

Norfolk Town Center

Town of Norfolk B-1 District Zoning Study

Community Meeting

September 12, 2019

Photo: MAPC

Town of Norfolk B-1 District Zoning Study



Meeting Agenda

1. Study Background

2. Recommendations

- Zoning
- Design Guidelines
- Other Recommendations

3. Discussion

4. Next Steps

- Joint Planning Board/Working Committee Meeting
- Board and Committee Meetings
- Special Town Meeting

Photo: MAPC



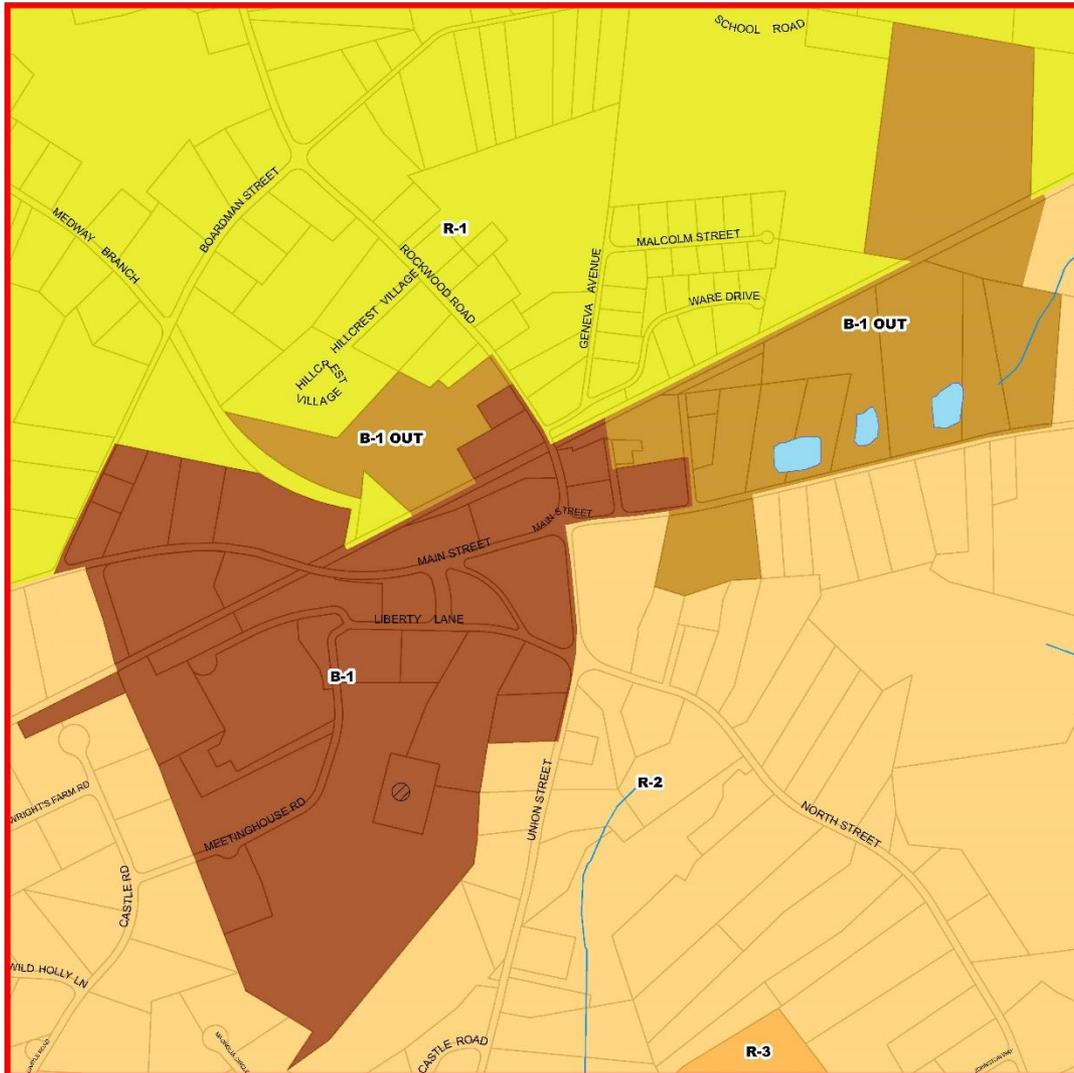
Study Background



Photo: MAPC



B-1 Zoning District



Insert 1 - Town Center



Your Vision for Town Center

Town Master Plan

Norfolk's citizens would like its Town Center developed into a traditional, pedestrian oriented, New England village with retail, commercial services and mixed uses, including housing, that provides for social and cultural interaction for all age groups.



Town Center Assets

- Commuter Rail
- Streetscape and roadway improvements with roundabouts
- Development completed and underway
- Partial wastewater treatment district
- Overhead utilities moved underground



Potential Town Center Development

- ✓ Community vision and proactive planning
- ✓ Regulations and incentives that encourage investment
- ✓ Private investment that is financially-driven
 - Owner's circumstances
 - Density required for financial feasibility
 - Fit on the property
 - Parking requirements
 - Lending environment
 - Wastewater treatment
- ✓ Community concerns about a specific project
 - Fit with scale and character of district
 - Infrastructure needs, traffic generation, parking demand, school-age children



B-1 Working Committee

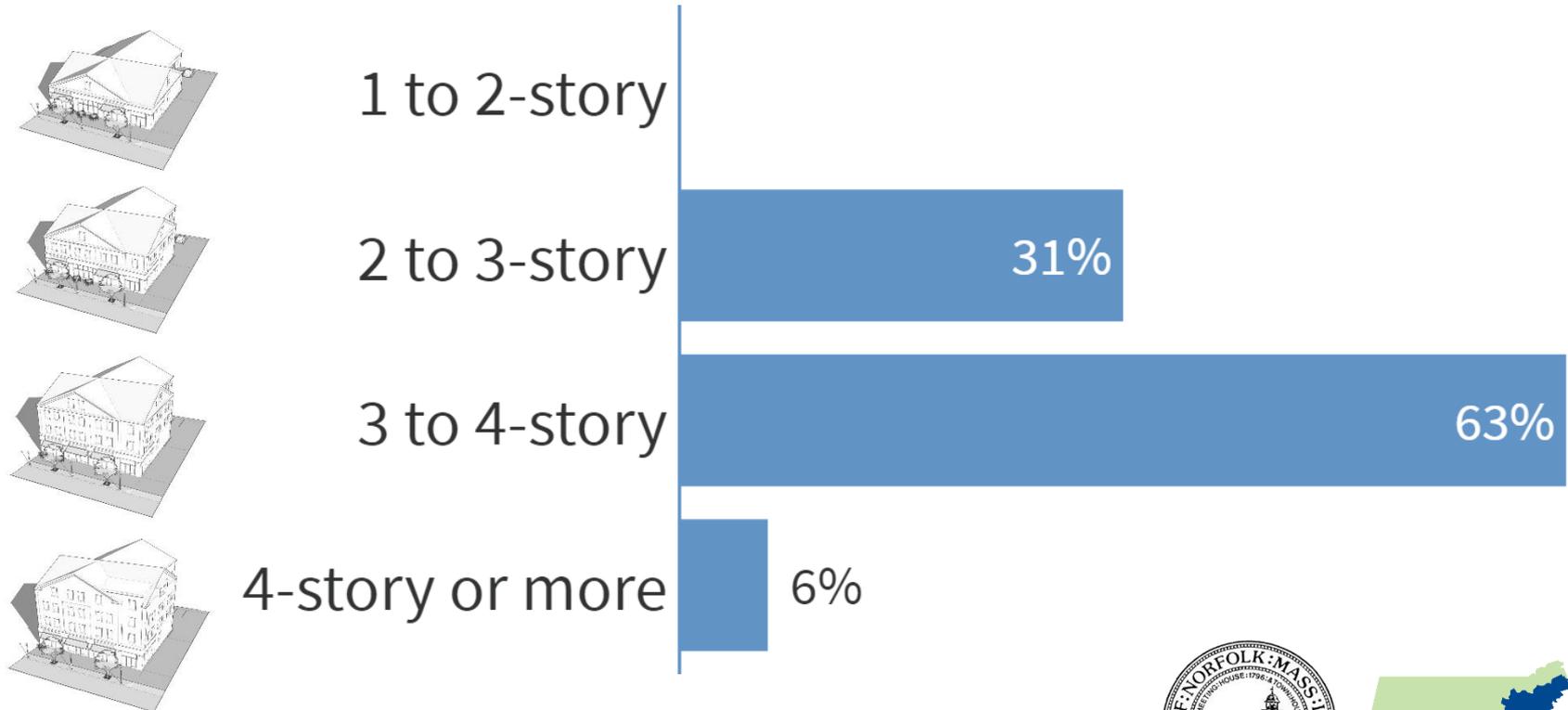
- **Devin Howe** — Zoning Board of Appeals, Full Member
- **Ed Haddad** — citizen representative
- **Erin Hunt** — Planning Board and Design Review Board, Clerk
- **Ilene Segal** — Board of Health
- **Jeannine Dubuque** — citizen representative
- **Jeff Kane** — Board of Health, Member
- **Kevin Kalkut** — Board of Selectmen, Clerk
- **Richard McCarthy, Jr.** — Norfolk Town Planner
- **Stephen McDonough** — Advisory Committee, Chairman



Community Workshop

- April 11th, 2019

How tall should future buildings be in Town Center?

