neighborhood groups in the Coolidge Corner area to explain the proposed IPOD and listen to comments. Generally, the response to the tool has been positive.

Process

The District Planning Council has met monthly to provide input into various stages of the process and recommend policies for further exploration. These monthly meetings began in January of 2006. To date, there have been 15 such meetings. In addition, Town staff has held four public meetings to date. The first, held in February of 2006, was to provide an overview of the process and hear from the public about their thoughts regarding development in Coolidge Corner. The second, held in April of 2006, involved examining the existing trends of development in Coolidge Corner and some possible tools for responding to these trends. The second public meeting also included an introduction to three possible development sites in the heart of Coolidge Corner. The third public meeting, held in February of 2007, was on the issue of transportation, traffic and parking in Coolidge Corner. A fourth public hearing on the overall planning process to date was held in March of 2007.

The DPC elected its co-chairs and adopted Robert's Rules of Order. During its proceedings, questions arose as to the applicability of the state Conflict of Interest Law and the interpretation of the Open Meeting Law concerning the approval of minutes. At the request of the DPC, Town Counsel sought a legal opinion from the State Ethics Commission regarding the Conflict of Interest Law. A DPC member sought a legal opinion from the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office regarding the Open Meeting Law. These opinions are available for review in Town Counsel's Office and on the Town's website at <http://www.townofbrooklinemass.com/legal>. DPC members learned that to comply with state law requirements, they need to file disclosures of any potential conflicts of interest with the Board of Selectmen. They also learned that under state law, members need to review and approve their meeting minutes formally to insure the accuracy of their records.

The planning process was managed by Town staff from the Department of Planning & Community Development and the Economic Development Department. Town staff also retained two sets of consultants to assist in this process. The first team, funded through a Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was led by Bluestone Planning Group. That team examined three potential development sites in the commercial core of Coolidge Corner in an effort to develop visions for their redevelopment that both met community interests and were financially feasible. As described in the report below, this process resulted in alternative development scenarios for each of these sites, but did not produce a preferred alternative, although it did lead to

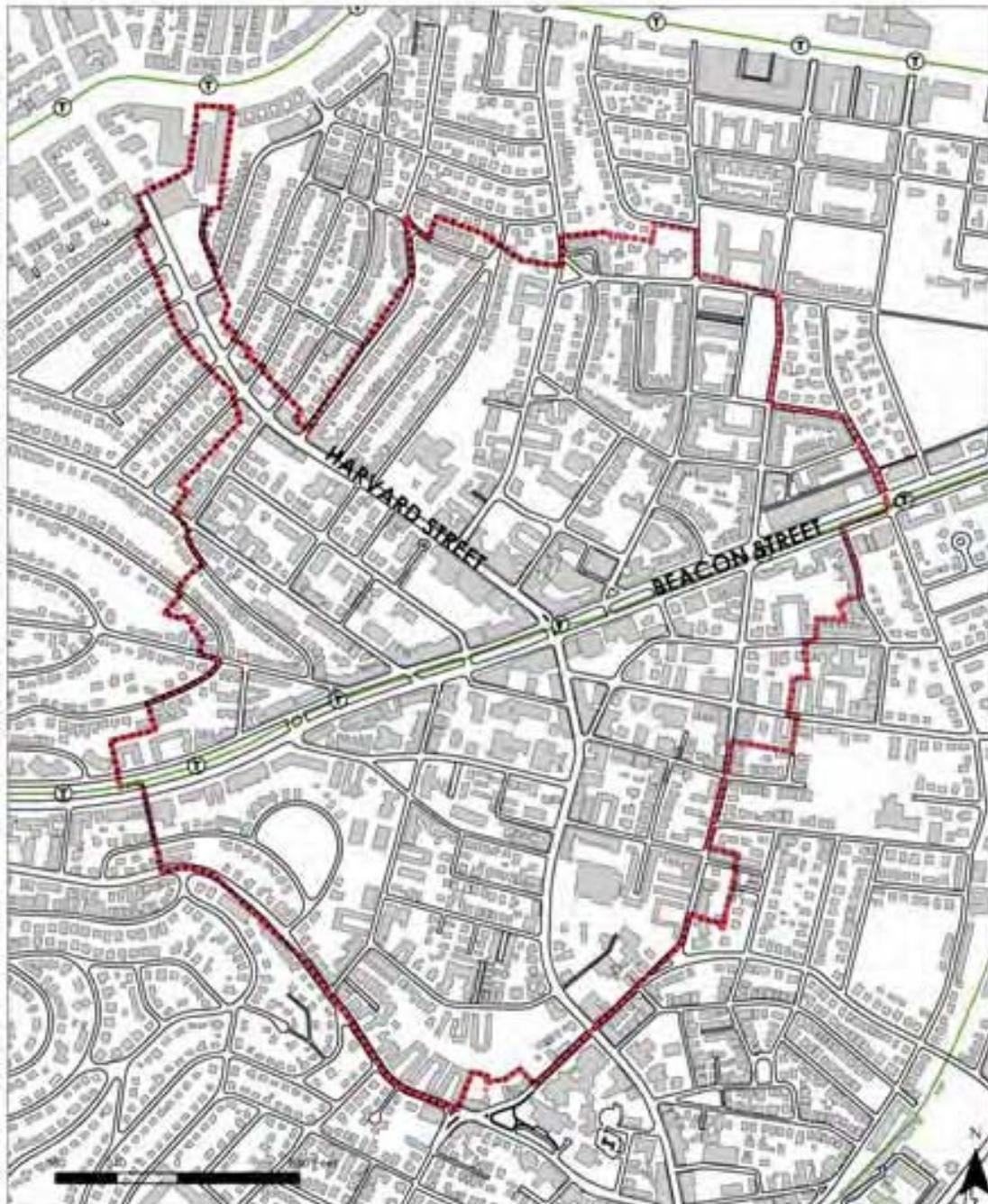
INTRODUCTION AND VISION & GOALS

some generally agreed-upon concepts. The second set of consultants, from the firm Traffic Solutions, Inc., was retained to examine issues of transportation, traffic and parking. Their contract was funded by Town Community Development Block Grant funds.

Study Area

The DPC took the initial study area proposed by Town staff and amended it to approve a final study area.

COOLIDGE CORNER DISTRICT PLAN STUDY AREA



Vision and Goals

After an extensive discussion, the DPC approved a set of Visions and Goals for Coolidge Corner to guide this process. The deliberation of these visions and goals began with an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Coolidge Corner (also known as a “SWOT Analysis”) followed by an informal discussion.

The final vision and goals were approved by a formal vote of DPC members. Some of the vision and goal statements were adopted unanimously and some were adopted by majority vote. The vision and goals represent a statement of what the neighborhood stakeholders want and, because they are visions and goals, not only an important starting point for discussion of future of the district but also a yardstick to apply to changes to the district.

VISION FOR COOLIDGE CORNER

Coolidge Corner is a home to its residents; a place to shop and do business for both Brookline residents and other visitors; and a place people want to come to due to its rich heritage and the high quality of life it offers. The community character of the district should be maintained.

Living in Coolidge Corner should involve:

- Having access to a diverse range of neighborhood commercial goods and services as well as entertainment and dining;
- Enjoying a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment;
- Having adequate opportunities for education and recreation within the neighborhood;
- Having adequate green space;
- Possessing a sense of security from inappropriate development;
- Having access to a diverse range of housing and housing stock, including rental housing, at cost levels that ensure the diversity of neighborhoods is preserved and enhanced;
- Not increasing the residential population; and
- Sufficient off street parking for residents and guests at affordable prices.

Having a business in Coolidge Corner should involve:

- Providing needed goods and services for residents
- Offering some key attractions for residents and visitors from other parts of Greater Boston;
- Having adequate access for employees and customers;
- Participating in the civic life of the town and neighborhood through involvement in local events and festivals
- Enhancing the area's attractiveness by maintaining facades and adjacent public spaces
- Working with a Town that stands willing to help businesses that are responsible corporate citizens;
- Being able to make a reasonable profit;
- Respecting the needs of nearby residents, especially with regard to noise, litter and compliance with parking regulations; and
- Sufficient parking for customers, employers and employees.

COOLIDGE CORNER DISTRICT PLAN GOALS

The Coolidge Corner District Plan should reach the following goals:

- Development of a common vision for the district that resolves conflicting issues as much as possible
- Complete an evaluation and a neighborhood vision for sites that might be developed in the commercial core in the next 5 to 10 years
- Create regulatory tools to help conserve neighborhoods and promote a vibrant commercial core and maintain local businesses
- Create actions that should be taken to help protect neighborhoods and encourage investment consistent with this vision
- Explore other potential tools available to the Town, residents and businesses to help achieve this vision.
- Explore the town's implementation of a town-wide condo acquisition program using 'soft second loans' similar to those employed by the Cambridge and Newton Housing Authorities.
- Having access to convenient, clean, and efficient public transportation with linkages to employment opportunities and amenities in other parts of the Greater Boston area.

Overview of Study Areas

This report outlines the various items studied by the District Planning Council, Town staff, and consultants. These study areas were as follows:

- *Existing Conditions:* Existing conditions were found to generally be currently good, but with some changes and trends that cause concern for many residents. Some infill developments and some developments constructed in the 1960's and 1970's were found to be out of scale with the preferred character of the district.
- *Future Conditions:* The potential for additional development in Coolidge Corner is limited by existing density. The current trend is for a moderate level of development that was not high in terms of square feet, but was perceived by many to have a negative impact on the character of existing neighborhoods. This impact related partially to the demolition of existing homes and their replacement with larger buildings that often did not have a good relationship with the streetscape.
- *Protecting Neighborhoods:* This process resulted in a number of recommendations designed to preserve the current feel of the residential streets around Coolidge Corner. The DPC recommended exploring changes to the Brookline Zoning By-law.
- *Appropriate Redevelopment in Commercial Areas:* The process, centered around the report developed by Bluestone Planning Group on three commercial sites, resulted in some progress toward developing a common vision for redevelopment in Coolidge Corner, particularly one that might include a significant public green space. However, the DPC did not recommend any specific vision for those three sites, although the process did lead to some generally agreed-upon concepts.
- *Transportation and Parking:* The existing circulation patterns in Coolidge Corner were congested at a level comparable to similar commercial districts near the urban core of Boston. Parking supply levels were reasonably sufficient in terms of number of spaces, but many of these spaces were on-street and therefore not available for use over 2 hours. The transportation consultants did not feel they had enough information to determine if parking demand warranted further supply.

About this Report

The primary authors of this report were staff from the Department of Planning and Community Development. However, the recommendations are generally those of the District Planning Council. In some locations, recommendations from consultants or the Comprehensive Plan will be listed, and identified accordingly.

II. Existing Conditions and Recent Changes

This section establishes a baseline of existing conditions in Coolidge Corner. All housing and population data is from the 2000 U.S. Census and Brookline Comprehensive Plan unless otherwise noted.

1.0 Residential Areas and Zoning

1.1 Existing Conditions

The district includes a mix of town, commercial and residential uses. The district contains the following zoning districts: S-7, T-5, T-6, L-1.0, M-1.0, M-1.5, M-2.0, M-2.5, G-1.75(LSH), G-1.75(CC) and G-2.0. These zoning districts permit a wide range of both residential and commercial uses. The permitted “floor area ratio”- a measurement of how much building can be constructed on a lot - starts at a minimum of 1.0 and ranges up to a maximum of 2.0.

The types of land use in the district are shown on the maps entitled “Existing Residential Land Use” and “Existing Commercial Uses.” The district is predominantly residential with commercial and mixed use land uses extending down the main transportation routes of Beacon Street and Harvard Street and concentrating at the intersection of these two roads. There are also community based organizations located in the district including the senior center and churches and temples. The Devotion School is located off of Harvard Street and serves as the only public school in Coolidge Corner.

This shows that some of the existing residential structures in Coolidge Corner have been developed below the density zoning mandates, and therefore have the potential for future expansion, whether desirable or not. However, there are not large areas that are significantly under the permitted FAR.

1.2 Recent Changes

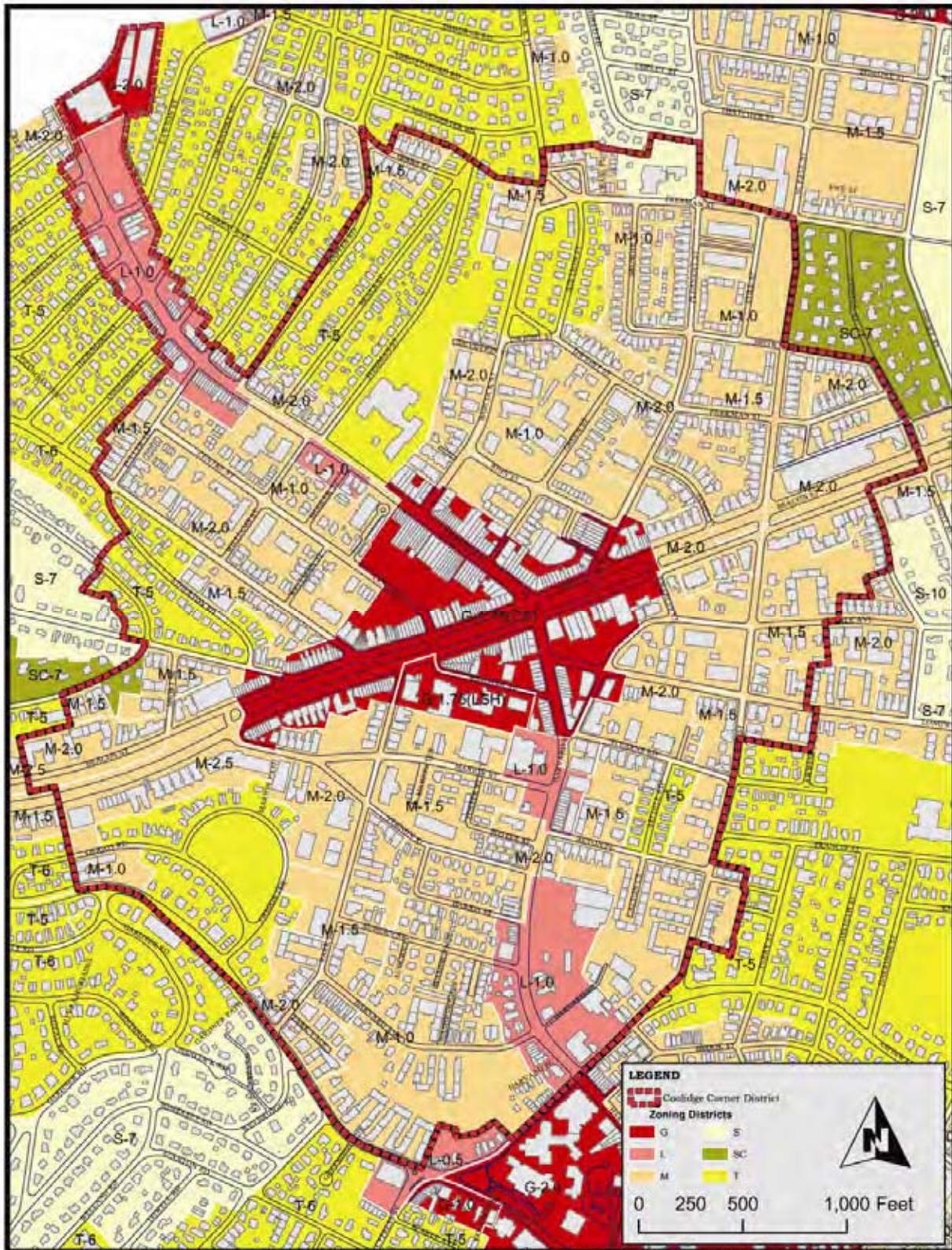
There have been limited zoning changes specific to Coolidge Corner in the recent past. However, some of the Town-wide zoning changes have had an impact on development on this area.

Parking Requirements have increased: In 2000, Section 6.11 (a) of the zoning bylaw was changed from 1.6/1.8 and 1.5/1.7 spaces per residential unit to 2.0/2.3 parking spaces per residential unit. Additionally the calculation for the provision of handicap parking spaces was revised to conform to federal standards. Recent developments have shown a preference for underground parking areas rather than at grade parking to accommodate these bylaw revisions.

Use of basement and attic space as livable space has been made more permissive and then curtailed: In 2002, Section 5.22 of the zoning bylaw was revised to allow the by-right conversion of residential basements and attics up to 150% of the permitted FAR as long as there are no exterior changes. This change was further amended in 2006 to significantly limit the ability to convert attics and basements to usable space, including limiting such conversions to 10 years after receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy.

