

City of Marlborough

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Final Report

April 2023



Acknowledgments



Prepared for
City of Marlborough

With support from

MEDC **Marlborough Economic Development Corporation**
(MEDC)

Meredith Harris, Executive Director



Prepared by
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

With funding from

Marlborough Economic Development Corporation
(MEDC)

District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)

Planning for MetroFuture Technical Assistance
(PMTA)

Contents

1	Overview	... 4
2	Study Area Context and Analysis	... 10
3	Study Area Vision	... 32
4	Land Use and Zoning Recommendations	... 40
5	Public Realm and Open Space Recommendations	... 50
6	Action Plan	... 58
Appendices		
A	Meeting Notes	
B	Draft Zoning	

1 Overview

Study Purpose

The City of Marlborough initiated this study to create a shared vision for the future of Donald Lynch Boulevard and the surrounding Limited Industrial area to define changes in zoning or other investments that will proactively guide the commercial corridor toward that vision and future success. The City's overarching objectives for the Donald Lynch Boulevard (DLB) area are to strengthen the area as a destination in the City, enhance the area as a vibrant and walkable district that attracts a new generation of investment and activity, and to retain a continued source of tax revenue for the City.

For at least the last few years, the City of Marlborough has been responding to requests to modify the zoning and sign ordinance regulating the Donald Lynch Boulevard area. Some progress has been accomplished with previous assistance provided by MAPC in 2017. MAPC provided technical assistance to review the existing Limited Industrial zone in the northwest portion of the City to determine changes needed to address issues raised by recent development proposals and other recommendations to enhance future development within the district. This previous work provided a foundation for this more comprehensive assessment of the future of the Donald Lynch Boulevard district.

Questions about the future of the northwest portion of the City remain relevant and a renewed sense of urgency for re-imagining the area may result as post pandemic real estate adaptations occur. Imagining a new future for the district is in the interest of the City, property owners, and patrons of the district to help it remain a strong contributor to the future of the City.

The results of this study process are based on research, analysis and community involvement needed to strengthen the approach to future investment in the DLB District. The Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard generates guidance to:

- Provide a work plan for coordinated and immediate actions that can be undertaken by the City to improve physical conditions for the public realm, publicly controlled properties, and other assets that could be leveraged for area improvements;
- Provide strategies for future development investments and identify zoning changes to facilitate transformative redevelopment;
- Provide recommendations for multi-modal circulation and parking improvements to enhance district access and walkability;
- Provide an economic revitalization strategy that is consensus driven and actionable.

Study Outcomes

The City of Marlborough is establishing a strong track record of proactive planning to set a vision for a district and then adopting zoning changes that are consistent with that vision. This model has recently been undertaken in Downtown, Route 20 East, Lincoln Street, and other areas. In this study and its resulting recommendations emphasis is focused in the following areas:

Economic Development and Vitality

Evaluating and recommending an appropriate strategy for the retail and commercial positioning of the district; identifying priority development sites in the district and redevelopment strategies; evaluating and recommending economic development tools, programs, and partnerships to implement the goals and strategies to guide outcomes toward the shared vision articulated through this process.

Land Use and a Sense of Place

Identifying appropriate strategies and uses for district redevelopment; identifying zoning changes consistent with the shared vision for the district.

Transportation and Connectivity

Identifying immediate actions that can be taken to improve the public realm through improvements to roadways, sidewalks, lighting, and signage to promote walkability and safety; identifying parking and circulation improvements that focus on enhanced access and district walkability. Exploring shared improvements for connectivity to recent mixed-use development in Berlin just north of the district.

Open Space and Quality of Life

Enhancing the potential contribution natural amenities and open spaces can make to public health and the attractiveness of the district by leveraging surrounding natural assets such as the Assabet River, and conservation lands near the district.

Study Process

In 2021 MAPC facilitated a planning process with the City of Marlborough and Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to develop a Vision for the Donald Lynch Boulevard area. The study process was about 10 months in length and involved a process of data gathering, analysis, and community engagement facilitated by MAPC. Stakeholder input was gathered with property owners, business owners, and residents at two public meetings, at a MEDC Board meeting, and Town of Berlin Economic Development Committee meeting. The process was closely coordinated with MEDC and City Councilors of the area. The process resulted in a draft Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District which has not yet been submitted for adoption.

In 2023, the City of Marlborough sought to revisit some of the characteristics of the proposed overlay district based on feedback received on the draft report and overlay district. MAPC evaluated the additional feedback and integrated changes into this updated Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard Report and proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District.

Study Area

The subject of this study is an area referred to as Donald Lynch Boulevard, but that includes an area larger than this single roadway. The specific area studied was defined by the current zoning boundary of the Limited Industrial (LI) zone. The area encompasses land to the north and south of Interstate 290 and land mostly to the west of Interstate 495 with a small portion to the east of Interstate 495. The City boundary forms the study limits to the north and west with the western boundary near Solomon Pond Road/River Road West. The southern limit of the study area follows Robin Hill Street.

The study area is the most northwestern area of the City and is somewhat isolated from the remainder of the City by the major divided highways and the interchange that connects them. At the center of the district is the east-west connector, Donald Lynch Boulevard. Several smaller access roads branch off of Donald Lynch Boulevard and include North Bigelow Street, and Bigelow Street. A diagram of the extent of the study area is shown on the following page outlined in yellow.