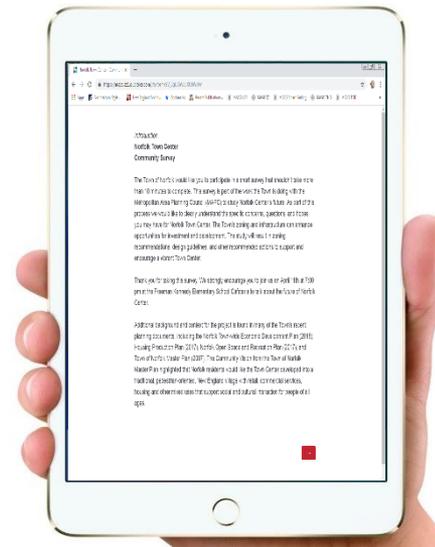


Community Workshop



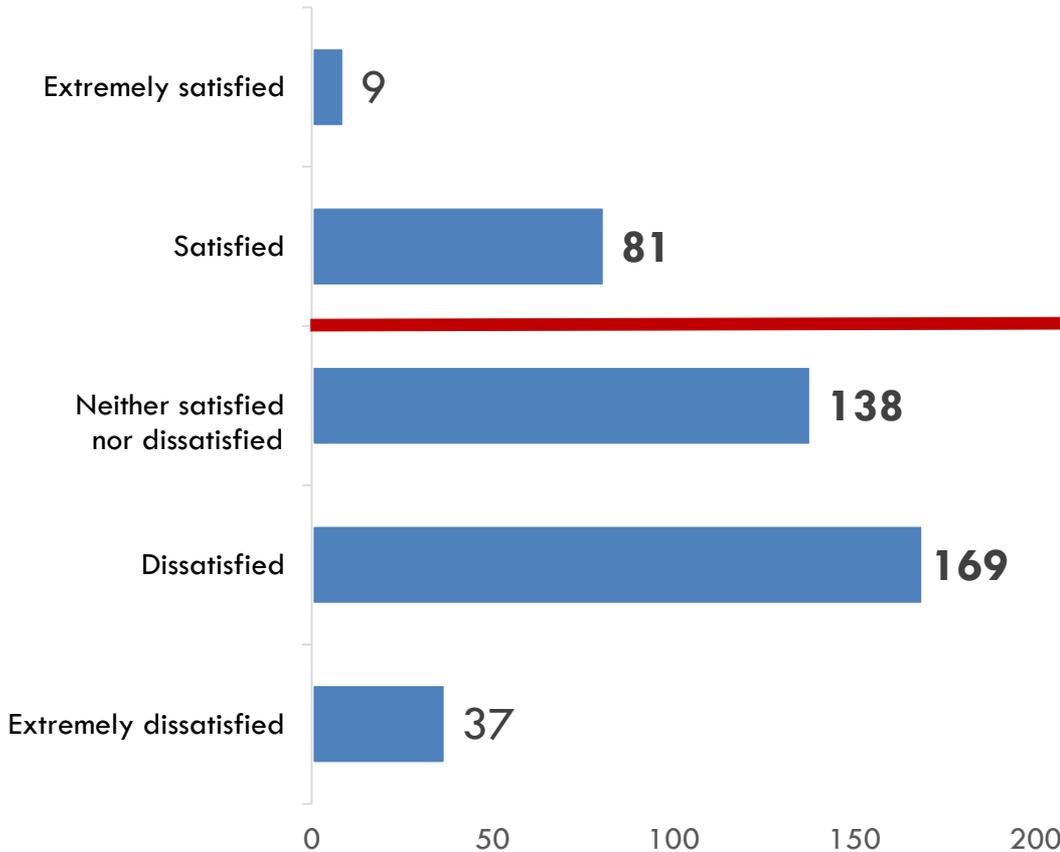
B-1 Zoning Study Community Survey

- Available from March 20th to May 1st, 2019
- (17) questions about Town Center
- About 10 minutes to respond
- Shared experience, vision, and support for changes in Town Center
- **540 responses**

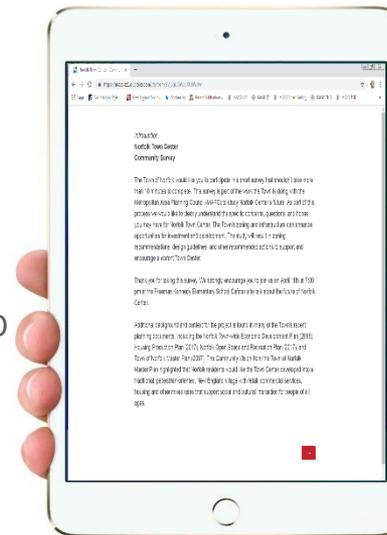


B-1 Zoning Study Community Survey

How satisfied are you with Town Center today?



79% of responses



Recommendations



Photo: MAPC

Town of Norfolk B-1 District Zoning Study



Zoning Fact Sheet

Norfolk Town Center Zoning Fact Sheet

Page 1 of 2

Introduction

The Town of Norfolk has initiated this study of the B-1 District to encourage the establishment of a vibrant mixed-use Town Center that proactively directs higher density housing and active ground floor uses to the Town Center. Zoning promotes health, safety, and general welfare and defines how a property is used, how much development can occur on a property, and how a property and building will look. The Zoning Bylaw of the Town of Norfolk governs development in the Town Center through Zoning Section I "B-1 District (Town Center)."



Background

The Town of Norfolk worked with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to study zoning recommendations, design guidelines, and other actions to support mixed-use development in Town Center. This work builds upon the vision established for the Town Center through the Town of Norfolk Master Plan and builds on recommendations of a 2018 Townwide Economic Development Plan. The vision for Town Center articulated through these previous plans states, "Norfolk's citizens would like its Town Center developed into a traditional, pedestrian oriented, New England village with retail, commercial services and mixed uses, including housing, that provides for social and cultural interaction for all age groups."

Zoning Recommendations

The zoning recommendations are summarized below. Although presented in summary form, the recommendations listed here are the only changes recommended to the zoning and represent the minimum changes that must occur to current zoning to correct issues that are reducing the likelihood of mixed-use development in Town Center.



District Boundary

The B-1 Zone District boundary is shown to the left (dark brown and light brown) and includes properties on Main Street, Rockwood Road, Liberty Lane, and Union Street. The dark brown is the "Business Core" and the light brown is "Outside the Business Core", the two subdistricts in the existing zone. **The boundary of the zone is not changing and the subdistricts remain.**

Building Requirements

Building Scale - The current B-1 District zoning language includes **building scale requirements** that state no building footprint shall exceed 15,000 square feet. This requirement should be removed to allow for flexibility and development that is appropriately scaled to the size of the lot. (Remove 1.4.a.1.)

Building Density - The current B-1 District zoning language includes **residential density requirements** that state residential dwelling units shall not have more than two bedrooms per unit and that residential densities shall not exceed sixteen bedrooms for any single lot. These requirements should be removed to allow development to align with financial feasibility. (Remove 1.4.a.1.1.)

Building Height - This section defines the requirements for **building height** that currently allow up to forty-six (46) feet to the peak of the roof by special permit from the Planning Board.