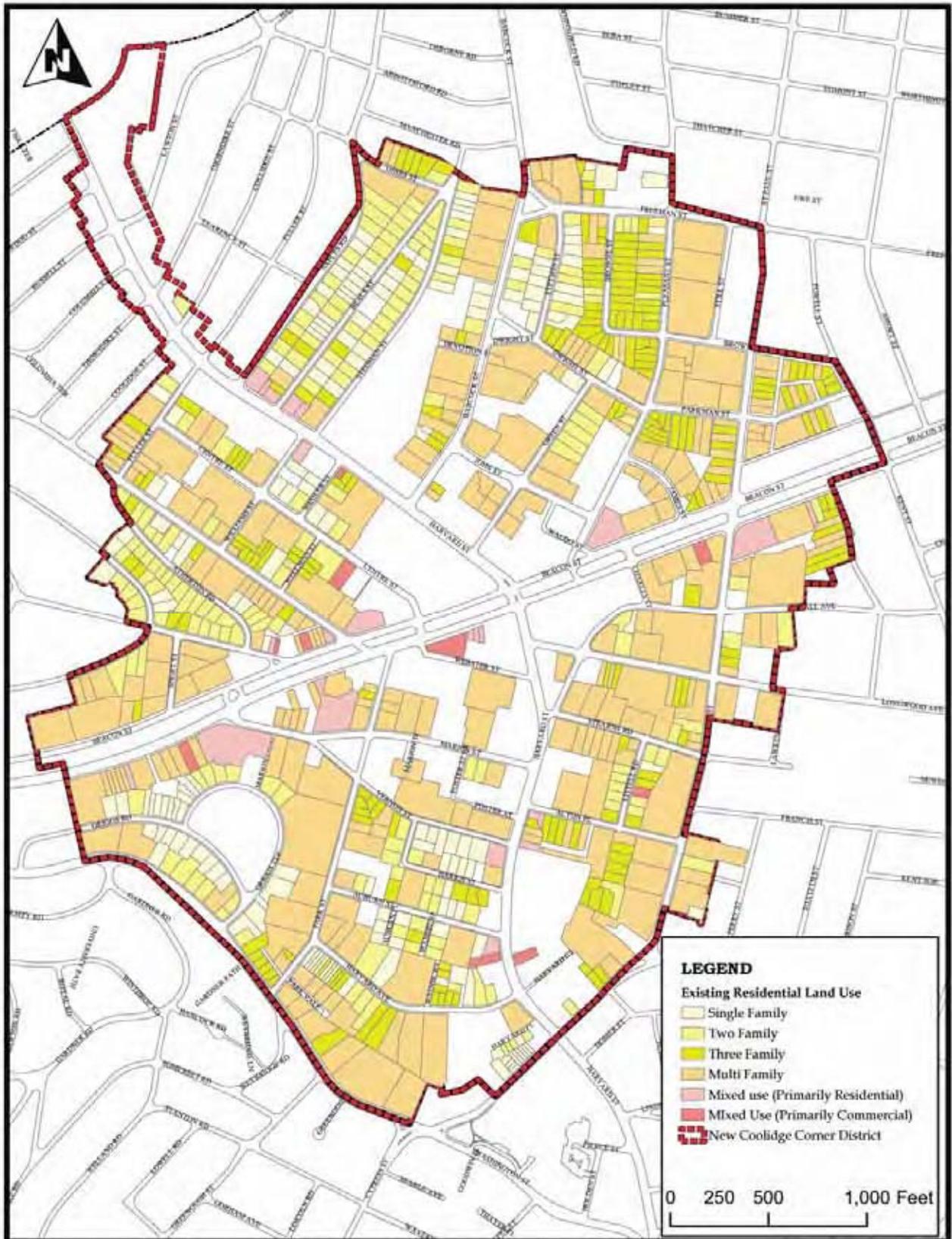
Use of ground levels in commercial areas as residences has been limited: In 2004, Section 4.07 of the Zoning bylaw was revised to require that in local business (L) and general business (G) districts the ground floor of a building must have no more than 40% of the ground floor devoted to residential use. This was included in the bylaw to preserve existing retail uses in the town from pressure to convert to residential use and to help retain the variety of commercial properties in town.

Zoning Districts



EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

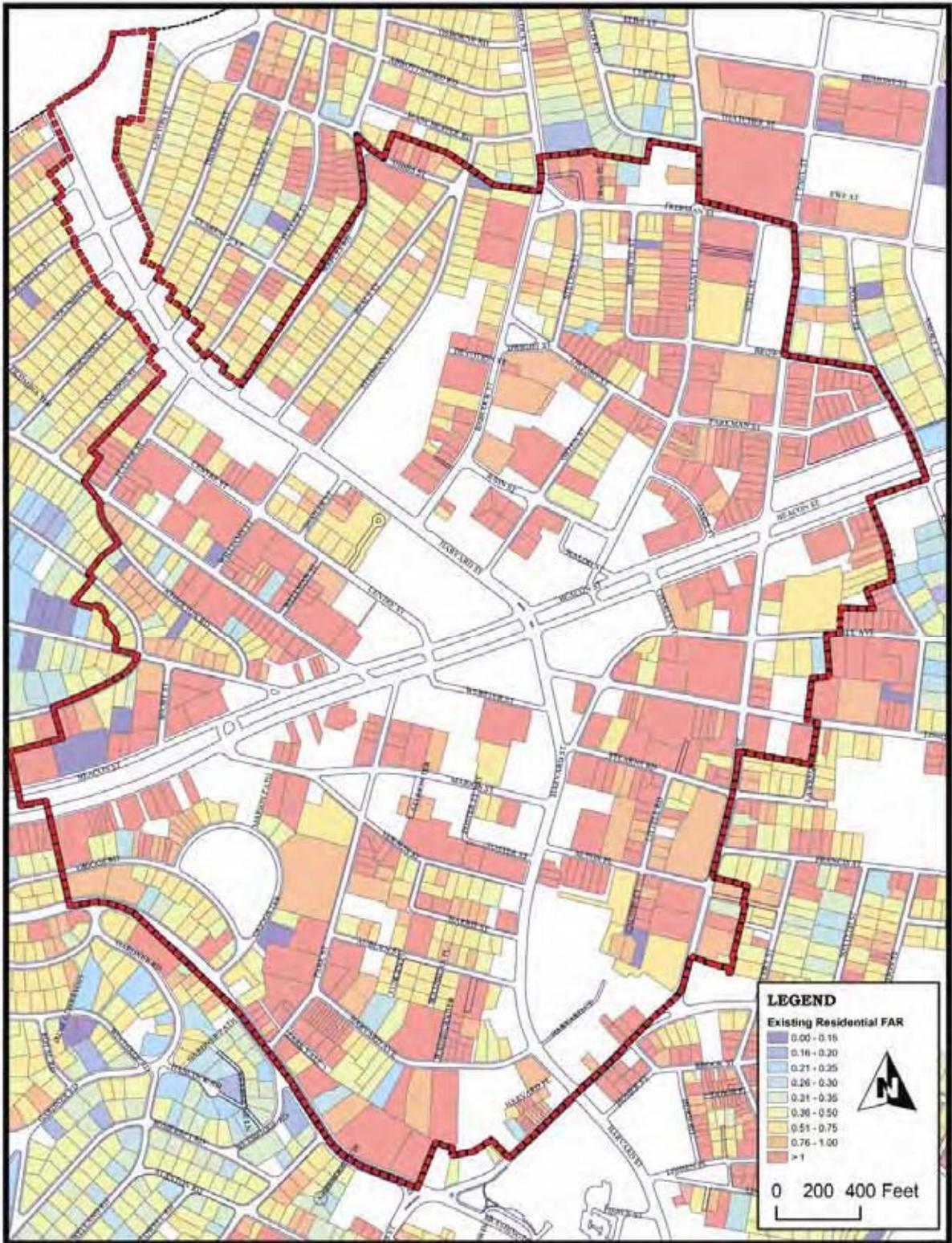
Existing Residential Land Use



Map created by Brookline GIS on 02/13/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/existingreslu.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

Existing Residential Floor Area Ratio



Map created by Brookline GIS on 01/04/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/far.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

2.0 Affordable Housing

2.1 Existing Conditions

Affordable housing is an important tool for retaining diversity in Brookline and for maintaining opportunities for long time residents to remain in Brookline. The following is a list of affordable housing sites in Coolidge Corner. These cater to a range of occupants, including the elderly and disabled, and those with special needs, and to households with a range of incomes, from less than 30% to 100% of median income.

Year Built	Location	Ownership/ Control	Total Units	Affordable Units	Targeted Group
1958	Col. Floyd Apts.	BHA	60	60	senior & disabled renters
1967	O’Shea House	BHA	100	100	senior & disabled renters
1968	Sussman House	BHA	100	100	senior & disabled renters
1970	Center Communities 100 Centre	non profit	211	127	senior renters
1970	Center Communities 112 Centre	non profit	124	104	senior renters
1972	Beacon Park	for profit	80	30	renters (general)
1973	Humanity House	non-profit	10	10	special needs renters
1975	Morse Apartments	BHA	99	99	senior & disabled renters
1978	Kickham Apts	BHA	39	39	senior & disabled renters
1981	Condos	BHA	2	2	senior & disabled renters
1994	Kilgalon House	BHA	8	8	special needs-renters
2000	1470 Beacon	for profit (inclusionary zoning)	57	4	renters (general)
2002	77 Marion/ 1405 Beacon	for profit (inclusionary zoning)	44	4	renters (general)
2004	St. Paul Crossing	homeowners (inclusionary zoning)	49	8	homeownership (general)
2005	51 Park	homeowner (inclusionary zoning)	9	2	homeownership (general)
2005	75 Winchester	homeowner (inclusionary zoning)	11	1	homeownership (general)
Total				698	

Source: *Department of Planning & Community Development*

- The Coolidge Corner district provides a significant percentage (at least 25 percent, and by some calculations 35 to 45 percent) of the overall affordable housing stock in the Town as a whole.
- Over 70% of the almost 700 affordable units within Coolidge Corner are rental units reserved for elderly, disabled or special needs populations.
- The majority of the affordable units were built before 1980. Twenty nine, or four percent, have been added in the last 25 years, and half of these – 14 units – resulted from new construction. (The majority of Brookline’s affordable units built since the 1980’s have been built outside of Coolidge Corner.)
- The 19 affordable units developed in Coolidge Corner in the past ten years are the result of market rate developments under the Town’s inclusionary zoning requirement. (The four units at 1470 Beacon are an offsite allocation from a project outside of Coolidge Corner.)
- Eleven of the 698 affordable units are for homeownership.
- 34 units were purchased using the Town’s Homebuyer Assistance Program. These do not always have permanent affordability restrictions.
- Given the variety of housing options available in Coolidge Corner, as well as in Brookline Village, it would appear that the district provides some of the more affordable market-rate housing in the Town. The average assessed value of a single-family home in Coolidge Corner is \$1.00 million, as compared to \$1.26 million town wide. For condominiums, the average assessed value in Coolidge Corner is \$442,000, as compared to \$458,000 town wide. The median assessed values of single-family homes and condominiums in Coolidge Corner are almost exactly the same as the median assessed values town wide.

2.2 Recent Changes

Because of its proximity to public transportation, commercial services, and high quality schools, Coolidge Corner continues to experience strong development pressures. At the same time, the scarcity of vacant land means that new development most likely will continue to be on parcels with pre-existing structures- either commercial or less densely built residential. The following list of residential projects of six or more units that have taken place since 2000 shows this trend. All were subject to the Affordable Housing Requirements of the Zoning By-Law.

- 11 Longwood Avenue 9 market rate condos with a contribution to the Housing Trust
- 64 Sewall Avenue 8 market rate condos with a contribution to the Housing Trust
- 77 Marion St. 44 rentals with 4 affordable units
- St. Paul Crossing 49 condos with 8 affordable units
- 121 Centre Street 9 market rate condos with a contribution to the Housing Trust
- 51 Park Street 9 condos with 2 affordable units
- 75 Winchester St. 11 condos with 1 affordable unit and a contribution to the Housing Trust
- Saint Paul Arms 20 condos with 3 affordable units
- 30 Longwood Avenue 15 market rate units with a contribution to the Housing Trust
- 164 Harvard St. 12 market rate condos with a contribution to the Housing Trust

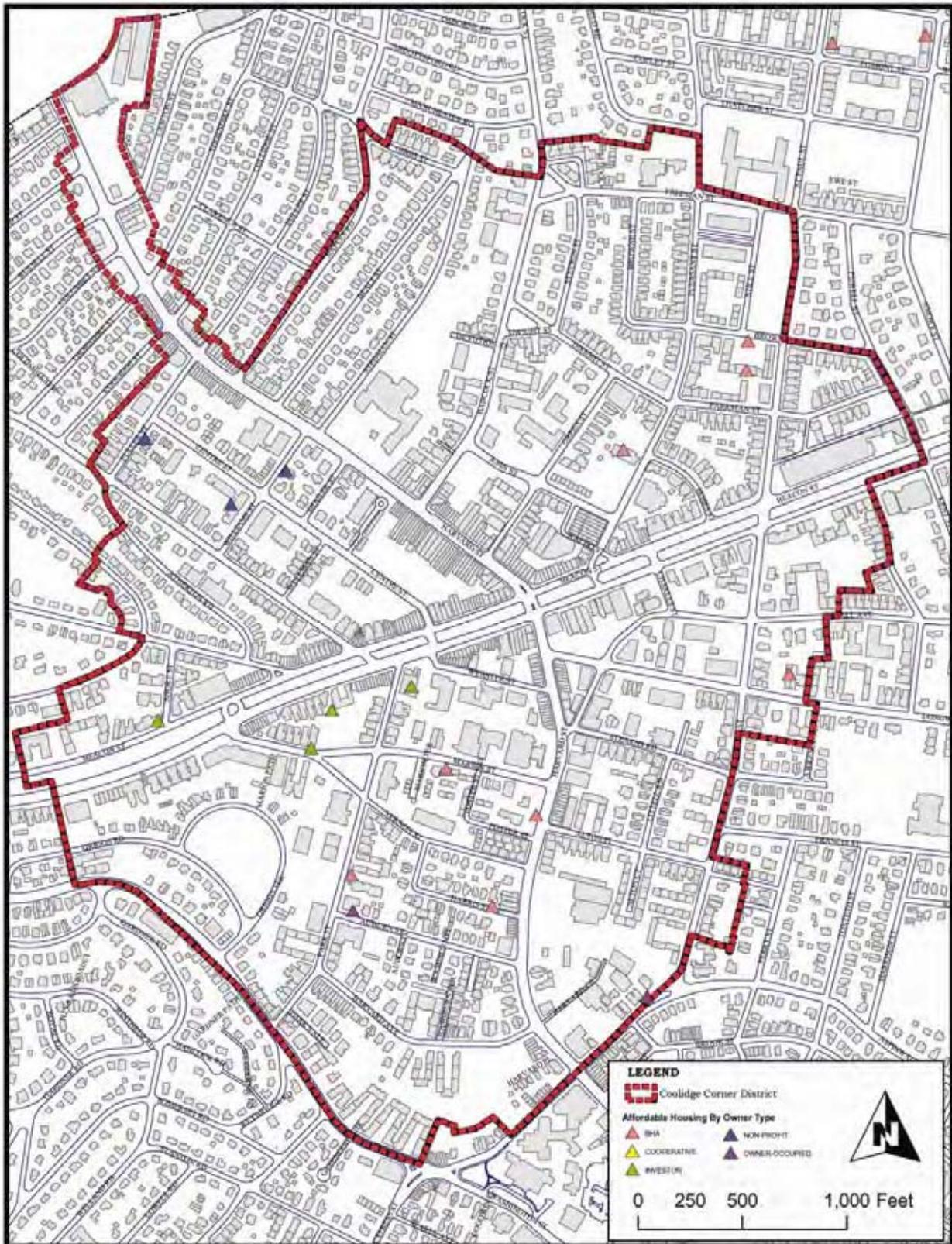
EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

Three sites within Coolidge Corner have been subject to proposals under Massachusetts General Law c. 40B¹ – 121 Centre Street, 44 Marion Street, and 207 Freeman Street (Saint Aidan's). At 121 Centre Street, the developers proceeded with an as-of-right project in the face of a ZBA rejection. At 44 Marion Street, the project was approved with significant conditions which the developers have appealed to the state's Housing Appeals Committee. St. Aidan's is a 59 unit mixed-income project which would combine adaptation of the St. Aidan's church building, open space conservation, and 36 units of affordable rental and owner occupied housing. The future of this project is uncertain.

There is limited turnover of existing multi-unit buildings in Coolidge Corner. These buildings tend to be priced at levels only justified by market-rate condominium conversions, reflecting the most profitable short-term option for developers. Buildings transfer quickly, often at prices that exceed the asking price. This makes it difficult for non-profits interested in converting existing housing into affordable units to purchase and rehabilitate buildings.

¹ Under 40B, a developer can seek waivers from the Town's Zoning Bylaw for any project that contains at least 25% affordable units (20% under certain limited circumstances) if a municipality has not reached a total of 10% of its residential units being considered affordable. Brookline has not reached that 10% threshold. The waivers granted can be limited to the minimum required to make the proposed project economically viable. Any project for which requested waivers are not granted can be brought before a state Housing Appeals Committee that may overrule local decisions on the project.

Affordable Housing



Map created by Brookline GIS on 01/04/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/affhse.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

3.0 Commercial Areas

3.1 Existing Conditions

Coolidge Corner proper includes 36.5% of the businesses located in one of the Town's seven commercial districts. JFK Crossing holds an additional 5.6% of Brookline's businesses located in retail commercial districts. At over 42%, the Coolidge Corner district as defined represents the largest concentration of retail commercial businesses in the Town.

The majority of these 180 retail businesses are locally or regionally owned, with only 50 (or 28%) being national chains. For the past few years, the percentage of national chain retail stores in Coolidge corner has increased from 22% in 2002 to 28% in 2005. Both the percentage of chain stores and this growth rate is significantly lower than the national averages, which exceed 50% in most main street type commercial areas. This concentration of local or regional commercial operations contributes to the unique character of Coolidge Corner.

As of July 2005 the vacancy rate in Coolidge Corner was 4%. It should be noted that any rate less than 10% is considered very good. Eight stores closed between the summers of 2004 to 2005 (3 chains and 4 independents) while twelve stores opened (8 Chains and 4 independents).