City of Marlborough Locus Map



Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area

Study Area Subareas

The study area divides into two subareas, a Core Area and an Outer Area. The Core Area is focused on Donald Lynch Boulevard and includes all parcels north of I-290 and west of I-495. This subarea is more intensely developed than the Outer Area. The Core Area has less total land area than the Outer Area. It also has more buildings and more total assessed value. The Outer Area is east of I-495 and south of I-290. It is larger in total land area. It is less densely developed with less buildings and less total assessed value.

Based on City of Marlborough Assessor's data:

Core Area

Parcels: 56

This subarea has a total of 56 parcels that vary in size and ownership. Most of the parcels in this subarea have frontage on Donald Lynch Boulevard.

Total area: 257 acres

All of the land area within the parcels combines to a total of 257 acres. This total area does not include roadways and rights-of-way.

Average parcel size: 4.6 acres

Owner occupied: 9 (16%)

Based on the owner address in the assessor's data, 9 buildings are occupied by the owner of the property.

Buildings: 24

Most parcels that have a building have a single building on the parcel. Less than half of the parcels have buildings.

Total assessed value: \$203.6M

The total assessed value of all the buildings and land in the subarea.

Largest owner: Larue Renfroe

The largest owner by land area.

Outer Area

Parcels: 35

This subarea has a total of 35 parcels that vary in size and ownership.

Total area: 408 acres

All of the land area within the parcels combines to a total of 408 acres. This total area does not include roadways and rights-of-way.

Average size: 11.7 acres

Owner occupied: 14

Based on the owner address in the assessor's data, 14 buildings are occupied by the owner of the property.

Buildings: 15 (43%)

Most parcels that have a building have a single building on the parcel. Less than half of the parcels have buildings.

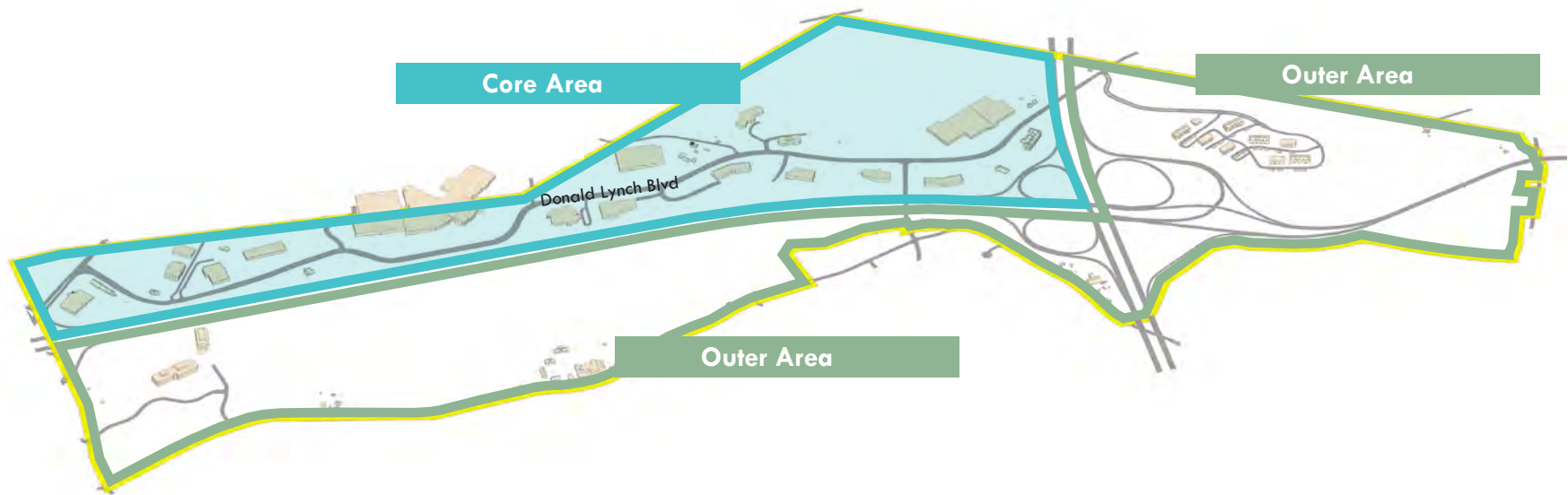
Total assessed value: \$84M

The total assessed value of all the buildings and land in the subarea.

Largest owner: Hillside School

The largest owner by land area.

Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area subareas



2 Study Area Context and Analysis

Context

The following illustrations show the current context of the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area. Each of the analyses examine the current context of the district through a specific characteristic. The specific characteristics include analyses of the scale, land use, zoning, circulation, parking, natural assets, and market context of the study area. It is important to examine the current conditions of the district to provide a baseline understanding of the study area. It is also important to help define what may need to change relative to the vision that has been articulated through this process.

The general context of the district is typical of many highway-oriented regional destinations. The highway access and orientation of the district is biased to travel by car. This bias is evident in the roadways with the ease of vehicular access along Donald Lynch Boulevard prioritized with a roadway designed for high traffic volume with divided median and turn lanes. It is also evident by the abundant surface parking areas intended to support the convenience of the district when arriving by vehicle.