Draft for Discussion

Town of Norfolk | MAPC

Norfolk Town Center Zoning Fact Sheet

Page 2 of 2

(Continued) Building Height - To allow for more flexibility in the design of the ground floor and roof form, the maximum height by-right should be increased from the current forty (40) feet to forty-six (46) feet measured to the average height between the peak and the eave of the roof. The building height as measured in stories shall increase to a maximum of three and one half (3.5) stories from the current (3) stories. The top half story shall be integrated with the slope of the building's roof. (Modify 1.4.a.6.)

Property/Layout Requirements

Phased Development - This section addresses **phased development** and should be modified to state a phasing plan shall be required showing anticipated stages of partial completion and the timeframes associated with each stage, multiple buildings that are part of the same development proposal may be phased provided the infrastructure required to support the full project is built in the first phase of the project. (Modify 1.4.a.3.)

Residential Buffer - This section defines a **buffer to residentially zoned properties** currently defined as 50 feet from an adjacent parcel. It is recommended that this buffer be reduced to 30 feet to increase flexibility and clarified as applicable to an abutting property line shared with a residential zoned parcel. (Modify 1.4.b.1.A.)

Lot Requirements - This section defines the **dimensional requirements** (setbacks, lot size, lot coverage, etc.) of the district. The current zoning defines a build-to-line of between six (6) feet and nineteen (19) feet, but no front yard setback. The front yard setback should be defined as six (6) feet to align these two characteristics. The build-to-line should be clarified as applying to the primary building in a multiple building site plan. The minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet should be reduced to 15,000 square feet to allow more parcels in the district to redevelop without having to assemble or subdivide land. These changes apply to the "Business Core" subdistrict only. (Modify 1.4.b.2.B.)

Parking - This section defines **parking requirements** and refers to Section F.7 Parking of the Zoning Bylaw. This section requires 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit and should be reduced for the B-1 District to 1.0 spaces per dwelling unit to encourage a vibrant, walkable, transit-oriented Town Center. (Modify 1.6.)

Shared Parking - This section defines **shared parking** and allows a delay in construction of up to 30% of the parking area. This language should be modified to allow the elimination of up to 30% of the parking area to truly provide the benefit of complementary mixed-uses and associated positive benefits on reducing parking demand. (Modify 1.6.a.)

Uses - This section defines the **uses permitted and regulated** in the B-1 District. This section should add an overall provision that a Town Center project shall be mixed-use comprised of any of the Allowed Uses with the majority (51%) of ground floor street frontage be devoted to active allowed uses as measured by percentage of ground floor building street frontage that is devoted to active allowed uses that will contribute to a vibrant Town Center. Specific uses should be refined to better align with the vision for a vibrant Town Center: "Limited used motor vehicle sales" should be changed from allowed to prohibited, "Gasoline and diesel fuel filling stations" should be changed from special permit to prohibited. Modify "Residential Dwelling Units" allowed use language to remove the requirements that residential uses consist of 65% or less of the total combined square footage and that the ground floor be limited to commercial uses. (Modify 1.7.)

Additional Information

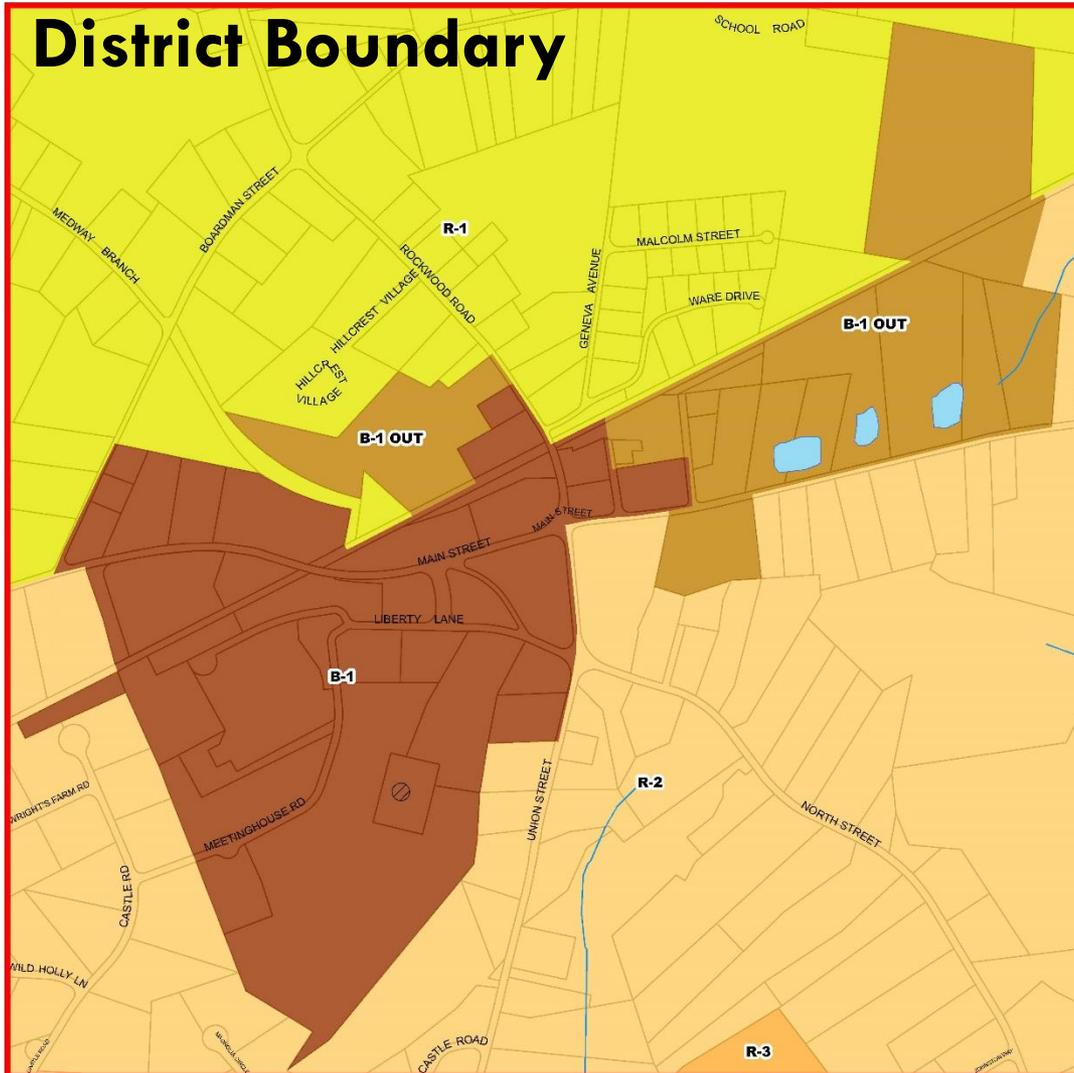
Additional background and context for the project, including many of the Town's recent planning documents, can be found on the Town's website at <http://www.norfolk.ma.us/departments/land-use/> Norfolk Town Planner **Richard McCarthy** can be reached at rmccarthy@norfolk.ma.us MAPC Principal Planner **Josh Fiala** can be reached at jfiala@mapc.org