3.2 Recent Changes

Brookline, and Coolidge Corner, has experienced modest new commercial growth over the last decade, reflecting the scarcity of suitable sites and their relatively modest size. The following is a list of new construction / major renovation projects that have taken place in the Coolidge Corner District Planning area since 1992:

- 1995: 99 Harvard Street (Walgreen's) – 11,176 SF on 39,568 SF lot.
- 1998: 523-527 Harvard Street (TJ Maxx) – 30,000 SF on 100,004 SF lot
- 1999: 40 Webster Street (Hotel) – 108,000 SF (189 Guest Rooms) on 32,486 SF lot
- 2004: 308A Harvard Street (Commercial) – addition of 630 SF on second floor
- 2005: 164 Harvard Street (Housing & Daycare) – 8,000 SF on 20,315 SF lot.
- Current: 1285 Beacon (Commercial) – retail building (under construction)
- Current: 1309 Beacon (Commercial) – 3,200 SF addition to Centre Place building.

The Coolidge Corner commercial district, like many other commercial properties in Brookline, faces market pressures to convert commercial properties to residential uses, often the most profitable option from a developer's perspective. In order to counter this trend, the Town's Zoning By-law was changed in 2004 to state that no more than 40% of the frontage in the ground floor of L & G district properties shall be converted to a residential use.

Several other key issues affecting local business districts which were identified in *The State of Brookline Businesses 2002* include:

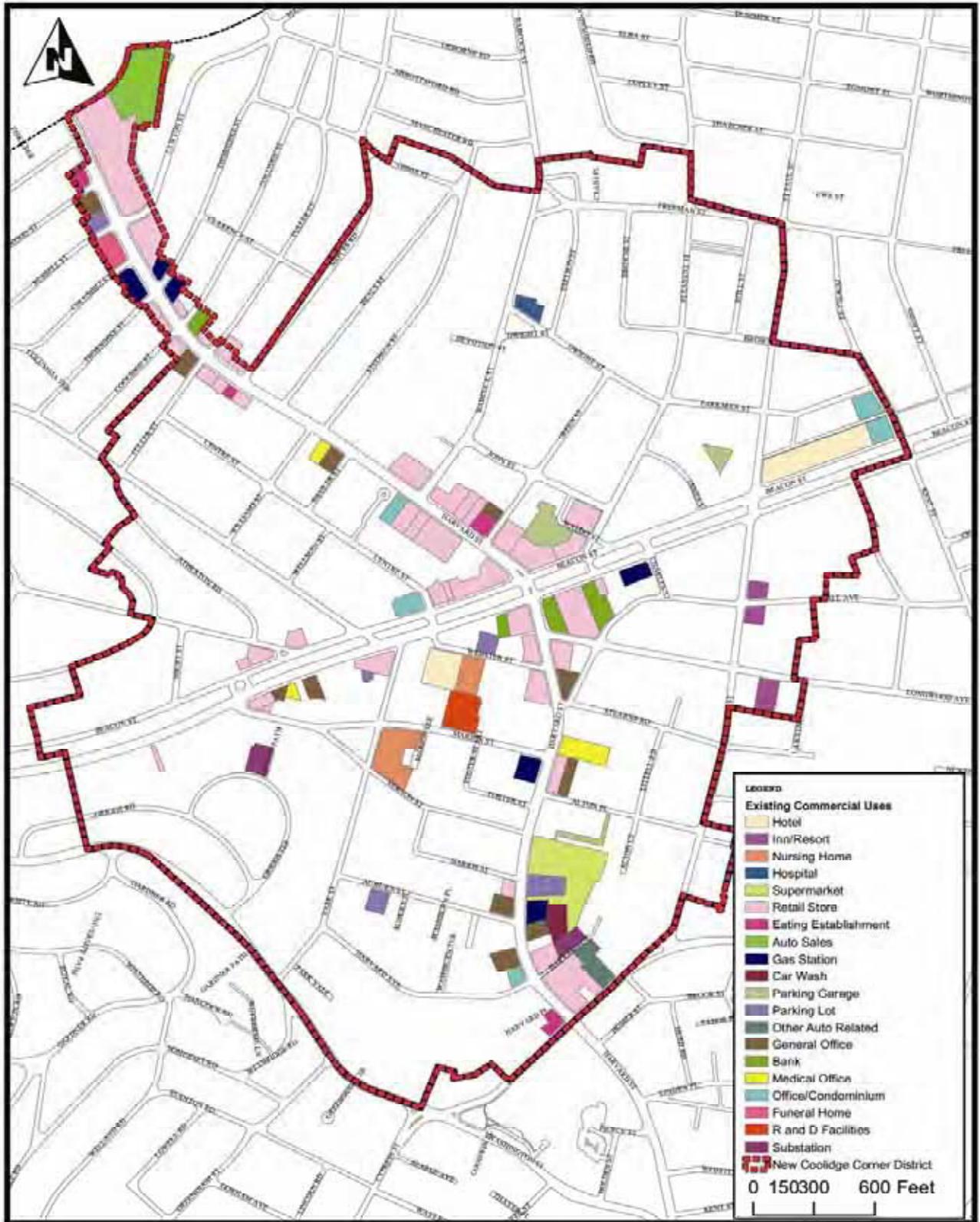
- Inadequate parking supplies: seen as a factor affecting the continued viability of commercial areas.
- The high cost of retail space: especially important to smaller and/or independent retailers
- Limited public gathering areas and pedestrian amenities: could attract more people to the commercial area and/or extend their length of stay.

Specific capital improvement projects benefiting the JFK/Coolidge Corner commercial areas that have recently been completed or currently underway include:

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

- Enhancements to Harvard Street in the JFK area (benches, trash barrels, bike racks, new sidewalks and new light poles). 1999
- Establishment of an informational kiosk at the inbound T-stop and outside of the Brookline Courtyard Marriott. 2003
- Improvements to the pedestrian walkways connecting the Centre St parking lot to Harvard and Beacon Streets (lighting, grade corrections, way finding signs) 2006
- Enhancements to Beacon Street (benches, trash barrels, bike racks, news box corrals and new light poles) scheduled for 2007/8

Existing Commercial Uses



Map created by Brookline GIS on 02/13/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/cam.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

4.0 Transportation/ Parking

4.1 Existing Conditions

Coolidge Corner is well served by public transportation. The commercial heart of Coolidge Corner is located at the intersection of Beacon Street and Harvard Street. The high level of public transportation puts most of Coolidge Corner within a walkable distance of some form of public transportation. However, most of the existing transit options have significant capacity and/or reliability issues at present.

- The MBTA Green Line “C” Branch runs down the middle of Beacon Street. The Green Line stops in Coolidge Corner include Kent Street, St Paul, Coolidge Corner, Summit Ave and Brandon Hall stops. However, this line is limited at present to two cars per train and is overcrowded at peak times.
- The Green Line “B” Branch runs across the top of the district and includes the Harvard Ave stop at JFK Crossing. This line is also quite crowded.
- The Route 66 bus travels through the District along Harvard Street and connects Cambridge, Allston to Jamaica Plain and the Red, Orange, Green and Silver “T” lines. Due to the busy streets on which this line travels, it is often late and is also often overcrowded to the point of being very unpleasant.
- Route 65 follows Washington Street on the Coolidge Corner District’s southwestern boundary and connects Brighton Center to Kenmore T station.
- Seniors in the District have an option of using the Brookline “Elderbus” service which travels through Coolidge Corner connecting the Senior Center to Star Market, the Longwood Medical Area and Brookline Village.

Several municipally owned parking areas are within Coolidge Corner focused mainly around the commercial core of the Beacon and Harvard Street intersection as follows:

Location	Spaces
Centre Street – East	143 Spaces
Centre Street – West	56 Spaces
Fuller Street	50 Spaces
Babcock Street	65 Spaces
John Street	14 Spaces
Webster Street – East	13 Spaces

Source: *Department of Public Works Transportation Division*

The shortage of commercial parking areas around Coolidge Corner has been documented in the 2001 Commercial Areas Parking Study. The municipal parking lots are well used and have limited space available. Metered parking is also available around this intersection and extending up Beacon and Harvard Streets. The parking is primarily used by business owners and employees, commercial customers and by Coolidge Corner residents.

An overnight parking ban has been in place for some time in the Town. To accommodate residents requiring overnight parking the Town of Brookline rents out a total of 309 spaces in 11 town-owned parking lots. 257 (83%) of those spaces are located in Coolidge Corner.

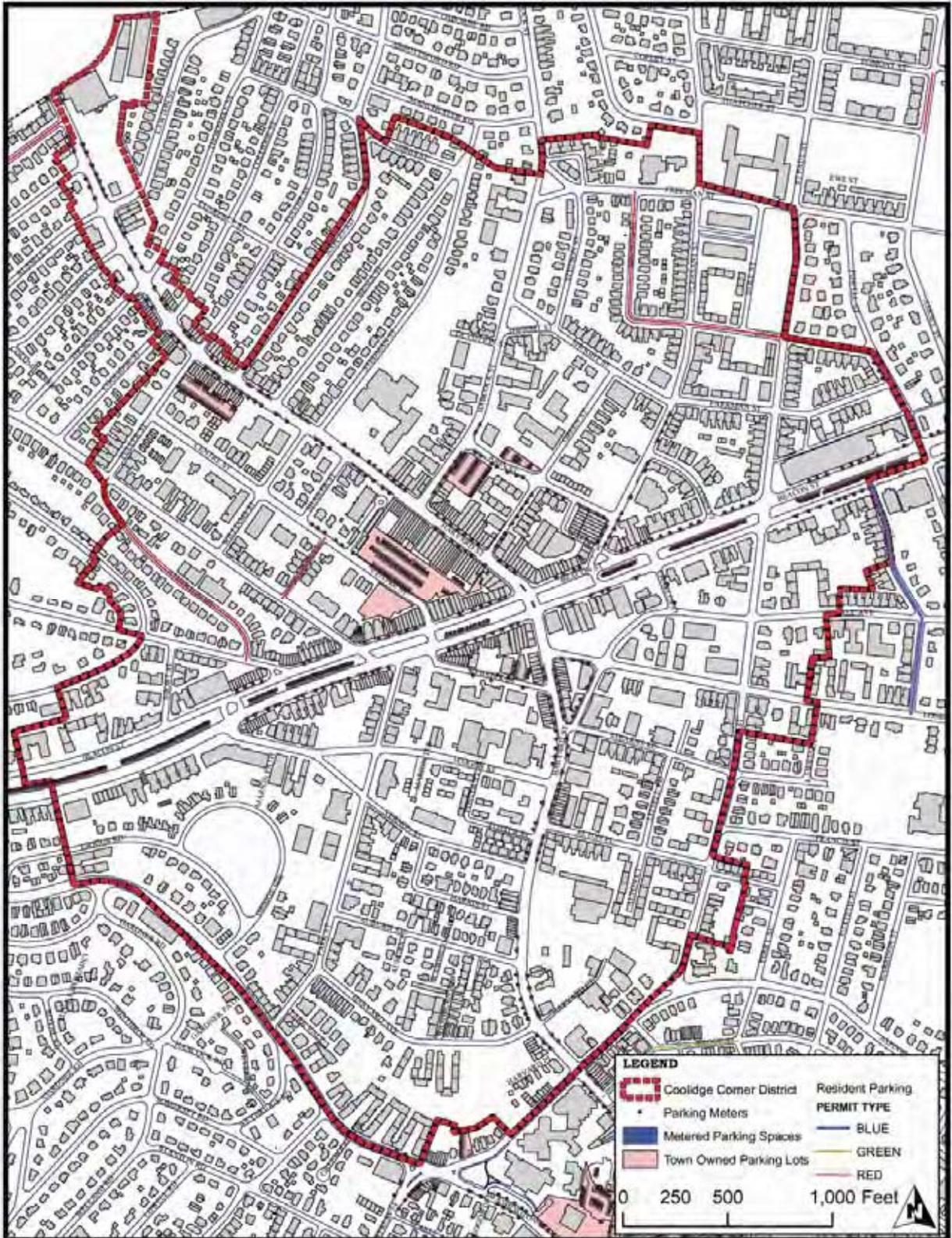
4.2 Recent Changes

There has been recent concern with the loss of parking spaces in Coolidge Corner due to the increased development of land. In 1999 the Marriott Hotel on Webster Street was constructed on a former town parking lot. To partially mitigate this impact an agreement was reached that this

site makes 60 parking spaces available to the public. However, DPC members have stated that the district now has fewer overnight parking spaces available for the residents of the many pre-War apartment buildings that were built when zoning by-law did not require developers to install on-site parking, due to new development on land previously used for privately owned parking lots and gas stations.

The intersection of Beacon and Harvard Street accommodates a large volume of traffic on a daily basis. Traffic in this location is expected to retain its current high volumes. A set of street improvements have been proposed for Beacon Street extending from the intersection of Ayr Road to St Mary's Street. These improvements began in April of 2006 and are expected to take up to three years to complete. The improvements proposed include the upgrading of signals, inclusion of a bike lane, rehabilitate the historic boulevard through re-vegetation of street trees and plantings and provide other roadway improvements.

Public Parking



Map created by Brookline GIS on 01/04/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/parking.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

5.0 Parks, Open Space & Greenways

5.1 Existing Conditions

The Town of Brookline has placed a significant emphasis on the provision of open space throughout the Town. Coolidge Corner has comparably less public open space on a per capita basis than some other parts of Brookline. According to the 2005 Open Space Plan, the district generally has less than three acres of open space per 1,000 residents, significantly lower than the 7.5 acres per 1,000 residents recommended in the Town’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Open space associated with schools and other green areas exist but these are generally limited in size for active recreational activities. At the same time, the density of the area and the limited size and number of private back yards on existing dwellings, as well as the conversion of private yards to parking, make these parks and playgrounds a valuable commodity for the community. These open spaces act not only as a place for active and passive recreation but also provide visual relief for Coolidge Corner residents.

The open space can be seen on the attached plan entitled “Open Space”. The larger open space parcels within Coolidge Corner are as follows:

Name	Size (acres)
Griggs Park	4.17
St Marks Square	0.42
Winthrop Square	1.91
Dwight Square	0.15
Devotion School Playground	5.55
Freeman Square	0.14
Pierce School Playground	2.35

Source: *Open Space in Brookline*

The park next to the Webster Street hotel is open to the public but is not clearly indicated as such.

There is a significant amount of street tree planting throughout the district that has been maintained and is one of the defining features of Brookline. Street planting is important in an urban environment not only in terms of visual relief and beautification but also in regards to air quality and watershed.

The length of Beacon Street has been identified as a Historic Greenway. This historic boulevard, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, was originally tree lined. The boulevard has since been eroded by street improvements. However, the Town has continued to maintain street trees along this roadway wherever possible. Many of the streets in the Coolidge Corner District are well vegetated.

5.2 Recent Changes

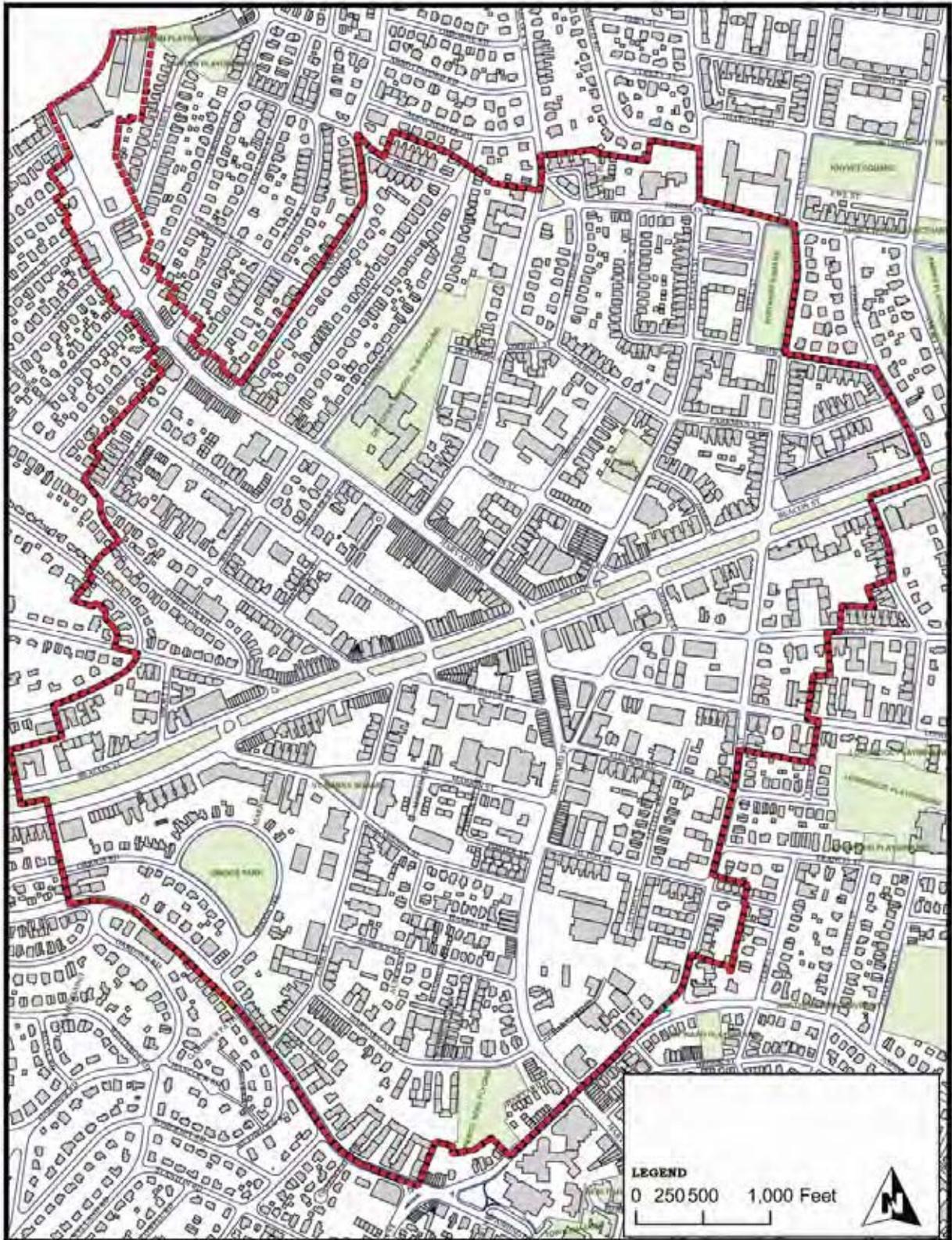
Due to the density of Coolidge Corner the open space in northern Brookline is well used. A “Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan” is currently being worked upon that is looking at the changing trends and needs of recreation on a Town-wide scale. The draft Master Plan shows that northern Brookline has a broad range of recreation activities within walking distance. Surveys completed as part of this process have identified the acquisition of open space as an important element the Town should focus on.

