

Hyde Park Neighborhood Strategic Plan

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Residential Districts

1. Consistent with updated zoning in other Boston neighborhoods, residential subdistricts should be classified as:
 - One-Family Residential Subdistrict (1F-9000 – formerly S-.3)
 - One-Family Residential Subdistrict (1F-6000 – formerly S-.5)
 - Two-Family Residential Subdistrict (2F – formerly R-.5)
 - Three-Family Residential Subdistrict (3F – formerly R-.8)
 - Multi-Family Residential Subdistrict (MFR)
2. Introduce a minimum useable open space requirement based on the number of dwelling units
3. Introduce regulations limiting the location of off-street parking. This would limit the visual impact of parking areas and the amount of impervious surface within a yard. It is recommended that parking be restricted to a single continuous driveway.
4. Require 2 off-street parking spaces per newly constructed unit.
5. If spillover parking from commercial districts becomes a problem, evaluate the Permit Parking program to provide a basis for expanding or reducing the program.
6. Create Design Guidelines to ensure that new buildings are compatible with existing residential development.
7. Encourage diverse unit sizes, including units with 3 or more bedrooms to accommodate families with children
8. Encourage development of housing affordable to “middle-income” residents, consistent with the Executive Order of Mayor Thomas M. Menino in February 2000, requiring that 15% of the market rate units in any development of 10 or more units be affordable to low and/or moderate income households.
9. Encourage participation in homeownership and home improvement programs sponsored by the City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development (DND).
10. Introduce an educational program or brochure to explain the zoning/project review process to homeowners wishing to make improvements to their property.
11. Encourage the Boston Landmarks Commission to complete a new and thorough survey of the important historic resources in the residential areas with substantial concentrations of older housing, including Sunnyside, Mt. Neponset, Fairmount Hill, the Central Avenue area, etc.

Industrial Districts

1. Preserve Hyde Park’s industrial legacy, through maintaining key industrial districts to bring jobs to the community and tax base to the city.

2. Encourage job creation in emerging industries such as medical/life sciences, creative economy and green/clean technology
3. Replace M1 and M2 districts with LI-1 and LI-2 districts which may allow "Artists' Mixed-Use"* space and retail use:
 - Providence Street between Collins Street and Westminster Street (LI-1)
 - Providence Street between Arlington Street and West Street (LI-1)
 - 100 Meadow Road (Stop and Shop parcel) and adjacent railroad land(LI-1)
 - River Street between Knight Street and Roxana Street (LI-1)
 - Business Street between Reservation Road and Business Terrace (LI-2)
 - Westinghouse Plaza area (LI-2)
 - Hyde Park Avenue between Reservation Road and Milton Street (LI-2)
 - Sprague Street Industrial Park (LI-2)
 - Readville Yards (LI-2)
4. Develop design guidelines and requirements for all industrial districts (LI-1 and LI-2) that limit driveway size and quantity, and require sidewalks, attractive screening, and potential landscaping. Use regulations should require all activities, except for loading, to be indoors, and may limit hours of operation.
5. Rezone the Readville Yards as an LI-2 subdistrict.
6. Eliminate smaller industrial districts that currently contain no industrial use or that conflict with adjacent residential uses such as A Street.
7. Provide streetscape improvements and design guidelines along lower Hyde Park Avenue to encourage emerging industries and artist live/work space that attract residents/employees interested in a pedestrian environment and access to transit

Commercial Areas

1. Encourage long-term economic viability of commercial districts
2. Develop design guidelines that support attractive, pedestrian friendly districts to attract customers and create a vibrant pedestrian environment. Elements should include:
 - massing
 - entrances on main streets
 - street wall continuity
 - limited driveways
 - parking in rear of buildings
 - storefront window size
 - window transparency
 - location and type of security grates
 - signage
 - lighting

* Artists' Mixed-Use - the use of all or a portion of a Building for both habitation and either Art Use or Arts Studio use, or a combination thereof, provided that any portion of a Building devoted to such use shall be (a) occupied by persons certified as artists pursuant to the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Artist Certification Process, (b) design in accordance with Boston Redevelopment Authority standards and guidelines for artists' mixed-use space, and (c) subject to an agreement for artists' housing with the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