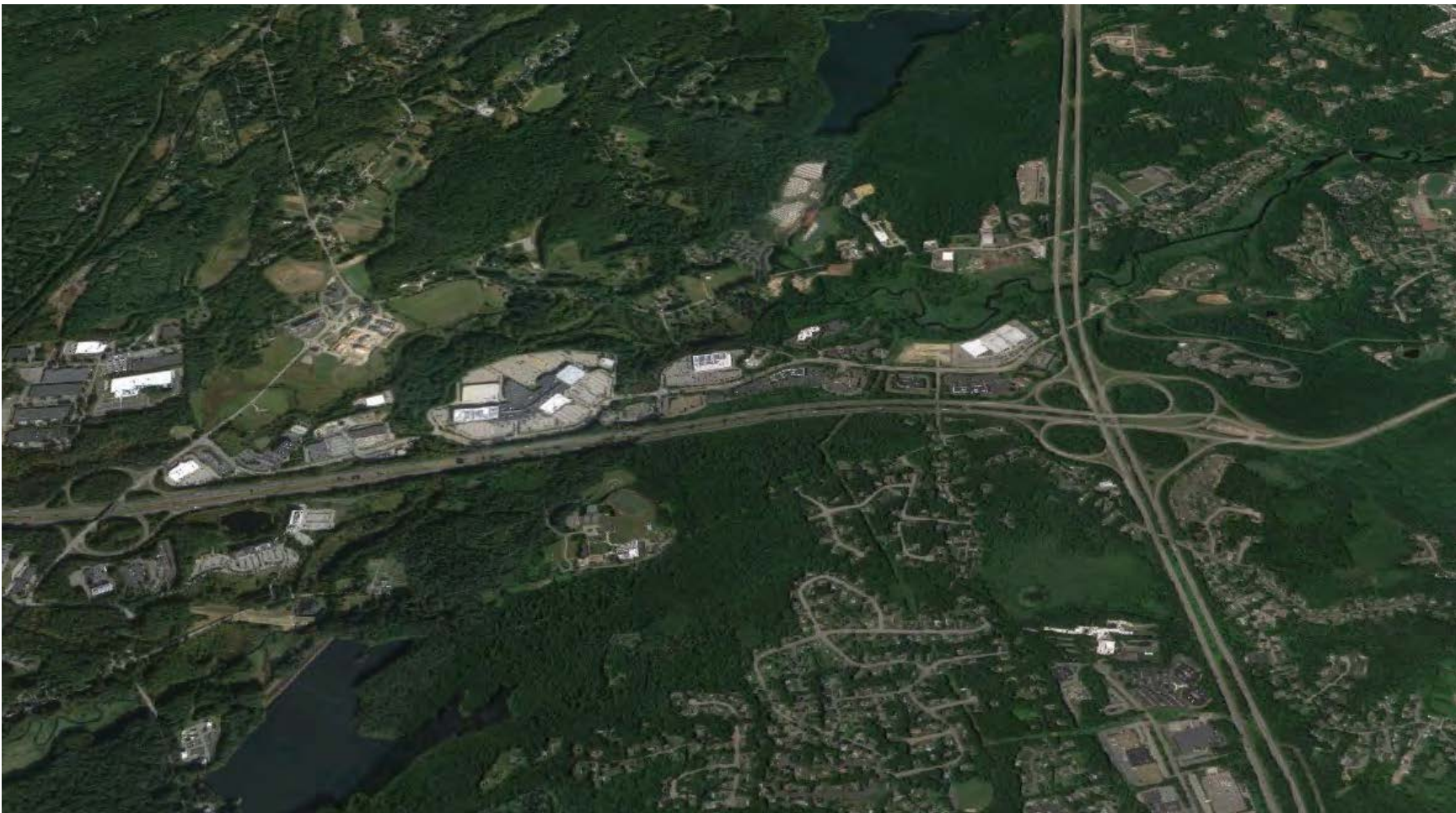
Some auto-oriented suburban settings have begun to evolve to support the importance of vehicular access while providing for access and experiences outside of the car. For example, regional malls have been transforming to increase the density

and variety of uses and offering more vibrant pedestrian environments and dynamic exterior spaces to complement the more traditional enclosed mall spaces.

The aerial photograph on the following page shows the context of the district and the prominent feature of the highway access of Interstate 495 and Interstate 290. The surrounding area is less developed and includes undeveloped wooded areas and single family homes as predominant land uses. The district today is a mix of office, retail, hotel and recreation uses that are anchored by the Solomon Pond Mall and the New England Sports Center as regional destinations served by the excellent highway access. A portion of the Solomon Pond Mall is located in the neighboring town of Berlin. Most of this activity is centered along and accessed by Donald Lynch Boulevard. Access to the district is from an interchange on Interstate 290. The district does not have direct access to Interstate 495.

On the following pages a series of more detailed oblique aerial views show the character of the district and some of its assets. In the first oblique aerial Donald Lynch Boulevard is at the center of the image. Interstate 290 is in the bottom right corner of the aerial.

Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area aerial



Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area oblique aeri



Several of the retail and office buildings typical to the district are shown in the first image, including Target. These buildings are served by large surface parking lots. The next oblique aerial shows the New England Sports Center a regional destination for ice sports including hockey, figure skating, and public skating. Directly across Donald Lynch Boulevard is the study area's only hotel.

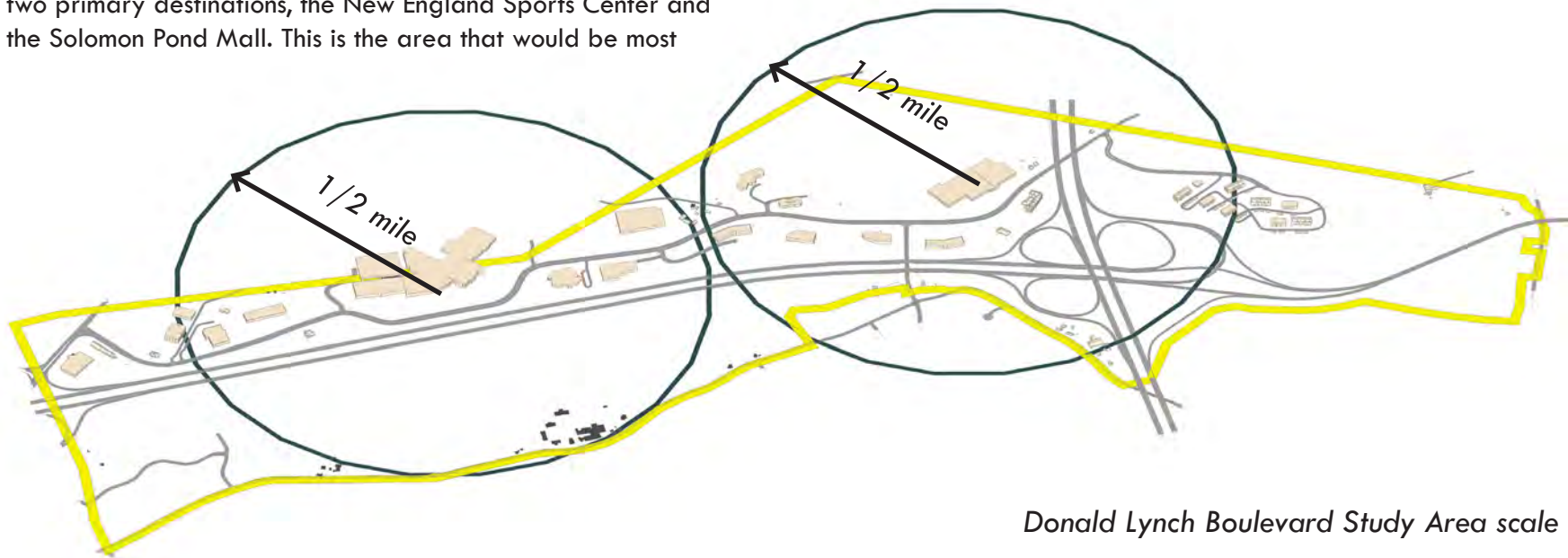
The final oblique aerial shows a corner of the Solomon Pond Mall and the Assabet River that circulates through and along the northern edge of the district. The mall is another important regional destination and the river is an important and underutilized natural asset of the district.



Study Area Scale

The first analysis and characteristic is focused on the scale of the district. As mentioned, this is an auto-oriented district and its scale is more suited to vehicular circulation. The study area is 3 miles long by 3/4 of a mile wide. The circles on the diagram represent a 1 mile diameter. A 1/2 mile is the distance that can be covered in a comfortable 10 minute walk by an able bodied patron of the district. The circles are centered on the two primary destinations, the New England Sports Center and the Solomon Pond Mall. This is the area that would be most

likely for a patron to visit on foot if there was an attractive destination and safe and comfortable walking path to get there. It would take about 1 hour to walk the length of the study area, or about 12 minutes by bike. In this context with long distances and an incomplete sidewalk network, it is most likely that a patron will get back in the car and drive even a short distance to the next destination. The district will need to evolve to encourage more walking and biking.



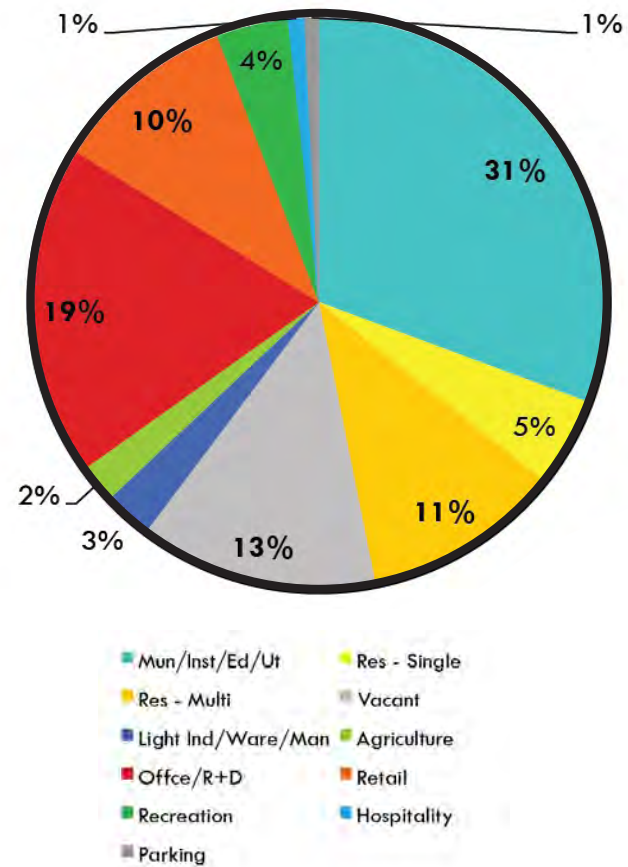
Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area scale

