



EAST FENWAY NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIC PLAN

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IN MEMORIAM

JOSEPH BARTON

The Fenway Planning Task Force dedicates the East Fenway Neighborhood Strategic Plan to its former chairman, Joe Barton. This document reflects the neighborhood's vision of its future and Joe represented the very best of its past.

Joe gave many hours to the neighborhood he called home. He was a tireless advocate for the parks, the Victory Gardens and the Fenway's place in the City of Boston.

After serving with the Peace Corps, he settled in the Fenway, served as president of the Fenway Civic Association and sat on numerous advisory boards concerning the Back Bay Fens and its Muddy River.

His strength was the calmness of his demeanor as he began this zoning initiative in a difficult period with many residents deeply concerned about potential developments. He was committed to fairness and provided leadership, always ensuring that all voices were heard.

His lifelong dedication to public service, as a volunteer and civic-minded resident of the Fenway, reflects the highest ideals of this country; he will be missed.

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VISION STATEMENT

East Fenway should be a vibrant neighborhood with a stable and diverse residential community living side by side with thriving educational and cultural institutions. Diversity should be maintained by supporting a steady balance of residents of all ages, incomes, household types, cultural backgrounds, races and ethnicities. The neighborhood's contemporary cultural life should be celebrated, and its historic character retained. East Fenway should continue to be a mixed-use neighborhood where people can attend world-renowned performances and exhibitions, shop and eat at a variety of attractive establishments, and where main streets are active while residential streets maintain a quiet character. It should be safe and clean, sustainable and universally accessible, with a network of well-landscaped streets and open spaces where people can walk, run, or bike to superb transit facilities.



INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The East Fenway Neighborhood Strategic Plan is a planning initiative to establish a vision and goals for the future of a vibrant and dynamic community in Boston, and to agree on the strategies that will fulfill that vision. East Fenway is the eastern half of a distinct planning area that centers on the Fens, one of the key pieces of Olmsted's Emerald Necklace open space system that connects Boston's historic neighborhoods.

The Fenway Planning Task Force (FPTF) selected by Mayor Thomas M. Menino to lead the effort, and members of the public who live, work, and study in the East Fenway neighborhood have been working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), the Boston Transportation Department (BTD), and a team of planning consultants on a comprehensive set of land use, planning, urban design and zoning recommendations for the neighborhood. These recommendations will be considered by the BRA in its drafting of new zoning for the area, which will require formal adoption by the Zoning Commission before any new regulations can take effect.

The East Fenway neighborhood encompasses an area of approximately 175 acres, and it was created during the filling of the Back Bay. The main neighborhood streets were laid out and the marshes were filled to create the Back Bay Fens by the early 1880s. By the turn of the century the streets were lined with three-story brick townhouses and walk up apartment buildings. Distinctive architecture and urban design typical of that period characterize most of the residential areas today.

East Fenway is home to cultural and educational institutions of worldwide renown, such as the Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Northeastern University, Forsyth Institute, Berklee College of Music, the New England Conservatory of Music, and the Boston

Conservatory, among others. The Fenway Cultural District was created by the City, the institutions and the community in 1998 to promote the arts and cultural activities in the area through the initiatives of the Fenway Alliance, an organization that represents eighteen major cultural and educational institutions.

East Fenway is also a dense residential neighborhood with a total population of about 14,000 (2000 Census). Of this total, approximately 9,000 are estimated to be college students. There are approximately 5,500 households, of which almost 85% are composed of one or two people. Approximately 60% of the households have annual incomes below \$50,000, about half of which are estimated to be occupied by students and half to be non-student households. More than 80% of the existing housing units are estimated to be rentals, and there are about 1,000 subsidized units in the neighborhood. Maintaining a diversity of population, income levels, and housing types is one of the challenges addressed by the plan, as is the goal of increasing home ownership for moderate and middle income households.

As in many urban areas that originated and developed before the car, there are more vehicles than parking spaces. However, East Fenway is well served by public transit and local streets that connect to the Fens. Throughout the planning process, the community has expressed a clear desire to make the neighborhood more pedestrian friendly, bicycle oriented, and universally accessible. These goals have been incorporated into the transportation and urban design strategies.

Three major transportation corridors connect East Fenway to the rest of the city – Huntington Avenue, also designated as Avenue of the Arts in recognition of its character as a cultural spine, Massachusetts Avenue, locally referred to as “Mass Ave”, and Boylston Street. Vehicular and pedestrian traffic is heavy throughout the day and some times at

night, especially on concert evenings or during major public events. Great part of the volume is through-traffic generated by commuters and nodes of activity at nearby locations. Joint institutional transportation programs, such as combined shuttles, shared parking policies, and a newly emergent Transportation Management Association have been recent developments related to the plan recommendations.

The proposed urban design strategies are based on two sets of actions: streetscape improvement programs and mechanisms to protect neighborhood character. Streetscape improvements are proposed to make streets and public open space more attractive and amenable to pedestrians, and to create a special identity along the main transportation corridors. Protection of historic, architectural, and urban design character is sought through historic and landmark inventory designation. Zoning criteria are aimed at maintaining the existing building fabric in the residential areas while targeting future growth to a few potential development areas identified along the corridors.

The plan is organized by categories into the following sections: Goals and Objectives, Land Use, Institutions, Housing and Economics, Transportation, Urban Design, and Zoning. A *Technical Memorandum on Findings* issued in February summarizes the available data and information on existing conditions, including transportation and retail overviews, and constitutes a useful companion to this document. The proposed zoning recommendations will be incorporated into the new zoning that will replace the current Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) designated for the Fenway area.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following summary of options and strategies is organized into five planning categories: Land Use, Institutions, Housing and Economics,



Transportation, and Urban Design. Zoning recommendations are summarized at the end of this document.

Land Use

Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the Arts, Massachusetts Avenue, and Boylston Street are the major arterials connecting East Fenway to the rest of the city. These corridors present significant volumes of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and are well served by public transit. The potential exists along these corridors for improvements in terms of traffic and transportation, quality of the pedestrian environment, streetscape and targeted new development. The plan proposes focusing on these

improvement corridors as strategic areas where new housing, retail and institutional opportunities could be developed, thus enabling the City to protect the existing neighborhood character of other residential areas. Some of the envisioned options and strategies are:

- Support improvements that would strengthen Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues as mixed-use corridors providing housing, retail services, commercial and institutional space.
- Ensure that development on the Massachusetts Avenue and Huntington Avenue corridors fits with the historical and architectural character of the surrounding buildings and neighborhood.
- Provide for pedestrian uses on the ground floor of new developments, such as retail, lobbies, exhibition space, or institutional uses accessible to the public. Residential, institutional, and commercial uses would be allowed on upper floors.
- Provide pedestrian uses at the ground level of all buildings along the mixed-use corridors, replicating earlier efforts made by some institutions to provide and manage retail space, and exploring ways to activate long institutional frontages not accessible to the public.
- Set reasonable zoning limits that would allow for the redevelopment of parcels along the mixed-use corridors occupied by low-rise/low-cost buildings.
- Consider mixed-use strategies that will encourage residential over commercial development at strategic locations.
- Explore the development of special corridor design elements unique to the area, such as streetscape, signage, and public art in conjunction with the Fenway Alliance and other initiatives proposed by the plan.
- Develop zoning to preserve current institutional and non-institutional uses without encouraging further expansion of institutions in residential areas.

Institutions

The cultural and educational institutions located in East Fenway contribute significantly to the vitality of the area. Eighteen institutions, represented by the Fenway Alliance, have joined efforts with the City to create and promote the Fenway Cultural District. The Cultural District boundaries extend beyond East Fenway, but the heart of the district and many of its major attractions are located in the neighborhood. Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the Arts and Massachusetts Avenue, proposed for designation as Avenue of Music, are two of the main transportation corridors connecting the East Fenway landmark institutions to the rest of the city. Moving the Cultural District beyond initial phases into a mature state is an important element of the strategic plan because it contributes to strengthening the image and identity of the area. It could become a vehicle to achieve many of the identified institutional and residential goals. The following are recommendations for the Cultural District, the institutions, and the community:

- Continue to implement the Cultural District plans and programs in East Fenway, including district program events, signage, streetscape improvements, and the creation of a visitor center.
- Create new and strengthened partnerships between the institutions, the City, neighborhood organizations, retail owners and tenants, and the community.
- Incorporate smaller cultural institutions and art individuals into the Cultural District programming.



- Continue pursuing institutionally based transportation management solutions and improvements, such as supporting the emerging Transportation Management Association (TMA), sponsoring an “Adopt Symphony Station” program, creating a better signage and wayfinding system, etc.



- Initiate and support a joint City and institutional effort to hire a Main Streets/Cultural District retail manager to work in coordination with the Fenway Alliance. Retail management duties could include joint cultural and retail programming, retail mix management, overseeing of cleaning and maintenance, restaurant development, shared parking implementation, and signage quality control, among others.
- Explore and promote art, music and retail partnerships, such as specialty stores, art in retail spaces, and sidewalk music cafes.
- Continue to create and organize special programs and activities, such as outdoor summer activities, targeted community programs, neighborhood arts festivals, and The Fenway Alliance’s “Opening Our Doors” event on Columbus Day.
- Continue to create new partnerships for housing, such as jointly developed student housing, private housing combined with student housing, and non-residential institutional uses combined with private housing.

Housing and Economics

Throughout the planning process, East Fenway has been characterized as a neighborhood with a distinct urban scale and character, a district

well served by different types of local retail and cultural activities, and a place where a large and diverse population has access to a variety of housing types. The following recommendations are aimed at preserving the character of the residential fabric, the variety of the housing stock, and the diversity of the resident population. They also reflect a desire expressed by the community to increase opportunities for home ownership.

- Maintain height limits in most of East Fenway at levels consistent with the current IPOD zoning requirements, except in areas subject to Institutional Master Plans and the potential targeted growth areas described in other sections of the plan.
- Initiate and support programs that promote homeownership and financial assistance to new homeowners in the neighborhood.
- New residential development should devote at least 10% to on-site affordable units, as established by the Mayor’s inclusionary zoning requirements.
- Encourage owner-occupancy of existing condominiums.
- Work to preserve existing housing stock; in particular expiring and subsidized units.
- Work to increase the supply of quality on-campus housing for students and staff.
- Promote the idea that student residences in the neighborhood be returned to the market as new housing is built on-campus.
- Encourage the growth and improvement of community facilities, such as day care centers, adult education services, health care, and art/performance space.
- Initiate and promote programs to make every public space and ground floor area universally accessible.

Transportation

The proposed transportation strategy builds upon the identified goals and objectives that envision East Fenway as a pedestrian oriented neigh-

borhood. To that effect, the recommendations that follow emphasize improvements to the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment, implementation of universal access, and the promotion of bicycles and public transit as sound alternatives to the car.

- Create pedestrian and bicycle improvements at key intersections with the provision of bulbouts, crosswalks, and timed signals.
- Create better and longer crossing time for pedestrians at all major intersections.
- Provide universal access: handicapped ramps at all intersections, and audible signals at selected locations.
- Extend and construct the bike path and pedestrian connection from Southwest Corridor Park/Ruggles Station to the Back Bay Fens via Forsyth Street, with a signalized crossing including curb cuts and a pedestrian light added to the Fenway at the point of crossing to the Fens.
- Initiate Westland Avenue pedestrian improvements with a widened sidewalk on the northern side of the street, and intersection improvements at Westland Gate.
- Explore changes to the Edgerly and Westland intersection to form a 'T'-type intersection, and incorporate the park open space as an extension to the sidewalk.
- Reinstall the 4-way stop sign at Gainsborough and St. Stephen based on an engineering study of speed, volumes and accidents. Continue further study of the intersection if more traffic calming is needed.
- A proposed closing of the intersection of St. Stephen Street and Mass Ave. to vehicular traffic, as part of transportation improvements planned for Mass Ave. by the State, could be considered only if pedestrian and emergency vehicle access are maintained. Further exploration of such changes, even on a temporary basis, should be subject to community review.



- Circulation change options are not recommended in general.
- Support the emerging transportation management initiative by institutions (TMA) to address parking and major event traffic coordination, signage and wayfinding systems. Consider potential nighttime shared use of parking by residents, with a resident sticker required.
- Improve the MBTA Symphony Station, including fare booths and security and making it a viable station.
- Improve direct pedestrian routes, including walkways and signage, between centers of activity, transit stations and bus stops.
- Establish zoning requirements for off-street parking ratios at 0.75 spaces per dwelling unit or per 1000 sf of commercial space.

- Further study the Massachusetts and Huntington intersection to determine long-term improvements.



Urban Design

The proposed urban design strategies are aimed at consolidating the pedestrian character of the neighborhood by implementing streetscape improvement programs along the main pedestrian corridors; identifying selected points of entrance to the neighborhood as gateways enhanced with special design elements and signage; protecting the historic, architectural and urban design character of the neighborhood; and setting physical limits for potential new development that will become the basis for future zoning criteria.

- Create “gateways” to the neighborhood, with special streetscape design elements, signage, and possibly incorporating public art, at the following intersections:
 - Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues
 - Boylston Street and Massachusetts Avenue
 - Boylston and Hemenway Streets
 - Westland Gate
 - Forsyth Park
- Create “green corridors” connecting the neighborhood to the Fens with widened and improved sidewalks, ornamental pedestrian lighting, and new trees to complement the existing vegetation along:
 - Westland Avenue
 - Boylston Street

- Forsyth Way

- Implement mechanisms to protect buildings that contribute to the architectural and urban design character of the neighborhood from significant alteration or demolition, particularly those buildings not listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places. These may include:
 - Boston Landmarks Commission designations
 - Zoning district overlays and guidelines
- Target future growth to provide for needed housing, institutional and commercial space at a few locations along the main transportation corridors, now occupied by low-rise, low-cost buildings.



- Establish the “broad vision” with long term urban design and transportation improvements:
 - Seek and implement solutions to eliminate the Huntington Ave. underpass, possibly bringing the Massachusetts and Huntington intersection to grade level.
 - Create a new front door access to Symphony Hall from Huntington Avenue, and reconstruct Symphony Station.
 - Investigate the possibility of extending the Green Line underground tracks for a longer stretch of Huntington Avenue, helping to connect rather than separate both sides of the Avenue of the Arts.

Notes on Comments

Active community participation has been a key component of the planning process. Numerous public meetings, interviews and conversations have been held between the consultants, the BRA, the BTB, the Task Force selected by the Mayor to lead the process, neighborhood residents, institutional representatives, and community members. The ideas expressed in this document have been generated and tested through long reviews and discussions, and reflect a consensus among a broad cross section of the community.

It is important to note that consensus does not mean absolute agreement, but rather the result of multiple discussions that often result in a compromise acceptable to the majority of the parties involved. An important element of consensus, for example, was the understanding that the historic and architectural character of the existing buildings should be protected throughout the neighborhood. Design protection mechanisms are recommended in the zoning section, in addition to the historic protection mechanisms already in place.

The planning process encouraged the expression of diverse opinions, and dissenting views were expressed on many issues, such as the following:

- Comments expressed dissent with allowing new institutional uses along the main transportation corridors. However, many of the existing buildings along those corridors are currently owned or occupied by institutions, a fact that the plan needs to recognize. The new zoning should incorporate mechanisms to ensure that a real



mix of uses, including residential and commercial in addition to institutional components, is achieved.

- Some comments disagreed with the recommendation of creating joint City/institutional/neighborhood partnerships. However, there was a general consensus during the public planning process that such partnerships could be useful in providing access to financial and technical resources otherwise unavailable, particularly in times when public funding may be scarce.

- The plan recommends that building height limits be kept at 75 feet throughout most of the East Fenway, with only two exceptions: the proposed B-1 zoning district with a maximum building height of 90 feet, and the institutional campus area south of Huntington Ave. subject to Institutional Master Plans. Some of the comments received during the planning process disagreed with allowing any building taller than 75 feet along Huntington Ave. Other comments asked for raising height limits, both along Huntington and within neighborhood areas.

- The plan does not advocate for the closure or taking of any public street. However, the plan needs to address the proposed closing of the intersection of St. Stephen's St. and Mass Ave. Diverse opinions were recorded during Task Force public meetings, some against the closing, some in favor of exploring its actual impact by trying changes on a temporary basis. In recognition of those opinions, the plan lists some of the criteria under which any change could be considered, and asks that any further action on the matter be subject to community review. Review processes in East Fenway will not end with this plan, but will continue as the final zoning is written and new projects are proposed.



PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following is a summary of planning goals and objectives for East Fenway based on meetings and conversations with the Task Force, the BRA and BTG, and members of the community. One of those meetings was a public workshop organized with the specific purpose of identifying goals and objectives for the plan. The list below has been edited and organized under planning categories in order to clearly convey the fundamental ideas that should guide and inspire the strategic plan.

LAND USE

GOAL: Retain and preserve the historic and architectural features of the neighborhood while encouraging progress and development

Objective: Set an appropriate scale for future development and limits to density

Objective: Use zoning to influence the design of new developments and encourage appropriate infill

Objective: Restore housing converted to other uses whenever possible

GOAL: Maintain and strengthen the existing land use character of each particular area of the neighborhood

Objective: Encourage mixed-use, sustainable development that incorporates compact and "green" building design, with adequate public transportation options to reduce reliance on cars

Objective: Seek less ownership of commercial uses by institutions (including parking)

Objective: Fine-tune zoning requirements to respond to the specific needs of local uses

Objective: Set zoning parameters that would prevent non-residential uses from encroaching on residential areas

Objective: Explore and develop "joint building programs" with institutions (including higher buildings, student residences, and housing)

Objective: Define areas and limits for parking that create a sensible balance between transportation needs and the feel and look of the neighborhood

Objective: Explore the possibilities of creating a community center or a community school

GOAL: Broaden retail diversity

Objective: Encourage neighborhood-oriented and locally owned retail and commercial venues

Objective: Promote a stronger business association, seeking to improve their contribution to the neighborhood

Objective: Introduce more diversity of retail options, particularly those connected with culture and the arts

Objective: Use retail to improve and animate some built spaces

Objective: Encourage retail uses on the ground floor (along major thoroughfares and pedestrian corridors)

Objective: Encourage merchants to take better care of the streets and the sidewalks

GOAL: Enhance open space and parks

Objective: Keep and add "pocket parks"

Objective: Improve security and maintenance at parks

Objective: Improve connections between parks creating pedestrian links

Objective: Encourage the creation of new open space

Objective: Discourage the privatization of public space

INSTITUTIONS

GOAL: Create opportunities for the institutions and the neighborhood to work together

Objective: Use the planning process as a forum to identify common needs and goals

Objective: Promote cooperation within the community to solve mutual problems

GOAL: Strengthen the identity of the Cultural District

Objective: Support activities and improvements on the Avenue of the Arts that promote the Cultural District

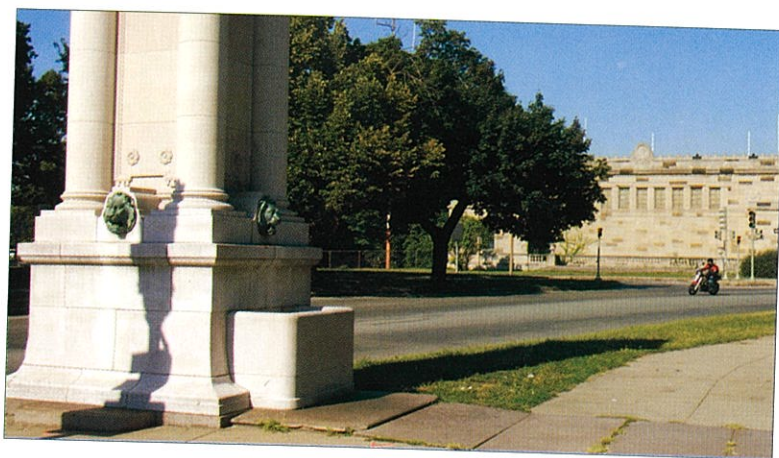
Objective: Create the designation of Avenue of Music on Mass Ave.

Objective: Animate key selected locations with outdoor performances and cafes

Objective: Design and use distinctive streetscape elements, banners, and signage to reinforce the Cultural District identity, and promote neighborhood culture

Objective: Explore opportunities for shared marketing and programming of events.

Objective: Create a visitor center



GOAL: Support shared solutions to transportation issues

Objective: Continue to implement solutions such as combined shuttles, shared parking facilities, Transportation Management Association initiatives, etc.