- screening and buffering of service areas
 - interior landscaping of parking areas
3. Adjust the boundaries of commercial districts to be more consistent with existing commercial development.
 4. Create Local Convenience Subdistricts (LC) to provide convenience retail and services (for example, a laundromat, small market, and shoe repair shop) for the immediate neighborhood and pedestrians. Recommended LC Subdistricts include:
 - Hyde Park Avenue and Dana Avenue and Pine Street
 - Hyde Park Avenue at Collins Street and Metropolitan Avenue
 - Hyde Park Avenue at Thatcher and Greenwood Streets
 - Hyde Park Avenue at Arlington Street
 - River Street and West Street
 - River Street at Oakcrest Road and Tileston Street
 - River Street and Reservation Road
 - River Street and Norton Street
 - Fairmount Avenue and Truman Parkway
 - Dana Avenue and Truman Parkway
 - Wolcott Square
 - River Street at Solaris Road
 5. Create Neighborhood Shopping Subdistricts (NS) to provide goods and services to the larger neighborhood (for example, a large grocery store, restaurant, and hair salon). Recommended NS Subdistricts include:
 - Stop and Shop plaza on American Legion Highway
 - Hyde Park Avenue at Willow Street
 - Shops at Riverwood Plaza
 - Hyde Park Avenue at Factory Street
 - River Street at Winthrop Street
 - Stop and Shop plaza at Truman Parkway and Washington Street
 6. Identify “Artists’ Mixed-Use” as an allowable use in Community Commercial Subdistricts; a conditional use on the basement and 1st floor and allowable use on upper floors in Neighborhood Commercial Subdistricts, and a conditional use in Local Convenience Subdistricts.

Cleary and Logan Squares:

7. Create Community Commercial Subdistrict (CC-1) to provide a diversified commercial environment serving larger markets. In an effort to encourage the development of a more pedestrian-friendly environment around Cleary and Logan Squares, it is recommended that public service uses, such as pump stations and sub-stations, vehicle rental agencies, and vehicle storage and repair garages be disallowed in CC Subdistricts. Recommended CC

Subdistricts include:

- Cleary Square
 - Logan Square
 - Fairmount Station Site
 - Lewis Chemical Site
8. Retain existing height limits of 3 stories / 40'.
 9. Encourage mixed-use (retail/office/residential) in Cleary and Logan Squares by reducing the parking requirement to 1.5 spaces/residential unit for mixed-use projects.
 10. Implement Public Improvement Plan for River Street/Hyde Park Ave.
 - Sync traffic light at River St./Hyde Park Ave. with light at River St/Business St.
 - Bump out curb at south corner of Hyde Park Ave./Oak St. to create 90 deg corner
 - Move bus stop, install 2 new shelters
 11. Provide streetscape improvements including wider sidewalks along River Street.
 12. Develop attractive gateways (with signage and special streetscape/paving features) at key locations.
 13. Implement Payment in Lieu of Parking Program to fund longer-term parking improvements (e.g., structured parking on municipal lot).
 14. Work with MBTA to provide free parking in Cleary Square lot at night and on weekends and work with property owners to improve rear facades facing the MBTA parking lot.
 15. Upgrade the municipal parking lot to improve traffic flow and provide opportunities for other uses such as a Farmer's Market. Recognizing that the lot serves as a "district gateway" to many who use the shopping district, encourage property owners to improve building facades and rear elevations facing the lot.
 16. Reconfigure the pocket park on River Street (mid-block between Hyde Park Ave. and Harvard/Maple Streets) to improve pedestrian flow from the public parking lot onto River Street and to discourage the kind of loitering and disruptive behavior that takes place in the existing park. Create a broad, patterned crosswalk from the park across River Street that defines a safe pedestrian zone for shoppers circulating to other areas of the district.
 17. Expand and improve the Cleary Square Plaza to provide a larger, more usable gathering space for events such as Traffic Jam, and encourage property owners to improve building facades facing the MBTA lot and plaza.
 18. Provide information to new and existing businesses on programs that provide technical assistance to small businesses
 19. Implement the recommendations from the Retail Market Study:
 - Create a clean and safe shopping environment that is universally accessible and easy for pedestrians and vehicles to navigate to and through
 - Increase consumer expenditures in the district by working with store owners to enhance product offerings in existing stores, improve public displays, and recruit new ground floor retail stores to attract more resident and visitor spending in more product categories
 - Increase weekend and nighttime activity with a new weekly farmers and craft market, more seasonal events and festivals in public spaces, and new arts and entertainment uses and restaurants