Study Area Land Use

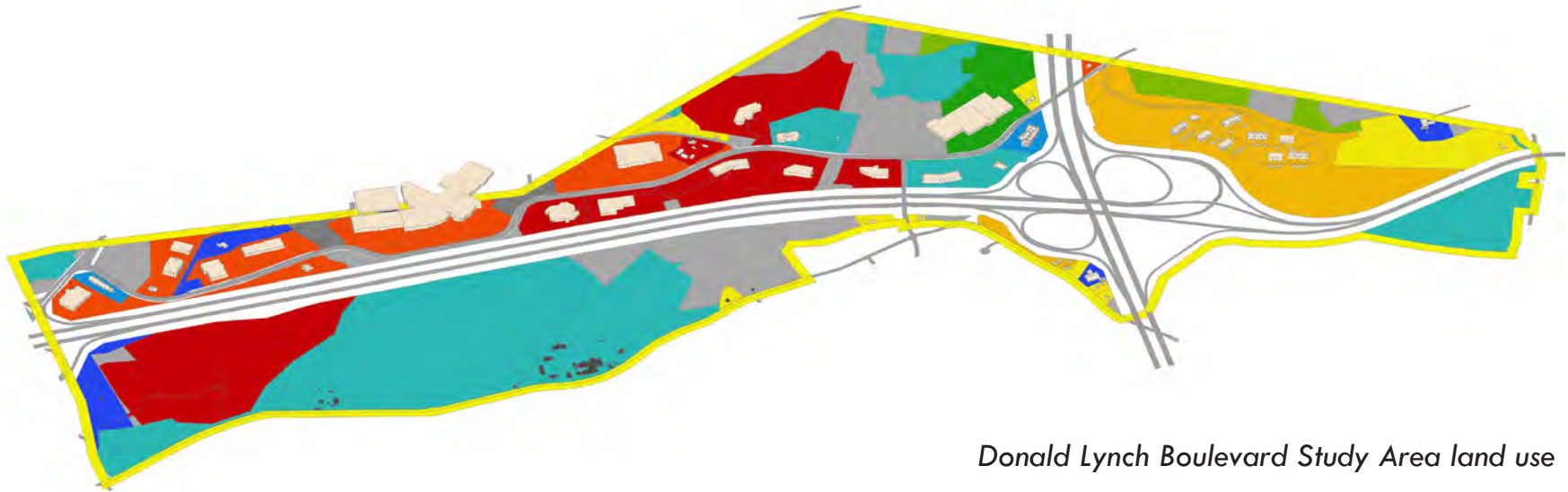
The land use in the study area is an eclectic mix of uses. The largest category of use by land area is municipal, institutional, educational and utility uses with 31% of the study area's land area defined by parcels with this use. The next largest use category is office and research and development uses at 19% of the land area. The next largest land areas belong to the uses of vacant land at 13%, multifamily residential at 11%, and retail uses at 10%. The remainder of the uses each occupy less than 5% of the total land area of the district and include single family residential at 5%, recreation at 4%, light industrial, warehousing, and manufacturing at 3%, agriculture at 2%, hospitality at 1%, and parking at 1%.

The large share of the municipal, institutional, educational and utility uses is attributed to the large parcels associated with the Hillside School. These parcels increase the total land area that is categorized within this use. The office and research and development uses and the retail uses combine for a total of 29% of the land area of the district and would likely be the uses that most patrons would associate with the study area. They are the most prominent and visible uses of the district and are clustered along the Donald Lynch Boulevard frontage of the district. On this page a pie chart shows the distribution of the study area land use. On the following page, the same

Land use composition of the Study Area



uses are shown distributed spatially in the study area. Most of the residential uses are to the east of Interstate 495. Most of the municipal, institutional, educational, utility uses are to the south of Interstate 290. Most of the office and research and development uses and all of the retail uses are to the north of Interstate 290 and to the west of Interstate 495. The total land area calculations are based on assessor's parcel data and do not include the land area that is devoted to roadways and rights-of-way.



Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area land use

Study Area Zoning

The City-wide zoning map of Marlborough is shown on the following page. The study area boundaries for Donald Lynch Boulevard were defined based on the City's Zoning Map. The Limited Industrial (LI) Zoning District is found throughout the City and most predominantly in the western portion of the City. The northwest corner of the City is a Limited Industrial district that continues from a larger district to the south with a small connector along the I-495 corridor. The study area follows the Limited Industrial boundary in the northwest corner of the City and cuts across the small connector along the I-495 corridor. The Limited Industrial boundary is shared with a Rural Residence (RR) district to the south and a Residence A-2 (A-2) district to the southeast and east.