The Parks and Open Space Division of the Department of Public Works has an ongoing schedule of improvements and upgrades to the existing open space in Coolidge Corner. Recent and future improvements to the district include:

- St. Mark's Square was renovated and improved several years ago.
- The Babcock/ Freeman and Babcock/ Dwight open areas were renovated in 2006 including new benches and trash receptacles. These areas are well used and provide an important visual improvement in the area.
- Improvements have been made at the Devotion School including upgrading the tennis and basketball courts, improving the little league fields, improving the playground equipment and providing new plantings around the periphery.
- With significant assistance of and coordination with the Friends of the Minot Rose Garden, the rose garden at Winthrop Square has recently been restored and new fencing has been installed.
- The Beacon Street improvements began in the summer of 2006. As part of the improvement program street side planting areas and shade and street trees have been proposed. The plan recognizes that Beacon Street is an important boulevard and is taking steps to re-create this amenity.
- An improvement program has been planned for Winthrop Square. This project, scheduled for design in 2008 and construction in 2009, looks to make improvements to the fields.

Other ongoing projects undertaken by the Town include the provision of flower barrels along Brookline streets and a general street tree maintenance program.

Open Space



Map created by Brookline GIS on 01/04/2006. Map Doc: // brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/os.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

6.0 Historic Preservation

6.1 Existing Conditions

The Coolidge Corner District has a number of buildings of historical significance, design or architecture. This microcosm of various building styles combine to create the individual character of Coolidge Corner. Historic buildings are relevant in their context and create a sphere of influence on surrounding properties and add to view-sheds and visual corridors. A variety of different architectural styles have been used in the District.

The length of Beacon Street is recognized as a National Register Historical District. A number of individual properties in the district are also on the National and State Register of Historic Places. These properties are as follows: 207 Freeman Street, 83 Beals Street (JFK House), 315 Harvard Street, 360A Harvard Street, 66 Winchester Street, 135 Mason Terrace, 106 Marion Street, 90 Park Street, 210 Harvard Street, 12 Vernon Street, 63 Harvard Avenue, 76 Harvard Avenue, 417 Washington Street, 11 Charles Street, 97 Sewell Avenue, 207 Freeman Street (Saint Aidan's Church), 158 Freeman Street (Saint Aidan's Rectory), 217 Freeman Street, and 347 Harvard Street (the Edward Devotion House).

A number of properties on Harvard Avenue are included within a designated Local Historic District. The location of the historic districts and properties can be seen on the map entitled "Historic Preservation". Additional properties have been identified as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Properties including the Coolidge Corner Theatre and properties along Griggs Road, Pleasant Street, Sewall Avenue and Waldo Street.

6.2 Recent Changes

With the increased pressure of development there has been a growing awareness of the importance of historic preservation and neighborhood conservation and more interest in the use of historic preservation strategies as tools to preserve the existing character of properties and their surrounds. The current real estate market is putting pressure on historic structures and neighborhoods creating the need for additional creative solutions for preserving structures. There have been discussions on the development of Town designated Neighborhood Conservation Districts and a working version of a bylaw is being formulated. Coolidge Corner has seen the designation of one Local Historic District in the Harvard Avenue area.

The National Park Service (NPS) is actively planning ways to improve the visibility and programming of the John F. Kennedy National Historic Site at 83 Beals Street. It is also thinking about how to use more of the President's boyhood neighborhood, which is remarkably well-preserved, to enhance the visitor experience. The NPS is interested in working with the Town and neighborhood associations to reach these goals.

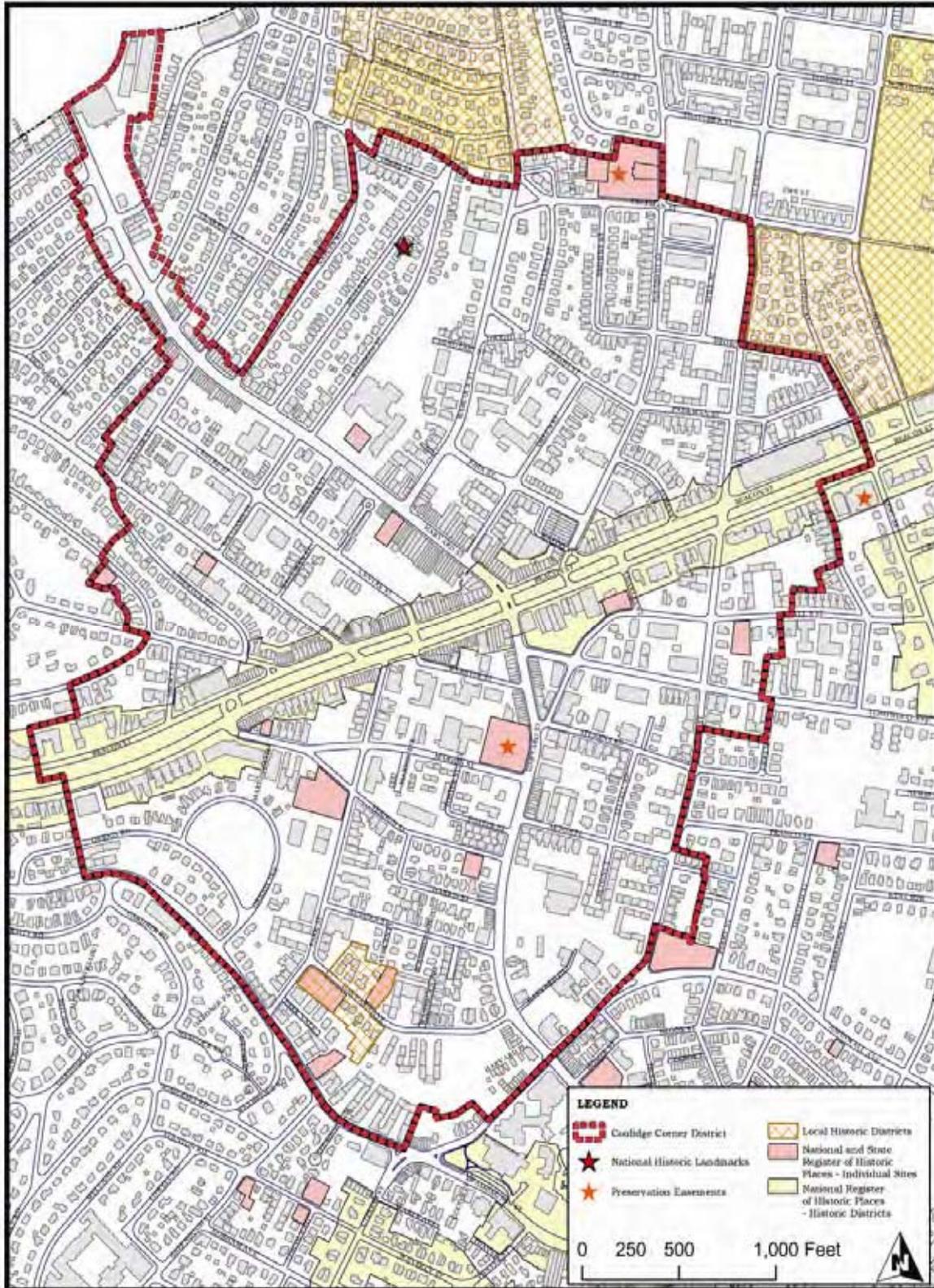
Residents are concerned that single, two and multifamily homes in districts zoned for higher density are being demolished and replaced by larger multifamily dwellings. The demolition delay bylaw currently provides for a one year stay on the demolition of buildings considered historically significant. Demolition permits were requested for 117 structures town-wide between January 2000 and December 2004. Of these, the 17 below, or 14.4%, were located in Coolidge Corner.

Address	Date	Building Type	Status
1146 Beacon Street	1-20-00	House & Garage	Significant – Demolished
1134-1136 Beacon Street	1-20-00	Townhouse	Significant – Demolished
27 Alton Place	4-19-00	Garage Row	Significant – Demolished
49 Beals Street	4-13-00	Garage	Non-Significant – Demolished
18 Vernon Street	7-18-00	Carriage House	Significant – Demolished
121 Centre Street	9-19-00	House	Significant – Demolished
120-122 Browne Street	3-13-01	House	Significant – Demolished
51 Park Street	2-38-01	House	Non-Significant – Demolished
51 St. Paul Street	5-14-02	House	Significant – Preserved
62 Aspinwall Avenue	6-18-02	House	Significant – Demolished
2 St. Paul Street	6-26-02	Garage Commercial	Non-Significant – Demolished
30 Harvard Court	6-26-02	Storage	Non-Significant – Demolished
64A Aspinwall Avenue	6-26-02	Garage Commercial	Non-Significant – Demolished
100 St Paul Street	12-3-02	House	Significant – Demolished
75 Winchester	10-7-03	House & Garage	Significant – Demolished
420 Harvard Street	11-4-03	House & Garage	Non-Significant – Preserved
4 Auburn Street	1-13-04	Garage	Significant – Preserved

Source: Preservation Department

The above table is a summary of requested demolition permits submitted to the Preservation Commission in Coolidge Corner between January 2000 and December 2004 and their status as of 2006.

Historic Preservation



Map created by Brookline GIS on 01/04/2006. Map Doc: //brkgis/projects/planning/coolidge_corner/whitepaper/his.mxd

EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT CHANGES

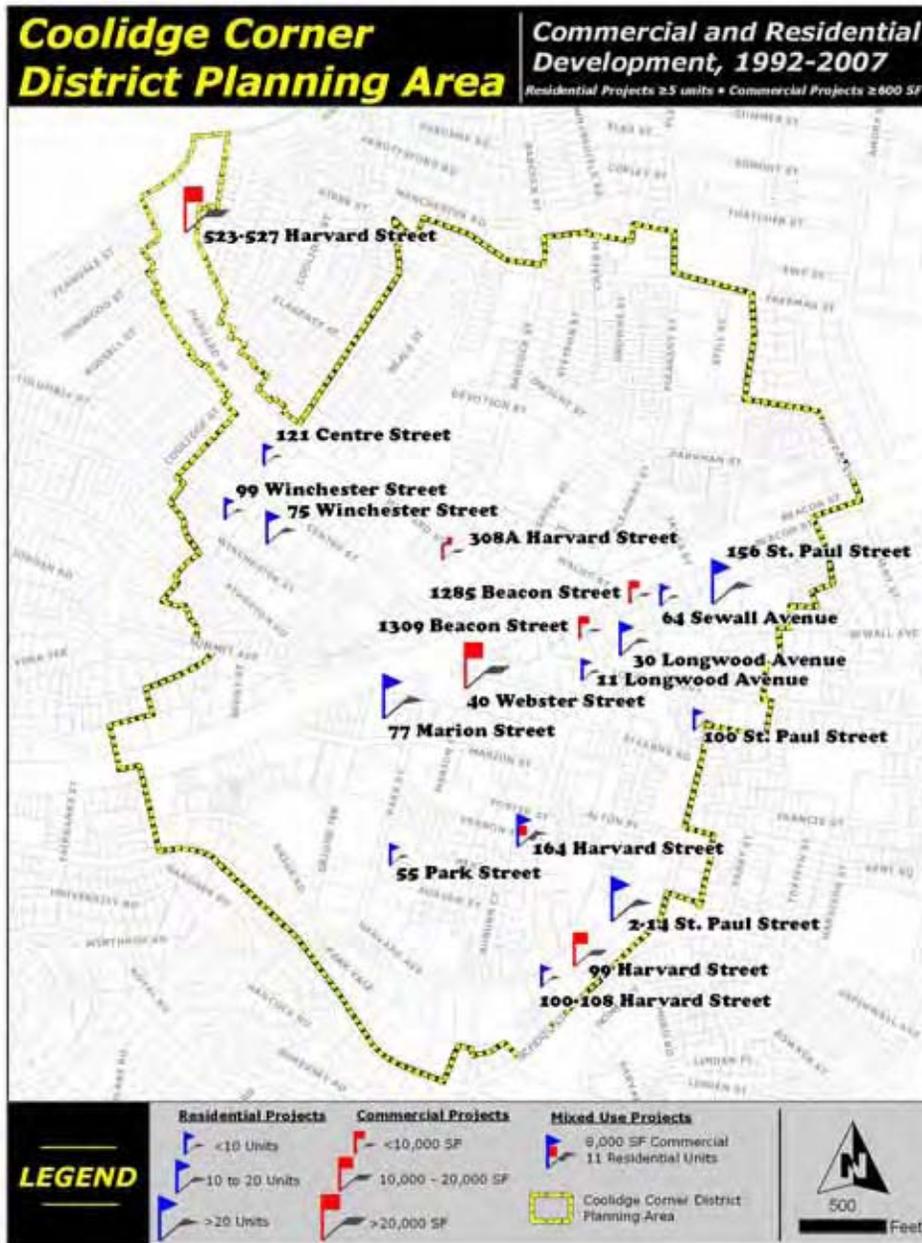
Existing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The DPC conducted an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Coolidge Corner. Such a study, commonly called a “SWOT Analysis”, is often used as a planning tool to develop a sense of both what challenges face an area, but also what assets and potential the area has that can be maximized.

A SWOT analysis is a brainstorming activity. It is not a critical process by which a group approves certain items and does not approve others. For this reason, the results are not conclusive, but are designed to inform debate about the future of an area. Many items listed as strengths or opportunities are seen as weaknesses or threats to others. In order to avoid it being misinterpreted as a set of recommendations, the DPC and Town staff have elected not to include the results of the SWOT analysis in this report, although it is available through the Department of Planning & Community Development.

III. Trends in Residential Development

As outlined above, the Coolidge Corner area has seen a slow, but steady, pace of residential development. These developments have ranged from one additional unit in an existing building, to the demolition of a smaller building and its replacement with a 5 to 10 unit building, to the proposed redevelopment of the Saint Aidan’s Church and Rectory into mixed-income housing and a large 40B proposal on Marion Street replacing an existing apartment building. In general, the concern with these projects has been their scale and the consistency of these developments with their surroundings. Traffic, parking, public amenities, and the overall density of Coolidge Corner have also been issues of concern.



TRENDS IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Buildout Analysis

In order to better understand what potential exists for further development, the next step was to examine existing zoning – as described above – and look at what development potential existed based on that zoning.

Brookline’s Zoning Bylaw is quite sophisticated and complex, and most new developments require some sort of discretionary permits from the Zoning Board of Appeals. In addition, while not common, there is always the possibility that a developer will seek to avoid local bylaws through submission of a 40B or the use of some other mechanism to exempt a project from zoning.

However, as a first step, Town staff conducted a “buildout analysis” of the district based on certain assumptions. This analysis was conducted by the Department of Planning & Community Development using the Town’s Geographic Information System. These assumptions were as follows:

- All developments are assumed to be permitted under existing zoning for the district;
- However, all developments are assumed to be permitted at the maximum level of development permitted under the Town’s Zoning Bylaw with respect to Floor Area Ratio;
- Units proposed are assumed to be equivalent in size to most units proposed today;
- Parking is assumed to be provided on-site or relief from parking requirements is assumed. Parking is not assumed to take up any above-grade building space;
- Only residential development was modeled. Most commercial areas are largely built out, with the exception of certain sites outlined below, unless zoning for commercial areas were to be changed.

These are fairly unlikely assumptions to come to pass, but they do provide some data as to what could be proposed for residential development in Coolidge Corner over the next 50 to 100 years. They highlight the issues related to current reliance in zoning on a multifamily zoning district limited by Floor Area Ratio rather than the character of the existing streetscapes.