Objective: Improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment

Objective: Find ways to improve the MBTA Symphony Station

Objective: Allow resident parking (with stickers) in institutional lots

GOAL: Develop transit program

Objective: Continue to strengthen institutional programs that encourage transit use by visitors, students and employees

Objective: Consider reduced fees for people using public transportation

Objective: Provide protected bike parking facilities

Objective: Minimize traffic and pedestrian overflow from nighttime destinations into residential areas

GOAL: Expand community relations programs

Objective: Keep contributing to the maintenance of streets and open spaces

Objective: "Adopt" a park or a T-station for maintenance and improvements

Objective: Encourage publicity of institutional events and benefits to the neighborhood

Objective: Continue to sponsor a community center and community educational programs

Objective: Encourage local residence by employees

Objective: Support the role of institutions in community life

Objective: Encourage the continuation of discount admission to events for residents

GOAL: Increase security on and around campus

Objective: Continue to develop and implement wayfinding systems (kiosks, sign, information center)

Objective: Improve security on the Gainsborough St. Bridge

Objective: Promote nighttime cultural and pedestrian-oriented activities along Huntington Ave., Mass Ave., and Boylston St.

Objective: Increase awareness and protection of students and residents

GOAL: Develop student housing program

Objective: Provide more on-campus, university-owned housing for students

Objective: Balance institutional and commercial growth

Objective: Develop concentrated student housing (high density) within institutional areas

HOUSING AND ECONOMICS

GOAL: Support development of housing affordable across a broad range of incomes

Objective: Seek a minimum of 10% affordable housing in new developments as required by the Mayor

Objective: Maintain diversity of income in residents

Objective: Develop homeownership programs

Objective: Define affordable as housing for moderate income households (making



from 80 to 120% of the median income)

Objective: Encourage diversity of property ownership

Objective: Make subsidized housing fit residential character

Objective: Maintain current supply of units affordable to households with incomes under 120% of median, including those households with incomes under 50% of the median income

GOAL: Diversify types of housing

Objective: Encourage “green” developments

Objective: Increase size of housing in new and existing developments, including units with more than two bedrooms

Objective: Encourage increased owner-occupancy, particularly within the condominium market

Objective: Encourage educational institutions to increase the supply of on-campus housing

Objective: Replace some of the off-campus student dorms with housing in the long term

Objective: Encourage the development of housing suitable for children



GOAL: Improve student housing relationship to the community

Objective: Consider new alternatives for student residence development

Objective: Seek balance between resident and student housing

Objective: Making joint building programs student affordable

- GOAL: Encourage sympathetic and effective development**
Objective: Develop new infill housing in empty lots and opportunity areas
Objective: Use zoning to encourage building improvements along major thoroughfares

TRANSPORTATION

- GOAL: Increase pedestrian safety, especially for the elderly and children**
Objective: Improve pedestrian safety at crosswalks
Objective: Improve conditions at pedestrian crossings, including longer time and more frequency
Objective: Build wider sidewalks
Objective: Improve pedestrian access to recreational areas, including the Fens
Objective: Keep the parkways free from commercial traffic
Objective: Explore traffic calming measures along neighborhood corridors

- GOAL: Improve transit access and level of service**
Objective: Improve Symphony Station (there is no attendant, no escalator)
Objective: Increase frequency of trains along Huntington Avenue
Objective: Improve bus service
Objective: Seek improvement of public transit access to the Longwood Medical Area

- GOAL: Develop neighborhood parking solutions**
Objective: Develop a shared parking program between residents and institutions
Objective: Minimize two-hour parking, and exempt residents from two-hour requirements, particularly along sections of Hemenway, Symphony and Edgerly Roads

- Objective: Enforce parking laws and restrictions, particularly in places where double-parking often occurs*
Objective: Improve layover facilities for tour buses

- GOAL: Implement traffic calming measures and improve traffic flow**
Objective: Reduce speeds on narrower streets, and enforce
Objective: Improve and coordinate timing of traffic lights throughout the neighborhood
Objective: Improve traffic management for special events
Objective: Apply transportation demand management techniques to the area
Objective: Study modification of one ways (i.e. reverse Symphony/Gainsborough pair)
Objective: Consider allowing left turns from Boylston to the Fenway
Objective: Educate people to pull out of the lane for stopping
Objective: Promote vision for shared transportation by new developments
Objective: Get buses to park off the streets

- GOAL: Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation**
Objective: Implement bike lanes and signals on major thoroughfares
Objective: Develop a north-south bike path
Objective: Provide protected bike racks at institutions and other destinations
Objective: Provide bike racks on new housing developments
Objective: Get bikes off the sidewalks

URBAN DESIGN

- GOAL: Beautify the neighborhood**
Objective: Expedite plans for the greening of Massachusetts Avenue
Objective: Implement consistent neighborhood lighting

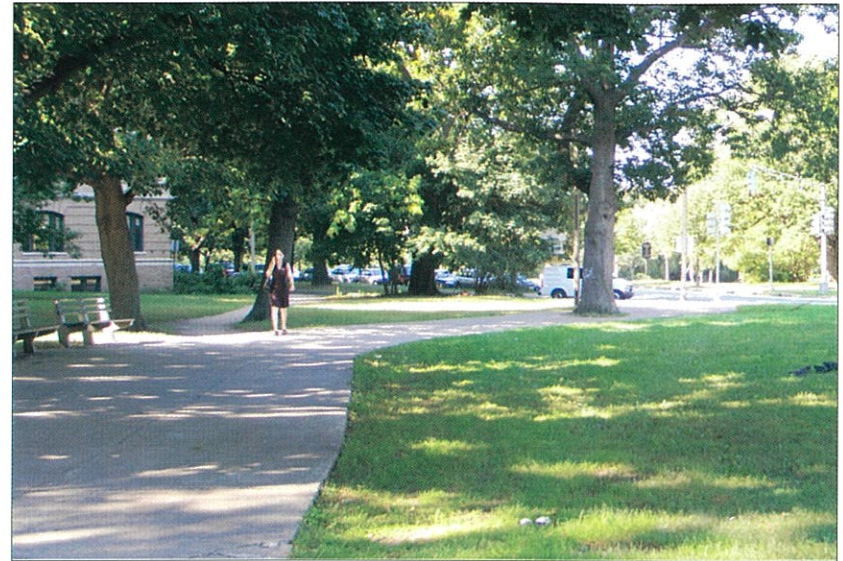
- Objective: Implement public art program*
- Objective: Locate, plant and maintain more street trees*
- Objective: Provide brick sidewalks, improved and well maintained*
- Objective: Encourage universal design to be integrated early on into any public or private development*
- Objective: Locate and provide benches in open spaces and green areas*
- Objective: Design and construct attractive winter landscapes*
- Objective: Encourage the use of high quality materials*
- Objective: Beautify bus stops*
- Objective: Beautify businesses on major streets*
- Objective: Reduce impervious areas and encourage use of "green" roofs*
- Objective: Encourage the "adoption" of certain spaces for maintenance and improvements by institutions and other key stakeholders*
- Objective: Discourage the use of chain link fencing*
- Objective: Improve the design of Harry Ellis Dickson Park*

GOAL: Protect and enhance underlying historic character of the area

- Objective: Preserve the special character of buildings and places through qualitative zoning and design guidelines*
- Objective: Incorporate local cultural and historic themes into the design of streetscape and signage elements particular to the neighborhood*
- Objective: Protect the existing street grid pattern*

GOAL: Maintain the "small town feeling" within a large city

- Objective: Seek resident participation on plans by owners early in the process*
- Objective: Set reasonable zoning limits to the potential "build out" in residential areas*
- Objective: Identify areas where new housing could be developed without destroying the character of the existing urban fabric*

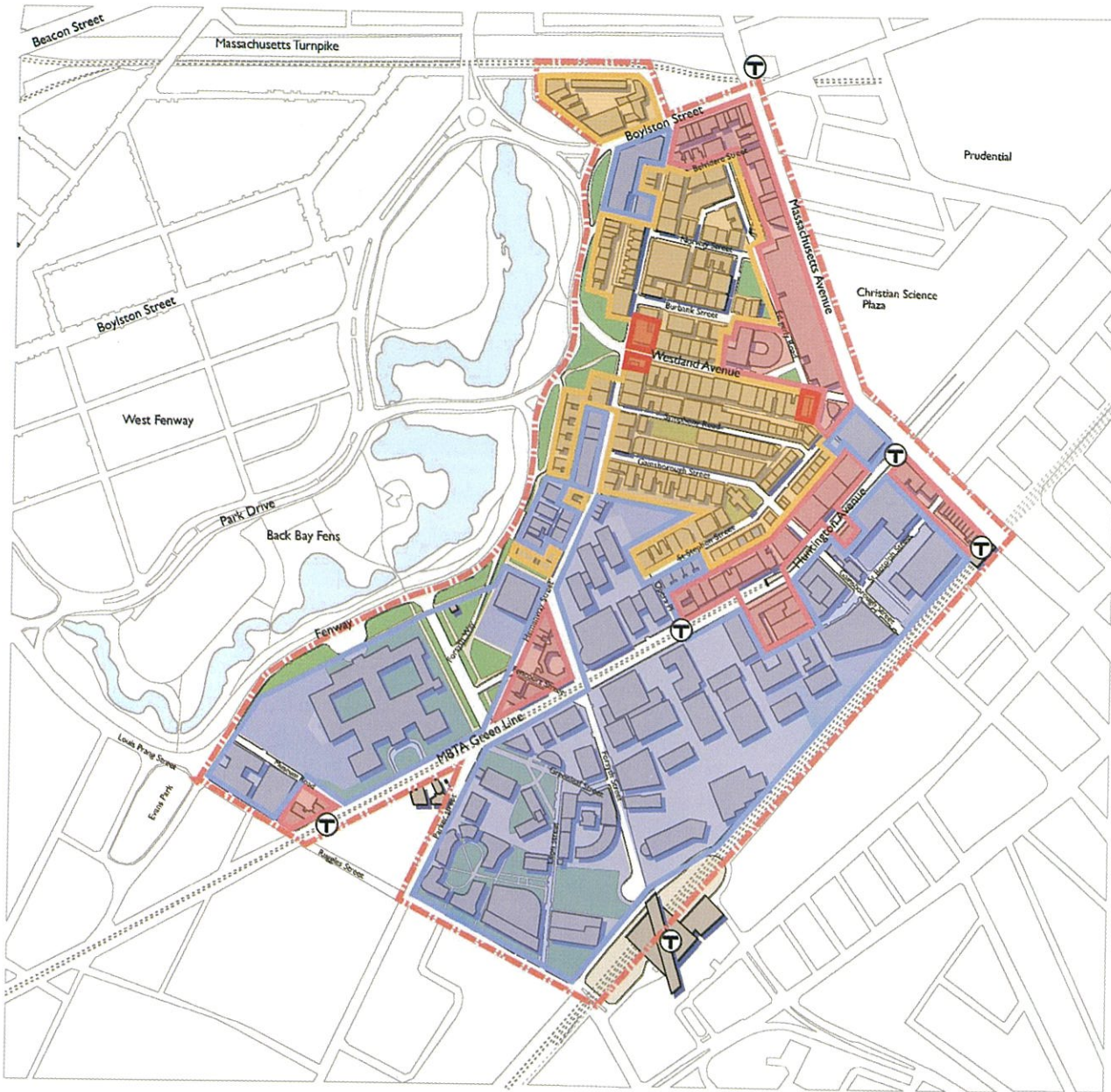


GOAL: Develop and implement a neighborhood orientation program

- Objective: Identify and enhance "gateways" to the neighborhood*
- Objective: Provide "wayfinding" signage for pedestrians and drivers*
- Objective: Provide universal access to buildings and streets*

GOAL: Improve maintenance of neighborhood parks and streets

- Objective: Clean and better maintain parks and open space*
- Objective: Clean up and maintain the Muddy River*
- Objective: Implement neighborhood cleanup programs for continuous maintenance and special events, and support the enforcement of program regulations*
- Objective: Enforce sanitation ordinance for cleaning of sidewalks and public spaces*
- Objective: Provide more corner trash bins and more frequent collection*
- Objective: Implement street drainage maintenance program*
- Objective: Help restore the ecology of the city by promoting environmentally sound landscaping and maintenance strategies*



Land Use Plan

- Residential
- Institutional
- Mixed Use Commercial/
Residential/Institutional
- Residential with Ground Floor
Commercial Uses

East Fenway Neighborhood Strategic Plan
 The Cecil Group April 17, 2002

LAND USE

The mix of land uses within East Fenway poses special challenges when applying an urban scale and multiple levels of activity to a district characterized by unique historic qualities and structures. Enhancing the sense of community at the street or block level, and within the broader context of the neighborhood with its diversity of institutions, businesses, and residents is the ultimate goal of the proposed land use plan and strategy. The following land use options and recommendations are presented as guidelines and policy guidance that seek to enhance these aspects of the community, while promoting positive and realistic change that will maintain the vitality and value of the land use within the neighborhood.

The implementation of these guidelines will be principally through zoning, and as such, they will require further legal review and completion of the regulatory processes prior to their implementation. During this process, the additional legal analyses will provide the necessary specificity and functionality into the final regulations.

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall land use policy options and recommendations include:

Creating a Mixed-Use Zone

The proposed mixed-use zone will extend along the main pedestrian and vehicular corridors of Huntington Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, and Boylston Street. The new district will encourage retail uses and a pedestrian orientation on ground levels, and residential, commercial or institutional uses on the upper floors. The boundaries of the zone could be readjusted as the new zoning is written to include blocks and groups of buildings that could be subject to redevelopment. Certain areas may be excluded to preserve current land use, and development guidelines will be included to assure protection of historic resources and street-level

spaces. Development guidelines are currently incorporated into almost all of the City's zoning districts and can be used as the basis for the proposed district.

The possibility of incorporating density bonus incentives to encourage residential over commercial development into the zoning recommendations, as it was done in the West Fenway planning process, has been reviewed and evaluated for its economic feasibility. The results of the economic analysis indicate that FAR bonus incentives in East Fenway will not be effective for the purposes of encouraging housing within the current market conditions unless high-rise buildings are developed, which would be unacceptable for the community (refer to the section on Zoning for more details).

Limited increases in density may be necessary at certain locations, however, in order to ensure that the plan objectives and market demands can be met within the allowed development framework.

Maintaining Residential Uses

Within the blocks defined by the streets of Westland, Hemenway, Haviland, Norway, Burbank, Edgerly, Symphony, Gainsborough, and St. Stephen, the residential uses are currently stable and well defined. Maintaining those blocks as a stable residential area that is connected in several ways to the neighborhood commercial areas and adjacent open space will preserve this area as a vital urban neighborhood. This can be accomplished with several aspects of stability considered including:

- Preserving historic features
- Improving street safety and accessibility
- Maintaining the existing building scale
- Ensuring continued private investment into the buildings and neighborhood

Promoting Neighborhood Retail

Neighborhood retail uses are one aspect of an accessible and stable neighborhood, which require special compensation within the zoning code to ensure their support for particular locations and their economic viability. These types of uses have been defined elsewhere within the Boston Zoning Code and could be laid out for the ground floors of buildings along the main corridors, and the corners of Hemenway Street and Westland Avenue, and Westland and Massachusetts Avenue.

Incorporating Institutional Uses

The new zoning will include a series of mechanisms for reviewing and approving new institutional uses in areas where requirements are not well defined by the current zoning. Additional aspects of institutional land uses are more fully discussed in the section on Institutions, which follows this section, and the section on Zoning at the end of the document.

Supporting Affordable Housing

Affordable housing programs have been at the forefront with the Mayor Thomas M. Menino's initiatives in "Leading the Way" and are incorporated in to the land use regulations of the City. More discussion on affordable housing and programs for implementation is included in the section on Housing and Economics.

LAND USE GUIDELINES

Zoning regulations directly influence the types of development that occur in East Fenway. Specific zoning-related criteria are being determined as a result of this planning process, and will be incorporated into the future zoning. Zoning requirements specifically tailored for each particular area will include maximum building height and parking requirements, regulations for new construction, and the final allocation of areas appropriate for residential, commercial, institutional, and mixed uses.

As an initial step towards the development of zoning criteria, the following are some of the land use guidelines proposed:

- The mixed-use corridors along Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues will call for retail or institutional uses open to the public at the ground level. Residential, institutional, commercial or hotel uses would take place on the upper floors. Zoning will be aimed to encourage residential over commercial uses.
- Commercial uses other than the ones currently existing will not be allowed in areas designated as residential, except by specific locations at the corners of Westland Avenue where ground floor retail will be allowed. These locations will be generally consistent with the existing uses already in place.
- Ground floor pedestrian uses that could include retail, as well as exhibition space or institutional space accessible to the public will be encouraged along Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues on both sides of the streets.
- Some properties along the proposed mixed-use corridors are occupied for small low-cost buildings and represent a potential for redevelopment that could result in additional housing, additional homeownership and increased retail and pedestrian activity. Zoning requirements regulating building height and floor area ratio will be adjusted to allow for mid-rise development at selected locations.

Huntington Avenue between Gainsborough St. and Symphony Hall, and a few parcels in the vicinity of the railroad corridor were identified as locations where new buildings could potentially be developed. Some prototypical sites were analyzed in terms of economic feasibility and urban design, and were found to be capable of supporting limited additional development with appropriate zoning changes and land use guidelines.

INSTITUTIONS

A variety of institutional strategies for the East Fenway have emerged from a review of existing conditions and from conversations with institutional representatives and neighborhood residents about their hopes for the future. Key to the specific institutional strategies for the neighborhood is the underlying need to strengthen the existing ties and partnerships between the institutions and the City, and create new partnerships that will strengthen the relationships between the institutions and the community.



OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for institutions and institutional programs include:

Strengthen and Create New Partnerships

Good working relations between its many different institutions and the diverse residential community characterize the East Fenway. However, in order for the neighborhood to move toward the implementation of many of the goals identified during the strategic planning process, these relationships need to be strengthened into working partnerships. The specific partnerships that are needed include the following:

Institutions Map

- Northeastern University
- Boston Conservatory of Music
- Berklee College of Music
- Massachusetts Historical Society
- Museum of Fine Arts
- New England Conservatory
- Boston Symphony Orchestra
- National Braille
- Forsyth Institute
- Archdiocese of Boston
- St. Clements Eucharist Shrine, Our Lady of Grace Seminary
- Fenway Community Health Center
- Huntington Theater
- YMCA
- Parking Lot
- Student Housing
- Proposed Addition

- Partnerships between institutions (such as the Fenway Alliance) will be critical to accomplishing each of the other institutional goals. Among the possible outcomes of such affiliations might be new opportunities for student housing or shared facilities such as performance venues.
- The institutions and the City of Boston already work very closely to implement the Cultural District. A strengthened partnership will require the City and the institutions to come to agreement about the funding, schedule, and design of a wide variety of physical and programmatic improvements. The City/Institutional partnership could also become a cornerstone of transportation enhancements for the area.



Cultural District

-  Cultural Spaces
-  Extension of Cultural Spaces
-  Performance Venues
-  Potential Location for Public Art /Kiosks
-  Other Cultural facilities

Strengthen the Cultural District

The Fenway Cultural District has boundaries that extend beyond the East Fenway, but the heart of the district and many of its major institutions are located in the neighborhood. Support for an identifiable and vibrant cultural district has been endorsed by the City of Boston, by the area's institutions, and by the neighborhood through this planning process. Promoting the district is a key element of the strategic plan.

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- Strengthen the partnerships between the institutions and the City - Taking the steps toward implementation will require a stronger partnership between the City and the area's institutions, represented by the Fenway Alliance, because it will entail decisions about how, where, and when to invest in the district.

- Extend the institutional partnership to smaller neighborhood organizations, individual artists, and cultural businesses - The Fenway Alliance primarily includes the area's larger institutions. There are many additional educational and cultural

groups in the neighborhood that add great vitality and variety to the area's cultural life, and it is important to draw them into the planning and implementation of the Cultural District. A listing of organizations (provided by the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs) is included at the end of this section.

- New partnerships between neighborhood organizations to create opportunities for mixed-use development that could provide a variety of housing and other neighborhood institutional uses.
- New partnerships between the institutions and the retail owners and tenants to jointly revitalize and strengthen the retail base and the Cultural District identity of the area.