The current zoning for the study area is focused on the Limited Industrial (LI) zoning characteristics. In this district the minimum lot area is 2 acres and the minimum lot frontage is 200 feet. The setbacks include a minimum side yard that is 50 feet, the minimum front yard is 50 feet, and the minimum rear yard is 50 feet. The maximum building height varies depending on the distance measured in feet from a residential zone. For a building 0 to 150 feet from a residential zone the maximum height is 30 feet, for 151 to 250 feet the height is 36 feet, for 251 to 400 feet the height is 40 feet, for 401 to 500 feet the

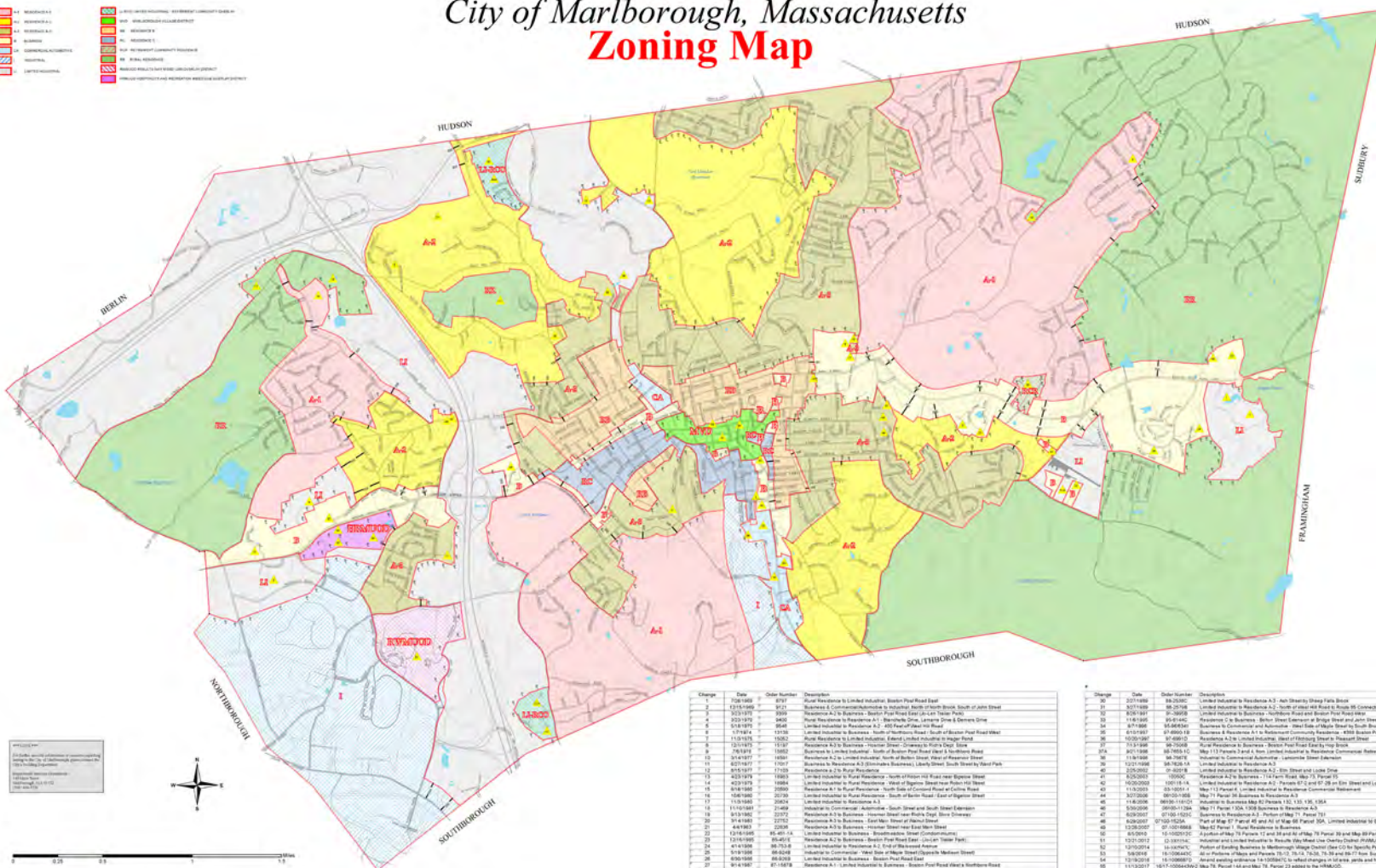
height is 52 feet. The maximum lot coverage in the district is 60%.

A total of 29 uses are allowed as of right under current zoning. A variety of uses are allowed as of right including offices, banks, insurance and financial institutions, commercial greenhouse, agriculture, horticulture, and floriculture, child-care centers, and light non-nuisance manufacturing among others. 24 additional uses are allowed by special permit and include retail sales and services, hotels, recreation center, shopping malls, restaurants, and coffee roastery among others. A total of 70 uses are not permitted in the district and include single-family residential, multifamily dwellings, artists studios, assisted living facilities, veterinary hospitals, schools, clubs, medical offices, and mixed use development.

The current zoning characteristics apply to all Limited Industrial (LI) Zoning Districts in the City. To modify zoning based on the vision for the study area defined by this process either a new underlying zoning district, or a new overlay zoning district would need to define and differentiate the study area from other Limited Industrial Districts.