Draft for Discussion

Town of Norfolk | MAPC



Zoning Recommendations



Insert 1 - Town Center



Building Requirements

Building Scale

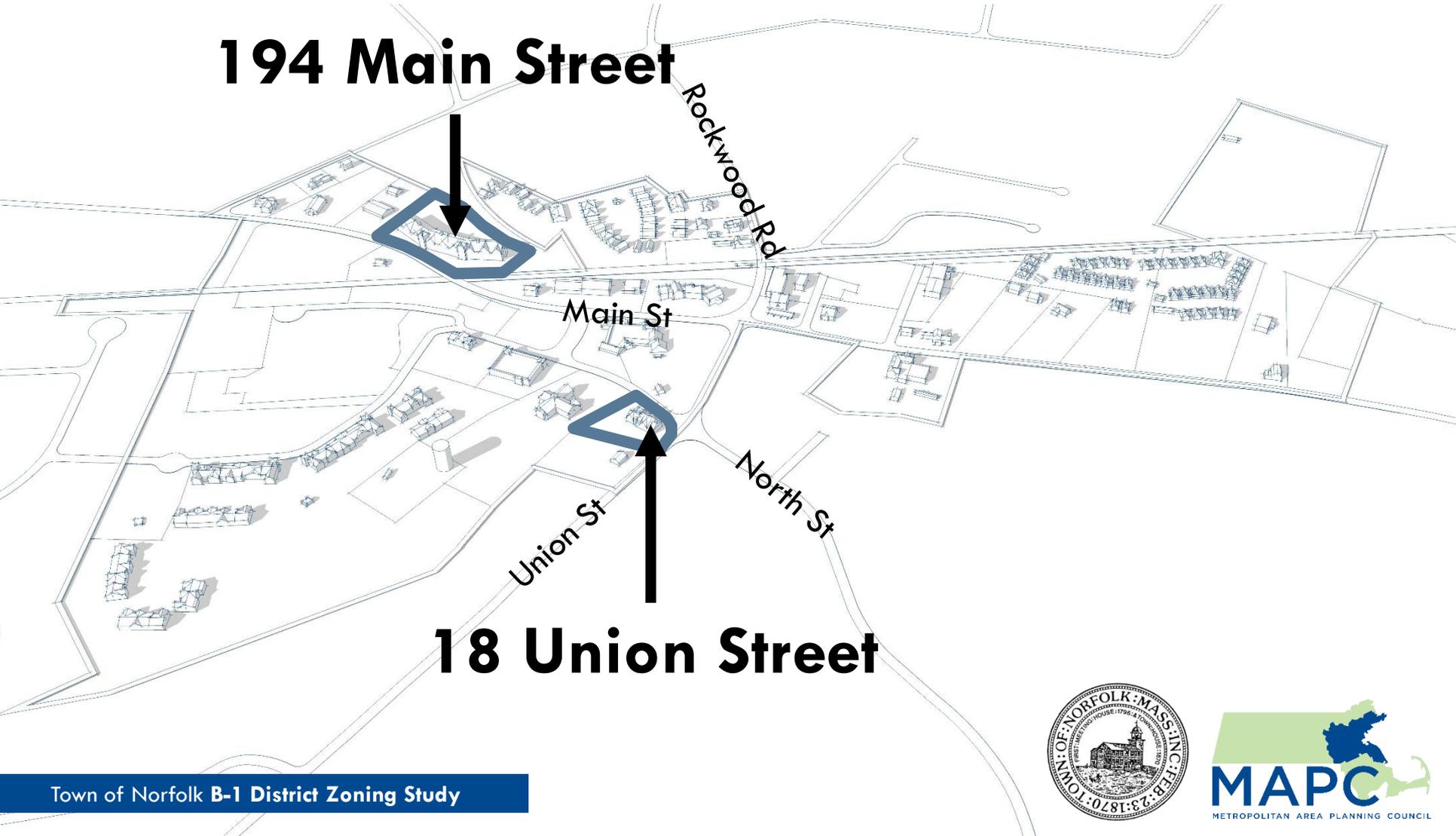
- Remove language that states no building footprint shall exceed 15,000 square feet
(*Section 1.4.a.1.*)



Building Requirements

Building Scale Examples

194 Main Street



18 Union Street



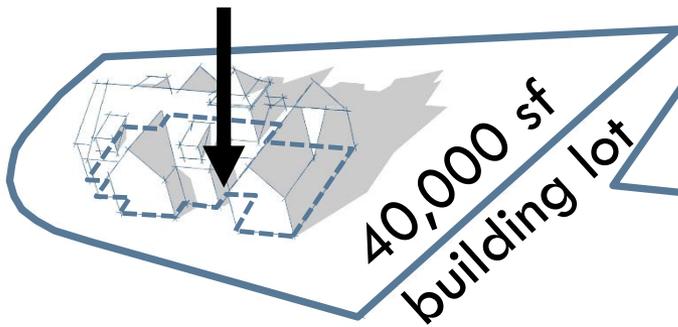
Building Requirements

Building Scale

- Remove language that states no building footprint shall exceed 15,000 square feet (Section 1.4.a.1.)

building footprint

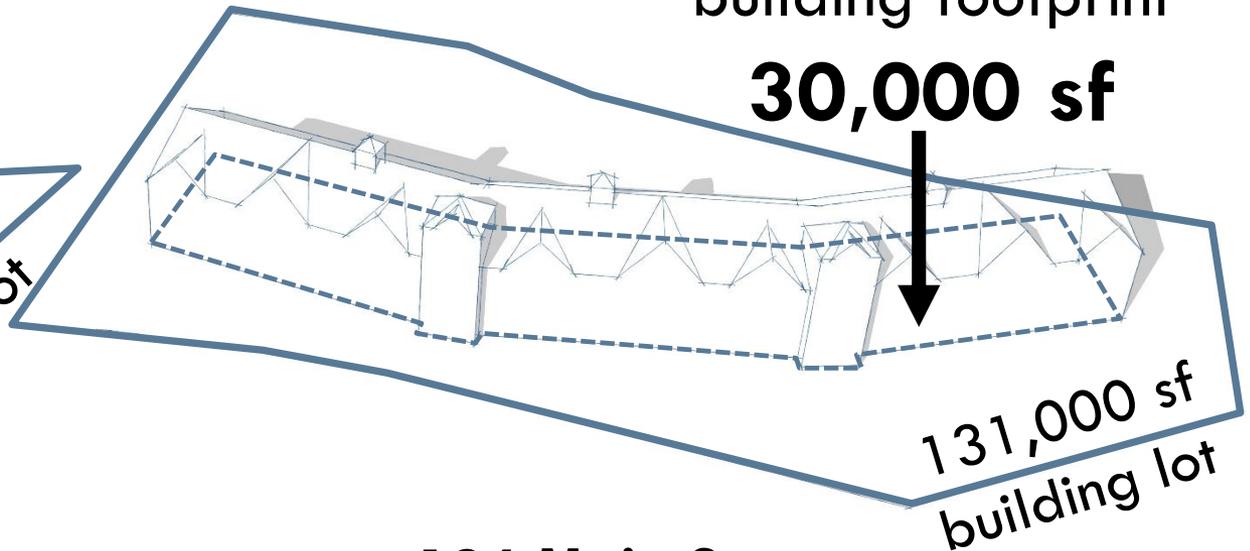
6,000 sf



18 Union Street

building footprint

30,000 sf

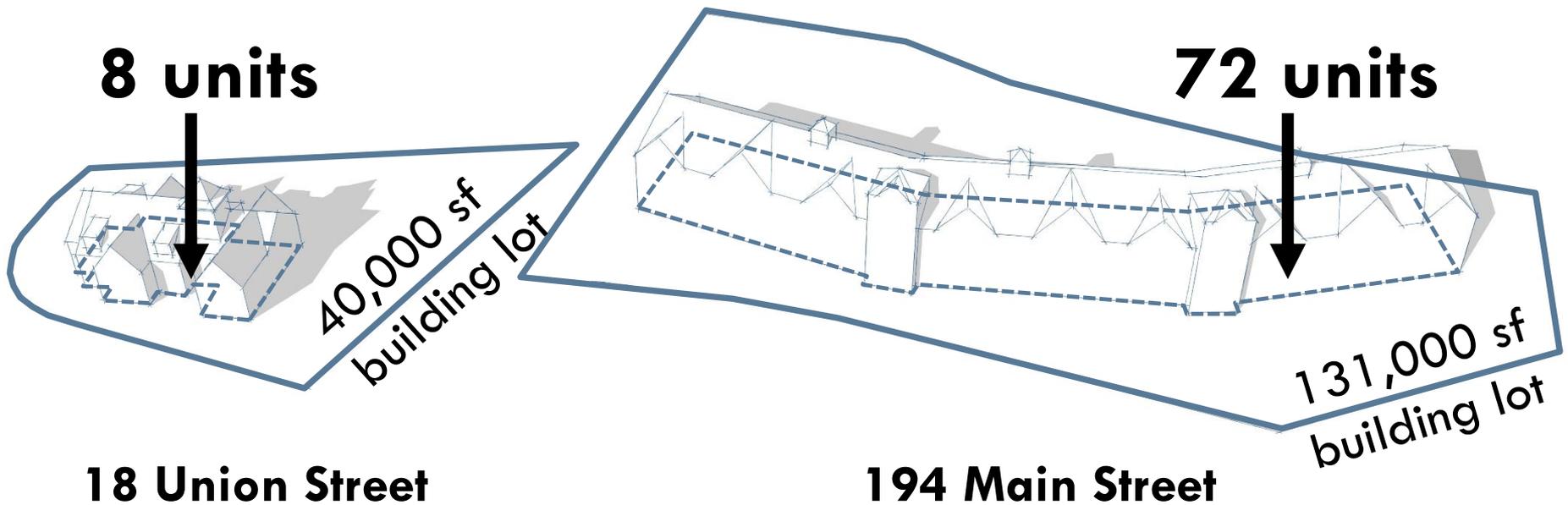


194 Main Street

Building Requirements

Building Density

- Remove language that states no unit shall have more than two bedrooms and shall not exceed sixteen bedrooms for any lot (Section 1.4.a.11.)