- Program Cultural District events - Develop programs that help to create a sense of the district as a unified entity. These can include:
 - Outdoor performances or exhibitions in the Fens, at Mother's Rest Park, or along Massachusetts Avenue, Huntington Avenue, and Boylston Street
 - Linked exhibition/performance programs such as music, theater, art and educational programming at several of the area's institutions (Spring Arts and Summer Music festivals have been suggested by members of the community).
 - Annual events that encompass the district - such as extending the MFAs "Art in Bloom" program to other institutions and to the parks and streets of the neighborhood. The Fenway Alliance should also continue to organize and sponsor the successful "Opening Our Doors" event held this year in October.
- Create a physical Cultural District identity - Make use of signage, public information, streetscape and other elements to create a distinct identity that is obvious to both the frequent visitor and the casual passerby. Each of these elements is described below.
- Signage - Efforts are beginning to get underway to create a consistent and handsome signage program to identify the area's institutions and to provide way-finding information for visitors. This is an important element in the creation of a Cultural District identity, and may be of particular importance to the smaller institutions that do not have a strong street presence.
- Public information - A variety of public information programs are important to enhancing the public's awareness of the Cultural District's vitality, and to helping create a unified identity. Among the elements of a public information program, and in addition to the "Opening Our Doors" event, there might be:
 - On-street kiosks that provide current information about events
 - Publications provided to metro-Boston residents, and also provided to area hotels for their guests
 - On-line information services
- Streetscape improvements - Both the institutional and neighborhood participants in the East Fenway Strategic Plan identified improvements in streetscape as a crucial element in neighborhood improvement. These improvements can take many forms and might include the following elements (refer to the section on Urban Design for greater detail on streetscape):
 - Trees and landscape improvements including flowers
 - Street furniture
 - Enhanced paving of sidewalks and crosswalks
 - Public art
 - Enhanced window displays in both retail and institutional street frontages
- Visitors' Center - The creation of a visitors' center has surfaced in a number of conversations about the Cultural District, but the programming, funding, and operation of such a facility has not yet been developed.

Pursue Institutionally Based Transportation Improvements

The institutions of the East Fenway generate substantial demand for transportation services, and the nature of that demand is quite different from commuting patterns. The off-peak, and events-based nature of much of the institutional travel demand creates both opportunities and challenges for the East Fenway transportation system.

- Transportation Management Association (TMA) - Support of the emerging East Fenway TMA in its efforts to focus on institutional transportation issues is a primary recommendation of the strategic plan (refer to the section on Transportation for additional details). This TMA is one of the Fenway Alliance initiatives currently underway, and it could address the following range of transportation issues:

- Transit promotion for both visitors and employees and addressed to both regular and special event programming.
- Parking management including off-peak use of existing parking resources (such as weekend and evening use of parking usually occupied by daytime commuters) and special event parking management. One of the issues that would need special attention is the pricing of parking, with pricing high enough to encourage transit use, while not so high that it leads to people searching for on street parking in the neighborhood.
- Joint event management and scheduling to minimize the overlap of very large events. While it will not be possible to avoid overlapping events, closer coordination could help to reduce the overlap of start and finish times, and better balance the scheduling of large events.
- Transit services such as shuttles serving transit stations or parking garages may be appropriate for certain events and/or evenings or weekends when peak visitor volumes are anticipated. The demand and economic viability of such services could be assessed by the TMA.
- Provision of good signage between the neighborhood's transit stations and institutions. Of immediate importance is good signage between Ruggles Station and the area's institutions.
- Advocacy on behalf of the institutions and neighborhood with the MBTA and the City could be an important role for the TMA.
- **Symphony Station Improvements** - Many participants in the planning process cited the safety and appearance of the MBTA Symphony Station as detriments to transit use in the neighborhood. The institutions of the East Fenway (perhaps through the TMA) could potentially help to ameliorate this situation in two ways:
 - "Adopt" the station and contribute to its appearance through a more regular maintenance program and through the introduction of arts and/or music in station.
 - Advocacy with the MBTA to modernize the station and perhaps increase staffing at key times to coincide with the promotion of transit use for area events.
- **Streetscape Improvements** - Enhancing the quality and safety of the pedestrian environment will make pedestrian and transit access more attractive to visitors and employees of the area's institutions (as well as to the neighborhood's residents). Important streetscape improvements include:
 - Sidewalk condition and maintenance
 - Enhancement of pedestrian crosswalks
 - Addition of street trees and landscaping
- **Signage and Wayfinding System** - The neighborhood's institutions draw their patrons and visitors from around the metropolitan area and around the world. The signage in the neighborhood is inconsistent and often inadequate for visitors. Adding good signage and an attractive way finding system can help to create an identity for the Cultural District, encourage transit use, and reduce visitor traffic that results from searching the neighborhood for a particular destination or a parking space.

Move into More Enhanced Institutional/Retail Partnerships

Both the area's residents and its institutions perceive the mix and level of maintenance of the retail facilities in the East Fenway as needing improvement. The role of the institutions in helping to accomplish improvements can come through a variety of mechanisms.

- **Main Streets/Cultural District Manager** - The City of Boston is an active promoter of Main Streets programs in a number of the City's neighborhood retail districts. In 1995 Mayor Menino launched Boston Main Streets, which provides financial and technical resources to 21 commercial districts throughout the City. In each of these districts the local programs include the hiring of a main streets

manager who organizes such activities as joint advertising, storefront improvements, promotional events, and shared maintenance. The mix of management and program support has helped these districts to improve their market, their appearance, and their relationships with their residential customers and neighbors. One strategy that could be led by the institutions of the East Fenway would be the development of a program for the neighborhood that combined the retail elements of a Main Streets program with elements of the Cultural District programming described above. By joining up with the City's existing Main Streets program such an approach could benefit from the City's existing expertise. At the same time, the unique elements of the Cultural District and the collaboration of the Fenway Alliance could add a depth and breadth to programming and promotion that would reflect the institutions of the East Fenway. Among the issues that could be addressed by a Main Streets/Cultural District Manager are the following:

- Enhanced management of retail tenants by institutional landlords - A number of the retail properties in the East Fenway are owned by the area's institutions. The institutions should be encouraged by the City (and by each other) to take a more active role in the management of these properties with respect to the mix of tenants, maintenance, and appearance of display windows.
- Marketing of retail spaces to arts related tenants - While there is already a concentration of music related businesses along Massachusetts Avenue, a concerted program of attracting both visual arts and music related businesses to the area could result in a specialty retail district that reflects the Cultural District and adds to the mix of activities that relate to the area's institutions.
- Arts related programming - Many retail districts in the City promote their local arts communities through displays of vi-



sual arts in places of business (such as restaurants and small service offices). The Main Streets/Cultural District Manager could pursue such a strategy in close collaboration with the Fenway Alliance, and could extend it to include music and video arts - both of which have their greatest concentrations in the city in the East Fenway.

Create More Partnerships for Housing

As discussed in greater detail in other sections of this strategic plan, the creation of expanded housing opportunities in the East Fenway is one of the neighborhood's clear goals. The institutions of the East Fenway have an important role to play in achieving this goal. While many of the academic institutions are already pursuing the addition of student housing, a number of possible partnerships could provide new opportunities to create both student and non-student housing. Any of the strategies briefly outlined below would require substantial cooperation from a number of different parties, and could also need management assistance from the City. Several of the strategies have already been undertaken, or have been pursued informally, by the area's institutions.

- Jointly developed student housing - Two or more of the area's institutions could join forces to develop student housing. One example of this already exists in the new Mass Art student residence, which also includes housing for Museum School students.
- Faculty/staff housing paired with student housing -The neighborhood's institutions have a need for affordable faculty and staff housing as well as student housing. Pairing these needs could help to create housing projects that are a good fit with the desire to increase the number of family units in the neighborhood.
- Private housing paired with student housing - Combining student housing with private housing (market rate or affordable) could create another opportunity to develop housing projects that are a good fit with the desire to increase the number of family units in the neighborhood. Northeastern University has already developed a project, Davenport Commons, that followed this model and opened in September of 2002.
- Institutional uses paired with private housing - Many of the area's institutions have space needs other than housing that could be paired with private housing. For example, a mixed-use building could include ground floor retail, several floors of office use, and housing above. Such an arrangement could provide an economic balance that would not be possible for housing or institutional uses alone.

Strengthen Institutional/Community Relationships

While the institutional/community relationship in the East Fenway is already good, there are opportunities to strengthen those ties. Several strategies are described below.

- Improve information about community programs/opportunities - Enhanced dissemination of information about the programs and benefits available to local residents would increase the use of these programs and also ensure that neighbors are aware of the many opportunities that are available.



- Add targeted community programs - Over the coming years it would be appropriate for the institutions to work directly with neighborhood organizations and the City to determine whether there are special activities or educational programs that might be of particular benefit to the East Fenway neighborhood.
- Continue to sponsor outdoor summer activities - As described above with respect to the Cultural District, outdoor summer activities are a way of reaching out to the community. The programming of such events should provide a balance of activities to draw a wide audience, and to serve smaller, local audiences as well.
- Contribute to the security and maintenance of public space - As noted under several of the strategies described above, the institutions have a role to play in the security and maintenance of public

space. Street care, enhancement and trash collection has been done by the institutions for a long time, representing an important benefit to neighborhood residents as well as to visitors to the District.

Cultural Organizations of the East Fenway

The Technical Memorandum on Findings provided earlier in the strategic planning process included a list and description of the institutions of the East Fenway, many of which are members of the Fenway Alliance. The following are the member institutions:

Members of The Fenway Alliance

Museum of Fine Arts
Boston Symphony Orchestra
The First Church of Christ, Scientist
Berklee College of Music
The New England Conservatory
The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
The Harvard School of Public Health
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy/HS
Wheelock College
The Forsyth Institute
Simmons College
The Mary Eddy Baker Library
Emmanuel College
Huntington Theatre Company
Massachusetts College of Art (MassArt)
Northeastern University
YMCA of Greater Boston

Since that time, the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs has provided a further listing that includes the many smaller cultural institutions that make their home in the neighborhood (or nearby). These additional organizations are noted below, and should be included as the strategies described above are undertaken.

Name of Organization

Boston Architectural Center
Boston Film/Video Foundation
Boston Latin School Fine Arts Department
From the Top
Handel & Haydn Society
Impulse Dance Co.
Institute of Contemporary Art
Kaji Aso Studio
New England Quarterly
New England Theatre Conference, Inc.
QE2 Players, Inc.
UrbanArts, Inc.

HOUSING AND ECONOMICS

Today the East Fenway area is a neighborhood that continues to reflect the impact of two known and continuing pressures – the rising cost of housing for both owners and renters, and the continuing growth of the several educational and cultural institutions in and near the neighborhood. The other important factor is the scarcity of land available for new development. The primary constraint on redevelopment of existing property is the economic return on properties as they are presently used, compared with the return on what could be developed under current zoning controls.

POPULATION

The population of the East Fenway neighborhood has increased by about 7% since 1990. The change is accounted for primarily by an increase in the 18-24 age group, constituted primarily by students but also including some young professional households. The household composition reflects this same trend – an increase in non-family households combined with a decrease in the number of family households. The smaller rate of increase in the number of households – 2.3% compared with the 7% rate for population – reflects the increasing cost of

housing and the resulting need for individuals to share housing costs.

Population

Age	1990		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-17	424	3.0%	444	2.9%
18-24	8,135	57.8%	9,231	61.3%
25-34	2,653	18.9%	2,615	17.4%
35-64	1,981	14.1%	1,920	12.8%
65+	878	6.2%	847	5.6%
Total	14,071	100.00%	15,057	100.00%

Household Composition

Household Type	1990		2002		1990		2002	
	Households				Population			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Family	808	17%	794	14%	2,494	18%	2,144	14%
Non-Family	3,853	70%	4,033	73%	5,976	42%	6,476	43%
- Student	2,562	47%	2,676	48%	4,099	29%	4,441	29%
- Other	1,291	23%	1,357	25%	1,877	13%	2,035	14%
Elderly	743	14%	706	13%	878	6%	847	6%
Group Quarters								
- Dorms		9			4,27	30%	5,031	33%
- Others		4			44	3%	559	4%
TOTAL	5,404	100%	5,533	100%	14,071	100%	15,057	100%

STUDENT POPULATION

In the 1990 Census, 8,378 persons were listed as being enrolled in college (Student Non-Family Households plus Dorm residents.) 4,279 (51%) were counted as living in dormitories, and the remaining 4,099 (49%) lived in off-campus housing. The other 1,877 households included in the category presumable are made up primarily of young working professionals. The estimated 2002 student population is 9,472, and increase of 13% over the twelve-year period. Numbers shown in the chart in *italics* indicate data derived from changes in average household size. Comparable data for smaller areas are not yet available for the 2000 Census.

The estimated increase in student population represents about 1% per year. The significant indicator is that of the total increase of 1,094 students, almost 70% was the result of increases in on-campus dormitory housing. Projected additional such construction over the next decade may continue to diminish somewhat the pressure of students on the existing housing supply, but the problem will not be eliminated.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The mix of household size has changed only slightly since 1990, with almost 85% of the housing stock being composed of 1 or 2 people. Another small but significant shift is the increase in the amount of owner-occupied units. The 526 units in 2002 represent an absolute increase of 139 units, changing from 7.1% to 9.5% of all units.

Household Size

	1990				2002			
	Owner	Renter	Total	%	Owner	Renter	Total	%
1 person	164	2,704	2,868	53%			3,015	53%
2 people	127	1,546	1,673	30.9%			1,658	30.9%
3 people	59	464	523	9.7%			492	9.7%
4 people	19	226	245	4.5%			247	4.5%
5+ people	18	89	107	2%			121	2%
TOTAL	387	5,029	5,416	100%	526	5,007	5,533	100%
%	7.1%	92.9%	100%		9.5%	90.5%	100%	

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The shifts in income distribution by age between 1990 and 2002 confirm the impact of the increasing student and young professional population, and the ability of that population to outbid lower income households for available rental units. After subtracting the estimated 2,676 student households, there are an estimated 2,887 other households in the East Fenway in 2002. 2000 Census data is not yet available to correlate income by household type. However, estimates of 2002 household income distribution assuming a distribution similar to the 1990 Census, and adjusted to reflect that student population has increased about 1% per year since 1990, indicate that approximately half of the households with incomes below \$50,000 are non-student households (about 1,600 or 30% of the total number of units).

Income by Age of Household Head

	\$0-10,000	\$10-25,000	\$25-50,000	\$50,000+	Total
1990					
15-24	1,031	692	270	46	1,768
25-34	17	295	536	375	1,494
35-64	386	360	349	297	1,392
65+	470	163	76	41	750
1990 Total	1,904	1,510	1,231	759	5,404
%	35%	28%	23%	14%	100%
	(0-15,000)	(15-25,000)			
2002 Totals	1,201	854	1,234	2,244	5,533
%	22%	15%	22%	41%	100%

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The current housing market in the East Fenway neighborhood is characterized by increases in both rents and sales prices. The number of sales has decreased over the past three years, but prices have increased as much as 30%. Rents have increased as much as 12% depending on unit size, and the number of listings has declined.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines households based on income as follows:

Definition	% of Area Med. Inc.	Income*
Very Low Income	<50%	Below \$32,750
Low Income	51-80%	Between \$32,750 and \$50,200
Moderate Income	81-120+%	Between \$50,200 and \$78,600

*Varies by household size. Figures shown in table are for a household of four.

A comparison of income and housing cost is shown in the table below. The basis for comparison is the generally used standard that limits spending for housing to no more than 30% of income to pay for housing. The standard is most relevant for lower income households, facing greater overall constraints on their disposable income.

The table suggests that almost all households with incomes under \$25,000, and most households of more than 2 people with incomes under \$50,000, will have difficulty finding housing that is within their ability to pay.

Currently there are about 1,000 subsidized units in the East Fenway neighborhood, accounting for 18% of all available units. Depending on the program involved occupancy can be available to households

Housing Affordability 2002

Household Income (\$)	No. Households	% of all Households	Affordable Rent* (\$)	Current Market Rents**				
				0br	1br	2br	3br	4+br
				\$850-1,100	\$1,200-1,800	\$1,600-2,200	\$2,400-3,400	\$3,600+
0-15,000	1,201	22%	0-375					
15-25,000	854	15%	375-625					
25-50,000	1,234	22%	625-1,250					
50-75,000	1,015	18%	1,250-1,875					
75,000+	1,229	22%	1,875+					
TOTAL	5,533	100%						
			Units Available	1,533	2,555	1,249	191	150

* The calculation is based on the allocation of 30% of gross income for housing costs. This standard is widely used to determine what households at differing income levels can afford to pay to meet their housing needs.

** The current market rents shown are based on a recent survey of listings of available units in the East Fenway neighborhood. The darker shaded cells indicate units that are not affordable for the given income levels, based on the standard referenced above. The lighter shaded cells indicate units that may be affordable for the given income levels, assuming either higher incomes or lower cost units and again based on the referenced standard.

with incomes up to 80% of median income, a figure that can go above \$50,000 depending on household size. Most of the subsidized stock targets incomes below \$40,000, again depending on household size. As noted in earlier reports, many of the developments in which these units are located are so-called expiring use developments, facing the need for renewal of their current contracts within the next few years.

TRENDS AND OPTIONS

Based on the analysis, population and housing trends in the East Fenway neighborhood can be summarized as follows:

- A gradual increase in total population, probably less than what was experienced over the past decade.
- Continued increases in rents and sales prices.
- A continued increase in household incomes.
- Continued pressure on existing housing stock from students living off-campus, alleviated partially by increases in number of on-campus dormitory rooms.
- As a result of the above factors, increasing difficult for low and moderate income households to find existing housing within their means.
- Small increase in the amount of owner-occupied housing, less than 1% per year.

The opportunity presented in this plan is to define the kind of community that is desired by the present residents. Are the above trends desirable, or do residents want to see a different direction and if so, what should it be? Should the current trend toward higher household income continue, or should there be an effort to maintain a mix of incomes?

Market driven trends alone will likely result in an increasing proportion of higher income households; there will probably be greater pressure to convert subsidized properties when their current contracts expire, and gentrification may take place. Maintaining the present mix of market-rate and affordable units will require active marketing of the neighborhood for moderate-income households, and policy intervention to preserve the expiring use subsidized units. Making the neighborhood more diverse will also require an increase in the proportion of owner-occupied residential units.

In looking at any potential options, it is important to understand the nature and intensity of the market forces at play driving the current trends. This in turn, will help understanding to what extent it is advisable to let the market play by itself, and to what extent the City and the community should guide the market towards achieving the desired planning goals. To that end, we performed an economic build-out analysis, looking in detail at the potential and feasibility for change in the neighborhood, either by means of new development or the renovation of existing buildings.

HOUSING BUILD-OUT ANALYSIS

A housing build-out analysis was performed to evaluate the potential for future housing production in the East Fenway neighborhood, and to identify the proactive steps needed to preserve and improve the housing stock and availability of the area. The study involved a review of potential development sites, an analysis of current housing data and demographics, and varying zoning requirements to gauge the impact of those requirements on the number of housing units that can be created.

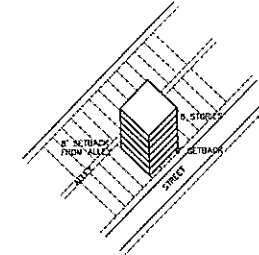
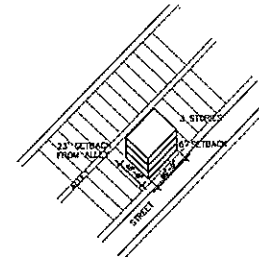
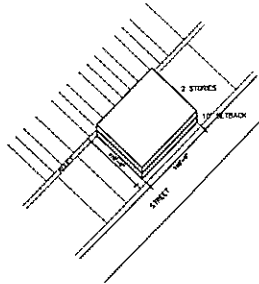
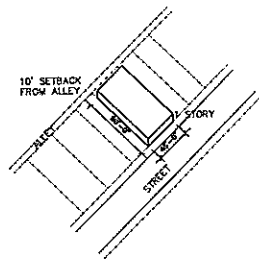
The purpose of the study was mainly to understand the market forces at play, not necessarily to advocate for new development of for more and bigger buildings. The idea was to understand and analyze the economic feasibility of potential development with a two-fold objective:

- To test the feasibility of new mid-rise development on selected sites along the proposed mixed-use corridors, and in particular the potential to generate new housing units.
- To understand market pressures on the existing buildings along residential areas which character we may want to preserve, in order to better assess the type of criteria that need to be set in place in order to enhance and preserve that character.

Potential Development Sites

To analyze the impact of different types of development in different areas of East Fenway, four types of potential development sites representing prototypical conditions within the district were identified. The site characteristics included:

- Low-rise commercial use with small lots, such as some on Massachusetts Avenue. These sites can be considered as “under-developed” compared to adjacent sites, in the sense that the abutting properties have taller buildings on them.
- Low-rise commercial use with large lots, such as some on Huntington Avenue. Similarly, these sites are assumed to have an additional development potential because they are in the context of taller buildings.
- Low-rise residential use, such as the townhouses on Symphony Road and Gainsborough Street.
- Mid-rise residential use such as the apartment buildings on Westland Avenue or Huntington Avenue.



- Residential use – one and two bedroom apartments with a net area of 650 and 900 sf respectively
- Commercial use – ground floor retail (Use of the entire building footprint for retail was assumed where this type of occupancy occurs in adjacent buildings.)
- Other use – second floor office space (It was assumed that this use would occupy the footprint of a typical floor of a multi-story building.)
- Parking – at grade and below grade (Structured parking below grade was considered where the site was large enough to permit a functional parking layout.)