City of Marlborough Zoning Map

City of Marlborough, Massachusetts Zoning Map



Change	Date	Order Number	Description
1	7/26/1989	8717	Rural Residential to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
2	12/15/1989	9513	Business C Commercial/Industrial to Industrial, North of South Street, South of John Street
3	3/23/1979	9999	Residence A-2 to Business, Boston Post Road East (in Car Toward Park)
4	3/23/1979	9626	From Residence to Residence A-1, Shapley Circle, Liberty Street & Orange Street
5	3/15/1978	8668	Residence to Residence A-1, 485 Pearl Street (off West)
6	1/7/1974	13100	Limited Industrial to Business, North of South Street, South of Boston Post Road West
7	1/18/1974	14002	Rural Residential to Limited Industrial, Elmwood, North of South Street
8	12/11/1973	13137	Residence A-2 to Business, Hudson Street, Corner to St. John's Church
9	11/14/1973	14663	Residence to Limited Industrial, South of Boston Post Road East of North Street
10	3/14/1977	14663	Residence A-2 to Limited Industrial, North of Boston Street, West of Reservoir Street
11	6/27/1977	17047	Business to Residence A-1 (Eliminate Business), Landly Street, South of Boston Post Road West
12	9/15/1977	17435	Residence A-2 to Business, Hudson Street, Corner to St. John's Church
13	4/23/1978	18663	Limited Industrial to Rural Residential, North of Boston Post Road East of North Street
14	4/23/1978	18664	Limited Industrial to Rural Residential, West of Boston Street near Ruffin Hill Street
15	4/24/1980	20969	Residence A-1 to Rural Residential, North Side of Central Street and Central Street
16	10/8/1980	20109	Limited Industrial to Rural Residential, South of South Street, East of Orange Street
17	11/15/1980	24634	Limited Industrial to Residence A-1
18	11/15/1980	24635	Industrial to Commercial/Industrial, South Street and South Street Extension
19	6/15/1981	22782	Residence A-2 to Business, Hudson Street and East Street, Boston Crossing
20	6/15/1981	22783	Limited Industrial to Business, Boston Street and East Street
21	4/4/1983	23008	Residence A-2 to Business, Hudson Street near East Street
22	3/16/1988	36106-14	Limited Industrial to Business, Boston Street (Commercial)
23	12/18/1989	46451-E	Residence A-2 to Business, Boston Post Road East, Lincoln Tunnel Park
24	6/14/1989	36704-B	Limited Industrial to Residence A-1, End of Whipple Avenue
25	5/18/1988	46420-B	Industrial to Commercial, West Side of Maple Street (Opposite Midland Street)
26	6/26/1989	46420-B	Limited Industrial to Business, Boston Post Road East
27	9/14/1987	47148-D	Residence A-1 to Limited Industrial to Business, Boston Post Road West of Reservoir Street
28	12/21/1988	47148-D	Limited Industrial to Business, Boston Post Road East (near Hill)
29	4/25/1989	48-2019C	Business to Residence A-2 (Eliminate Bus), Pleasant Street and Memorial Drive

Change	Date	Order Number	Description
30	3/27/1989	48-2019C	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2, Ann Street (near Park Block)
31	3/27/1989	48-2019C	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2, South of East Hill Road to South Hill Connector
32	8/26/1987	36106-14B	Limited Industrial to Business, Northside Road and Boston Post Road West
33	11/4/1988	46420-C	Residence A-2 to Business, Boston Street (Corner of Orange Street and John Street)
34	8/19/1988	46420-C	Business to Commercial and Industrial, West Side of Maple Street and John Street
35	6/14/1987	47148-D	Business to Residence A-1 to Residential Commercial, 4788 Boston Post Road East (Over Extension)
36	10/29/1987	47148-D	Residence A-2 to Limited Industrial, West of Boston Post Road East of Reservoir Street
37	7/13/1988	46120-14B	Rural Residential to Business, Boston Post Road East by West Street
38	3/4/1988	46120-14B	Map 113 Parcel 2 and 3, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
39	11/14/88	48178-B-1A	Industrial to Commercial/Industrial, Lexington Street Extension
40	3/27/1988	36106-14B	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2
41	10/26/1988	47148-D-1A	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2, Elm Street and Lake Street
42	10/26/1988	47148-D-1A	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2, Parcel 67 and 67-2B on Elm Street and Leland Drive
43	11/15/1989	36106-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 4, Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
44	3/27/1988	36106-14B	Limited Industrial to Residence A-2, Elm Street and Lake Street
45	11/4/1988	46120-14B	Map 113 Parcel 3, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
46	5/26/1989	46120-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 1, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
47	6/22/1987	46120-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 2, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
48	6/22/1987	46120-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 3, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
49	6/22/1987	46120-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 4, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
50	6/22/1987	46120-14B-1A	Map 113 Parcel 5, from Limited Industrial to Residential Commercial/Industrial
51	12/21/1988	47148-D-1A	Industrial and Limited Industrial to Retail, Vero Street (near 88th Street)
52	12/21/1988	47148-D-1A	Parcel of Building Business to Residential/Single Family (See 51 for Specific Parcel)
53	8/30/1988	16-1064A-C	Use of Public Property and Parcel 70-C, 70-D, 70-E, 70-F, 70-G and 70-H, from Business to RM-100
54	12/15/1988	16-1064A-C	Parcel of Building Business to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
55	11/15/1987	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 1 and 2, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
56	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 3, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
57	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 4, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
58	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 5, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
59	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 6, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
60	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 7, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
61	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 8, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
62	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 9, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
63	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 10, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
64	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 11, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
65	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 12, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
66	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 13, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
67	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 14, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
68	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 15, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
69	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 16, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
70	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 17, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
71	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 18, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
72	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 19, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
73	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 20, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
74	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 21, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
75	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 22, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
76	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 23, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
77	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 24, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
78	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 25, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
79	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 26, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
80	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 27, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
81	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 28, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
82	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 29, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
83	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 30, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
84	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 31, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
85	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 32, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
86	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 33, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
87	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 34, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
88	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 35, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
89	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 36, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
90	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 37, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
91	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 38, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
92	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 39, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
93	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 40, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
94	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 41, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
95	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 42, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
96	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 43, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
97	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 44, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
98	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 45, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
99	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 46, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)
100	8/14/1988	16-1064A-C	Map 76 Parcel 47, from Limited Industrial to Residential/Single Family (See 52 for Specific Parcel)