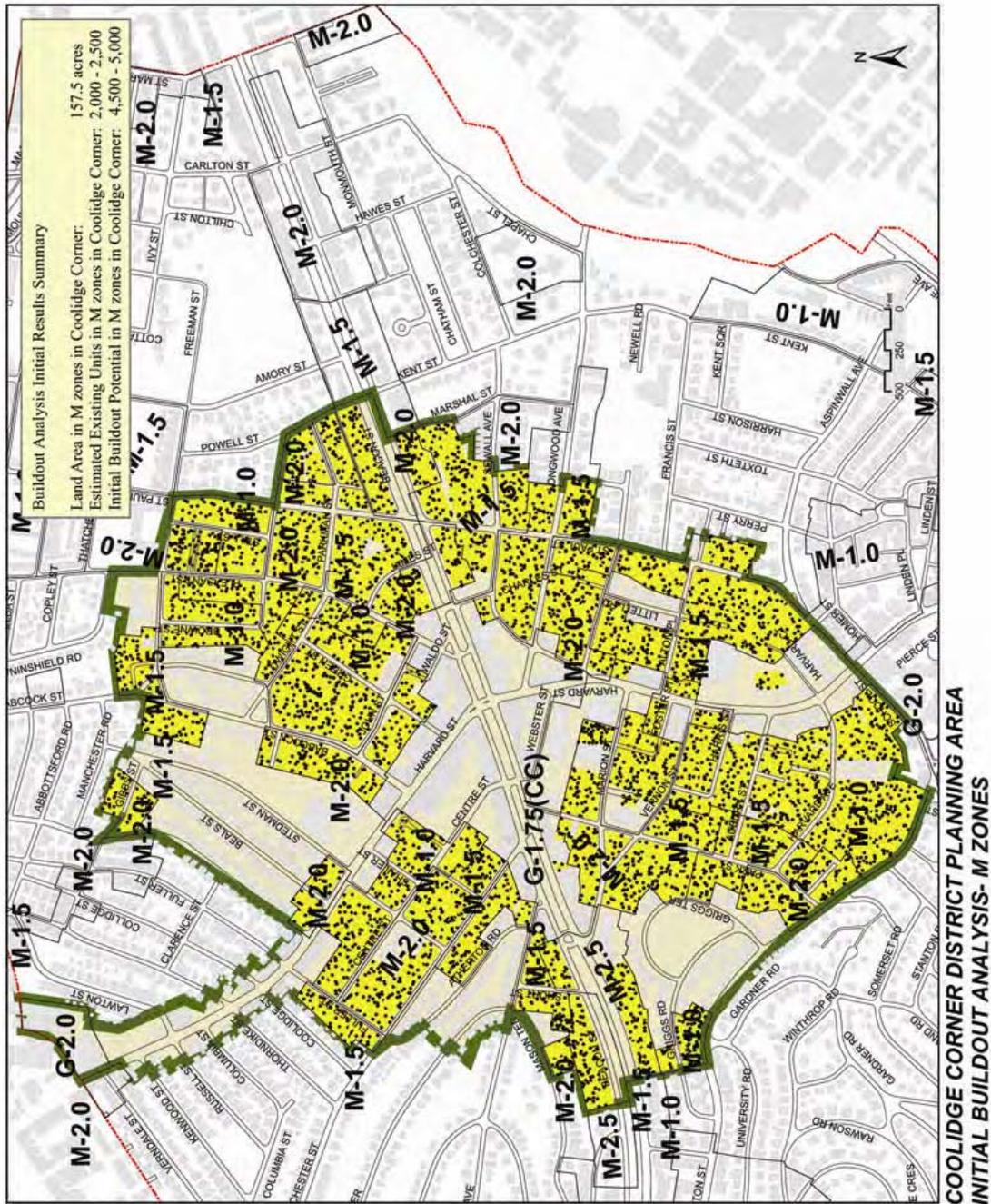
Specifically, the buildout analysis found the following potential for development in Coolidge Corner should the above assumptions be accurate:

- ❖ Land Area in M zones in Coolidge Corner: 157.5 acres
- ❖ Estimated Existing Units in M zones in Coolidge Corner: 2,000 to 2,500
- ❖ Initial Buildout Potential in M zones in Coolidge Corner: 4,500 to 5,000 units²

In short, the current development potential in the M zones for residential development, in theory, permits a doubling of existing residential densities. Given that the current development densities in Coolidge Corner are already among the highest in the Boston area, such a finding is of concern. Given the number of uncertainties inherent in such an

² This number includes the existing units.

analysis, such a doubling is extremely unlikely to happen, even over 50 years or more. However, it does indicate how the existing zoning does not pay particular attention to the existing character of the residential areas. It also helps explain why new development is often proposed in the middle of existing neighborhoods and involves the tearing down of an existing building and its replacement with a building with a much larger number of units. It should also be noted that merely because the Zoning By-law may permit such additional density – through a permitting process – does not mean that such development is intended by the Bylaw or desired by those who live and work in Coolidge Corner.



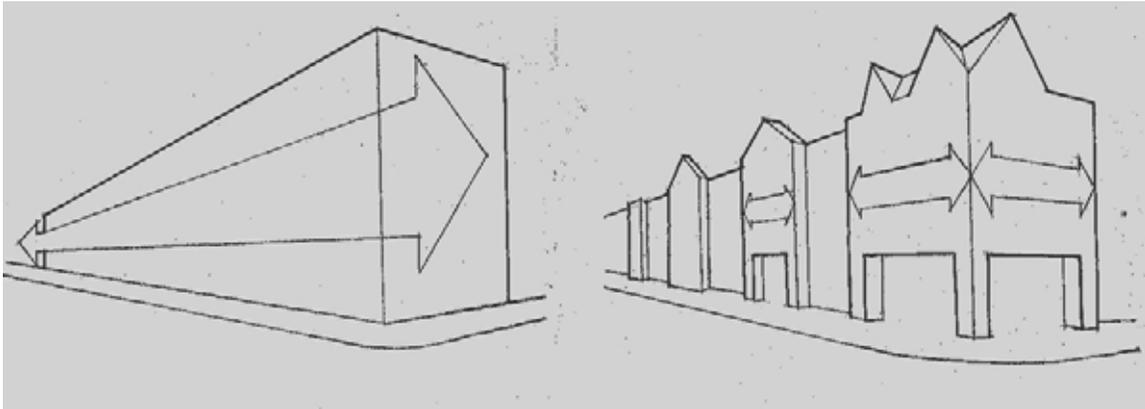
TRENDS IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Current Concepts in Urban Planning: Street Form

The other trend in development relates to the quality of the buildings. In general, while the buildings that have been constructed in the past 15 years are not unattractive, they do not always fit in with the streetscape of which they are part.

Clearly, beyond the issue of density, current trends in development have the potential to detract from the streetscapes on residential streets near Coolidge Corner that are so highly valued. One step towards reducing those impacts was the passage at the 2006 Annual Town Meeting of zoning restrictions on so-called “Snout Houses.” Such houses have garages dominating their frontage, often as a “snout” poking in front of the actual building.

However, other regulatory changes may be necessary in order to further prevent deterioration of Coolidge Corner’s streetscape.



STREETS BENEFIT FROM PATTERNS THAT REINFORCE THEIR CHARACTER, SUCH AS IN THE IMAGE ON THE RIGHT

IV. Protecting Neighborhoods: Zoning, Historic Preservation & Neighborhood Conservation Districts

Residents of Coolidge Corner, and of Brookline as a whole, are concerned about protecting the character of the existing residential neighborhoods around Coolidge Corner. Opinions range from an interest in stopping all new development in the area, to ensuring that new development is consistent with the character of existing streetscapes, to an interest in promoting new development due to its public benefits. In general, most people fall in the middle of this spectrum and are interested in making sure that when new investment occurs in Coolidge Corner it does not disrupt the things people like about neighborhood streets near Coolidge Corner.

The DPC members generally agreed that preserving existing, consistent, residential streetscapes make sense for many reasons, such as the following:

- Residents who make a decision to live in a certain area should be protected from dramatic changes in character to their neighborhood;
- Consistency in development patterns protects property values and their corresponding assessed and appraised values;
- Coolidge Corner is home to a number of historically and architecturally rich areas and new development should not detract from the richness of these areas;
- The quality of the pedestrian environment is thought to increase the amount of walking done by residents and visitors, with both public health and transportation benefits.



EXAMPLES OF CONSISTENT STREETSCAPES – ONE AT A LOWER LEVEL OF DENSITY AND ONE AT A HIGHER LEVEL. BOTH TYPES OF STREETSCAPES EXIST IN COOLIDGE CORNER





THIS BUILDING IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW NOT TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE CHARACTER OF A NEIGHBORHOOD'S STREETScape

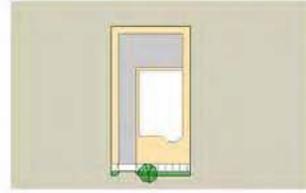
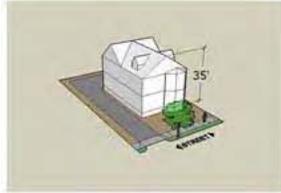
What Does It Mean to Protect Residential Neighborhoods?

While there is not an exact definition of this idea, the District Planning Council clearly felt it made sense to control the design, density, height, and open space characteristics of the historic residential streetscape. Taller buildings that were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's are not generally seen as contributing to the quality of these streetscapes. Similarly, there are examples of infill development that may be more or less the appropriate height or scale but do not share common design characteristics with neighboring buildings.

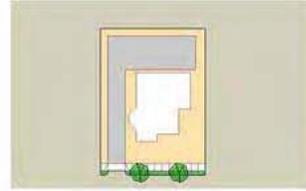
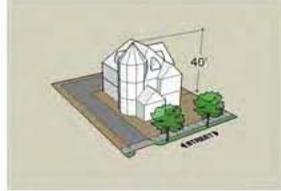
A staff analysis of the multifamily residential areas near Coolidge Corner found six general streetscape forms, and one subform:

Draft Coolidge Corner Building Forms

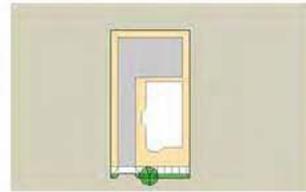
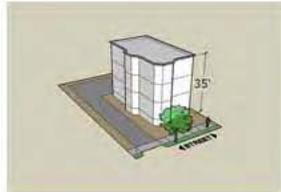
FORM 1
Single Family Converted to Multifamily



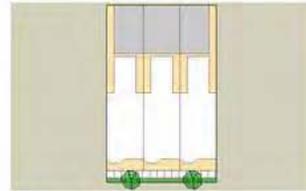
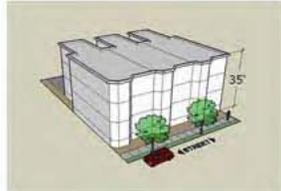
FORM 1a
Single Family Converted to Multifamily (Queen Anne Victorian)



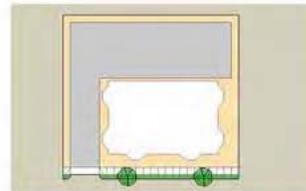
FORM 2
Detached Triple Decker



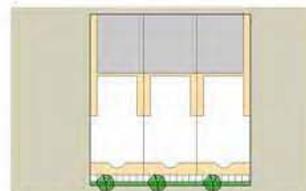
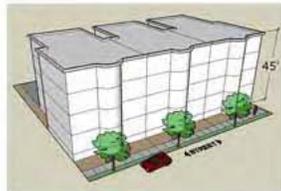
FORM 3
Three-Story Attached Multifamily (Rowhouse)



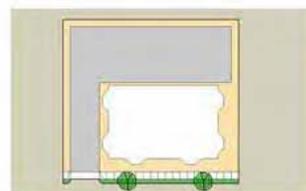
FORM 4
Three-Story Multifamily Building



FORM 5
Four-Story Attached Multifamily (Rowhouse)



FORM 6
Four-Story Multifamily Building



While not every street clearly fits into one of these formats, these represent the general types of streetscapes we think of as being near Coolidge Corner. In lieu of other reasons to permit variation from these existing street patterns – such as the provision of specialized uses such as affordable housing for seniors – these patterns should be preserved and reinforced through the development review process.

Tools to Help Protect Neighborhoods

The District Planning Council was interested in preserving the existing streetscapes, and looked at a number of regulatory tools to help preserve these existing street patterns. These were primarily changes to the Zoning Bylaw. The DPC also looked at other tools – most notably the Neighborhood Conservation District tool, and the possibility of new Local Historic Districts.

Possible Zoning Changes

The DPC discussed many different possible amendments to the Zoning By-law to help protect neighborhoods. In general, while only formally voting to support the use of the Three Family Zone and amendments to section 5.43 of the Zoning Bylaw, as well as a six-month extension to the Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay, the DPC felt that some possible tools warranted further study:

- **Three Family Zones:** Certain areas with a strong use pattern of one-, two- and three-family properties exist in the current M-1.0 and M-1.5 districts. These areas could potentially be rezoned to permit a maximum of three units on a parcel, while still permitting the existing use pattern of connected buildings with three units. Currently, approximately 90 parcels in three areas have been identified as appropriate for such zoning. There may be others that can be identified for future inclusion in such a zoning district.
- **Form-Based Zoning:** Form-based zoning is a tool that focuses on ensuring that new development is consistent with and conserves the character of the existing streetscape. Form-Based Zoning, sometimes called Form-Based Code, relies on the use of images, prototypical buildings, and an explicit look at the larger context of a proposed development. The DPC felt it warranted further study to see if some areas around Coolidge Corner should be considered for a form-based zoning approach that might help preserve the existing form in those areas. This tool could base development review on the various forms shown above, while retaining many of the characteristics of the existing zones, such as open space requirements. The DPC did not have sufficient time to learn about and consider the implications of such an approach. However, there is a sense that it merits further public education, and may be a possible approach to not just Coolidge Corner, but other densely developed areas in the Town.
- **Permitting Reconstruction:** Due to the possible changes recommended, which will create some new nonconforming structures and uses, the section of the Zoning By-law that does not permit reconstruction of buildings destroyed by catastrophe should be amended or eliminated.

- **Amendments to Section 5.43:** This section of the Zoning By-law permits relief from setback requirements if other amenities are provided in lieu of these setbacks. This section should be closely examined to determine how best to preserve existing open space and appropriate setbacks in residential areas, perhaps in conjunction with the Three-Family or Form-Based zoning tools described above.
- **Amendments to the Public Benefit Incentives:** The DPC also discussed a set of public benefits that could be desirable to achieve from future developments seeking to use the Public Benefit Incentive (PBI) sections of the Zoning By-law (5.21 and 5.32) to obtain additional height or Floor Area Ratio. This list could be considered for inclusion in the Zoning By-Law for projects near Coolidge Corner. Members believe that developments should not receive PBI bonuses for meeting existing requirements of the Zoning By-Law. They also believe that agreed to public benefits should not be subject to substitution at a later date without the approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals and that the provision of these benefits should be monitored and continuously enforced by the Town. The immediate neighborhood of the development should have priority in receiving these public benefits.

- Landscaped open space that should be located and visible at ground level, open to the public, and green.
- Parking spaces available to residents of the area requiring additional parking at a reasonable price.
- For developments of six or more units, provision of on-site affordable housing units above that required in the Zoning Bylaw.
- Incentives for use of public transit and other alternative transportation, such as subsidization of MBTA passes for employees or provision of ZipCar spaces.
- Significant contributions to a fund to develop a public plaza in the heart of Coolidge Corner.
- Significant contributions to a fund to provide public parking below grade or otherwise shielded from view.

SOME PUBLIC BENEFITS DISCUSSED BY DPC MEMBERS

In the Fall of 2006, the DPC recommended the use of the Three Family Zone and amendments to section 5.43 of the Zoning Bylaw, as well as a six-month extension to the Coolidge Corner Interim Planning Overlay District.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts

The Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) is a generic term for a method of development review that lies somewhere in-between that in a Local Historic District and

under zoning. Generally, NCD's are discrete areas with common development patterns. NCDs have begun to be adopted around the country to provide communities greater range and flexibility in their approaches to preservation than what is typically afforded by locally designated historic districts. Here in Massachusetts, Cambridge has implemented this preservation regulation. Amesbury, Massachusetts also has a regulation it calls an NCD, but which embodies a different, zoning-oriented approach. Lincoln adopted enabling legislation for NCD's in 2006 and Wellesley is considering such legislation this spring.

Using a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Town completed a study of NCD's in 2005. It found that NCD's provide an additional regulatory tool for preserving the character of established neighborhoods and unique areas of communities from inappropriate development. Of the many NCD-type regulations around the country, the central shared rationale for their adoption has been to provide a more flexible and tailored approach to protecting areas not typically considered "historic." While many of these areas would meet the criteria established by the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office for designation, many preservation commissions, let alone the general public, would not view them in this light. Yet such neighborhoods have the potential for becoming valued historic districts if their key attributes can be maintained and intrusions that would destroy their integrity can be avoided.