Development Scenarios

In order to assess the feasibility of redeveloping any existing property, it was necessary to consider different development options for each of the chosen sites. Three levels of development intensity were proposed and identified as low build; moderate build and high build scenarios:

- Low build: minimum of six stories
- Moderate build: nine stories
- High build: twelve stories

Feasibility is also directly related to the size of the available parcel. Consequently we considered, three different land assembly scenarios: development on a single typical lot and development on two or three contiguous assembled typical lots.

Building Typology and Massing

In order to test the development capacity of the various sites in a realistic way, a schematic footprint for a typical floor was developed for each site condition. It was assumed that the layout for any new construction would be determined by compliance with current building codes in terms of egress and circulation, and the provision of adequate

Development Program

A generic program of proposed uses was established based on the characteristics of existing development in the area, the proposed mixed-use concept for some of these locations, and an analysis of current housing data and the architectural characteristics of the existing buildings. Four uses were considered, depending on the characteristics of each site:

natural light and ventilation. This led to the conclusion that new construction would not replicate existing building footprints that are typically very deep and often rely on small interior courtyards or light wells. For most of the sites, a “standardized” residential, double loaded corridor layout was used, with an overall building depth of 60 feet. The width of the building footprint was typically established as being equal to the lot frontage, and setbacks from property lines were established to be consistent with existing development on the same street. That is, the study presumed front yards equal to those of abutting lots and no side yard setbacks, since existing structures are typically built without side yard setback. The resulting standardized footprint for a typical floor is generally a simple rectangle that is 60 feet deep and as wide as the site. This allows for a central corridor serving apartments that face the street or the rear yard. Structured parking in basements was assumed wherever the dimensions of the site made it feasible.

For the purposes of economic analysis, urban design criteria were not applied to evaluate the design quality or desirability of any of the scenarios, with two exceptions:

- It was assumed that the nine and twelve story build-out scenarios for the low-rise residential use (such as the townhouses on Symphony Road) would not be allowed. Only the low-build scenario was considered.
- It was assumed that setbacks would generally conform to the precedent established by existing abutting buildings.

The results of the analysis were tabulated and used to analyze the economic potential for development of various types of new housing.

DEVELOPMENT ECONOMICS

A study of the economics of redevelopment was performed for each of the build-out options referenced above based on the square footages

and number of residential units tabulated. The study sought to answer the following questions:

- How valuable are the existing land use improvements on a given parcel, and under what circumstances might an owner be motivated to demolish existing improvements to build something new? (This information is useful in understanding how to promote or encourage changes where it may be desirable or to prevent changes where it may be damaging.)
- Is new development feasible and if so, under what conditions?
- Are some uses, heights, lot configurations, parking solutions, etc. more feasible than others?
- What are the threshold conditions for a project to be economically feasible?

Underlying the study are two key principles of development economics:

- When the property value created by building new is greater than the value of the property as it is currently improved, then the highest and best use will be to demolish the existing improvements and build something new.
- When the value created by building new is greater than the cost of development (including the cost of acquisition, construction/renovation, and entrepreneurial profit) then a project can be considered feasible.

Following these principles, we first estimated a current “as is” acquisition price for each prototypical site based on the existing building size, use and density. The estimated prices per sf of building area were derived through an income capitalization method cross-checked against our database of building sales to ensure their reasonableness. Then for each program option we undertook development cost and income/expense proformas in an effort to understand the margin by which the value of prototypical new development (measured as a function of net

apartment rent or condominium sale income) exceeded (or not) the cost to acquire and demolish the existing improvements and build new.

The results of the analysis are summarized in the Feasibility Margins/ (Gaps) table below:

# Stories # Lots	Site/Building Type	Existing Build Out	New Construction			New Construction			New Construction		
			Low 6 Stories			Moderate 9 Stories			High 12 Stories		
			1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
LOW-RISE COMMERCIAL - SMALL LOT PROTOTYPE											
Apartment Development	Vacant		25	29	31	28	31	32	29	32	33
	1 Story Retail		-32	-30	-30	-12	-11	-10	-1	0	0
	3 Story Retail/Office		-89	-84	-82	-51	-48	-47	-31	-28	-28
Condominium Development	Vacant		33	38	39	46	50	51	53	56	57
	1 Story Retail		-24	-22	-22	7	8	8	40	41	42
	3 Story Retail/Office		-80	-76	-74	-32	-29	-28	-7	-4	-3
LOW-RISE COMMERCIAL - LARGE LOT PROPERTIES											
Apartment Development	Vacant		-8	-8	-6	2	6	6	8	11	11
	2 Story Retail/Office		-71	-69	-68	-40	-35	-36	-25	-22	-22
Condominium Development	Vacant		8	9	10	37	41	40	49	53	53
	2 Story Retail/Office		-65	-63	-62	-12	-7	-8	11	15	14
LOW-RISE RESIDENTIAL (Rowhouses)											
Apartment Development	Vacant		6	10	11						
	Rowhouses		-91	-87	-86						
Condominium Development	Vacant		47	50	52						
	Rowhouses		-96	-92	-91						
MID-RISE RESIDENTIAL (Apartment Buildings)											
Apartment Development	Vacant		0	8	11	13	18	20	17	21	22
	Mid-Rise Residential		-197	-189	-186	-155	-110	-108	-81	-77	-76
Condominium Development	Vacant		41	49	52	54	59	61	58	62	63
	Mid-Rise Residential		-156	-148	-145	-74	-69	-67	-41	-37	-35

KEY: Feasible >\$25/GSF
Marginal \$0-25
Not Feasible <50

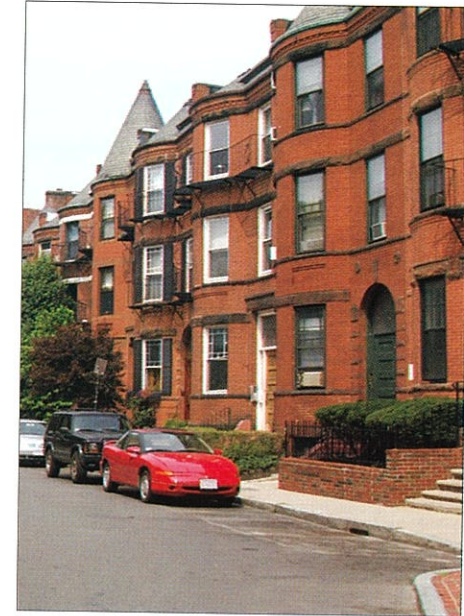
Observations: Highest and Best Use

The highest and best use study concluded that:

- With one exception, none of the development scenarios examined produce values on completion sufficient to motivate an owner to demolish existing improvements to build market rate rental apartments. In the one scenario where demolition and redevelopment would be feasible - existing low-rise buildings on large lots (just a few parcels along Huntington Avenue) - it is only marginally so and only at new development heights above nine stories.
- Even at the maximum heights examined (12 stories), existing building improvements generated acquisition prices high enough to preclude the development of rental apartments.
- New condominium development on existing low-rise sites (along Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues) begins to generate greater value than the existing improvements as the heights approach the 12-story threshold (6 or 9 stories is generally not enough).
- New condominium development on the mid-rise apartment sites (typical buildings along Westland Avenue or Hemenway Street) does not generate enough value to justify new construction because existing site densities are relatively high already.
- Ground floor commercial uses make a significant contribution to development feasibility and financial performance.
- The cost of constructing underground parking has a serious, negative impact on development feasibility.

This is good news from the point of view that without major new zoning initiatives that would permit greater height and density than is currently allowed, market and development pressures are not likely to produce wide-spread, character-altering demolition or wholesale redevelopment efforts in the neighborhood. It is bad news in the sense that the major reinvestment in the existing stock, which is much needed throughout the neighborhood, is also unlikely to occur without incentives.

The analysis also indicates that with zoning changes allowing for mid-rise development new construction could be supported in certain places and under certain conditions specifically on those sites currently occupied by small or low cost buildings. The major challenge of the plan from an economic point of view is how to incent reinvestment in the existing stock without the unintended consequences of height, density and ultimately gentrification.



HOUSING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The economic build-out analysis suggests that renovation of the housing stock is feasible, while demolition of existing buildings to build new ones is not. New development would only be feasible in a very small number of lots – parcels with low-rise and low cost existing buildings, and only if building heights are higher than 9 stories. In this regard, it appears that the potential to build new affordable housing units through new development (for moderate-income level households) will be limited (likely in the order of tens rather than hundreds of units.) From this point of view, policy decisions need to be considered by public agencies and the city government if the existing population diversity and neighborhood character wants to be retained:

Preserve the Existing Supply of Affordable Housing

- Work with owners of at-risk properties to improve and preserve the quality of the housing stock.
- Monitor the market for other opportunities and establishing early contact with property owners.
- Encourage participation in maintaining affordable housing, housing opportunities, and protection of units for low and moderate-income occupancy over the long term.
- Support efforts to require that a minimum of ten percent of housing units in new developments be preserved as affordable units.
- Limit the impact of any loss of affordable units needed for the income category served (80-120% of median income.)

Encourage Owner Occupancy of Housing Units

- Continue to support the concept of owner occupancy of condominium units, although increasing sales prices will severely limit the chances of home ownership for moderate-income households.



- Work with City agencies and other funding sources to establish programs that provide funding assistance to write down purchase prices for income-eligible buyers.

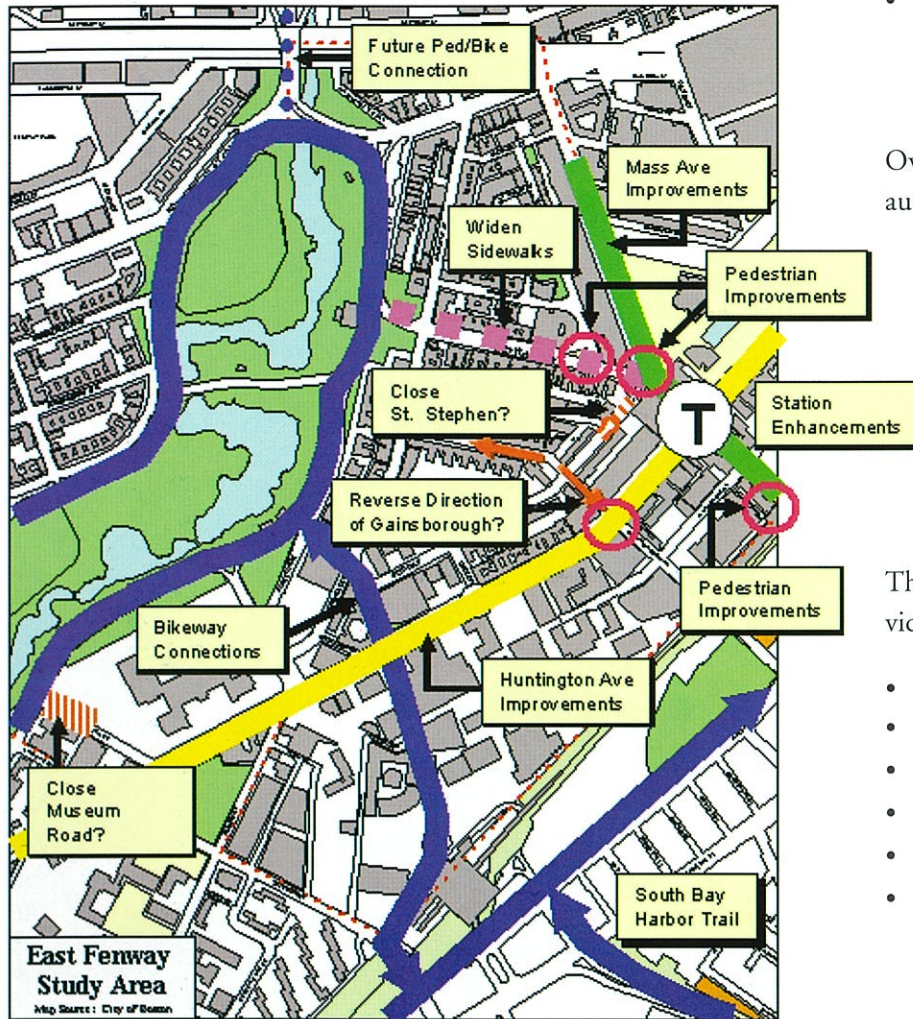
Continue Seeking New Housing Concepts

- Explore and implement new possibilities for mixed income and tenancy occupancy for on campus housing developments, such as the ones recommended in the section on Institutions.
- Integrate energy efficiency and green design concepts to reduce costs over time.



TRANSPORTATION

The overall transportation strategy consists of three major sets of actions that will set the future pattern of transportation demand and service throughout the East Fenway:



- Plan and build street and intersection improvements that encourage reliance on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use rather than private vehicles. In other words, favor the pedestrian movement of residents rather than through traffic.
- Develop parking regulations that minimize the amount of parking required for new development.
- Encourage shared use of institutional parking for special events and overnight parking by residents with sticker IDs. Encourage the use of shared cars.

Over time, the combination of these strategies is expected to reduce auto dependence within the neighborhood for residents, employees and visitors. Future development or redevelopment, whose potential is limited in East Fenway, will occur within this policy context. An illustrative analysis is provided at the end of this section.

The enclosed map summarizes the elements of the transportation strategy discussed during the planning process.

TRANSPORTATION STRATEGIES

The proposed strategies and site-specific recommendations are subdivided into the following categories:

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Transit System
- Street Improvements
- Circulation Changes
- Parking Ratios
- Transportation Management Association

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Strategy

Set a pattern of pedestrian and bicycle routes that encourage these modes. Adjust intersection signal timing, provide ADA compliant pedestrian accommodation, and use traffic calming measures to encourage reliance on walking and bicycling.

Actions

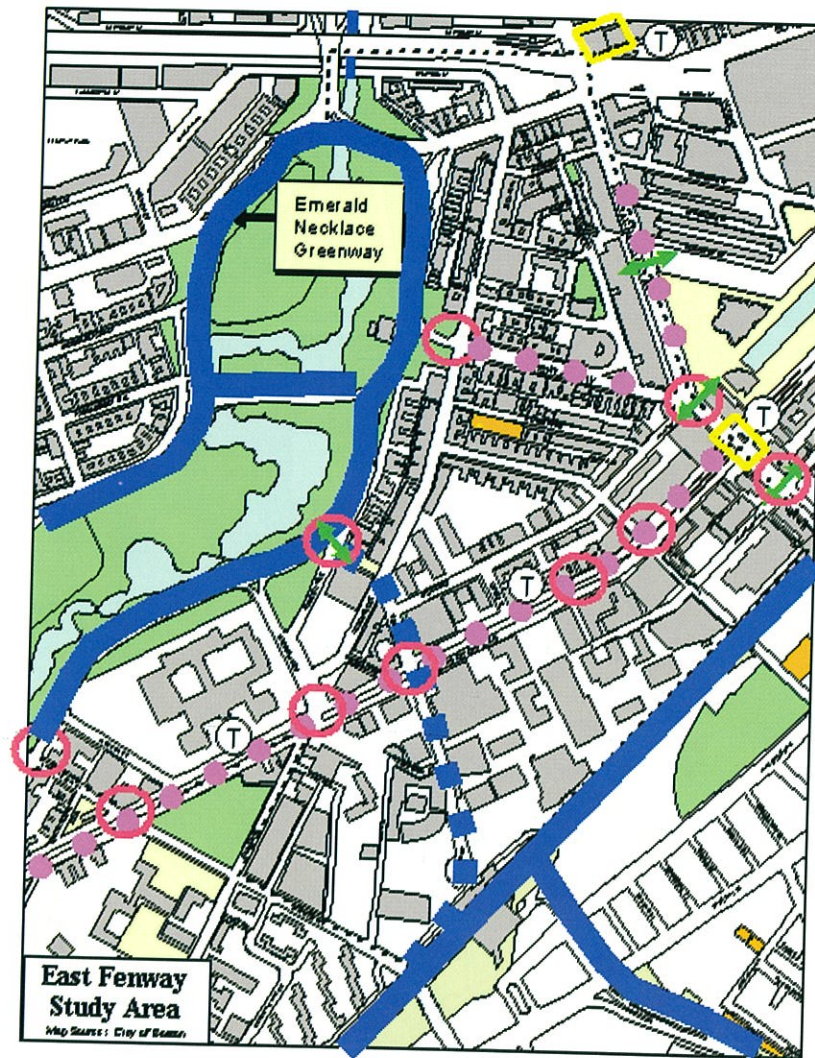
A broad range of physical improvements should be planned as a system and gradually implemented as funding become available:

New or Enhanced Crosswalks: Along Boylston Street, Massachusetts Avenue intersections, Christian Science Center, Westland Avenue, St. Botolph Street, the Fenway at Forsyth Institute passage and Forsyth Way, Hemenway at Forsyth Institute, mid-block crossings of Massachusetts Avenue and the Southwest Corridor Park, and at the Mass. Ave. T station.

Pedestrian Accommodation: Many intersections in the study area do not fully comply with ADA and City standards for pedestrian ramps at intersections. Single apex ramps should be replaced with separate ramps on each corner wherever feasible per the City's *Pedestrian Safety Guidelines for Residential Streets* (2001).

Wider Sidewalks: Provide additional sidewalk width and pedestrian safety improvements along Boylston Street between Park Drive and Massachusetts Avenue. This can be accomplished in the 60-foot roadway cross-section by restricting parking at intersections and adding bulbouts on Boylston Street at Massachusetts Avenue. On the north side of the street, wider sidewalks could also be provided as part of the building setback for any potential air rights development at the Mass Ave/Boylston Street intersection.

In conjunction with other proposed street improvements in the area, the sidewalk on the north side of Westland Avenue should be widened between Hemenway Street and Edgerly Road. A more detailed discussion is included in the Urban Design section of this document.



Signage and Maps: Develop an improved wayfinding signage system to help pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Particular attention should be given to locations such as the Avenue of the Arts, the Christian Science Center, and T stations. The proposed web site for cultural events should reflect signage and provide wayfinding maps along with event calendars.

Traffic Calming: To be safe and effective, traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps, islands, etc., have to be developed on a site by site basis. They must conform to the City's *Pedestrian Safety Guidelines for Residential Streets* (2001) administered by the Boston Transportation Department (BTD). The design process must also include input from the Boston Department of Public Works (DPW) with respect to snow plowing and other maintenance issues. A number of these improvements have already been incorporated into the redesign of Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues.

- Provide intersection signal improvements and crosswalk bulbouts at major pedestrian crossings, including:
 - Massachusetts Avenue: Boylston, Westland, Huntington, St. Botolph, Southwest Corridor crossing
 - Huntington Avenue: Massachusetts, Gainsborough, Forsyth Way, Forsyth Street
 - Westland Avenue: Edgerly, Hemenway
 - Boylston Street: Massachusetts, Hemenway
 - Hemenway Street: Westland, Forsyth Street
- Restripe the north side of Westland Avenue to narrow travel lanes at both the Fenway and Mass Ave. ends.
- Undertake the stepwise process to improve pedestrian safety at the Gainsborough and St. Stephen Street intersection. Clearing sight

lines and the existing signal is the first step. Preliminary analysis suggests that a multiway stop control and crosswalk bulbouts at the intersection would help reduce travel speeds and improve pedestrian safety.

Bicycle Accommodation: The East Fenway bicycle path system should be integrated into the wider Boston network in a number of ways:

- Create a bike path extension from Ruggles Station to the Fenway via Forsyth Street and the Forsyth Institute passage. This would connect the Southwest Corridor, Melnea Cass Boulevard, and the Fens' Muddy Riverbike paths. A new crosswalk with actuated signals would provide safe passage between Forsyth Way and the Fens.
- In conjunction with the Forsyth Street branch, provide a direct connection across the Fenway for bikes and pedestrians traveling along the Muddy River. While grade separation is not necessarily required, a safer, more direct connection could be facilitated through provision of traffic signal control. Coordinate any signalized crossing with proposed improvements at the Forsyth Way signal.
- Narrow the width of the vehicular travel lane along Westland Avenue between Edgerly Road and Hemenway Street. Reallocate that dimension to provide a shared parking and bicycle lane (14 feet wide) and widen sidewalks by 4-6 feet on the north side of the street.
- Pave or resurface existing bike paths running parallel to the Muddy River.
- Continue to plan for and implement three bike path "branches" from the Emerald Necklace system through the Fenway. These branches include connections from the Muddy River to Kenmore Square, Forsyth Street, and the Charles River. The Forsyth Street branch is currently under design by the Boston Parks Department.
- Provide bicycle racks at the mid-block signalized crossing of Mas-

sachusetts Avenue, at the Massachusetts Avenue Orange Line Station, and the Southwest Corridor Park/Pierre Lallement Bikeway on the east side of Ruggles Station.