Building Requirements

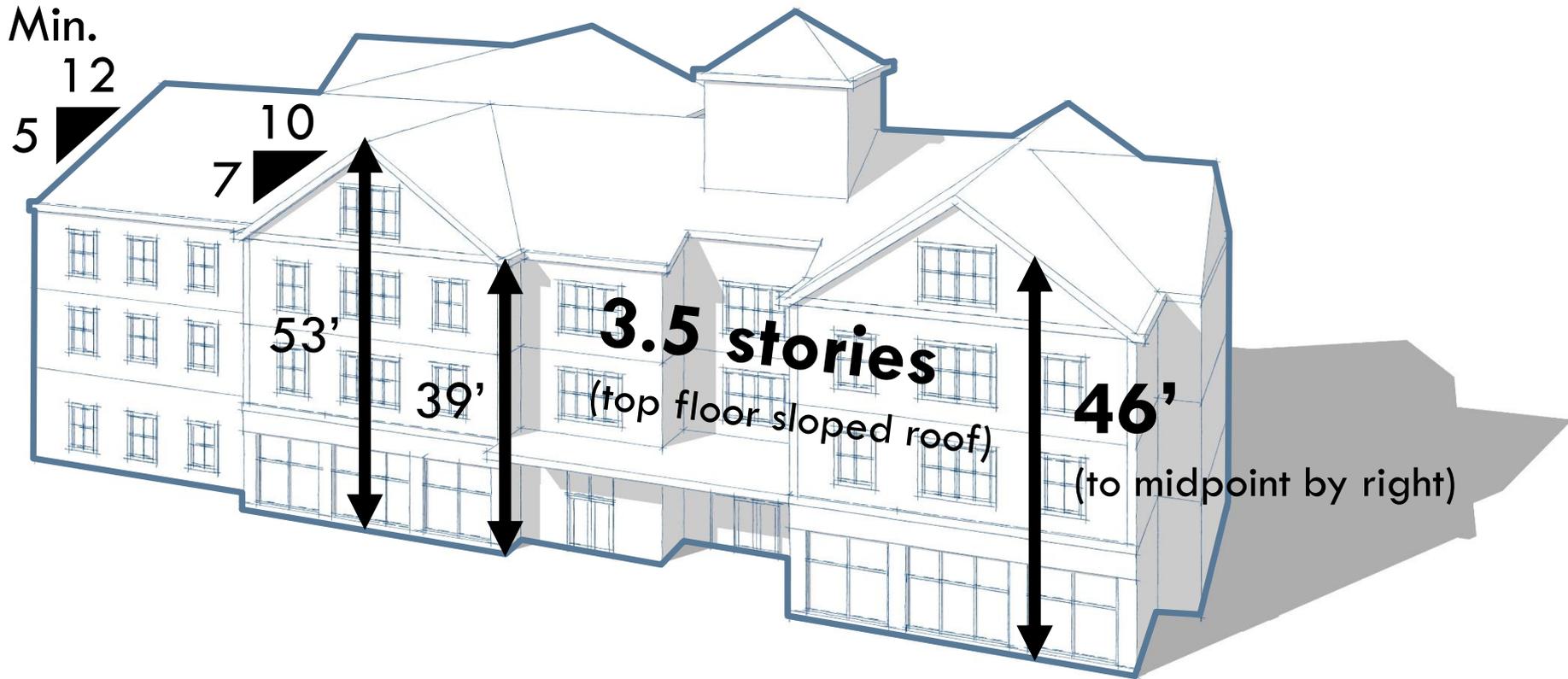
Building Height

- Currently allow up to forty (40) feet to peak of the roof by-right or forty-six (46) feet by special permit (*Section 1.4.a.6.*)
- Increase maximum height to (46) feet measured to the average height between the peak and the eave of the roof by-right
- The building height in stories shall increase to a maximum of 3.5 stories from the current 3 stories. The top 1/2 story shall be integrated with the slope of the building's roof.



Building Requirements

Building Height



Property/Layout Requirements

Phased Development

- Add the requirement of a phasing plan, clarify buildings may be phased with all required infrastructure built in first phase (*Section 1.4.a.3.*)

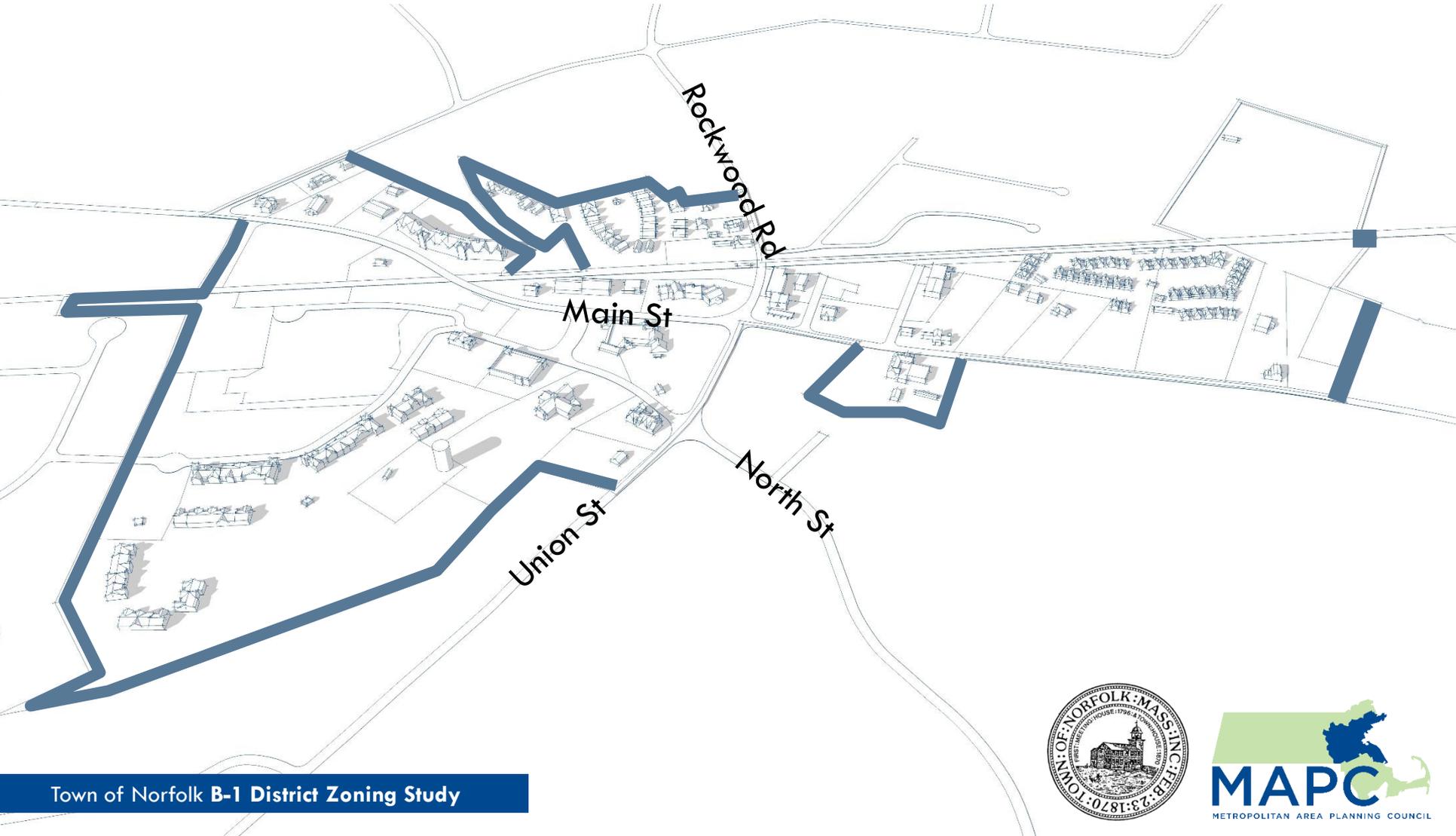
Residential Buffer

- Modify current buffer of 50 feet to 30 feet and clarify that it applies to abutting properties (*Section 1.4.b.1.A.*)