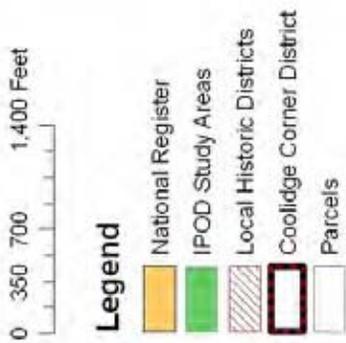
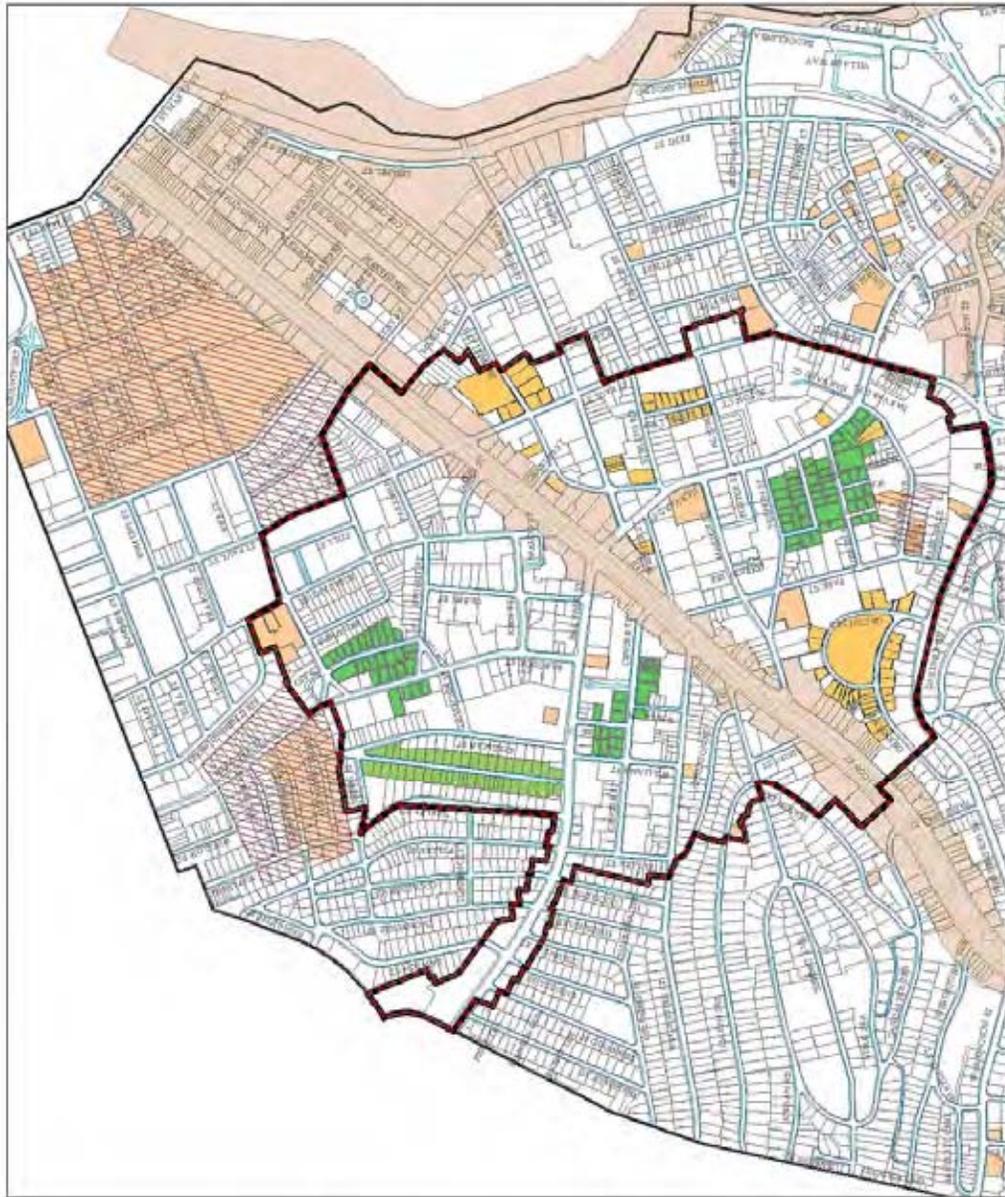
This relatively recent regulatory tool has been adapted to the unique circumstances of various municipalities. NCD's are often administered by planning and zoning personnel as by historic preservation officials—a clue to its broader application than simple design review for individual properties. NCD's frequently grow out of public planning processes that emphasize the participation of property owners in finding solutions to planning issues affecting their neighborhoods—and indeed this was an impetus for Brookline to consider the mechanism. Such concerns often extend beyond the historic and aesthetic character of neighborhoods into issues such as maintaining housing choices and affordable housing stock, making infrastructure improvements and providing needed social services. Where the major concern is protection of out-of-scale development in an area NCDs can be effective in maintaining the development "balance" of a community that is under extreme development pressures stemming from proximity to major metropolitan areas and market forces that demand larger dwellings.

NCDs used in the United States can be categorized in several ways. Some are incentive-based and require reviews only if property owners wish to avail themselves of a particular benefit (similar to commercial properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places that take advantage of income tax credits). A few require review by their recommendations are only advisory and therefore lack "teeth." Most NCDs, however, are mandatory systems that require certain alterations to be reviewed and approved. Some communities have both incentives and mandatory review.

The 2005 report looked at what it called the "North Lawrence" district – Sewall and Longwood Avenues between Saint Paul Street, Beacon Street, Francis Street and Kent Street. It drafted some potential design guidelines for this area and a model bylaw that could be used for creation of NCD's in Brookline. However, in general it found that the

neighborhood was possibly too architecturally diverse to have a single set of design guidelines, and suggested that other regulatory tools might be more appropriate.

In general, while the use of NCD's is not ruled out, the current recommendation from Town staff is to explore the use of zoning tools to accomplish similar goals. In particular, the form-based zoning tool may provide a more effective way of accomplishing similar goals. In the future, the idea of NCD's and even new Local Historic Districts in areas around Coolidge Corner should be considered.



GREEN AREAS ON THIS MAP HAVE BEEN DEEMED WORTHY BY SOME MEMBERS OF THE PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF CONSIDERATION FOR NCD OR LHD STATUS

V. Appropriate Development in Commercial Areas

Just as there is an overall sense that existing residential areas need to be protected, there is also an interest in preserving the health of existing commercial areas on Harvard Street, Beacon Street, and other commercially zoned areas near Coolidge Corner. Part of preserving these areas involves ensuring that existing businesses - especially unique, locally owned businesses – can survive and prosper. Another part of preserving this health may involve some limited expansion of current commercial uses into existing commercially-zoned areas.

Commercial development has primarily been retenancing of existing storefronts, which has generally resulted in the replacement of local businesses with national or regional chains. However, there have been some exceptions, such as the successful opening of the Magic Beans toy store on Harvard Street. There has also been new commercial construction at 1309 Beacon Street, 1285 Beacon Street (in progress), an approved expansion at 1309 Beacon Street, and the conversion of three formerly residential row buildings at 1415 and 1419 Beacon Street to commercial uses.

In commercial districts, in-fill development –as described above for residential areas - has been somewhat successful. This is in part due to the Town’s façade review process on major streets, and in part due to the requirement that commercial districts have commercial uses on the first floors of any residential buildings. However, there is a challenge in ensuring that the uses in those spaces remain as diverse and unique as they have been in the past. There remains a role for national and regional chains as part of a dynamic mix of goods and services available in Coolidge Corner- and current data suggests that the chain presence in Coolidge Corner remains lower than the presence in many other commercial districts. It is important for the Town to determine if there are any ways to make sure that the percentage of chains in the district remains at a manageable level, without the Town becoming too directly involved in the market for retail and commercial space. This may involve the development of upper stories on existing commercial buildings or it may involve other actions from the Town.

Available Regulatory Tools to Promote Appropriate Development

Zoning

If there were an interest in encouraging such upper-story development, a likely way to do so would be to revise the parking requirements for such development to represent the lower parking requirements shown for such locations as part of the transportation analysis. However, as previously noted, the municipality studied permit overnight on-street parking and on-street parking for residents for more than two hours. The DPC did not decide whether upper story development would be desirable for the district, nor did it decide, if upper story development were desirable, whether such development should be limited to commercial uses only. As shown in its Vision Statement, however, the DPC did vote that 'living in Coolidge Corner should involve ... not increasing the residential population' and in its Action Plan, the DPC voted to explore and encourage planning tools that will increase principally commercial development in Coolidge Corner. In any

case, there is a distinct possibility that even with such zoning revisions in place, the cost of such upper-story development may not make it feasible.

State Programs

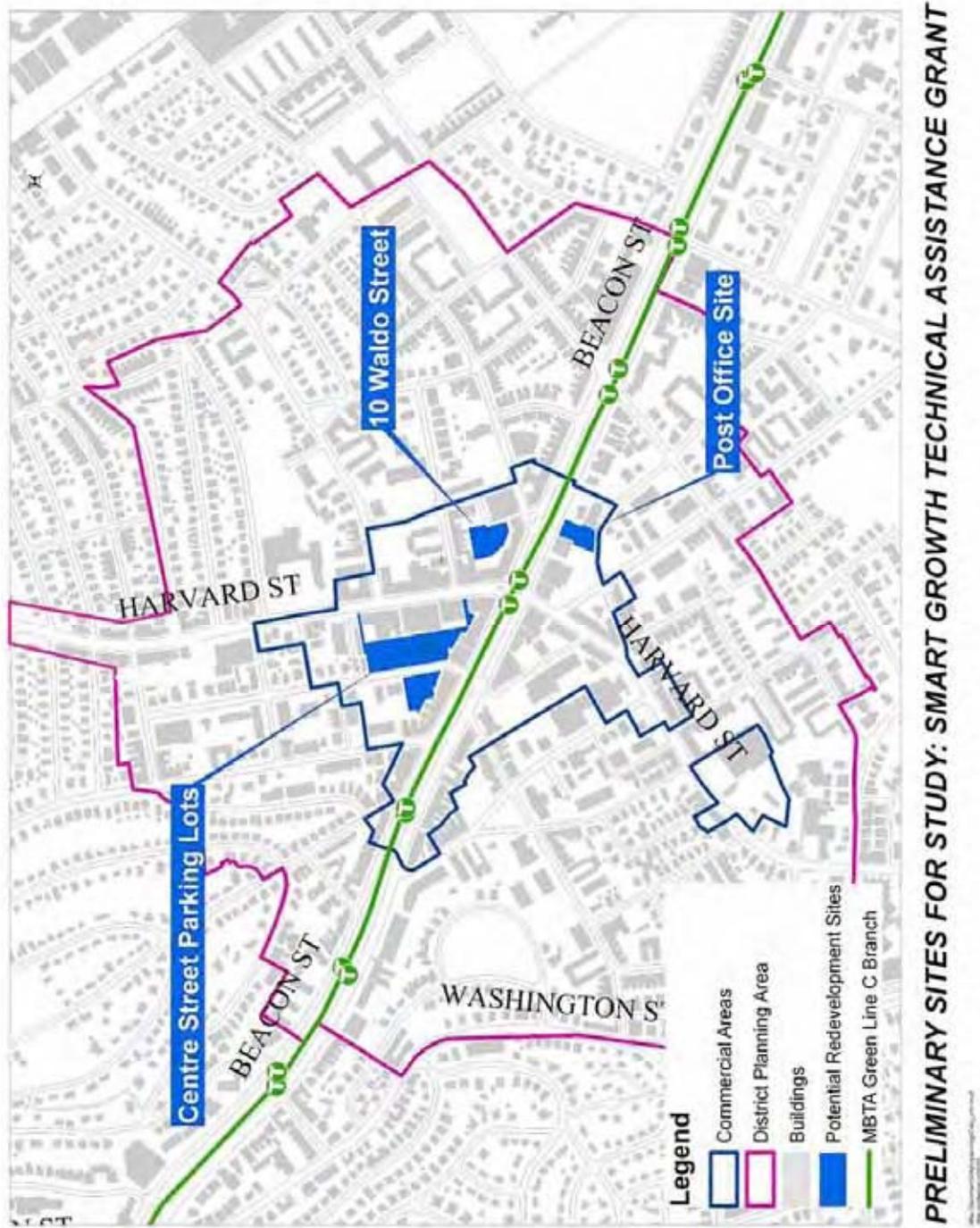
A number of state programs exist to help commercial districts. None of them are immediately apparent as useful to help accomplish the goals of the district planning process, but they were discussed as part of this process. Tools discussed include the Tax Increment Financing program; the District Increment Financing programs; and the Chapter 40R program.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF):** TIF is essentially a form of local property tax relief for specified developments. What is commonly referred to as TIF in other states is actually referred to as District Increment Financing in Massachusetts.
- **District Increment Financing (DIF):** DIF involves financing public improvements from dedicated local real estate tax revenue increases derived from new development in Coolidge Corner under a new state enabling funding program for municipalities.
- **Chapter 40R:** The aim of 40R is to encourage housing development in areas near transit stations or in existing city and town centers to address a growing housing demand in Massachusetts. Cities and towns receive a financial bonus depending on how many units are or can be constructed, and developers gain a more predictable permitting process. However, the discretion of the Town to regulate development in these districts is limited once such a district is approved.

Studies of Three Potential Sites for Redevelopment

In some cases there are existing commercial parcels that may be redeveloped in the next five to ten years. These parcels include the following:

- ***Post Office Site:*** This property on Beacon Street, owned by the United States Postal Service (USPS), is potentially available for redevelopment since the USPS was seeking alternative sites for a larger postal facility. The development of this site would likely be a private development endeavor.
- ***10 Waldo Street Site:*** This property, occupied by a former taxi company garage, was recently purchased by a developer in order to build a new residential or mixed-use project. The development of this site would also likely be a private development endeavor.
- ***Centre Street Parking Lots:*** These two Town-owned public parking lots on Centre Street (East and West Lots) offer opportunities for new development to meet certain Town-wide economic and affordable housing goals as well as new open space opportunities. The development of this site would either be accomplished as a public municipal initiative or a public/private partnership.



These three parcels were studied by a consultant, Bluestone Planning Group, working with the DPC and funded by a state Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant. This full report is included as an appendix. While no overall consensus was reached on the future of these three parcels, some alternatives were seen as having more positives than others. However, it was found that many redevelopment scenarios for these sites that were seen

COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

as acceptable to a majority of DPC members did not appear to be profitable for private developers. Either public funding would need to be found for such projects, or the community might have to make some additional tradeoffs with potential developers to make the projects economically viable.

The examination of the development potential from a developer's perspective of these three sites was undertaken in two phases. The first phase explored alternative development options for each site - including commercial, housing and hotel uses. The purpose was to determine each site's reasonable maximum development potential based upon the sites' size and dimensional characteristics in order to answer whether even such maximized development was sufficient from a developer's perspective to economically warrant new construction – given high land acquisition costs, construction costs, and the costs of relatively expensive structured or underground parking.

This first round examination showed that, from a developer's perspective, the amount of parking that could physically fit on a site was often the governing factor that in turn programmatically limited the total amount of development that could be supported. As a result, some options proved financially feasible while others did not – depending on the use tested, whether additional properties or leases had to be acquired, and on the parking supply that could be provided.

Based upon a review of this first phase examination of options, and the resulting building heights that were in some instances significantly higher than currently prevailing or permitted building heights in the Coolidge Corner area, the Coolidge Corner District Council asked that the next round of explorations seek to first create a desired vision for Coolidge Corner that could be widely supported by District Council members, and only then test whether that vision was, in fact, financially feasible from a developer's perspective. A key priority was to establish a central civic gathering space or open space which Coolidge Corner presently lacks. Another key priority was to keep the scale of new development more or less in line with currently prevailing heights and densities. For some, the creation of additional parking was high on the agenda.

Using these criteria as a mandate, the second phase examination of the three case study sites produced options that attempted to meet the District Council's vision – ie. new developments that were in scale with their surroundings, offered new public gathering places at each site, and provided additional parking in some instances. Once again, some options proved financially feasible from a developer's perspective, while others did not. Any development initiative for the Town-owned Centre Street public parking lot sites would clearly require a major public investment.

Several of the options are discussed below. However, the DPC did not vote to endorse any option.

COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

A. Post Office Site

The Post Office site was examined as an expanded site that included both the Post Office site itself as well as the two parcels to the immediate west of the Post Office for a total parcel size of approximately 17,950 square feet or 0.41 acres. The Post Office site itself, as a stand alone project, was not examined because the Preliminary Assessment indicated that it was not a viable development project.

- *Alternative Development Options & Development Program Summaries*

Two similar mixed-use development options were explored for the expanded Post Office site. Both scenarios included one or more uses (housing, offices or hotel) on upper floors over one or two levels of retail space along Beacon Street on the lower floors. A pedestrian passageway, lined with retail shops and connecting Beacon St. to Sewall Ave., was provided between this development project and Trader Joe's to the west.

Parking was provided underground. A civic plaza, surrounded by retail shops, was provided on Beacon Street immediately across from the Green Line trolley platform; and, a courtyard was provided on Sewall Avenue.

The primary difference between the two options is that in Option 1, only one level of underground parking is provided. In Option 2, two levels of underground parking are included. Being more costly, this option would need to be larger than Option 1.

Post Office Site Option 1: Mixed Uses / Civic Spaces + 1 Level Underground Parking							
USES	SF/FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units /FL	Total Units				
HOUSING	11,200	9	22	2.5	28,000	32	
RETAIL 1	8,000	N.A.	N.A.	1.5	12,000	24	
RETAIL 2 (in back)	8,000	N.A.	N.A.	1	8,000	16	
1 Level Underground Parking							71
TOTAL				5	48,000	72	71



COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

Post Office Site Option 2: Mixed Uses / Civic Spaces + 2 levels of Underground Parking							
USES	SF/ FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units/ FL	Total Units				
HOUSING	15,500	12	54	4.5	69,750	80	
RETAIL 1	8,000	N.A.	N.A.	1.5	12,000	24	
RETAIL 2	8,000	N.A.	N.A.	1.5	12,000	24	
2 Levels Under-ground Parking							123
TOTAL				7.5	93,750	128	123



▪ *Consultant's Conclusions*

Option 2 is approaching feasibility in the larger version. A 20% return on costs is normally required by developers to make a project worth pursuing. Our calculations estimate that Option 2 would return a 16.7% profit. With a moderately larger program or modest changes or refinements to the assumptions, a viable project might be achieved.

Parking in both Options on the Post Office site is underground. The high construction cost of underground parking as well as the acquisition of the existing buildings adjacent to the Post Office both contribute to the very high cost of executing these development scenarios.

B. 10 Waldo Street Site

For the Final Assessment phase, the privately-owned 10 Waldo Street site was examined as either: 1) a public parking deck site built entirely within the existing 10 Waldo Street property in the interior of the block, or, as 2) a privately-developed mixed use project that incorporates an adjacent parcel of land on Pleasant and Beacon Street to provide street frontage and visibility.

Several site constraints exist at the Waldo Street site which are not ideal for development: 1) a service alley and access easement must be maintained on the 10 Waldo Street property to the rear of all existing adjacent commercial properties along Beacon Street and Harvard Street; and 2) there is only circuitous or indirect pedestrian access to the 10 Waldo Street site from Harvard Street if the 10 Waldo Street site is used for public parking.