Transit System

Strategy

In concert with pedestrian strategies, support improvements to the transit infrastructure that provide a viable alternative to driving by offering quality service and meeting increased ridership demands.

Actions

Both planning studies and near-term physical/management improvements are recommended.

Despite the availability of some reserve transit capacity, significant investments must be made to increase line capacity to meet the increased demand of developments outside the study area as well as the incremental demand of East Fenway redevelopment. These “exterior” developments will lay claim to new and existing available capacity on the transit system, especially any Massachusetts Turnpike Air Rights development and expansion of institutions in the Longwood Medical Area.

Green Line Capacity: Support restoration of Arborway trolley service and the advancement of the Urban Ring project.

Symphony Station:

- Boarding counts should be updated to help gauge the cost/benefit of different kinds of improvements
- Provide staffed kiosks to enhance passenger security.
- Improve interior finishes to enhance aesthetics.

- Discuss Adopt-A-Station as a means of maintaining the station
- Plan for long-term improvements such as escalators, station consolidation or enhancements to Symphony plaza area. Resolving the issues due to the separation of platforms and the need to cross the Mass Ave/Huntington Ave intersection at-grade are the major design challenges.

Massachusetts Avenue Station: Construct a mid-block pedestrian crossing at Massachusetts Avenue, as currently planned at the Southwest Corridor crossing as part of the Mass Ave reconstruction project.

Transit Signal Priority: Include transit vehicle priority with new traffic signals or modifications to existing equipment where feasible, as has been done on Huntington Avenue for trolleys. Coupled with a beacon installed on the bus, the green time at a traffic signal can be extended a few seconds to allow a bus to proceed through the intersection.

Shuttle Buses:

- Encourage all private bus operators, including MASCO and the Boston Red Sox, to present implementation timelines for conversion to clean fuel vehicles.
- Consolidate institutional and private shuttle buses to reduce unnecessary circulation, parking, idling and air pollution.

None of the transit system improvements mentioned above preclude the phased implementation plans for the Urban Ring alternatives.

Possible public use of the private shuttle systems should be investigated. The Red Sox Fenway Park shuttle to/from Ruggles Station shows that this kind of service is possible, at least for special events. However, it must be very carefully thought through because it is a very complex issue which raises many liability as well as federal labor protection issues, e.g. Sect. 13c.

Street Improvements

Strategy

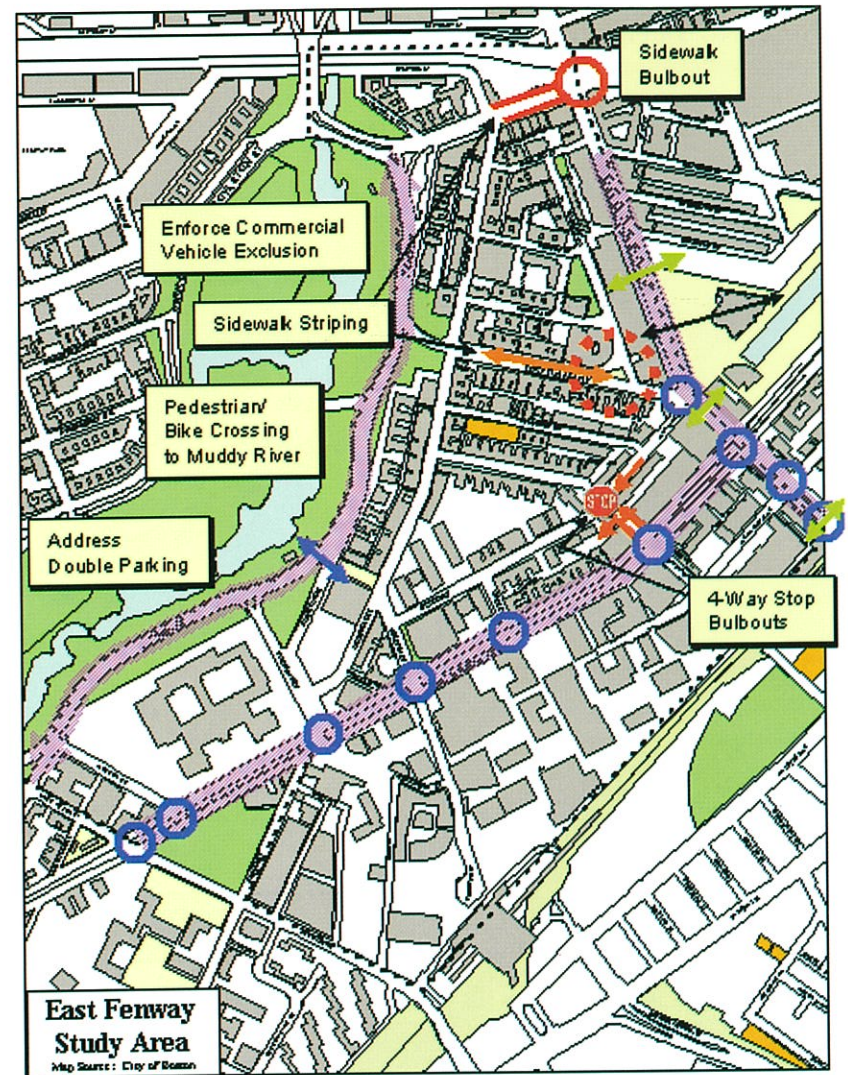
Develop improvements that encourage through traffic to stay out of the residential neighborhood. Continue implementing ongoing improvement projects on Mass Ave and Huntington Ave (illustrated on pages 44 and 45).

Actions

In addition to ongoing planning and street improvements such as street reconstruction and intersection improvements including crosswalks and signals on Mass Ave and Huntington Ave, a number of other improvements are proposed:

Intersection/Traffic Control Improvements

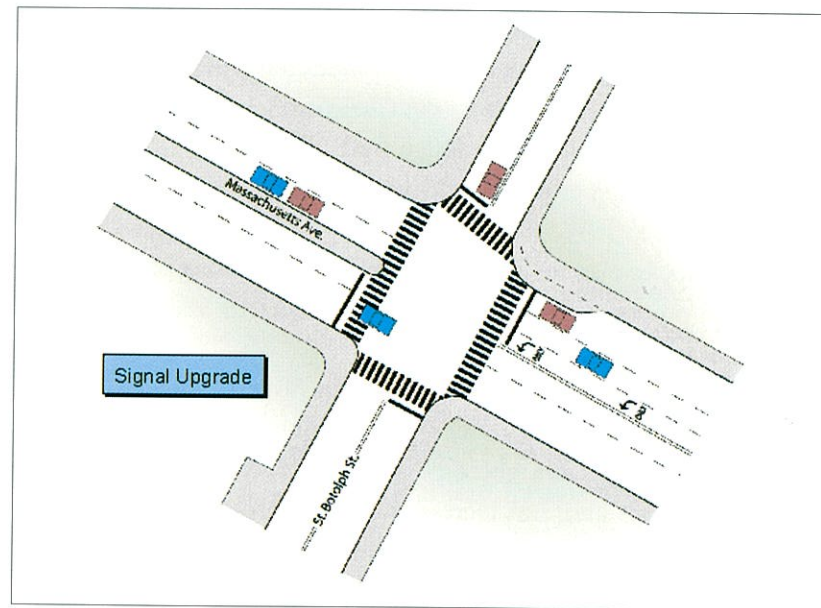
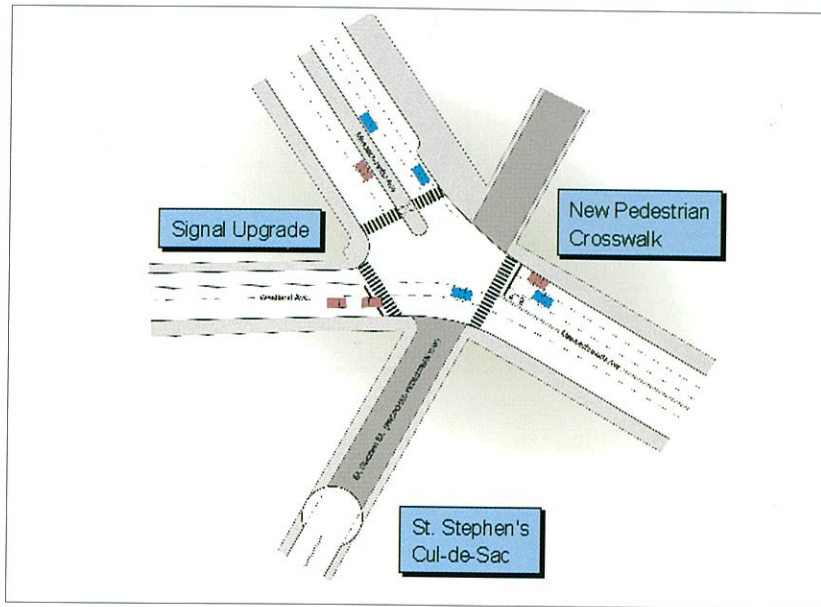
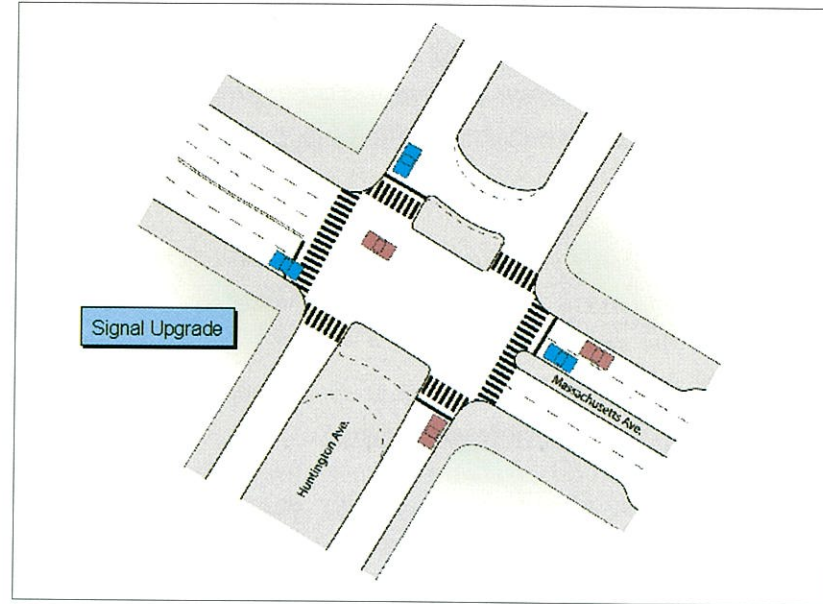
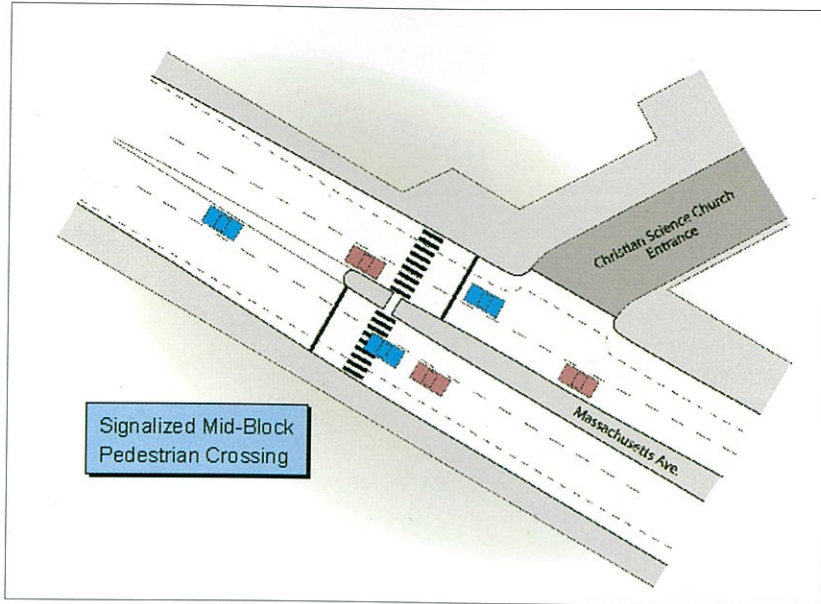
- Support BTD plans to retime, modify, or replace existing traffic signals along Massachusetts Avenue to incorporate pedestrian phases which encourage their use (i.e., wait times for the crossing phase that are not excessively long) and improve their accessibility, e.g., push buttons, audible signals.
- Provide upgraded signalized mid-block crossing at the Massachusetts Avenue entrance to the Christian Science Center, as proposed in the preliminary design by BPW.
- Add a stop sign at the Massachusetts Avenue exit of the Christian Science Center.
- Continue to plan for a signalized pedestrian crossing of the Fenway at the proposed Forsyth Street and the Forsyth Way bicycle path connection
- Construct neckdowns at the Boylston Street/Massachusetts Avenue intersection to reduce the crossing distance, as feasible. Decrease curb radii where possible, in order to minimize pavement surface area and increase sidewalk space.
- Study whether it is better to eliminate the Right Turn on Red sign from Boylston Street eastbound to Massachusetts Avenue



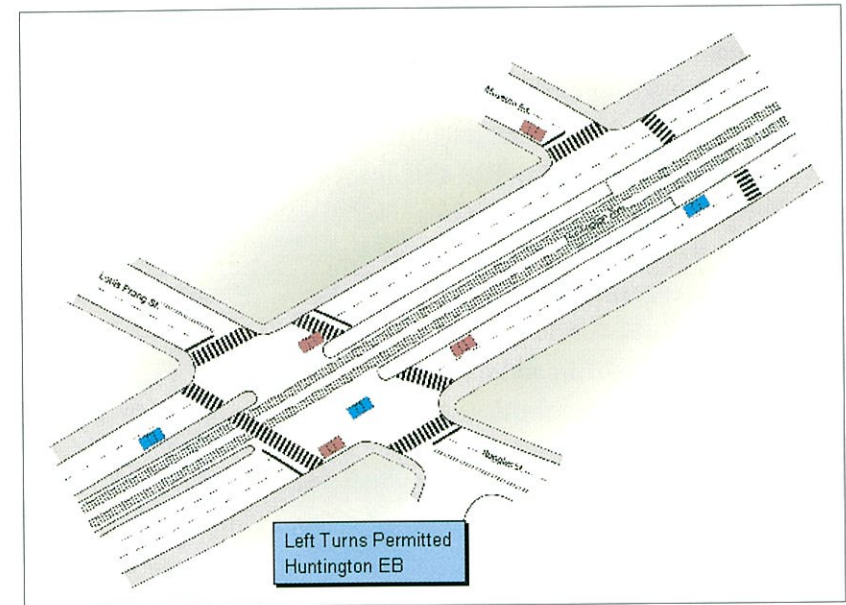
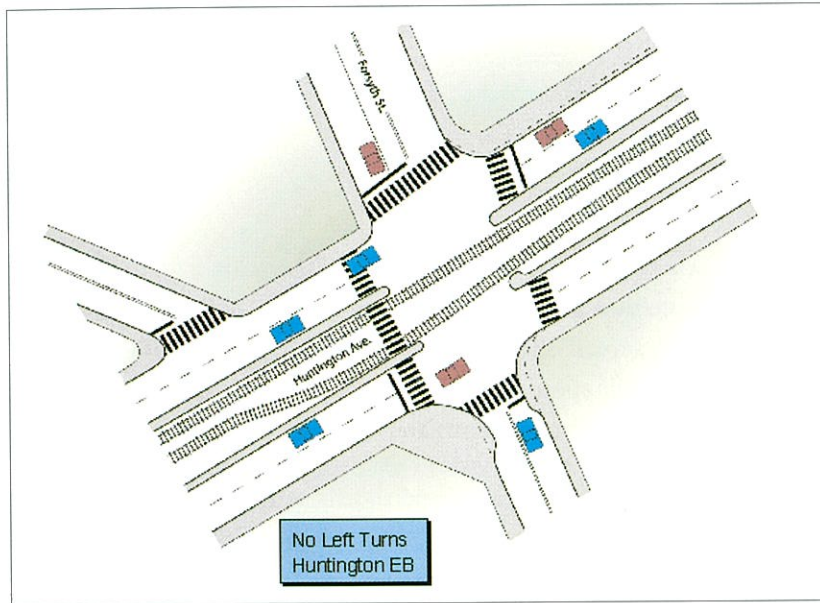
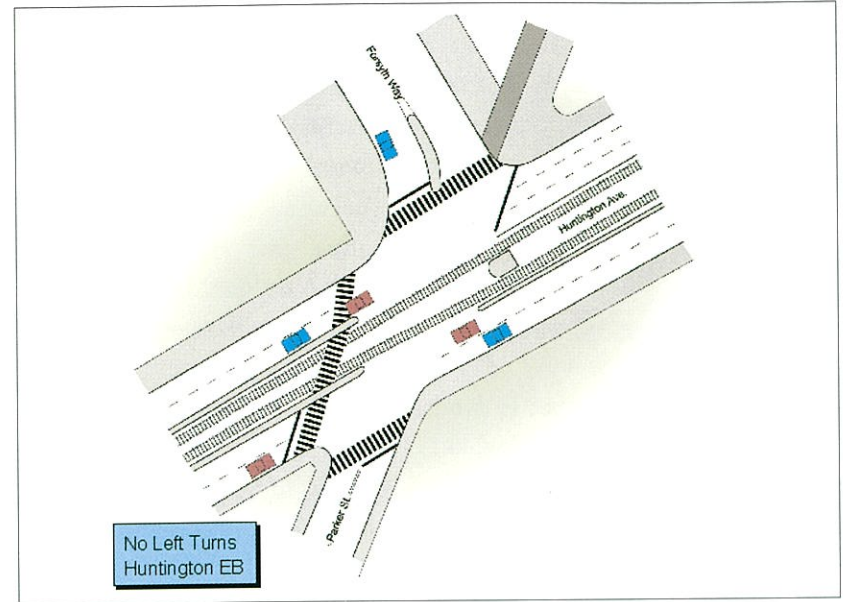
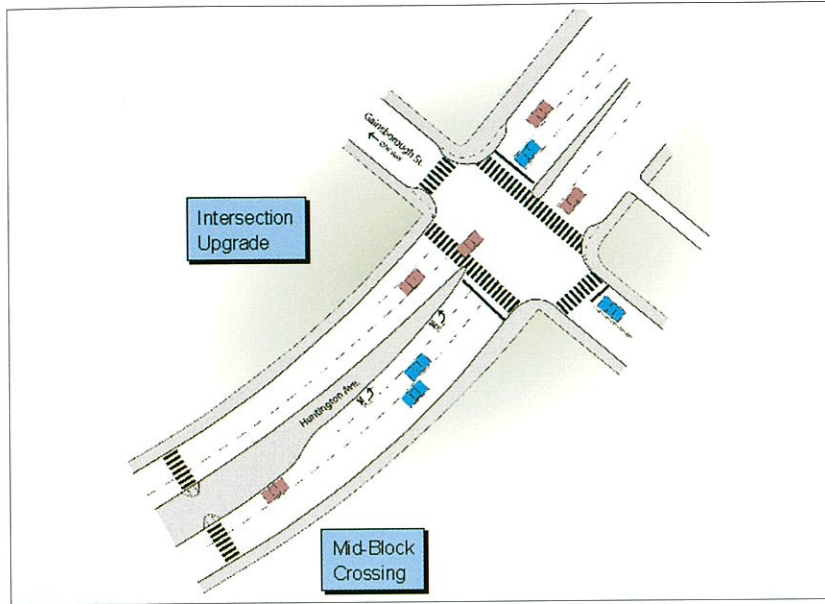
southbound or to place “Yield to Pedestrians” signs, and at this and other locations, as appropriate.

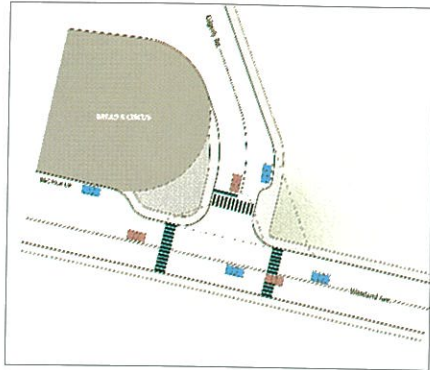
- Modify or construct new curb cuts with pedestrian ramps that meet ADA requirements where needed.