- Strengthen the Squares' retail by creatively linking it to arts and micro-enterprise through quality used goods or consignment stores, thrift and vintage stores, and used furniture and antique stores
 - Create new economic opportunities for existing and prospective businesses through greater community outreach and business development partnerships with existing resources
 - Implement an expanded cleanliness initiative to prevent litter, increase clean-up efforts, and promote improved cleaning and maintenance by merchants.
 - Create a campaign to promote more attractive window displays.
 - Create signs and other wayfinding tools to better direct shoppers to public parking lots.
 - Reduce long-term use of short-term parking through an informal enforcement program, and creating alternative long-term parking options for employees and business owners.
 - Create a broad-based committee to monitor city services to Cleary and Logan Squares, and advocate for their improvement.
20. Encourage installation of public art throughout the Squares to support the local arts scene and enliven the squares
21. Create a Neighborhood Design Overlay District that encourages the preservation and sensitive rehabilitation of historic buildings.
22. Encourage the Boston Landmarks Commission to complete a new and thorough survey of the important historic resources in the Squares, paying particular attention to architecturally and historically significant commercial, institutional, arts-related, and religious structures.

Open Space

1. Support efforts of the Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative to develop the Fairmount Greenway multi-use path and related open spaces through the neighborhood, including creating an opening in the stone wall along BelNel/Edgewater Drive and acquisition of priority parcels identified through that process:
 - Walnut Street
 - Bel Nel
 - Sprague Pond
 - West Street
 - Truman Highway at Erie Street
2. Work with DCR to improve maintenance at Stonybrook Reservation and to develop a reuse for the Thompson Center
3. Provide access to the Mother Brook through acquisition of easements along private property and/or public acquisition (DCR or City of Boston) of key parcels
 - Easement at Westinghouse
 - Easement at Renaissance Academy and 1791 Hyde Park
 - Parcel on River Street at Norton Street
 - Encourage/require public easement along private property as it is redeveloped
4. Create Open Space Zoning to protect open spaces

5. Have BPRD review the following DND parcels for eligibility for Conservation Protection Subdistrict (CPS).
 - Monterey Hilltop I
 - Crane Ledge I
 - Tacoma St. / Safford St.
 - Belnel Rd.
 - 91-99 Maple St
 - Weston Street
 - Dedham Line
 - Manila Ave.
 - Neponset Riverfront Site
6. Work with DCR to continue implementation of Neponset River master plan, including multi-use trail along Truman Parkway
7. Create Riverfront Planning Overlay District along properties fronting the Neponset River and Mother Brook, similar to GPOD, that require compliance with design guidelines (similar to those being proposed in the commercial and industrial districts) which respect the natural features of the area, and encourage public access and views to the water.
8. Encourage acquisition of Neponset River frontage proximate to Hyde Park Avenue and Truman Parkway (currently owned by DND) by either Boston Parks and Recreation Department or DCR and rezone as Parkland
9. Develop signage program to direct people to open space

Transportation

Pedestrians & Bicycles

1. Expand sidewalks & enhance pedestrian crossings to facilitate access to neighborhood services & transit
2. Improve bicycle accommodations to encourage bicycling (require bicycle racks at new developments)

Public Transportation

3. Advocate for more frequent commuter rail service
4. Advocate for lower fares (subway comparable)
5. Develop targeted improvements to MBTA bus service and facilities

Capacity Changes

6. Identify physical improvement to minimize potential congestion

Other

1. Require BRA design review on all new construction, expansion or renovation projects over 750 square feet that are visible from a public street or public open space.
2. Work with ISD to strengthen enforcement of maintenance requirements.
3. Work with ISD to strengthen enforcement of parking requirements for new uses.