To provide a new civic space adjoining the Waldo Street site and to better rationalize the confusing street intersection nearby, the intersection of Waldo / Pleasant / Beacon Streets was realigned to eliminate the triangular traffic island now there and convert the intersection to a regular perpendicular intersection with Beacon Street. This allowed the creation of a triangular plaza and widened sidewalk immediately in front of the Waldo street property where plantings and benches could be installed as well as places for restaurants or cafes to place outdoor tables and chairs.

▪ *Alternative Development Scenarios & Development Program Summaries*

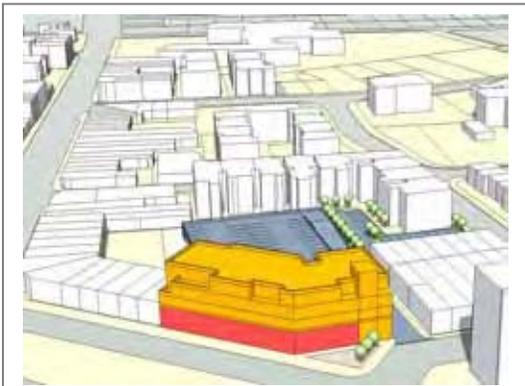
Option 1: Public Parking Site: This option illustrates a public parking deck project located entirely within the parcel bounds of the existing 10 Waldo Street property. A total of 100 parking spaces are provided on the surface and on one deck above it. In this option, the Town of Brookline would acquire the site from its present owner for use as public parking.

Option 2: Mixed Use Development / Parking Deck on Expanded Parcel: This option illustrates a new 50,100 square foot mixed use building on an adjoining acquired parcel of land located directly on Pleasant / Beacon Street. Supporting parking for 100 cars is located on the surface and on a deck on the adjoining the 10 Waldo Street parcel of land. In the scenario illustrated, 72 of the 100 parking spaces provided are needed to support the new development. The remaining 28 parking spaces can either be dedicated to public parking or may be sold or rented to nearby residents or commercial building owners.

10 Waldo Street Site Option 1: Parking							
USES	SF/FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units/ FL	Total Units				
Parking Deck	19,500	N.A.	N.A.	2.0	39,000	N.A.	100
TOTAL				2	39,000	N.A.	100



10 Waldo Street Site Option 2: Mixed Use / Parking Deck							
USES	SF/FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units/ FL	Total Units				
HOUSING	11,200	9	26	3	33,600	39	
RETAIL	11,000	N.A.	N.A.	1.5	16,500	33	
Parking Deck	19,500	N.A.	N.A.	2	39,000		100
TOTAL				6.5	89100	72	100



COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

▪ *Consultant's Conclusions*

While both of these options appear financially feasible from the perspective of return on cost exceeding the 20% rule of thumb, it must be considered that land value is carried at acquisition cost and cost of carry. The landowner undoubtedly thinks that the property has more value than cost – after all, they didn't buy it to break even. Some or all of the excess Return on Cost above the nominal 20% will be negotiated out as part of land value by the owner. The residential scheme as configured is probably a little thin but within striking distance of a viable project.

Both options include above-ground structured parking rather than under-ground parking, and the relatively lower cost to build structured parking is a contributing factor to the success of both Options. The Town's projections for public parking revenue (derived from both meter fees *and* parking tickets) is also a contributing factor to the success of Option 1 since the town generates significantly more net revenue per space than the private parking market can support.

C. Centre Street Public Parking Lot Sites

For the second assessment phase, the Centre Street East Public Parking Lot site was examined as both a Town-funded capital improvement project comprised of public civic space over one level of underground public parking, and, a mixed use private development project that includes both the Town-owned East Centre Street parking lot itself as well as an adjoining privately-owned parcel of land on Harvard Street. This latter scenario would require a public/private partnership to execute it.

A high priority in both scenarios is to provide a major new public civic space space for the Coolidge Corner district at this site. Public civic spaces are located to be easily accessible and adjacent to the several pedestrian passageways that connect the site to both Harvard and Beacon Streets. In both scenarios, it is assumed that the existing public surface parking lot of 143 spaces is replaced with an underground public parking level.

The Centre Street West lot is seen as an independent site that either could be redeveloped or left to operate as it now does. The major implication of developing the West Lot on the development of the East lot is that the existing 54 public parking spaces now located there would have to be relocated and replaced in the new underground parking level below the East Lot site.

▪ *Alternative Development Scenarios & Development Program Summaries*

Option 1: Civic Space over One Level of Underground Public Parking: This option illustrates a public park / plaza along Centre Street over a new underground public parking garage of 140 spaces (which replaces the existing surface parking lot). This new civic space includes landscaped lawns as well as paved areas to support such activities as the Farmers Market now held on the West Lot. This development would be a municipally-sponsored and funded initiative.

Option 2: Mixed Use Development & Civic Space over One & One-Half Levels of Underground Parking: This option illustrates 144,000 square foot of new mixed use development located in three new buildings on both the Centre Street East Lot and an adjoining parcel of privately-owned land along Harvard Street. An existing one story building of 26,000 square feet along Harvard Street would be acquired and demolished to accomplish this plan. One and one-half levels of underground parking to accommodate 350 parking spaces would be built below the Centre Street East Lot and the acquired parcel of land along Harvard Street. Of these 350 new underground spaces, 143 spaces would be dedicated to replacement of the existing surface public parking lot and the remainder would be available to support the new private mixed use development.

A new public plaza would be constructed on Harvard Street adjacent to the Coolidge Corner Theater. It would be surrounded by mixed-use buildings with retail shops and restaurants on the ground floor. On Centre Street, a public civic space would be

constructed. It would be adjoined to its north and south by mixed use buildings that would also include retail shops and restaurants on the ground level adjacent to this new civic space.

Centre St. Option 1: Civic Space over One level of Underground Parking							
USES	SF/FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units /FL	Total Units				
Under-ground Parking				1.0	48,000		140
Civic Space					48,000		
Surface Parking							29
Parking on East Lot (existing)						143	
Parking on West Lot						56	56
TOTAL				N.A.	96,000	199	225



Centre St. Option 2: Civic Space Over Underground Parking + New Mixed Use Development along Harvard St. and Centre St.							
USES	SF/ FL	Unit Count		# Stories	Total SF	Assumed Required Parking	Provided Parking
		Units/ FL	Total Units				
BUILDING 1							
RETAIL	17,000	N.A.	N.A.	1.0	17,000	34	
HOUSING	18,500	14	43	3.0	55,500	64	
BUILDING 2							
RETAIL	10,000			1.0	10,000	20	
OFFICE	12,000			2.0	24,000	48	
Existing Retail to be replaced	-26,000			1.0	-26,000	-52	
BUILDING 3							
RETAIL	9,000			1.0	9,000	18	
HOUSING	7,800	6	12	2.0	15,600	18	
Underground Parking		N.A.	N.A.	1.5	128,000		350
Civic Space					37,000		
Parking on East Lot (existing)						143	
WEST LOT DEVELOP- MENT							
MED. OFFICES		N.A.	N.A.	1.0	4,300	16	
HOUSING		3	8	2.0	8,600	12	
Parking on West Lot						56	13
TOTAL				N.A.	266,000	365	363

COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)



COMMERCIAL AREAS (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

▪ *Consultant's Conclusions*

Option 1 is an entirely publicly-funded initiative. In Option 2, the level of density illustrated does not allow for the developer to contribute to the Town's cost to build a civic space and underground parking. In fact, the density would have to be increased in order to support a financially feasible project even for the developer's piece alone. Slightly increasing the density may make Option 2 feasible for a developer, but, the town would still be responsible for its portion of the underground parking and civic spaces which would require a significant bond issue (or major subsidies). The high cost of acquiring the existing retail building on Harvard Street to create an active public civic space, and the high cost of underground parking both contribute to the project's financial infeasibility and /or large bond issue required of the Town for Option 2.

Possible ways of making these options more financially feasible and practical include: 1) shifting parking, in whole or part, to structured parking screened with retail frontage, and 2) assume only acquisition of approximately half of the 26,000 square foot retail building on Harvard Street (the building has a uniform façade but is actually two or three structures).

Consultant's Conclusions of the Study of these Three Parcels

If any of these options are pursued in the future, financial fine-tuning will be required, traffic impacts of each will need to be assessed beyond the analysis conducted by Traffic Solutions (which primarily looked at the parking), and political consensus will need to be built to move forward.

There was no formal vote of the DPC on these development scenarios, and there remain members who support none of these redevelopment concepts. Some members are interested in the scenario that utilizes the Waldo Street parcel for public parking. The Planning and Community Development Department believes that the redevelopment scenario that has the most potential to accomplish public purposes is the second redevelopment option for the Centre Street parking lots. That alternative, while still needing some refinement and likely to require some public funding, is the one most likely to warrant further analysis by the Town. On the other two sites, the work done as part of this study is most likely to be useful as input into a future development review process.

Other parcels, notably the TJ Maxx property on the Boston City Line and the Stop and Stop near Brookline Village, are also possible redevelopment sites that some DPC members had an interest in examining further. Due to limits of time and funding, however, these sites were not examined as part of the planning process to date.

VI. Transportation and Parking

While there are many opinions about parking in Coolidge Corner, there is a general concern that it is difficult to find a legal parking space at the current time.

As part of the district planning process, the Town retained a consultant to examine issues of traffic and parking. This consultant, Traffic Solutions, was charged with conducting an overall transportation analysis of the district. This full analysis is included as an appendix. Their charge included an overall look at the above-referenced issues, but focused on parking. While issues like traffic congestion or transit service are obviously of critical importance to the district, parking was clearly the highest of the various transportation issues raised during the SWOT analysis and the public process early in the district planning scope. DPC members' opinions varied on the issue of how much parking is required in Coolidge Corner.

Report Summary

1. Establishment of Baseline and Trends

The transportation analysis undertook an extensive data collection effort to better understand the existing conditions within the Coolidge Corner District. This task identified existing trends, catalogues roadway and facility improvements, created an inventory of on- and off-street metered spots, and provided a general overview of existing transportation modes within the district.

The consultant completed an inventory of on- and off-street metered spots and a comprehensive listing of transportation services and programs that exist, some exclusively within the Coolidge Corner district.

Initial findings from the data collection process:

- The reconstruction of Beacon Street should result in significant upgrades to the street's infrastructure and layout, and should improve how the street functions. However, the reconstruction will also cause significant disruption during construction, result in a loss of on-street parking, and only a portion of the street will have a designated bicycle lane.
- The pavement, pavement markings and street furniture within the District are generally in good condition. The Commercial Areas Streetscape Master Plan undertaken in 2003 made a number of suggestions for improvements to the Coolidge Corner streetscape. The majority of these suggested improvements have yet to be implemented or advanced beyond their preliminary design.
- Both the Green Line 'C' Branch and the Route 66 bus have extremely high ridership, with Coolidge Corner being an extremely popular stop. Fleet and schedule changes to improve service on both the 'C' Branch and Route 66 do not appear imminent, though a number of capacity and station/stop improvements are being considered.

TRANSPORTATION (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

- There are a limited number of bicycle lanes constructed or planned, while recommended bicycle routes tend to be poorly signed or marked. There is also a lack of bicycle parking facilities, while existing facilities may not be in optimum locations. Current zoning requirements are limited and even discretionary when it comes to providing bicycle parking requirements and standards.
- Approximately 1,141 metered parking spaces are located within the District, both on-street and off-street (including Centre Street West lot and Marriott garage). Approximately 338 spaces in the District are available through the Town's Open Air Parking Space License Program, while an additional 32 spaces are available at hourly rate through a private parking facility at 209 Harvard Street.
- There are a number of lesser known alternative modes of transportation operating within the District, such as but not limited to; Zip Car, taxis, the Elderbus and the RIDE.

2. Land Use and Transportation Analysis

A component of this study was to focus on the three key development sites described above, and to identify and assess the potential impacts that the different development scenarios might place on the supporting transportation infrastructure. The analysis of these three sites is a continuation of the work undertaken for the Town by the Bluestone Planning Group on the following sites:

- Beacon Street Post Office
- 10 Waldo Street
- Centre Street Parking Lots

The consultants reviewed the development assumptions (zoning, parking, site access, site layout) used by Bluestone to create the development scenarios. These assumptions were used to forecast automobile trip generation numbers, to assess on-site circulation and loading facility requirements and to consider potential connectivity to the existing street network.

This analysis analyzed whether the off-street parking requirements used for the development of the three sites was adequate to support each development option. To accomplish this, the consultant gleaned the off-street parking requirements for similar dense urban areas in close proximity to public transit (Cambridge at Central Square and Somerville at Davis Square) and the off-street parking requirements of the Institute Traffic Engineers (ITE). These were compared with Brookline's current parking requirement to create a comparative parking analysis spreadsheet. It is worth noting, however, that the Cambridge and Somerville off-street parking requirements are in the context of cities that permit residents to park on the street overnight and also that those cities have different rules than Brookline about parking on the street during daytime hours.

The findings of this section were as follows:

- For each of the development options proposed, the Town's parking requirements for residential, retail and office uses under the zoning bylaw are significantly higher than projected in the land use study, as well as those projected by the Institute Traffic Engineers (ITE) and those of nearby communities with similar dense urban areas on transit lines. However, as mentioned above, the differences on parking restrictions between Brookline and these other communities may affect the interpretation of this comparison.
- With a Town preference for structured or underground parking and with each of the development scenarios examined also having structured or underground parking, construction costs are increased significantly. A parking space within an above ground structure generally ranges from \$15,000 to \$25,000, while for a below ground structure they are generally cited as being in the range of \$25,000 to \$35,000 per parking space. The greater the number of spaces, the greater the construction costs and the greater the rents and sales prices of the final building. Often this means that local merchants and residents cannot afford to buy or rent in the area. Ensuring adequate parking provision and not over provision of parking is therefore critical.
- Unlike some other communities, no reduction in parking requirements is given in the zoning bylaw for proximity to transit. Somerville for example gives a 20% reduction for non-residential uses located within 1000 ft of a transit stop; new zoning in downtown Quincy has parking requirements of 1 space per residential unit in order to promote development and because of the availability of transit; the Medford MUZ zone, which abuts Wellington station, also has reduced parking (1.5 spaces per residential unit) because of the availability of transit. Again, it is worth noting that Somerville, Quincy and Medford permit overnight parking and also have different rules governing daytime parking. In addition, the Medford MUZ zone does not include any older buildings that do not provide for their own parking needs. In Boston, the parking requirements for retail and office uses, particularly those on the upper floors, are significantly lower than the requirements in Brookline.
- All the development programs envisioned, particularly the municipal lot scenarios, would be extremely expensive to construct. The benefits to the Centre Street scenarios are that the Town already owns the lot. However, Option 1 on Centre Street does not provide sufficient additional parking to justify the expense of underground parking. Option 2 is much more desirable because of the mixed use component. However financing this option could be problematic. Although not Town owned, the Waldo Street Option 1 has advantages in that it is decked parking (cheaper to construct), it would be screened from view being an internal lot, and it has potential for an efficient circulation pattern. It may also lead to a better distribution of the parking demand within the District.

TRANSPORTATION (INCLUDING CONSULTANT WORK)

- Mitigation for any development scenario will be limited due to the existing density within the District. Mitigation for development will in all likelihood require more creative solutions, such as signal timing changes, one-way street pairings and so forth.

3. Circulation Analysis

This task provided a general overview of the circulation system within Coolidge Corner, focusing on wayfinding, parking, signal coordination, multimodalism, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. The existing circulation system was analyzed and recommendations are made for all travel modes in a manner that strikes a balance for each.

Following the completion of this task, the analysis found the following:

- *Wayfinding*: Providing an intuitive wayfinding system is critical for efficient and effective use in Coolidge Corner. Incorporating simplified and uniform wayfinding signs into pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow will allow people to get to the district, park, and find their way around quickly and effectively.
- *Parking*: Parking regulatory signs should be concise and should avoid unnecessary length. Signs with too much text are unlikely to be read and adhered to.
- *Signal Coordination*: The Town should explore coordinating signals so that pedestrians may cross Harvard Street when Beacon Street has the green light and the flow of traffic from Beacon to Harvard is relatively light. This would improve vehicular efficiency near the intersection of Harvard and Beacon Streets.
- *Multi-Modalism*: The Town should explore working with the MBTA to reduce variability in headways and to allow for multiple door loading at the platform to increase speed and capacity. Bus stops should be located on the near side of the intersection whenever possible. Consistent parking enforcement will improve the efficiency of the popular bus lines through the district.
- *Pedestrian*: The Town should continue to prioritize pedestrian integration and to maintain the pedestrian network to keep it in good condition.
- *Bicycle*: Bicycle accommodations should be included in any major infrastructure improvement. Bicycle infrastructure should be maintained in good condition including an annual line marking plan. Given the limited right of way, innovative approaches to creating bicycle lanes should be explored (e.g. reduce vehicular lane width, removal of parking spaces, etc).

4. Access and Parking Analysis

As mentioned above, the demand for and availability of parking within the district was the most discussed issue. There is a perceived shortage of parking within the district, and for many, this problem could only be solved by either the construction of additional municipal parking or private parking facilities. The section of the analysis involved a much more detailed study of existing parking trends and parking occupancy levels. This was not an overall parking demand study, and did not look at past trends of off-street parking supply to determine if the off-street parking supply has declined over time.