ONGOING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ON MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE



ONGOING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ON HUNTINGTON AVENUE





Proposed Westland/Ederly Intersection

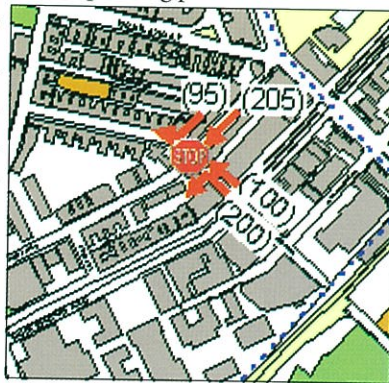
- Reconstruct Westland and Ederly intersection at Bread & Circus to simplify parcel pickup and pedestrian crossings.
- Delimit parking lanes on Westland and Boylston Street between Massachusetts Avenue and Hemenway with bulbouts.
- At its eastern end near Ederly Road, restripe

Westland Ave so that is two-lanes towards rather than away from the Mass Ave intersection.

- Review the proposed cul-de-sac treatment of St. Stephen Street between Mass Ave and Symphony Road in conjunction with other proposed pedestrian improvements at the Massachusetts Avenue/St. Stephen/Westland intersection. Emergency access through the intersection must be maintained. (Circulation changes are discussed in more detail below.)

Gainsborough/St. Stephen Street Intersection:

Cars currently speeding through this intersection make crossing hazardous for pedestrians and vehicles alike. Speeding problems can be addressed by following applying City guidelines presented in Pedestrian Safety Guidelines for Residential Streets (BTD, 2001). In addition, a step-by-step process established by BTD should be followed to monitor performance and adjust controls as needed. The process involves the following steps:



Pre-Screening Criteria

- Designated as a Local Residential Street
- 500 vehicles per day <Average Daily Traffic<5,000 vehicles per day
- 85% of traffic goes over 30 mph for a 24-hour period
- Current speed limit ≤ 30 mph
- Evaluate accident data
- Public meetings for discussing concepts

Stage 1 – Project Evaluation

- Signage
- Turn restrictions
- Pavement markings
- Changes in street direction
- Creation of one-way streets
- Truck restrictions/prohibitions
- Coordination with emergency response

Stage 2 – Additional Physical Changes

- Curb extensions (neckdowns)
- Traffic circles
- Full or partial street closures
- Use of center island narrowings (to reduce crossing distance)
- Speed bumps/tables
- Raised intersections
- Landscaping elements
- Lighting changes

Existing information about PM peak hour volumes indicates that the intersection meets several of the pre-screening criteria for eligibility. Others such as 85-percentile speed and accident experience require further study. The preliminary recommendations are:

- 1) Clear the sight lines to signs and signals at intersections, and
- 2) Provide four-way stop sign at Gainsborough/St. Stephen intersection to slow traffic.

After these changes are made, BTD will evaluate intersection performance and potential addition of the Stage 1 and 2 actions described above. BTD would then determine whether additional traffic calming measures to slow down traffic were needed. Coordination with Boston Public Works Department, Public Improvements Commission is required to implement any of these measures.

Long Term Improvements

Longer term improvements are planning projects which are typically considered first by BTD and then implemented by appropriate City agencies such as BPW or BPD. A number of such potential changes were felt to merit detailed attention:

- Improve enforcement of parking regulations on Boston streets (Boston Parking Department) and the Fenway (Metropolitan District Commission.)
- Study the reconfiguration of the Massachusetts and Huntington Avenue surface roads and underpass. The traffic analysis should include intersections from Westland Ave. to St. Botolph streets on Mass Ave., as well as at least one block east and west on Huntington Ave. to encompass both sides of the underpass.

Circulation Changes

Strategy

Change street directions to redirect through traffic away from neighborhood streets or to support specific development projects.

Actions

Potential circulation modifications involving changes in street configurations were studied both as stand-alone changes and in combination. Five alternatives were evaluated for traffic diversions and intersection Level of Service, based on PM peak hour traffic volumes:

- Existing Conditions

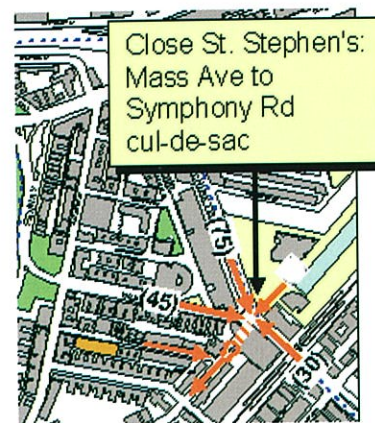
The existing street circulation pattern generates several problems for neighborhood residents. Traffic cuts through the neighborhood on Westland Avenue, Hemenway, Gainsborough and St. Stephen Streets. Travel speeds are such as to create safety problems. In addition, internal circulation presents problems for residents.

- Close St. Stephen Street at Mass Ave

Possible with specific safeguards.— This particular change would benefit pedestrians and traffic at the Westland/Massachusetts Avenue intersection, and eliminate some cut-through traffic. As

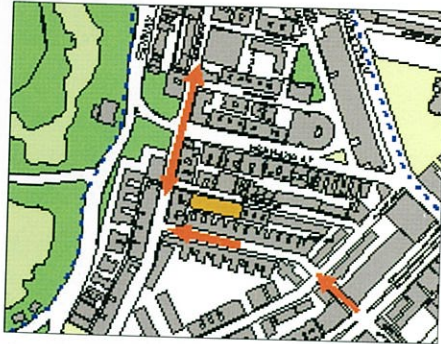
shown, minor volumes would be re-directed onto Edgerly and Symphony as well as Westland. The change would possibly allow extension of Symphony Hall activities across St. Stephen at a second level.

However, from a transportation perspective, the closure is only acceptable if pedestrian and emergency vehicle access can be maintained between Massachusetts Avenue, St. Stephen Street and Symphony Road.



There are other criteria that need to be considered in addition to transportation requirements, such as the perception of the community. Members of the Task Force expressed their concern about setting a precedent in the neighborhood by closing a public street to vehicular traffic. Concerns have also been raised about a potential loss of visual and spatial connections to Mass Ave and the Christian Science Center if the intersection is blocked by a new entrance or

addition to Symphony Hall. The Task Force suggested that the impacts and effects of closing the intersection could be tested on a temporary basis if changes increase pedestrian safety, and it is ensured that visual and pedestrian continuity are maintained. Adoption of any permanent changes to the intersection should be subject to further review by the community.



Circulation changes that were evaluated

- Reverse Gainsborough between St. Stephen and Huntington Ave

Not recommended – The one-block reversal would not affect the operation of Gainsborough and Symphony as a one-way pair.

However, diverted vehicles would noticeably degrade traffic level of service on Westland, Hemenway, and Louis Prang.

- Make Hemenway Street one-way

Not recommended – This action was reviewed with Hemenway as one-way northbound as well as a one-way split at Westland, i.e. northbound only to Boylston Street and southbound only to Huntington Ave. Diverted vehicles would noticeably degrade traffic level of service on the Fenway, Massachusetts Avenue, and Huntington Ave. It would also complicate movement within the neighborhood.

- Combine all the potential circulation changes

Not recommended – Diverted vehicles would have noticeable level of service impacts on neighborhood and major arterial streets.

Of all the potential changes in street directions that were analyzed, only the closure of St. Stephen Street at Mass Ave is not likely to have noticeable impacts on street and intersection level of service. However, as noted, such a change is not appropriate unless emergency vehicle access can be continue to be assured across this link.

Zoning and Parking Ratios

Strategy

Change zoning to discourage parking by commuters, minimize resident parking demand, and encourage non-auto dependent transportation.

Actions

Modify zoning language to reflect the goal of encouraging non-auto dependent transportation.

Zoning: Maximum and minimum parking ratios for new residential and non-residential land uses affect the number of local vehicle trips as well as the level of general traffic. After considerable discussion and comparisons with similar neighborhoods in Boston, the Fenway Planning Task Force feels that a balance should be struck between traffic generation and how the number of parking spaces affects the financial feasibility of new projects. As with the West Fenway, the consensus was that the following ratios should be incorporated into revised zoning for the area:

- Off-street residential parking ratio should be:
Minimum: 0.75 spaces/unit
Maximum: 0.75 spaces/unit
- Off-street parking ratio for all other uses should be:
Minimum: none
Maximum: 0.75 spaces/1000 gsf of building

In order to further reduce dependence on private automobiles, the Task

Conclusions

Force felt very strongly that parking for shared vehicles should be required in new structures. The City has prepared draft zoning language which reflects this goal and is included below.

DRAFT ZONING FOR ALTERNATIVE PARKING OPTIONS

“Article 80 Section 80B-4. Standards for Large Project Review Approval

4. Transportation Access Plan Alternative Transportation Guidelines. If the Transportation Access Plan for a Proposed Project includes a Parking Management Element, pursuant to Section 80B-3.1a, such Element shall assess the need for alternative parking options, including a Car Sharing, Bicycle parking and car pool/van pool parking, as a means of minimizing the number of accessory parking spaces, promoting a more sustainable pattern of development and efficient use of land, and promoting good design. The following guidelines shall apply in determining the need for alternative parking spaces:

- (a) Proposed Projects with a gross floor area of 100,000 square feet or more should provide at least two (2) car sharing spaces,
- (b) If forty (40) or more accessory parking spaces are proposed, the Proposed Project should provide bicycle parking spaces, subject to Boston Transportation Department (BTD) standards, equal to approximately ten (10) percent of the vehicular spaces. Bicycle parking shall include both short and long term spaces, as defined by BTD.
- (c) Car pool/van pool parking spaces should be provided, as needed, in accordance with BTD standards.

Article 2 Definitions, Article 2A Definitions Applicable in Neighborhood Districts and in Article 80, Development Review and Approval

“Car Sharing”, a geographically distributed fleet of private vehicles owned by a common carrier and made available to a specified group of users, usually through membership, on a 24-hour basis, primarily for short-term, hourly, round-trip use. A car sharing space shall be considered to be accessory to a main use on the lot.”

Task Force discussion of shared parking requirements made the point that

while the proposed regulation would require shared car spaces in large projects, providers of such services are commercial enterprises which should pay rent for these specially designated spaces.

Transportation Management Association (TMA)

Strategy

Encourage institutions to formalize coordination on transportation issues to reduce auto use, parking demand, and congestion on a daily basis as well as for special events.

Actions

Build on the Fenway Alliance initiative, its member institutions, and its programs to continue expanding and strengthening the emerging TMA.

As of late summer 2002, the member institutions of the Fenway Alliance announced that they had begun to coordinate some of their transportation activities. The range of activities to be addressed for the East Fenway includes:

- Promote the Avenue of the Arts as an organizing concept for wayfinding signage and image.
- Coordinate transportation and parking for major events via media and Internet, e.g. single web site for maps, parking availability, transit stops, etc.
- Develop coordinated wayfinding signage for streets, transit stations, and web site working with the City and MBTA.
- Coordinate and consolidate bus parking for major functions.
- Implement employee incentives for car-free commuting, e.g. paid T passes, Caravan and van pool programs, provision of bicycle racks, shuttles from T stations, preferential parking for van pools and shared

cars.

- Develop methods to share institutional parking resources for nighttime use by residents with parking stickers.

IMPACT OF POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Housing and Economics section of this plan describes the process followed to identify and quantify mixed-use development opportunities that would be financially feasible under current market conditions. The analysis identified potential sites along Huntington and Massachusetts Avenues, two of the proposed mixed-use corridors. The estimated level of development would support approximately 300 to 350 new residential units, and approximately 300 to 350 new off-street parking spaces. These would increase the total number of residential units in the neighborhood from 5,500 to 5,850 (6% increase), and the total number of parking spaces from 5,000 to 5,350 (7% increase).

At this planning level, it is impossible to accurately estimate the specific impacts of any potential development. The small scale of development and potential build-out that is considered feasible within the residential area of East Fenway presents few impacts to the transportation infrastructure or to the pedestrian environment such as congestion. In addition, the plans of Northeastern University are intended to reduce auto-based commuter travel and currently propose no additional parking.

- Street Traffic – Vehicular traffic generation from potential new development would be low, and in many cases represents little more than replacement of existing trips. The same holds true for transit and walk trips.
- Transit – The capacity available to this area through Green Line,

Orange Line and MBTA bus service is reflected in one of the highest transit and walk mode shares (78%) compared to Boston's citywide average of 51%. The shift in commuter behavior towards a maximum 30% peak hour target share for West Fenway commuting by car already is a fact in the East Fenway.

Primarily due to the fact that proposed land uses are replacements of existing uses, the potential development density is not expected to tax an MBTA system already at capacity on some rapid transit lines and bus routes. The Orange and Green rapid transit lines serving East Fenway are estimated to be at 50%-70% of capacity. For the near term, redundant bus service to the "E" branch of the Green Line along Huntington Avenue is provided via Bus Route 39. With the restoration of trolley service to the Arborway, this bus route will be eliminated, but transit capacity will not be appreciably reduced. In the longer term, the Urban Ring will bring increased transit capacity to East Fenway and abutting areas.

Overall, the walk/bike, transit, and auto trips associated with the estimated level and location of future development are within the capacity and acceptable level of service of the existing transportation system in the East Fenway. Detailed transportation analysis should be performed in the future as part of the necessary project review and approval processes when, and if any particular development proposal is made.

URBAN DESIGN

The planning process has served to confirm and make clear that East Fenway is a neighborhood with a special urban design character and livability, which are highly appreciated and cherished by its residents. Throughout numerous meetings, interviews and conversations with residents and owners, it has become apparent that the neighborhood can be better, but should not be substantially changed. Beautification, cleaning and maintenance of public spaces is one of the major concerns that have been repeatedly expressed. Protection of the neighborhood historic and architectural character is another. A desire for more home ownership and, ideally, an increase in the number of children living in the neighborhood has also been manifested.

As a response to those needs and desires expressed by the community, the proposed urban design strategies are based on three complementary sets of recommendations – beautifying public spaces and making streets more amenable for pedestrians and bicyclists; identifying locations where limited growth could take place in order to create home ownership opportunities, while preserving the character of the existing urban fabric throughout the rest of the neighborhood; and looking beyond the current possibilities to a long-term transportation vision that could bring a positive benefit to the quality of the public realm. These are the following:

- Baseline improvements
- Targeted growth
- Broad vision

It is important to mention that funding is not available for the proposed improvements at this time. However, they are noted here as an expression of the community vision and guidelines for future planning.

BASELINE IMPROVEMENTS

Baseline improvements represent the basic streetscape design and transportation elements that would contribute to make the neighborhood more attractive and livable for all. These type of improvements typically contribute to enhance the accessibility, aesthetics and safety of the public environment, including streets, parks and open space, and public transportation services.

In East Fenway in particular, these improvements will require the implementation of streetscape programs aimed at highlighting key points of entrance to the neighborhood or “gateways” by providing special design elements, directional signage, and pedestrian amenities; changing to “acorn” type street lighting on residential streets; complementing existing plantings of street trees along the streets most frequently traveled by pedestrians, in order to create “green corridors”; creating a special image for public spaces within the Cultural District through the use of streetscape elements, informational signage and public art; and providing pedestrian and bicycle improvements at streets and intersections, as described in the section on Transportation.

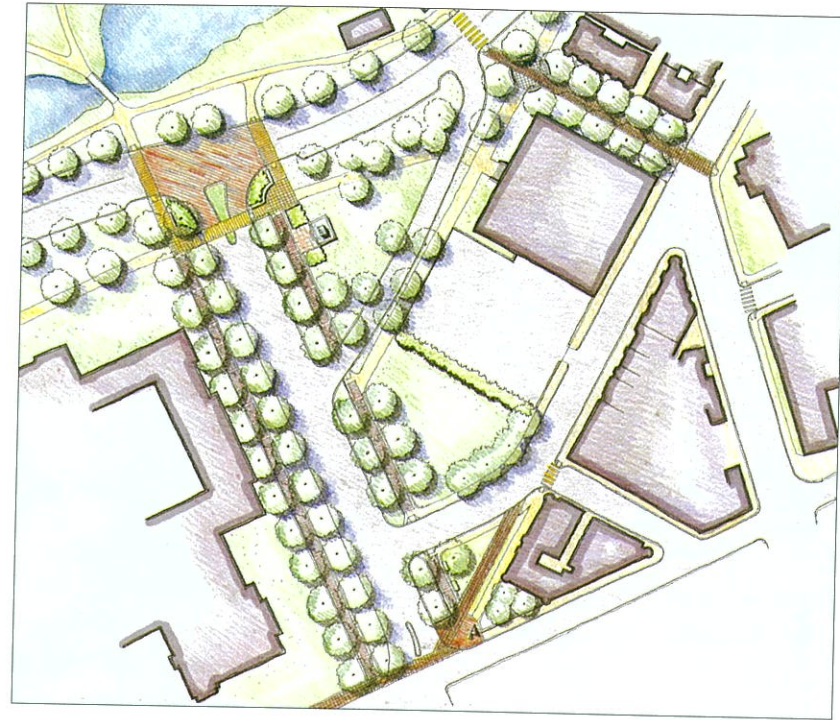
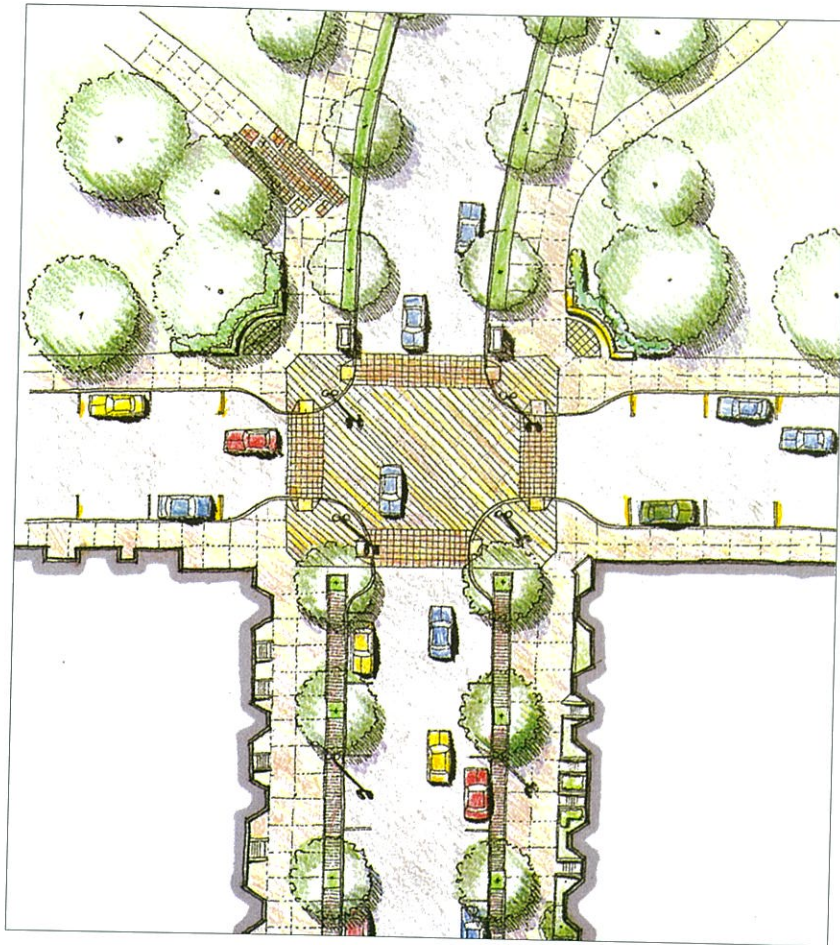
Gateways

Westland Gate

- Define the intersection with pavement patterns or designs that integrate the existing columns, balusters and benches into the design plan, in a way that the existing historic qualities are respected and maintained.



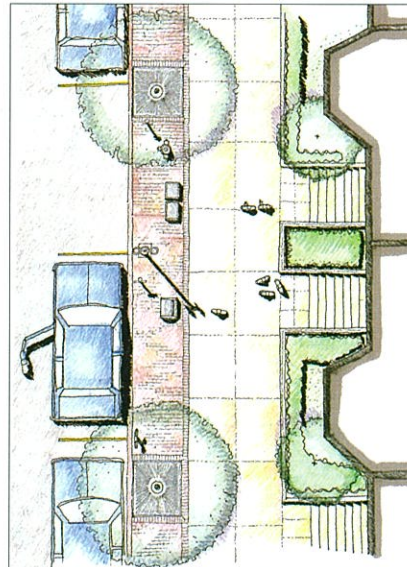
- Consider using specialty paving to create a “carpet” feeling across the intersection, by employing brick and modular pavers to slow down traffic and enhance the quality of pedestrian connections across the street.
- Add sidewalk extensions or “bulbouts” at the corners for better crosswalk definition.
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle intersection improvements as recommended in the section on Transportation.