Property/Layout Requirements

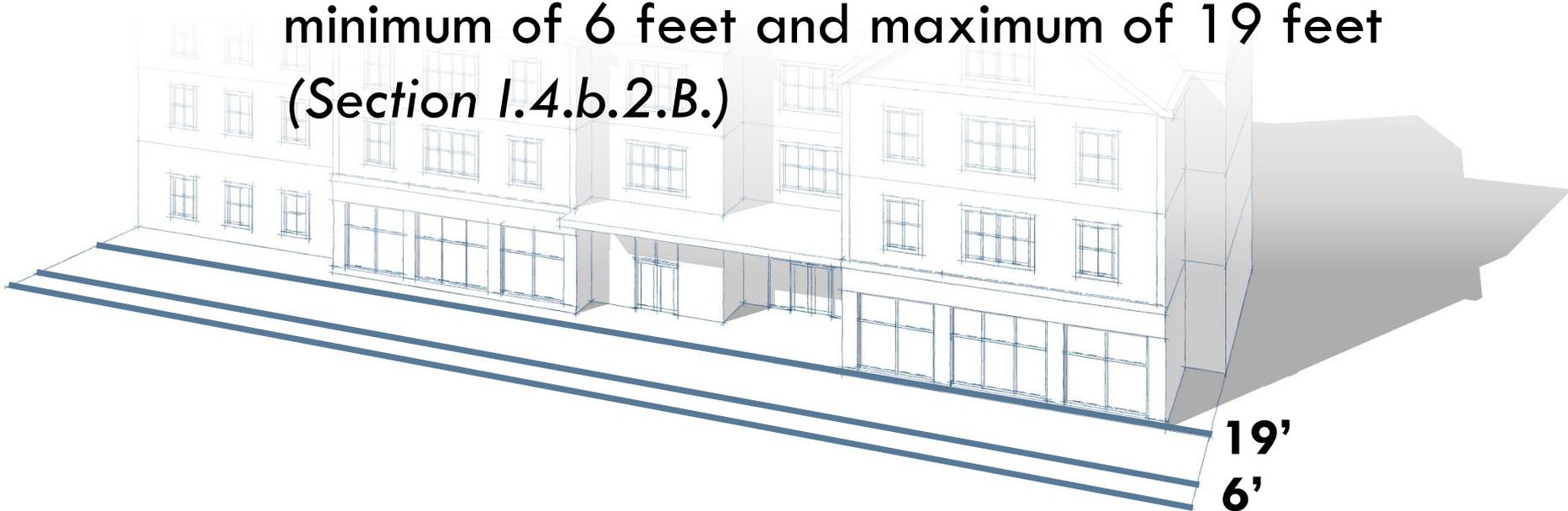
Residential Buffer



Property/Layout Requirements

Lot Requirements

- Clarify build-to-line and front setback align at a minimum of 6 feet and maximum of 19 feet
(Section 1.4.b.2.B.)



- Clarify that in multiple building site plans, only (1) primary building is required to be located within the build-to distances

Property/Layout Requirements

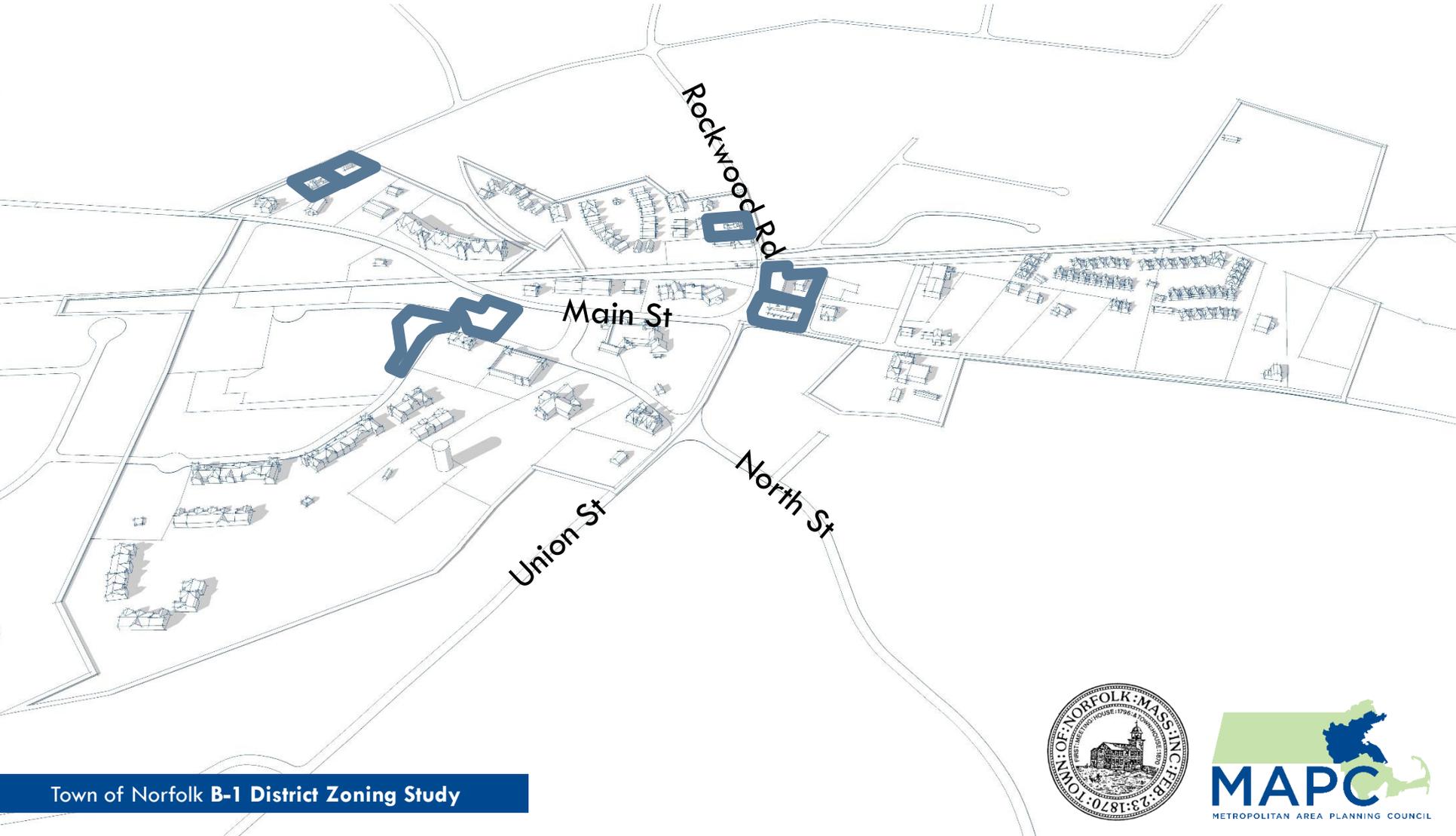
Lot Requirements

- In “Business Core” modify current minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet (*Section 1.4.b.2.B.*)



Property/Layout Requirements

Lot Requirements



Property/Layout Requirements

Parking

- Modify minimum required parking from current 1.5 spaces per unit to 1.0 spaces per unit (*Section 1.6.*)

Shared Parking

- Modify current delay in construction of parking of up to 30% of required parking area to allow elimination of up to 30% of required parking area (*Section 1.6.a.*)