Following the completion of this section, the transportation analysis found the following:

- Although only two residential streets, Park Street and Naples Road, were observed and monitored, enforcement of parking violations on these streets appears to be lacking. Over a two day period, at least 72 vehicles on Naples Road were found to have exceeded the maximum two hour parking permitted, while on Park Street at least 55 vehicles were found to have exceeded the maximum two hour parking permitted. Only 5 of these 127 vehicles were observed as having tickets issued for this violation. While people drove from all over the state to the district, in general, parkers originated in Boston and Brookline.
- There appears to be a shortage of available and convenient parking for employees in the Coolidge Corner area. Employees parking on residential streets, the “feeding” of parking meters and the waiting list for the commercial parking program seem to validate this perception.
- Results of a December 2006 survey by the Coolidge Corner Merchants Association in cooperation with the Coolidge Corner Hub showed that of the one hundred eleven (111) companies who responded to the survey, seven hundred forty four (744) of their employees were found to arrive to work by car. Only seventeen (17) of these car trips were shared by fellow employees, meaning parking for seven hundred twenty seven (727) employee cars is currently sought in the area at various times of the day and week. The survey also found that only seventy seven (77) of the employees used privately owned parking facilities, while only a further forty one (41) employees used the Town’s Commercial Permit Parking Program. It is unclear how scientific these findings are, but they do provide some data on the needs of merchants.
- Amongst other things the Comprehensive Plan called for the establishment of a Parking District in Coolidge Corner. A Parking District would be a zoning overlay in which required parking could be reduced or waived in exchange for payment-in-lieu of parking provision. Payments would be placed in a fund and used to fund parking improvements. The Plan also calls for a review of parking standards for commercial areas to evaluate possible changes for mixed-use buildings, shared parking arrangements, and Transit Oriented Development.

- Occupancy levels for metered on-street parking along Harvard Street and Beacon Street are significantly higher closer to the Harvard Street and Beacon Street intersection, with occupancy levels over 90% observed.
- Occupancy levels for metered on-street spaces in the District were found to be consistently high, ranging from 73% to 96% for the streets surveyed. Occupancy levels within the municipal parking lots varied significantly when surveyed, ranging from an average occupancy for the John Street lot of 42% to an average occupancy of 93%.
- A parking utilization study was performed for the Centre Street East to identify parking turnover rates. Throughout the eight hour survey period, available parking spaces were counted every hour. A total of only seventy nine (79) spaces were counted over the eight hour period. The largest number of spaces was available at 6 pm, seventeen (17) spaces.
- The number of commercial permits available through the Commercial Permit Parking Program is being increased from 56 to 93. An informal arrangement with the Marriott Hotel will also make parking spaces available at a discounted rate to area employees.

Consultant's Recommendations

The following were the final recommendations made by Traffic Solutions in their transportation analysis. Note that while these were the recommendations of the consultant team, they were not endorsed by the DPC. Note, also, that in making its recommendations and looking for guidance from other municipalities, DPC members felt that the consultant team did not adequately take into account Brookline's unique parking restrictions such as the overnight parking ban and the daytime 2-hour parking limit.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

- In any update of Section 5.09 of the Zoning Bylaw, there should be a requirement that for any project within the district that exceeds certain square footage thresholds and for any project requiring relief from constructing a certain number of parking spaces, a detailed TDM plan must be submitted. Minimum submission requirements for a TDM plan should also be set forth in Section 5.09. At a minimum, any TDM plan submitted should outline the steps to be taken to reduce single occupant vehicle trips, measurable goals, and monitoring strategies for the plan.
- The City of Cambridge has a full time planner for TDM planning and ensuring developers meet obligations set forth within a TDM plan. Although it would not make fiscal sense to have a full time planner in Brookline to review, formulate and enforce TDM strategies in the District, as the workload would not sustain such a position, it would make sense to add these responsibilities to an appropriate staff position. TDM strategies often lose their effectiveness if they are not regularly monitored and enforced to ensure their long term success.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

- Coolidge Corner typifies what is meant by TOD, with the exception of parking standards for new development. As outlined earlier in this section, zoning amendments to reduce parking requirements for new development, a reduction in parking requirements for proximity to transit, and shared parking arrangements should be considered as revisions to the Zoning Bylaw.

Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)

- Since the MASCO TMA is dedicated towards serving the LMA and is financed by a small number of larger institutions within the LMA, it is unlikely to be receptive to expanding its services to include individual small businesses. The ability of the Town to act on behalf of the businesses to provide funding and support services to the MASCO TMA would have to be determined by the Town. Finally, the desire of the MASCO TMA to expand beyond its existing service area is also highly unlikely, with preliminary discussions suggesting it is not an idea they have considered or are likely to consider in the near future.

Consultant's Recommendations (continued)

- As to the establishment of a self supporting TMA, the Town and businesses within the District would have to explore this in more detail. With no easily identifiable large employer/employers within the District, the establishment of a TMA is made all the more difficult, particularly from a motivational view point and from a financial perspective.

Zoning Amendments

- Up to a 20% reduction in parking requirements for uses located within 1000 feet of the Green Line 'C' Branch.
- Section 6.02.1.b.c of the Town's Zoning By-Law (Off-Street Parking) already allows for a reduction in required parking through a special permit from the Board of Appeals. This section does not however specify the maximum deduction that will be considered. Up to a 15% reduction in parking requirements should be allowed to avail of shared parking arrangements in mixed use developments with no residential component.
- Reduction of existing on-site parking requirements for both residential and nonresidential uses permitted within the existing G-1.75 (CC) district.
- Underground parking is always preferable within urban settings and is almost a necessity within the Coolidge Corner District when attempting to meet the parking requirements of the Bylaw. The floor area of underground or above ground parking structures and the floor area of the portion of either structure devoted in whole or in part to parking automobiles, should not be counted as Gross Floor Area and should be exempt from the requirements as to floor area.
- The Town may wish to establish parking minimums and maximums within the G-1.75 (CC) district.
- As outlined within the Comprehensive Plan, Section 5.09 of the Zoning By-Law (Design Review) should be revised. This section of the By-Law is very prescriptive, lacking adequate detail or standards as to the minimum standards and scope for a transportation study. Also lacking are clear thresholds that define when and where development is viable, should be allowed, and should require mitigation.
- The establishment of a Parking District in Coolidge Corner needs greater exploration and should be tied into any potential zoning changes that allow for a reduction in parking. Any reduction or waiver from parking requirements granted by the Board of Appeals would require the applicant for such relief to pay into a fund for parking improvements, with the amount paid based on a per space formula. Again, the G-1.75 (CC) district seems appropriate for such an overlay.

Consultant's Recommendations (continued)

Parking Supply and Demand

- A comprehensive wayfinding signage package that clearly directs drivers to the various parking lots within the District is urgently needed. This is a relatively low cost, simple project that could be implemented almost immediately. Regulatory signage within parking lots is often confusing and poorly located. Any review of way finding signage should also include a review of regulatory signage within municipal lots and on public streets.
- The Town may wish to explore options such as APS and variable message signs, though as mentioned the installation of such a system can be expensive. Improving the existing signage within the District and monitoring the results may show that a more expensive system is not warranted or would have only marginal benefits.
- The opportunity exists to further explore “e-parking” and “pay-by-phone” with what should be relatively little expense to the Town. These programs are managed independently and the Town may wish to further explore these options, which would add to the convenience of parking in the District. If it is still determined that additional commercial parking spaces are needed, after the recent changes to the program, the Town may wish to consider offering a limited number of commercial permits to each business allowing employees to park on residential streets for greater than two hours. However, this option should only be examined after the existing changes to the Commercial Parking Program have been fully vetted and it has been determined that additional permits are still required.
- Enforcement of parking violations in the District needs to improve, especially with the introduction of the new residential on-street parking program. Ticketing for meter “feeding” and parking in excess of parking maximums does not appear to be a priority.
- The Town should examine all existing meter fees and fines for violations to determine if fee increases are warranted. Increased fees may assist with parking turnover rates, reduce parking violations, and potentially be used towards providing additional parking within the District.
- Pavement markings within the municipal lots need to be maintained on a regular basis. Markings within the Centre Street West lot do not appear to correspond with the 56 spaces that are supposed to be available within this lot.
- The Town should actively work with ZipCar and similar providers to make access to their fleets easier and available within municipal lots. The promotion of shared vehicle programs should also be considered in private developments and considered by the Board of Appeals when zoning relief from parking requirements is being sought. An April paper published by UC Berkeley's Partnership for Advanced Transit and Highways, suggested that every car sharing vehicle on the road accounts for six to 23 cars taken off the personally owned vehicle roster in this country and Canada. The zoning code should be amended to more easily accommodate ZipCar.

Consultant's Recommendations (continued)

Bicycles and Pedestrian Facilities and Connections

- A comprehensive study of existing bicycle rack locations, circulation patterns and routes, directional and routes signage, as well as pavement markings needs to be undertaken. Recent upgrades to Harvard Street have improved conditions and facilities for cyclists, as will the reconstruction of Beacon Street. However, further improvements are needed along these streets and elsewhere within the District. Improved way finding signage, share the road signage, pavement markings, and better as well as more strategically placed bicycle parking facilities and shelters, could all enhance the overall experience of cycling within the District.
- Bicycle parking requirements within the current Zoning Bylaw are minimal and discretionary, as such new bicycle parking requirements and standards need to be incorporated into the Bylaw. Proposed Bylaw amendments drafted in 2002, and which progressed to Town Meeting warrant, have yet to be enacted. These amendments should be re-examined by the newly formed Bicycle Committee and the Town's Planning and Community Development Department to determine if they are still suitable (with or without amendment) for inclusion within the Bylaw. If they are deemed unsuitable new bicycle parking requirements and standards should be drafted for inclusion into the Bylaw.
- Existing facilities and amenities need repair or upkeep. Faded crosswalk paint, uneven and broken pavement surfaces on sidewalks and roadways, malfunctioning pedestrian signals and broken street lamps are examples of facilities and amenities in need of attention.
- Sidewalks should be level, smooth and without obstructions in the pathway of pedestrians. District Planning Council members and members of the public have expressed particular concern about brick sidewalks.
- Crosswalks should be well marked and accentuated by curb extensions. At a minimum, crosswalks should be marked with ladder striping. A 10-foot distance between the stop lines and crosswalks is recommended. Treatments for multilane roadways should include a 10- to 30-foot distance between the stop line and the crosswalk. Appropriate advance signage should also be in place to warn motorists of pedestrian crossing activity. To improve sight lines between motorists and crossing pedestrians, on-street parking should be spaced at least 30 feet back from crosswalks. Furthermore, other options for enhancing sidewalks should be considered, including the use of reflective paint or thermoplastic striping, pavement texturing, in-pavement lights, crosswalk cones and barrels and overhead signs.
- All existing signals should have functioning buttons and walk signals, while modern signal technology should be utilized where possible. Signals should be equipped with pedestrian activation buttons that light up when pushed, as an indication of having been successfully activated. Also, countdown-style pedestrian crossing signals should be used in locations with a sufficient amount of pedestrian activity.

Consultant's Recommendations (continued)

- The opportunity to add additional bike lane lanes within the study area is limited, due to on-street parking, high traffic volumes, and street width. Certainly, streets such as Longwood Avenue, and perhaps other roads like Babcock Street and Freeman Street, would benefit from a bike lane, but without further studies and the elimination of parking, such lanes are unlikely to be constructed. Alternative improvements such as discussed in this analysis should be examined. In addition, some members of the public expressed interest in coordinating bicycle lanes with traffic calming improvements.
- Relocation of existing bicycle racks to improve visibility, provide shelter and promote use. Racks should be situated in locations that offer enough space not only for storing bicycles, but also for maneuvering them.
- As important as the location of bicycle racks is the type of racks being used. Racks should be designed to support the bicycle upright by its frame in two places, enabling the frame and one or both wheels to be secured. Racks should also allow for front-in or back-in parking and should be compatible with modern bicycle frames and with U-locks. Commonly used racks that meet these requirements are the inverted –U or hoop style rack, the “A” rack, which is a hoop with a horizontal bar, and the post-and-loop rack. If racks are to be arranged in a row they should ideally be spaced approximately 36 to 42 inches apart.
- Bike lockers and showers should be considered at new office developments for employees.
- In a few locations street furniture impedes passage along the sidewalk. Sidewalks should have all street furniture placed next to the curb to ensure adequate clearance.

Transit

- The MBTA has an ongoing bus shelter and bicycle rack installation and maintenance program. A staff member in the Planning and Community Development Department should be assigned to work with the MBTA and the Town's Bicycle Committee to determine where bus shelters and bicycle racks would be most beneficially located along Harvard Street. The appointment of a staff member to work directly within the MBTA may also help the transition and dissemination of information surrounding the transition to the automated fare collection (Charlie Ticket) system.
- The MBTA is considering a number of other improvements to the 'C' Branch, though design and operational constraints will first have to be overcome. The possibility of operating three-car trains along Beacon Street is one such improvement, though with each car being approximately 73 feet long, and with a three-car train being approximately 225 feet long, trains' of this length would partially block at least one intersection on the outbound side. A further improvement being considered by the MBTA is the introduction of mini high platforms for wheelchair accessibility. These platform modifications are 37 feet long and are required to be positioned alongside the first car of a train set. Although desirable, installation of these mini-high platforms can result in a loss of parking and landscaping, they also raise aesthetic concerns.

VII. Action Plan

The Coolidge Corner District Planning Council, through the diversity of its members' views backed by long experience, created and began to integrate a rich array of professional and citizen analyses and suggestions. Although we did not have time to become adequately informed about certain new techniques (for example, form-based zoning and ch. 40R), nor did we have time to reach consensus on many specifics, we have reached a relatively coherent vision of what we want to preserve and improve.

By majority vote, we recommend Town elected officials (including Town Meeting where necessary or appropriate), Town Boards and Commissions and neighborhood associations build on our work by taking the following actions. We are also ready to continue to provide assistance as an ongoing group.

	Action	Responsible Parties
1	Preserve the historic look and feel of Coolidge Corner.	
	<p>A. <i>Implement a new 3-family zone to help preserve approximately 90 buildings now in M zones.</i></p> <p>B. <i>Revise or eliminate the section of the Zoning By-law that does not permit reconstruction of nonconforming buildings destroyed by catastrophe.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Preserve streetscapes, private green space, and neighborhoods through exploring the use of Form-Based Zoning, Neighborhood Conservation Districts, setback requirements and other methods.</i></p> <p>D. <i>Use a wider forum to explore ways any proposals recommended for CC might be used in the whole Town.</i></p> <p>E. <i>Revise the public benefits section of the Zoning By-law. Consider including "Some Public Benefits Discussed By DPC Members." Anything required by the Zoning By-law should not be considered a public benefit. The immediate neighborhood should have priority in receiving public benefits, and developers should not be able to buy out of these provisions easily.</i></p> <p>F. <i>Use other available tools and resources to preserve the historic look and feel of CC, including working with the National Park Service to enhance the visibility of the JFK Birthplace and to preserve his boyhood neighborhood as a significant resource for the Town, the nation, and the world.</i></p>	<p>A. <i>Zoning By-Law Committee (ZBC) and Town Meeting (TM)</i></p> <p>B. <i>ZBC and TM</i></p> <p>C. <i>ZBC with public hearings</i></p> <p>D. <i>Planning and Community Development Department (PCD) & Brookline Neighborhood Alliance</i></p> <p>E. <i>ZBC and TM</i></p> <p>F. <i>Preservation Commission (Pres Comm), BOS, CC merchants</i></p>

	Action	Responsible Parties
2	Promote and enhance the Coolidge Corner commercial district.	
	<p>A. <i>Explore and encourage planning and zoning tools that will increase principally commercial development in Coolidge Corner.</i></p> <p>B. <i>Use incentives and revise restrictions to provide CC employee parking in ways that increase the number of spaces available for CC customers, including a pilot program for the Beacon St median west of Marion Street for longterm parking by CC employees, and exploration of locations for longer term parking by employees away from the commercial center.</i></p> <p>C. <i>Improve parking signage in an aesthetically appropriate way to increase access and utilization beyond the East Centre Street Lot, such as at the Webster Street Hotel.</i></p> <p>D. <i>Decrease reliance on automobile use by: (1) supporting changes that benefit pedestrians and cyclists (for example, improved street crossings); and (2) expanding the use of public transportation (for example, encouraging employers to subsidize MBTA passes and seeing that the MBTA improve and expand streetcar and bus service in the Coolidge Corner area.)</i></p> <p>E. <i>Use management techniques suggested by Traffic Solutions to increase the usage of available parking, including enforcement to help provide turnover of parking spaces and exploring options for better using existing supply.</i></p> <p>F. <i>Explore options for potential redevelopment of the Centre Street lot in conjunction with provision of a public green space, including further exploration of the proposed robotic parking concept</i></p> <p>G. <i>Explore tools for local business retention, expansion and diversity.</i></p>	<p>A. <i>ZBC and TM</i></p> <p>B. <i>Transportation Board (T Bd) and Board of Selectmen (BOS)</i></p> <p>C. <i>T Bd and DPW</i></p> <p>D. <i>T Bd, DPW, Pres Comm, BOS, State Rep, State Senator</i></p> <p>E. <i>T Bd, DPW, CC Merchants, EDAB, Police Dept.</i></p> <p>F. <i>EDAB, Planning Board (PB), PCD and BOS</i></p> <p>G. <i>EDAB, PB, PCD and BOS</i></p>

	Action	Responsible Parties
3	Promote the creation of open spaces for community gathering in Coolidge Corner and adequate signage for open spaces that are publicly accessible.	<i>CCDPC, ZBC, TM, PB & PCD</i>
4	Promote the creation of community arts and cultural spaces in Coolidge Corner which, with the Coolidge Corner Theatre, would enhance Coolidge Corner as a cultural destination.	<i>Arts Council, EDAB, CCDPC, CC Merchants, ZBC, TM</i>
5	Continue the Coolidge Corner District Planning Council as a mechanism for residents and merchants together to play a central role in addressing Coolidge Corner issues as they arise.	<i>TM, CCDPC</i>