Forsyth Park

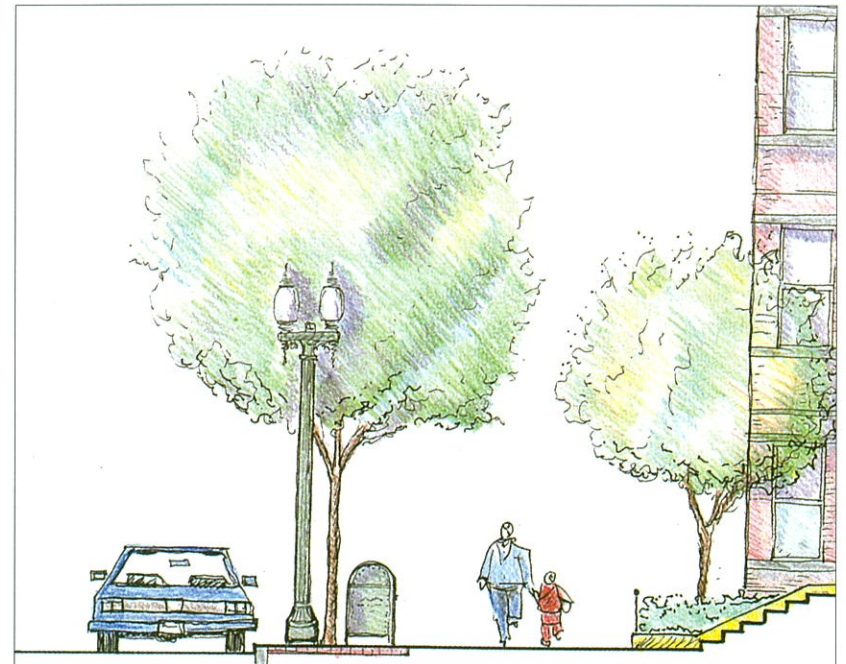
- Define the intersection with pavement patterns or designs in a way that integrates the existing monument and statue to the design plan and responds to future museum improvements at the corner.
- Consider using specialty paving to create a “carpet” feeling across the intersection, by employing brick and modular pavers to slow down traffic and enhance the quality of pedestrian connections across the street.
- Add crosswalks on the eastern side of Forsyth Way and the Forsyth Institute passage, and provide a pedestrian light at the most appropriate and effective location.
- Preserve the existing mature trees and complement with new tree plantings.

Green Corridors



Westland Avenue

- Add a 6-foot brick extension to the north sidewalk between Ederly and Hemenway to allow for larger tree pits and the location of street furniture, such as ornamental lighting fixtures (“acorn” type), hydrants, bicycle racks, mailboxes, etc.
- Add a 4-foot brick extension to the north sidewalk between Ederly and Massachusetts Avenue to allow for the planting of street trees.
- Replace the existing cobra lights by ornamental lighting fixtures similar to the ones used along Huntington Avenue.
- Relocate and redesign Harry Ellis Dickson Park to make it directly accessible from the sidewalk, if the Westland/Ederly intersection is reconstructed to simplify pedestrian crossings as recommended in the section on Transportation.



Forsyth Way

- Preserve the existing mature trees, and replace the trees lost to illness and decay along the sidewalk with new plantings.
- Provide ornamental lighting fixtures similar to the ones along Huntington Avenue (“acorn” type).

Forsyth Street

- Provide accommodation for bicycles linking Ruggles Station to the Fenway as planned by the Boston Transportation Department.
- Refurbish the Forsyth Institute passageway with period ornamental lighting fixtures (“acorn” type) and new low plantings.

The Fenway

- Initiate partnerships and joint programs with the MDC and institutional owners along the Fenway to improve the maintenance of sidewalks, trees and public open space.
- Seek and pursue the construction of improvements to make the Fens universally accessible.
- Support initiatives to maintain status of the Fenway as a parkway.

Cultural District

Avenue of the Arts

Huntington Avenue has been renamed Avenue of the Arts through part of its length as a tribute to some of the prime cultural institutions in the city and the region, all located along its sides – Symphony Hall, the Museum of Fine Arts, Huntington Theatre, New England Conservatory of Music, Massachusetts College of Art, etc. This is one in a series of initiatives started and developed as part of the Fenway Cultural District and the Mayor’s Office that deserve widespread support and recognition.

Significant streetscape improvements are currently underway along Huntington Avenue as part of renovations and upgrading of the Green Line corridor. These include intersection and traffic light improvements, redesign of transit stops and access, new granite curbs and fencing along the rail line, and the planting of hundreds of new trees and bushes.

In addition, the Fenway Cultural District has also proposed and is seeking specific streetscape improvements such as hanging flowerpots, kiosks and bulletin boards promoting cultural events, new dynamic directional and informational signage, and the use of public art in public spaces. All these initiatives will contribute to transform the Avenue of the Arts into a special urban environment, and are endorsed by this plan.

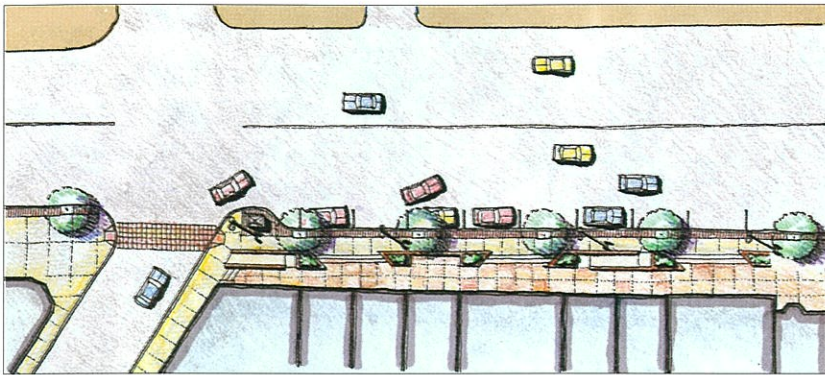
Avenue of Music

Similarly to the Avenue of the Arts, an initiative has emerged to rename part of Massachusetts Avenue as Avenue of Music, based on the presence of prime musical institutions such as Berklee College of Music, with its popular Berklee Performance Center, and Symphony Hall.

As well as Huntington, Massachusetts Avenue is also the subject of a major street renovation and improvement program currently in the planning stages. Application of streetscape improvements, pedestrian and traffic light improvements at intersections and mid-block locations, and the Cultural District design initiatives will also contribute to upgrade and animate the pedestrian environment along Mass. Ave. in a very significant way.

Boylston Street

As a significant gateway into the neighborhood, and a connector between Berklee College of Music and the Boston Conservatory, Boylston Street also deserves and could benefit from the implementation of Cul-



tural District streetscape initiatives. Actually, several buildings along the street are used as student housing, support rehearsal facilities, and specialty retail oriented to music students and musicians. An interesting feature from an urban design point of view is a difference in elevation between the sidewalk and the ground floor level of the buildings, which increases as we move from Massachusetts Avenue towards Hemenway Street. Currently the sidewalk is in poor condition. Streetscape improvements and a managed programming of retail activities along this stretch of sidewalk could help create a special place for students, artists and the general public, such as the following:

- Build a new sidewalk along the south side of the street between Hemenway Street and Massachusetts Avenue, adding 3 to 4 feet to the existing sidewalk to allow for larger tree pits and the location of street furniture.
- Replace the existing asphalt by high quality materials such as brick, or concrete with a 4-foot wide decorative brick band.
- Add sidewalk extensions or bulbouts at corners for better crosswalk definition.
- Promote the construction of sidewalk terraces along the existing buildings, which could be used as pedestrian sitting areas or outdoor cafés. Landscaped edges could alternate with stairways and



access ramps at selected locations to solve the design problems posed by the fact that the buildings and the sidewalk are located at different elevations.

- Design the corners of Hemenway

Street and Massachusetts Avenue as gateways to the neighborhood and the Cultural District, by providing special design elements, pedestrian sitting areas, informational and directional signage, and incorporating public art.

Transportation

Provide pedestrian and bicycle improvements at streets and intersections, as well as transit improvements to Symphony Station, as previously described in the section on Transportation.

TARGETED GROWTH

Massachusetts Avenue, Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the Arts, and Boylston Street are the main vehicular, pedestrian and transit corridors connecting East Fenway to the rest of the city. As described in other sections of the plan, they also represent an envisioned potential for improvements in terms of traffic and transportation, quality of the pedestrian environment, streetscape and mixed-use redevelopment. One of the basic premises of the proposed land use and urban design strategies relies on focusing on these improvement corridors as areas where new housing, retail and institutional opportunities could emerge, as a way to protect the neighborhood character of other residential areas.

The historical and architectural character of the surrounding buildings and neighborhood should be incorporated into the design of any new development in these areas.

However, the analysis of existing conditions and the results of meeting reviews and conversations have led to a conclusion that not all sites along the corridors are susceptible to change. Furthermore, the replacement of existing buildings by new construction is not economically feasible in most cases, except by just a few locations and within a specific set of circumstances (refer to the section on Housing and Economics for greater detail.)

Potential Development Areas

Two potential development areas have been identified where targeted growth could occur within reasonable zoning and urban design limitations:

Parcels along Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the Arts

Huntington Avenue between Gainsborough Street and Symphony Hall is an area where new development could bring benefits to the neighborhood in terms of creating home ownership units, additional retail services, institutional space to support cultural activities and an increase in pedestrian amenities.

The analysis of development economics indicates that redevelopment in parcels such as these may only be feasible if the new buildings are at least 9-story high, and the residential component consists of condominiums (rental units would not be feasible.) In terms of zoning, it has been agreed by the Task Force at planning review meetings that the maximum building height for locations such as this may be set at 90 feet. In other areas along the proposed mixed-use improvement corridors, such as Mass Ave, the maximum building height may be set at 75 feet (Refer to section on Zoning for more details).

Parcels along the Railroad Corridor

A few parcels located between Huntington Avenue and the Orange Line are occupied by low-rise, low-cost buildings, and are currently owned by institutions. Given their location and ownership, these parcels are naturally appropriate for institutional uses and represent a potential for future institutional growth targeted away from the core residential areas of the neighborhood.

Future use and buildout envelope for these parcels should be determined by the zoning mechanism applicable to the institutions, such as an Institutional Master Plan or any other similar process of review and approval adopted in the new regulations

Neighborhood Character

The following recommendations are aimed at preserving the historic quality and scale of the existing architectural fabric and the urban design character of the neighborhood:

Landmark Inventory

Protect buildings with significant architectural and urban design character from demolition or significant alteration through zoning or special designation; in particular, those buildings not included in the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The Boston Landmarks Commission designation process is recommended for this purpose.

Height Limits

Set height limits in most of East Fenway at levels consistent with the existing land uses and the current IPOD zoning, except in areas subject to Institutional Master Plans or other project review processes required by Article 80, and the potential development areas identified along main corridors (Refer to section on Zoning for more details).



Zoning Guidelines

The new zoning to be written for the district as a result of this planning process will include zoning guidelines consistent with current zoning in other neighborhoods, yet specially tailored to the particular conditions and characteristics of East Fenway. Zoning guidelines may be used to designate buildings or building features that should be preserved, in addition to those already protected by historic registers or landmark inventories. They typically also include design criteria and city code standards such as:

- Require ground floor commercial and civic uses where needed.
- Include urban design standards such as wall continuity and setbacks.
- Include building design standards such as display window area and transparency.
- Establish site planning standards such as screening, access and storage.

BROAD VISION

Ideas for long-term transportation improvements to the Green Line, such as the reconstruction of the Symphony Station passageway connecting both directions as it used to be before the Huntington Avenue underpass was built, and the extension of the underground tracks beyond the Museum of Fine Arts to attain a full urban space integration at the ground level between both sides of the Avenue of the Arts, have been expressed at public meetings as part of the vision for the future of the neighborhood.

Looking into the future, and considering the significance of East Fenway and the Cultural District for the city of Boston, it seems that some of those ideas are not as visionary and far-fetched as it may seem at first. Who would have thought when the idea of relocating the Central Artery underground was first proposed that such thing would ever be possible?

One of the important roles of planning is setting the stage for a better future, and as such, ideas like the former deserve to be mentioned even if they may not appear to be feasible in the foreseeable future.

The problems created by heavy traffic volumes and multiple turns at the intersection of Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues are such

that new and innovative transportation solutions need to be found, including perhaps a replacement of the Huntington Avenue underpass by an intersection at grade or another alternative solution. Changes to the physical configuration of the intersection could result in improved aesthetic and urban design qualities, and possibly an improved access to Symphony Hall's front entrance.

The idea of relocating the Green Line underground along Huntington Avenue/Avenue of the Arts is even more visionary and has been proposed before. However, independently of the long-term transit solution adopted, the concept of seeking a visual and pedestrian integration of both sides of the street now bisected by the rail line is worthy of study and further consideration. It could bring substantial long-term benefits to the image perception and the vitality of the Avenue of the Arts through East Fenway.



ZONING

One of the key actions resulting from the East Fenway Strategic Plan process will be to implement the planning and land use recommendations through the creation of new zoning that replaces the current designation for the neighborhood as an Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) and the previous underlying zoning. The Boston Zoning Code will be amended for both the East and West Fenway neighborhood areas in accordance with the revision process legally established for such changes. The amendments will implement the guidelines and opportunities identified in these plans with the specific language necessary for zoning codes.

In basic form, the new zoning will be:

- Responsive to the needs and particular character of the neighborhood as identified by the strategic plan,
- Compatible with the zoning recommendations proposed for West Fenway, and
- Consistent with the existing zoning framework for the entire city.

This section outlines preliminary zoning concepts for East Fenway based on the findings, analysis and options identified during the planning process. Eventually, these ideas will be taken forward and refined through the public process facilitated by the BRA legal and zoning departments for these purposes.

ZONING PRECEDENTS AND GOALS

The strength of zoning as a land use tool comes from outside the City. Zoning is allowed within the framework of city powers as imposed by state law. In addition, the breadth of allowable restrictions that can be



included in zoning is continually redefined by court cases. Consequently, the recommendations presented here frequently refer back to zoning codes that have already been enacted and established by the City in other neighborhoods to show how these recommendations are supported by previous actions.

The recommendations included here start from the premise that overall the zoning implementation steps should concentrate on protecting the desired, existing fabric of the neighborhood while finding the key locations for improvement and change. The broadest land use goals that were gleaned from the Task Force and public meetings focused on some basic land use principles:

- Maintain residential uses and the residential neighborhood: Retain the historic and architectural features of the neighborhood while encouraging progress and development.
- Create a mixed-use zone: Identify the options for future residential and commercial growth.

- Allow neighborhood retail: Broaden the diversity of retail to support neighborhood needs.
- Incorporate institutional uses: Maintain and strengthen the existing land use character of each particular area of the neighborhood, including the significant investment of the large and small institutions in East Fenway.
- Support housing: Put housing program goals at the forefront of current regulatory policy and direct to the particular needs of this area.

The proposed zoning concepts are designed to reach these goals after considering the more specific regulatory content that will be necessary.

PROPOSED ZONING CONCEPTS

The goals for East Fenway were further developed in the planning process into a number of key land use objectives that coincide with potential zoning concepts. The key land use objectives outline a series of actions that can be translated into the regulatory programs as specific standards within the zoning code. These land use objectives are:

- Setting appropriate scales and limits for future development and identifying areas appropriate for that change. These limits should maintain the neighborhood scale in residential areas, allow for needed development within the areas owned by institutions, and identify what can be built within the designated growth areas.



- Encouraging mixed-use development where it contributes to the neighborhood and the objectives set for the cultural district. In particular, providing new retail in development projects along the main pedestrian and vehicular corridors, where that retail supports neighborhood needs, adds to the commercial diversity, and supports the cultural district designation.
- Restoring or adding new housing that helps supply the needs of a diverse population. This includes providing for the minimum of affordability as required by the Mayor's orders, and encouraging more on campus housing for students.
- Creating opportunities for needed institutional growth and enhancement, particularly where it coincides with the objectives of the residents and improves the cultural district designation. This can be managed partially through the Institutional Master Plan process, but may require other regulatory management programs to accommodate smaller institutions.

More specific zoning guidelines have also been proposed for sub-areas of East Fenway:

- The mixed-use corridors along Massachusetts and Huntington Avenues, and Boylston Street will call for retail or institutional uses open to the public at the ground level. Residential, institutional, or commercial uses would take place on the upper floors with the aim to require at least half the space as residential above the second floor.
- Commercial uses other than the ones currently existing will not be allowed in areas designated as residential, except by professional home offices and ground floor retail at specific locations such as the corners of Westland Avenue. These locations will be generally consistent with the existing uses already in place.
- Ground floor pedestrian uses which could include retail, as well as exhibition space or institutional space accessible to the public will

be encouraged along the proposed mixed-use corridors on both sides of the streets.

- Zoning requirements regulating building height and floor area ratio will be adjusted to allow for mid-rise development along the proposed mixed-use corridors, where potential redevelopment could result in additional housing, additional homeownership, and increased retail and pedestrian activity.

Bonus incentives

The possibility of implementing FAR bonus incentives to encourage the development of residential over commercial uses along the proposed mixed-use corridors has been studied and evaluated as part of this planning process.

Zoning recommendations issued for West Fenway propose FAR bonus incentives to encourage the development of residential uses, and the construction of affordable housing in addition to the 10% requirement established by the Mayor. Similar FAR bonus incentives were considered for East Fenway, and tested for economic feasibility based on their application to the prototypical sites identified in previous sections of this document. The results of the analysis indicate that bonus incentives for residential development in East Fenway start to be effective only at FAR values superior to 6, which would require building heights higher than the 90-foot maximum agreed upon by the Task Force and the community. At FAR values lower than 6, the economic value added to the property by the FAR bonus is not sufficient to encourage new development under the current market conditions.

The development of new residential uses, particularly market-rate housing and home ownership, has been identified as one of the prime goals of this plan. In addition, there is a lack of vacant sites in the neighbor-

hood that could eventually be developed as new housing. Therefore, if FAR bonus incentives are not to be effective in promoting new housing at the limited potential locations available, residential uses may need to be required as part of the zoning use definition instead of encouraged by means of incentives.

Another important conclusion of the economic analysis is that the possibility of using bonus incentives to support the creation of affordable housing units in addition to the Mayor's requirement does not appear to be feasible at FAR values lower than 6.

ZONING DISTRICTS

The creation of zoning for implementing these recommendations requires both a change in the official zoning map and revisions to the text of the Zoning Code. The proposed zoning districts have been outlined according to the underlying land use and the desired level of protection or need for changes identified in the planning for this neighborhood. When mapped over the planning areas, the districts can be laid out according to the Proposed Zoning Map.

Below are short descriptions of the proposed zoning districts. The district designations are listed according to the land use and sequential in the intensities of potential development of that particular type. As an example, B-1 is more intense a land use than B-2. Where these districts can be patterned after an existing district within the Zoning Code that similar district is identified. Note that these descriptions are only summaries and within the city zoning code much longer listings of allowed, conditional and forbidden uses are included.

B-1: Mixed-use district, including retail and civic uses on the ground floor, and residential/institutional/commercial uses on upper floors; maximum building height of 90 feet. Ground floor uses should be pedestrian oriented and accessible to the public, including retail, food establishments, and civic, exhibition or art performance space. Uses on the basement and the second floor could be related to the ones on the ground floor level. At least 50% of the net floor areas above the second floor should be dedicated to residential uses. This district could be patterned after the Community Commercial or possibly the Neighborhood Shopping district used in the city code, with allowed college and dormitory uses subject to Institutional Master Plan approval.

B-2: Mixed-use district, including retail and civic uses on the ground floor, and residential/institutional/commercial uses on upper floors; maximum building height of 75 feet. Ground floor uses should be pedestrian oriented and accessible to the public, including retail, food establishments, and exhibition or art performance space. Uses on the basement and the second floor could be related to the ones on the ground floor level. At least 50% of the net floor areas above the second floor should be dedicated to residential uses. The district designation could be patterned after the Multifamily Residential/Local Services (MFR/LS) district or possibly the Neighborhood Shopping district used in the city code.

B-N: Neighborhood commercial district, with retail on the ground floor and residential uses on upper floors. This district would be equivalent to a Local Convenience district that forbids most residential uses on the first floor but accepts them on the upper floors, while accepting many types of local conveniences on the first floor. Basement uses could be related or accessory to the ground floor uses.

I-1: This district is for the institutions that utilize the Institutional Master Plan, Large Project Review or Small Project Review processes

and approvals within Article 80 of the City Zoning Code to develop and redevelop their properties. The type and character of uses allowed in this district would be consistent with the needs and requirements of the corresponding institutions as established by their Institutional Master Plans.

I-2: This district is for cultural institutions, small institutions, or those institutions not defined as institutions by zoning or not large enough for Institutional Master Plans, according to existing zoning. Permitted development would be determined through the Planned Development Area (PDA) project review and approval process. This district may require special zoning criteria to accommodate the smallest institutions.