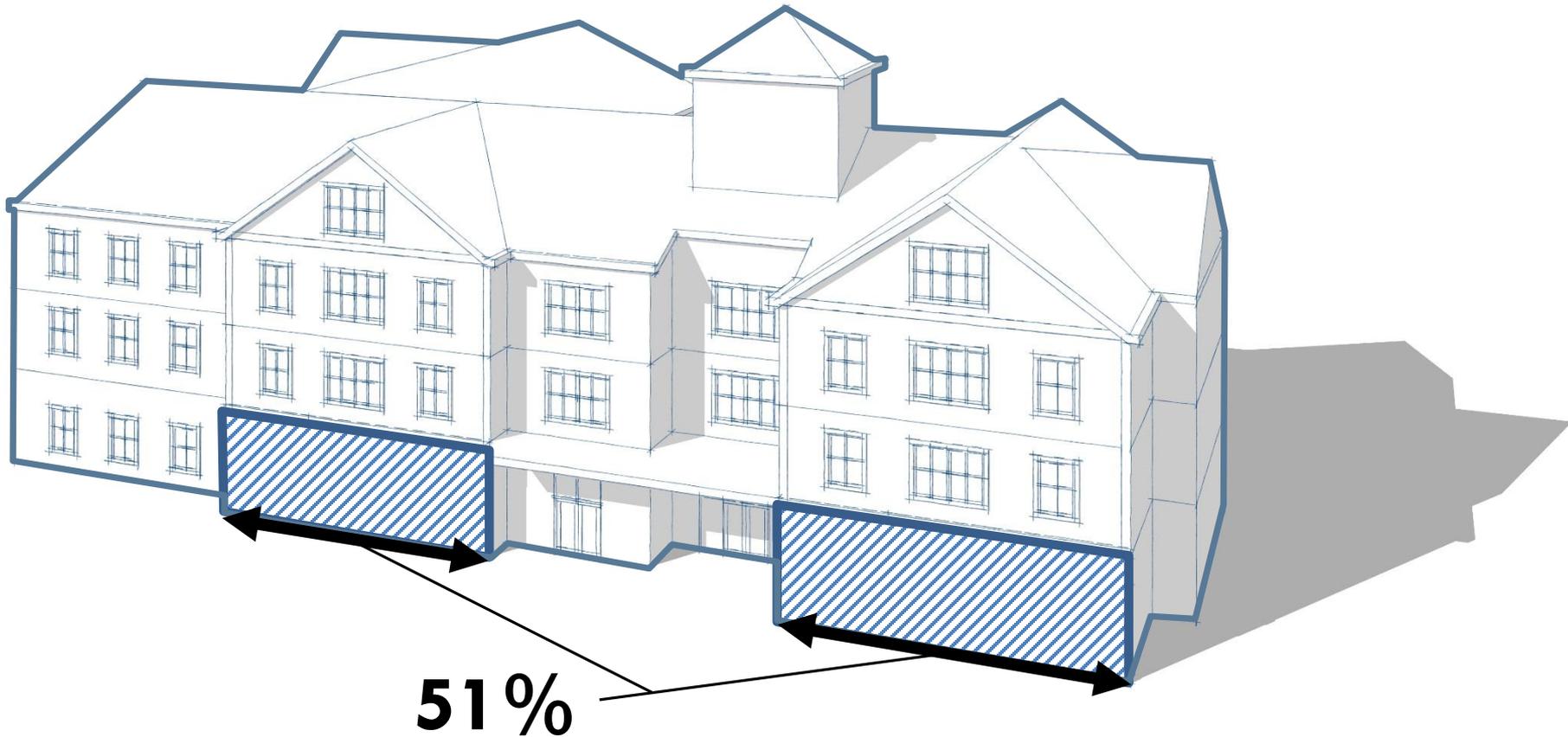
Property/Layout Requirements

Uses

- Add language that states a Town Center project shall be mixed-use comprised of any of the Allowed Uses with the majority of 51% of the ground floor street frontage devoted to active allowed uses (*Section 1.7.*) The remaining area on the ground floor may be residential or other uses.
- Modify residential dwelling units to remove requirements that residential uses consist of 65% or less of total combined square footage and that the ground floor be limited to commercial uses



Property/Layout Requirements



51%

Min. active ground floor



Property/Layout Requirements

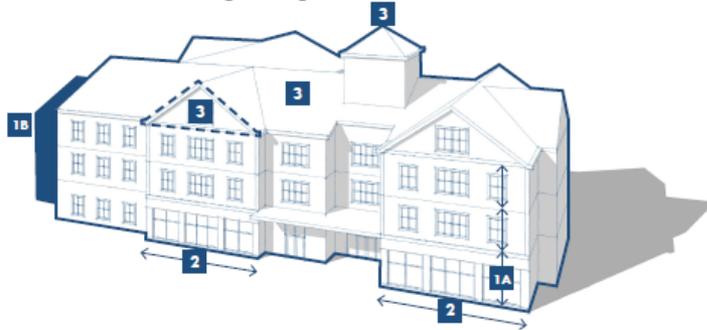
Uses

- Change “Limited used motor vehicle sales” from allowed to prohibited (*Section 1.7.*)
- Change “Gasoline and diesel fuel filling stations” from special permit to prohibited (*Section 1.7.*)



Draft Design Guideline Discussion

Norfolk Town Center Design Guidelines: Building design



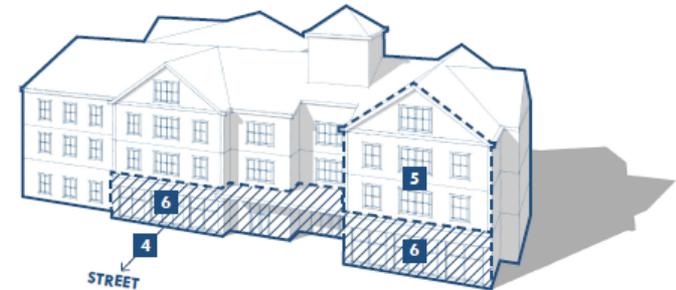
1 Modest and Well-proportioned Building Height - Building height should respect the historic context of Town Center, be sensitive to surrounding structures, and use the building design to reduce the overall impression of building height. **1A** The ground floor should be taller than the upper floors of the building. **1B** New buildings which are taller than surrounding buildings should respect neighboring properties by stepping down a portion of the building near property lines or providing a setback at the upper level to reduce the visual impact.



2 Modest Building Scale - Building scale and building form should respect the historic context of Town Center. Typically, the width of historic buildings was no more than about 40 feet. This should be reflected in new building massing to be sensitive to the modest scale of the district. While a building may be larger, the plan and shape of the building should be designed to reduce larger lengths into building bays no wider than 40 feet. These bays should be oriented to face the street frontage.



3 Sloped Roof Pitch - Sloped roof pitches should be designed to reinforce the New England village aesthetic with simple yet interesting sloped rooflines. Most of the historic buildings of the district reflect a relatively consistent application of sloped roofs that should be a part of the character of future buildings. Sloped roofs should be used to reduce the overall perceived height of taller buildings by integrating the upper most floor within the slope of the roof. Any portion of flat roof should be concealed with a sloped roof oriented to the site frontage. Roof features, dormers, and gable ends should be used to add interest to the roof.



4 Building Orientation - The building orientation and location of buildings on a property should be designed to strengthen district continuity and sense of vitality. All aspects of the building should reinforce an orientation to the primary street(s) on which it is located. The primary facade, building entries, placement of the building on the property, location of signage, and location of storefront windows should all reinforce an orientation to the primary street(s).