I-N: This district, Neighborhood Institutional, is proposed as an option for existing institutional uses with existing buildings and within residential areas. This would be similar to the subdistrict designation found in Greater Mattapan. The application of this district would seek to preserve the existing structures and the character of the urban fabric even when the use of the building may be defined by Institutional Master Plans.

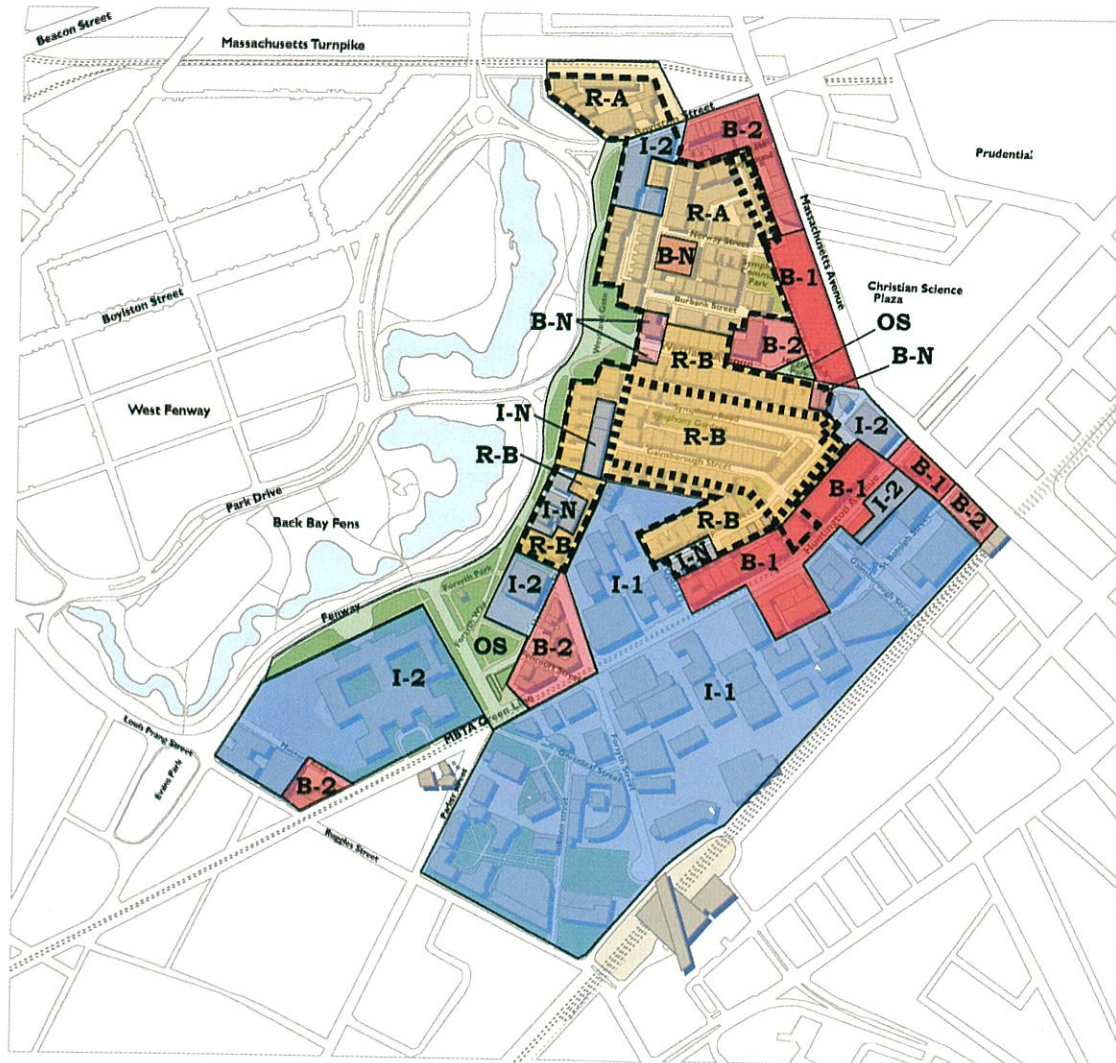
R-A: This district is equivalent to the typical Multifamily Residential (MFR) district found elsewhere within the City code. These areas are for large residential buildings with a maximum building height of 75 feet.

R-B: This district is also equivalent to the typical Multifamily Residential (MFR) district found elsewhere within the City code. However, the designation indicates the areas of smaller residential buildings with maximum building height of 60 feet.

OS: Existing open space areas are to remain preserved as public lands.

Neighborhood Design District Overlay: This district is proposed to protect the historical and architectural character of areas with significant existing buildings (for more details refer to the section on Preservation of Architectural Character below).

Restricted Roof Structure District Overlay: This district is proposed to protect areas with existing buildings where changes in building height could result in a detriment of the architectural and urban design character (e.g. the existing rowhouses along Edgerly Road).



Zoning Map

- B-1** 90' Mixed Use, Retail 1st floor; Commercial/ Residential/ Institutional in upper floors
- B-2** 75' Mixed Use, Retail 1st floor; Commercial/ Residential/ Institutional in upper floors
- B-N** 60' Neighborhood Commercial with Residential above
- I-1** 75'/190' Major Institutions; IMP or LPR/SPR
- I-2** 75' Cultural and Small Institutions; Zoning criteria or PDA
- I-N** 60' Neighborhood Institutional in Residential Areas
- OS** Public Open Space
- R-A** 75', Residential
- R-B** 60', Residential
- - -** Neighborhood Design District
-** Restricted Roof District

East Fenway Neighborhood Strategic Plan
The Cecil Group

Additional Zoning Actions

The goals and objectives for the East Fenway neighborhood present a number of ideas that are not addressed with the standard zoning district map. For these issues, there is specific zoning text to consider. The areas of consideration include:

- Preservation of Architectural Character
- Dimensional Standards
- Parking Standards
- Design Guidelines
- Alternatives For Institutions

Preservation of Architectural Character

The preservation of the historical and architectural heritage of the neighborhood is currently overseen by a number of state and local agencies, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Boston Landmarks Commission, and other active groups such as the Boston Preservation Alliance. The focus of these offices is to identify and preserve the area's history.

However, an additional concept beyond historic preservation and more to any distinctiveness of the existing buildings was brought out in the East Fenway planning process. This concept was to consider preservation of the building forms, elevations and rooflines, which although possibly not of historic note, provide unique urban forms that identify East Fenway. The issue could become important as the proposed height allowances are determined and the existing buildings are compared with the potential under new zoning, and as the options for roof decks and additional units are considered to improve properties.

As an example, the residential properties within the blocks between Westland Avenue, St. Stephen, Gainsborough and Hemenway Streets are the smallest buildings and have a significant Victorian architectural

character, similar to the one that characterizes parts of Bay Village and the South End. This area is proposed to be zoned with an RB-type, multifamily district with a height restriction of 60 feet. The current rooflines are varied and some consideration should be given to potential new investment and expansion that could add additional units on the top floor thereby changing the roofline or adding other features.

If this potential for change is considered significant, an option for preserving the significant design qualities of the existing buildings could be through a Neighborhood Design District such as the overlay districts established in Roxbury and other neighborhoods in the city to protect the architectural and urban design character of the area. This overlay district is aimed at ensuring that new development and redevelopment will be compatible with the existing neighborhood character. This type of district could prescribe that, in addition to the Large and Small Project Review processes defined by Article 80, the Design Component of the Small Project Review be required for any proposed project to erect a new building or structure within the district, any significant exterior alteration of the street wall façade, and any exterior alteration of the roof shape, cornice height, street wall or building height of any existing building within the district.

Similarly, an option for managing the skyline in special areas could be through a Restricted Roof Structure District allowed under section 3-1A. The requirements for this subdistrict are for areas where the buildings have "identical or similar heights" and are further described in Article 3-1A of the Zoning Code.

The map on page 57 shows the East Fenway buildings that are included in the National Register of Historic Places and the Boston Landmarks Inventory, as well as the proposed boundaries for the Neighborhood Design District and the Restricted Roof Structure District.

Dimensional Standards

The dimensional standards included in zoning regulations define the three-dimensional frame, which can be filled with building construction. Consideration must be given to several aspects of zoning dimensional requirements to fit a building on a particular site.

Enclosed is the range of dimensional standards proposed for the East Fenway neighborhood within each of the recommended zoning districts. The recommended districts should be designed to complement the existing development and provide the opportunities for change and improvement where appropriate.

- **Height** - defines the maximum height of the roofline within the definitions of the Zoning Code
- **FAR** - limits the amount of usable floor space that could be constructed on any number of floors under the maximum building height.
- **Street Wall Height and Setbacks** - control the height and alignment of walls along the public street for visual massing and continuity with adjacent buildings

The standards proposed here are based on the analysis of the dimensions of prototypical sites identified in earlier planning stages. Although certain standards may not be specifically defined or listed on the table, there are other means in which they could be determined within the

District	Building Height	FAR	Street Wall Height	Setbacks
B-1 Mixed-Use	Max. 90 feet	Max. FAR:5	Consistent with adjacent buildings	Consistent with adjacent buildings
B-2 Mixed-Use	Max. 75 feet	Max. FAR:4	No Requirement	Consistent with adjacent buildings
B-N Neighborhood Commercial	Max. 60 feet	Max. FAR:4	Consistent with adjacent buildings	Consistent with adjacent buildings
I-1 College and Large Institutions	Max. 75 feet north of Huntington Ave. Max. 190 feet south of Huntington Ave.	Max. 4 north of Huntington Ave. Max. 8 south of Huntington Ave.	No requirement	Consistent with the location and character of buildings as established by the Institutional Master Plan
I-2 Cultural and Small Institutions	Max. 75 feet	Max. FAR:4	No requirement	Consistent with adjacent buildings and subject to Planned Development Area review
I-N Neighborhood Institutions	Max. 60 feet	Max. FAR:4	Consistent with adjacent buildings	Consistent with adjacent buildings
R-A Residential (Large Buildings)	Max. 75 feet	Max. FAR:4	Consistent with adjacent buildings	Consistent with adjacent buildings
R-B Residential (Small Buildings)	Max. 60 feet	Max. FAR:4	Consistent with adjacent buildings	Consistent with adjacent buildings

zoning and development processes. The processes, such as an Institutional Master Plan or development review, allow the opportunity for the public to review the potential development and to see what modifications to the zoning standards fit best with the particular project proposals.

Parking Standards

Maximum and minimum parking ratios for new residential and non-residential land uses affect the number of local vehicle trips as well as the level of general traffic. After considerable discussion and comparisons with similar neighborhoods in Boston, it seems apparent that a balance should be struck between traffic generation and how the number of parking spaces affects the financial feasibility of new projects. As in the West Fenway, the following ratios are proposed:

<u>Off-street Parking Ratios</u>	<u>All Uses except Residential</u>	<u>Residential</u>
Minimum	None	0.75 spaces/unit
Maximum	0.75 spaces/1000 gsf of building	0.75 spaces/unit

An important point to consider is whether the larger developments can and should be asked to include shared car parking. For example, shared car parking provisions may be incorporated into the final zoning in a manner consistent with policies being encouraged by the City in other neighborhoods.

Design Guidelines

The new zoning to be written for the district as a result of this planning process will include zoning guidelines consistent with current zoning in other neighborhoods, yet specially tailored to the particular conditions and characteristics of East Fenway. Zoning guidelines may be used to designate buildings or building features that should be preserved, in addition to those already protected by historic registers or landmark inventories. They typically also include design criteria and city code standards such as:

- Require ground floor commercial and civic uses where needed.
- Include urban design standards such as wall continuity and setbacks.

- Include building design standards such as display window area and transparency.
- Establish site planning standards such as screening, access and storage.
- Define types, character and location of signage

The current zoning for the South End and the Mission Hill Neighborhood District contain provisions of this type that apply to Large Project Review and Small Project Review processes. These can be used as a reference when writing the zoning for East Fenway.

In general, the following principles should apply for districts other than institutional:

Building Massing

New buildings should extend along the entire front of the property, forming a continuous street wall with the adjacent buildings. Side yards should only be allowed in cases where they are strictly necessary to access the rear of the parcel. Assembly of multiple parcels should be accompanied by specific steps towards the preservation, evaluation, and rehabilitation of existing structures, subject to design review and approval.

Street Wall Setbacks

Front elevations should be aligned with the at least one of the immediately adjacent buildings on every street characterized by a continuous street frontage.

Pedestrian Uses and Activities

Ground floor uses along the main transportation corridors - Huntington Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue and Boylston Street - should be pedestrian-oriented and accessible to the public. Food and beverage establishments, live music and art performances, art studios and galler-

ies, neighborhood and specialty retail, courtyard and sidewalk terraces are particularly encouraged.

Elevation Treatment

Building elevations should be modulated, preferably with a horizontal band of storefronts or large windows at the ground level on every side facing the street or public pedestrian areas. The lower floors of the building should be finished with a masonry base consonant in height and design with the adjacent buildings; openings and details should relate to the internal structure of the building and to the scale of the neighboring facades. Individualized expression through the use of setbacks, recesses, projecting bays, balconies, rooftops and different materials is encouraged for the upper floors.

Materials and Colors

Building materials should include brick, stone or masonry cladding, and glass on their exterior. Warm colors and earth tones with brighter color accents to highlight special features are recommended, subject to design review. Operable windows and doors opening to the sidewalk are encouraged for pedestrian uses at the ground level. Bronze mirror curtain walls or the extensive use of glass curtain wall on every floor of a building should be restricted. Garage exteriors visible from the street should include brick, stone or masonry details in their design, and subdivisions that will bring the façade into scale with adjacent buildings.



Zoning Alternatives for Institutions

The existing City zoning regulations define institutions as "College or University Uses, Hospital Uses or Nursing or Convalescent Home Uses", [Article 2A]. This definition excludes entities such as the MFA, Boston Symphony, Huntington Theatre, YMCA, National Braille Press, and others from qualifying to be defined as "institutions". Cultural institutional uses (art gallery, museum, theatre, etc.) are defined elsewhere in the zoning code and so can be listed in other zoning codes. The definitions apply to all districts within the city.

As described earlier, there are three different proposed zoning districts and designations to cover the many different types of institutions found within East Fenway, including those that do not fully qualify for the current definition. However, there are several options to consider for the institutions that may help maintain these uses under existing zoning provisions and preserve the neighborhood character. Two of the options are presented below.

I-N Zoning District

A zoning district can define a permitted land use as allowed or conditional. Allowed uses can proceed if they conform to the other standards of the zoning district. Conditional uses must complete an extra review step with the Zoning Commission to ensure these projects will conform to the purpose and intent of the underlying district in the ways that are defined within that district. Prior to the establishment of the Fenway IPOD and the Northeastern Institutional Master Plan, institutional uses were conditional within most of East Fenway.

A zoning district that defines certain types of institutions as allowed could be used to map these land uses as part of the underlying zoning. The use of this option is recommended in the mapping of the I-N, Neighborhood Institutional District. The I-N district is proposed as a zoning map designation for small-scale institutional uses within residential neighborhoods. The concept is to provide a review so that a project for an institution "proceeds in a manner that is sensitive to and preserves the quality of life of the surrounding residential neighborhoods." (Example from Section 60-24, Greater Mattapan District)

The option of an I-N zone could work for institutional property holdings within the residential areas that may be used for student/professor/administrator housing. It could also be considered for mapping over small institutional uses that are not housing related.

Planned Development Area

A Planned Development Area (PDA) is a process for review of unique land uses and development options currently within the zoning code. The process is defined under Article 80, together with Institutional Master Plans, Large Project Reviews and Small Project Reviews. PDA's can be included as an overlay district identifying areas of development potential that would be reviewed under this process, (Article 3).

There are criteria for use of the PDA process, one being that the property must be at least one acre in size with approved development plan, or at least five acres in size and not in a residential zone. Sites of five acres can also prepare a master plan for approval under the PDA process. In addition, if an Institutional Master Plan is required under Article 80, then a PDA is not allowed. However, Institutional Master Plans are not applicable to the cultural and small institutions considered under this option.

A project can be approved under the PDA standards if:

- The land use is not forbidden by the zoning code,
- Use, dimensional and other design standards are complied with,
- Public benefits and similar requirements are provided,
- The project conforms to the general plan, and,
- Nothing is injurious to the neighborhood or public welfare after weighing all benefits and burdens.

The option is to use the PDA process for the institution project approvals and reviews within the I-2 zoning districts. This can be accomplished through the existing Article 80 processes, and with overlay zoning district designations for East Fenway.

While the PDA is a strong and flexible process with specified criteria for approval, not all institutional sites will fit the basic criteria for PDA. However, in the list of the cultural, small and non-defined institutions, the Museum of Fine Art, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Forsyth Dental, and the Boston Conservatory, in aggregate, have properties greater than one acre. Consequently, the most significant institutions will have this option available for application.

None of those properties, except for the museum, are greater than five acres and so will not require a PDA master plan. This suggests that the institutions should be called on to present their ideas for change and redevelopment to the local residents and general public early in the design and permitting process.

Review and Approval Process

As described in the previous section, there are several options for review and approval of projects that are available within the City Zoning Code. These include the building construction plans reviewed by the build-

ing inspectors. Building construction plans are submitted after the public permitting processes and are subject to the full range of building and health code requirements. The other permit processes allow for public scrutiny in a number of ways, and importantly, also allow a negotiation process where the proponent can present approaches to development that may differ from the specified zoning. These other public review processes are described below for informational purposes.

Article 80

Reviews under Article 80 of the Zoning Code include a number of different options depending on the land use and project. Notably, Article 80 is also where the Institutional Master Plan provision resides in the code. The PDA review discussed in the previous section on options for institutions can also be found under Article 80.

Small Project Review

The standards and process for the Small Project Review (SPR) are found under Article 80E and are established for design, site and sign review.

The criteria for use of the SPR are:

- It is required when adding one or more buildings of at least 20,000 sq ft
- It is required for 15 or more dwellings
- It can be required in the underlying zoning, or
- It can be required in the zoning appeals process

The standards for SPR include design review requirements, but do not include the land use options available in the PDA and Large Project Review regulations.

Large Project Review (Project Notification and Impact Review)

Large Project Reviews (LPR) like the PDA's are defined by the standards and process under Article 80B. In fact, for certain projects, both the Large Project Review and PDA are required. This review is required when a project:

- Adds one or more buildings of at least 50,000 sq ft
- Changes an institutional building by at least 100,000 sq ft
- Is a rehab project of at least 100,000 sq ft, or
- Is required by the zoning district where the project is found

The standards for Large Project Reviews include design and mitigation requirements. If approved by these reviews, the project may include uses that are forbidden or conditional within the underlying district. This means the process has much greater flexibility than the PDA process.

LPR's allow full specification of the design criteria within the review process, without the previous adoption of specific zoning guidelines. However, the LPR does not require a master plan because the subsequent approval is based on project specific submittals.

Institutional Master Plan

The Institutional Master Plan (IMP) process, under Article 80, applies to all institutions as defined in the zoning code (see above discussion on zoning definition) that meet the IMP thresholds. It does not apply to institutions and institutional projects of less than 150,000 sq ft, unless the institution desires and offers to participate in the IMP process. In this latter case, the institution or the project must be at least 100,000 sq ft in size to go through the planning process. Those projects that are exempt from the IMP must then conform to underlying zoning unless elected by institution to be included in the IMP.

Overall the process creates a long term and comprehensive planning procedure for the institution and public viewing. This process is particularly effective for institutional property uses for long range planning, but does not apply to the small institutions and 'non-defined' institutions.

Recommendation for Institutional Zoning

A concern raised in the planning process was whether zoning mechanisms are currently in place for small institutions or those institutions not defined as institutions by the zoning code. Any of these zoning designations or review functions could apply in East Fenway so there appear to be a number of options for these smaller institutions to present plans for future growth in a manner consistent with both institutional and civic goals.

It is recommended that a Planned Development Area process including the master plan step be applied to the cultural and small institutions such as the Boston Symphony and Forsyth Institute within those areas mapped as I-2 zoning. This will allow these institutions to define goals and parameters for future growth and present them in a public forum early in the planning and development process.

SUMMARY OF ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed zoning recommendations lay out a series of districts with recommended guidelines and standards designed to attain the stated goals and objectives. The zoning recommendations are summarized in the table below and include the following:

- Three different business districts recommended for three different intensities and uses of business activity, particularly retail for neigh-

borhood needs and street level activities. These are proposed as mixed-use zones that will require residential uses on some of the upper floors.

- Three different districts for institutional uses that include the typical large institutions, smaller institutions and similar uses, and the institutional facilities that are integrated with the residential blocks.
- Two residential districts that preserve the lower scale blocks but allow for the larger building types.
- The public green/open space areas are protected within the neighborhood.



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