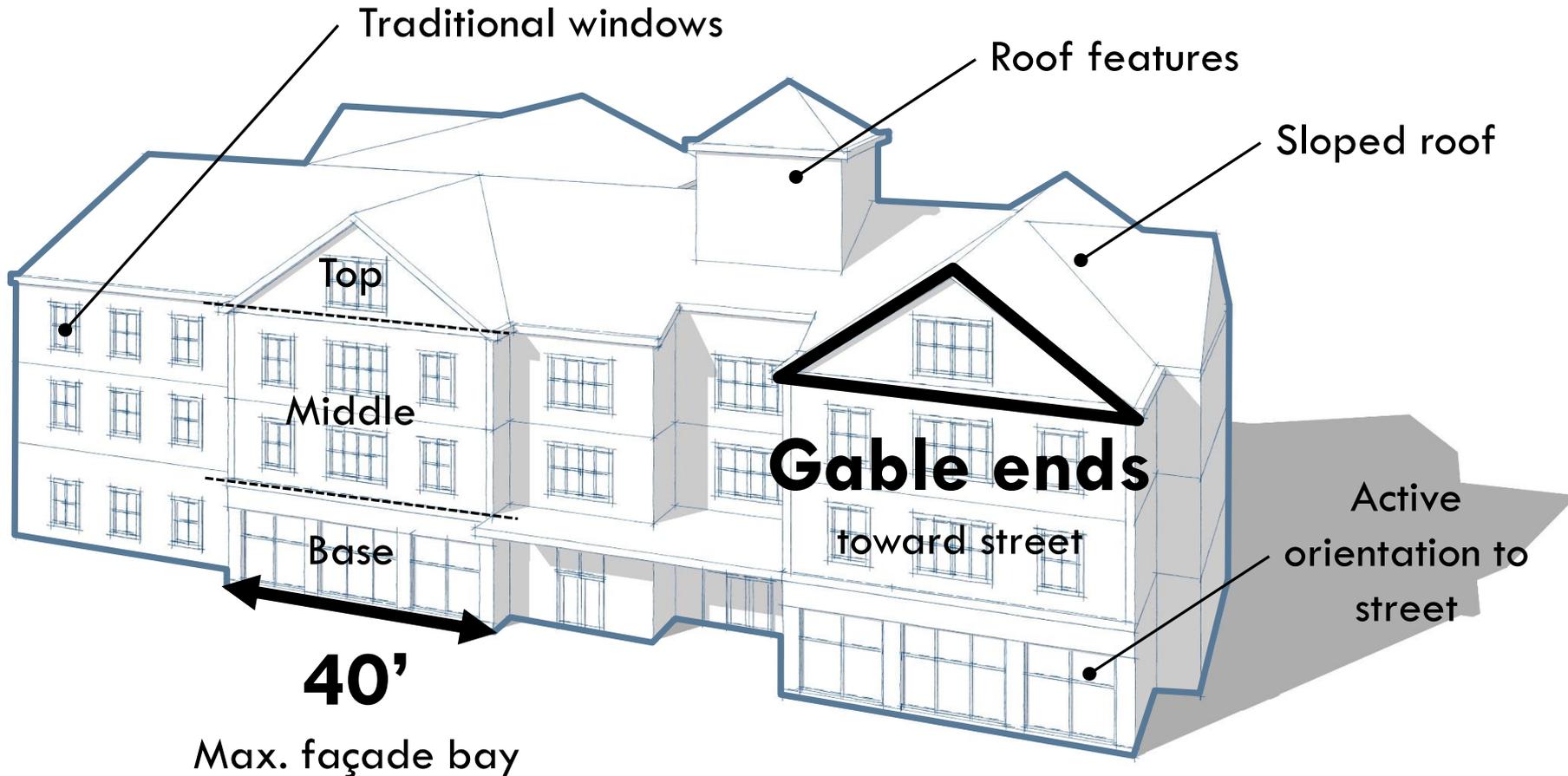


5 Incremental Improvements - Incremental improvements and strategic additions should be used to better align existing buildings with the Norfolk Town Center vision and design guidelines. Modifications to existing structures should be used to better align the quality and character of the structure through new roof features, dormers, window bays, cupolas, storefronts, awnings, porches, or other strategic modifications and additions that will respect the existing structure and the context of the district.

6 Preserve Flexibility of Uses - Preserve flexibility for the use of ground floor space through the design of the ground floor of the building to strengthen the vitality of Town Center with a variety of uses and destinations. Space should be provided on the ground floor for a mix of uses that complement the Town Center. All ground level space should be designed to be flexible to accommodate a variety of uses in the future, regardless of the original intended use.



Draft Design Guideline Discussion

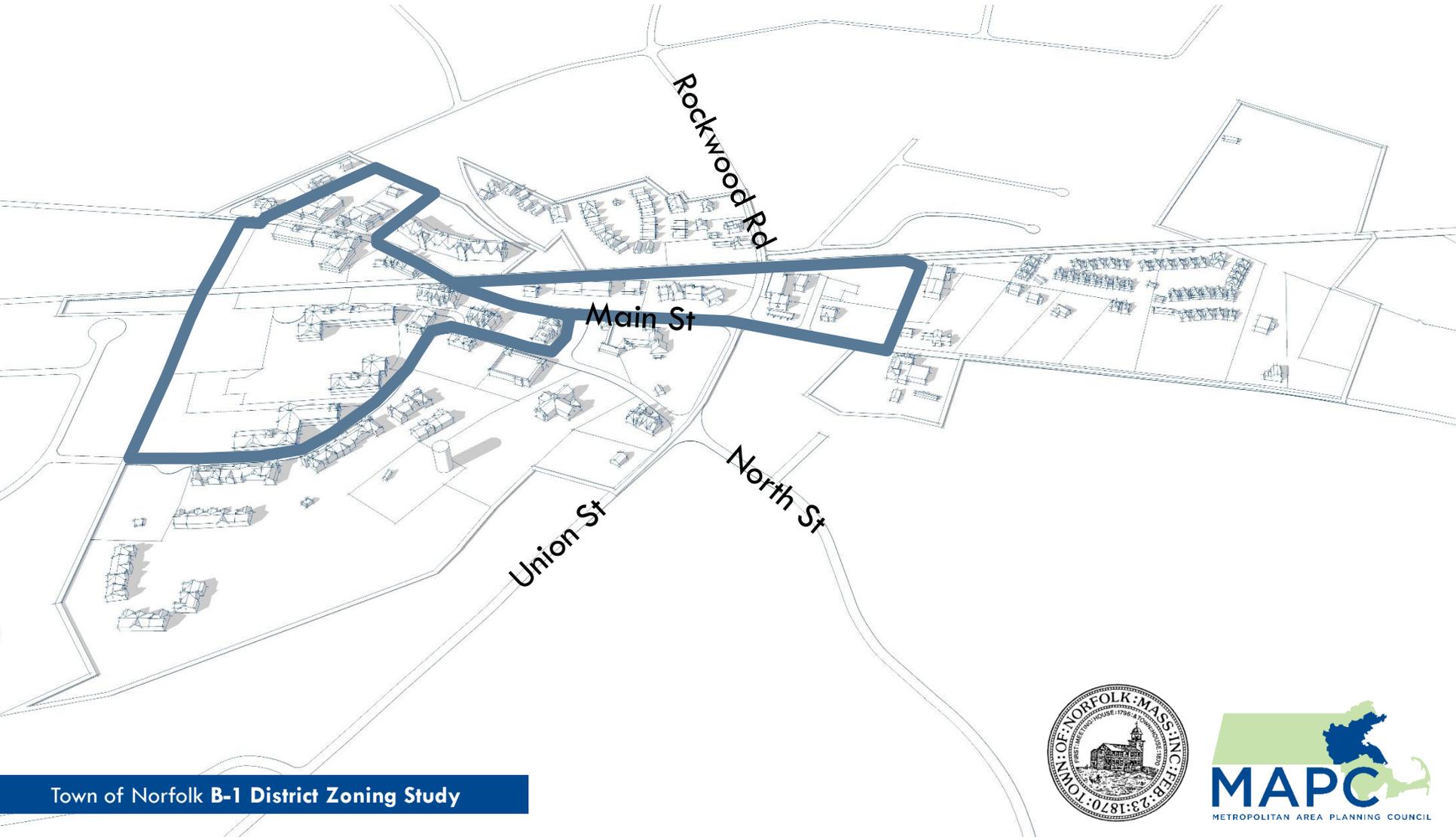


Complementary Recommendations

- **Board of Health regulations/wastewater**
- **Walkability and bikability**
- **Stormwater**
- **Other utilities**



Potential Outcomes and Impacts



Potential Outcomes and Impacts

- **Potential for adding new investments consistent with the community's vision for Town Center**
- **Potential new uses, activity, and destinations on currently vacant properties**
- **Potential economic development with additional jobs, and tax revenues**
- **Potential new housing choices for residents**



Other questions?

- Study information will be made available on the Town's website:

<https://norfolk.ma.us/>

- Josh Fiala AIA AICP LEED AP
Principal Planner, MAPC

jfiala@mapc.org

- Richard McCarthy
Town Planner, Norfolk

rmccarthy@norfolk.ma.us



Next Steps

- **Joint Planning Board and Working Committee Meeting**
- **Board and Committee Meetings**
- **Special Town Meeting
November 19th, 2019**

Photo: MAPC



Discussion



Photo: MAPC

Town of Norfolk B-1 District Zoning Study