City of Marlborough

 Julian Glicks, Building Commissioner

 John J. Giblin, Commissioner P.R.

 Lisa M. Thomas, City Clerk

 Map Current as of July 1, 2018

 ABB: [Signature]

 Lisa M. Thomas, City Clerk

Study Area Circulation

As described previously the study area access and circulation is a critical and defining feature. The study area benefits from excellent highway access placed at the intersection of two interstate highways. The highway access directly connects Solomon Pond Road in the study area to Interstate 290. Beyond the highways, the roadway network in the study area is relatively limited. Each subarea is accessed by a single primary roadway. The Core Subarea is accessed by Donald Lynch Boulevard. The Outer Subarea south of Interstate 290 is accessed by Robin Hill Street and the Outer Subarea east of Interstate 495 is accessed by Brigham Street that transitions into Donald Lynch Boulevard.

The study area street network is completed by River Road West that extends Solomon Pond Road to the north into the Town of Berlin. Goddard Road and Waterford Drive connect Solomon Pond Road and Robin Hill Street. Bigelow Street provides the only other north south connection between Donald Lynch Boulevard and Robin Hill Street. It travels under Interstate 290. At this intersection with Bigelow Street, Robin Hill Street transitions into Berlin Road. North Bigelow Street transitions into Bridge Road that connects Donald Lynch Boulevard north to River Road West in the Town of Berlin. Wheeler Hill Boulevard connects to Brigham Street and provides access to The Point at

Marlborough, the multifamily residential development to the east of Interstate 495.

The streetview photographs that begin below and are shown on the following page, illustrate the character of the primary roadways in the study area. The primary street, Donald Lynch Boulevard, travels east-west across the study area. It has four lanes, providing two travel lanes in each direction. The boulevard has a center median landscaped island that is mostly lawn. The center island transitions into center turn lanes at most intersection and site access locations where major turning movements occur such as at intersecting streets, the entrances



Donald Lynch Boulevard Google Streetview

into Solomon Pond Mall, or other site entrances. A traffic signal occurs at the intersection with Solomon Pond Mall. Donald Lynch Boulevard has a nearly continuous pedestrian network that varies in configuration from a curbed sidewalk adjacent to the roadway to a shared path with a landscape buffer from the roadway. Marked pedestrian crossings are not present at most intersections or site access locations. Bicycle infrastructure is limited with a dedicated bike lane on the south side of Donald Lynch Boulevard from Bigelow to Brigham Street in Hudson.

The other primary roadway in the study area is Robin Hill Street. It has a very different character than Donald Lynch

Donald Lynch Boulevard Google Streetview



Donald Lynch Boulevard Google Streetview



Robin Hill Street Google Streetview

Boulevard. It is much more rural with a narrow paved surface including a single lane of travel in each direction. The roadway has a minimal shoulder and no pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure.

The pedestrian and bicycle circulation diagram on the following pages shows the extent of sidewalks and paths in the study area. For portions of Donald Lynch Boulevard a sidewalk or path exists on both sides of the street. For a few other portions, a sidewalk or path exists on only one side of the street, and for the segment of roadway nearest Solomon Pond Mall, no sidewalk exists on either side of the street.

A sidewalk exists on one side of the street on Brigham Street and Wheeler Hill Boulevard serving pedestrians at The Point. Other portions of the study area street network have minimal pedestrian infrastructure.

As mentioned previously the scale of the study area is best supported by vehicular access. However, the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is not to a level in the study area that communicates convenience and safety to those who may desire another form of circulation. If the network of sidewalks, paths, and crossings were more comprehensive and connected it would be more likely to encourage non-vehicular trips in the study area. A patron may arrive by vehicle, but then may go

for a walk in the district, walk to get lunch, or walk to a nearby outdoor amenity during a break. Additionally, the sidewalk and path network is limited to the roadway network today. Additional paths could be created independent of the roadway network to create more direct connections to the natural assets of the study area including the Assabet River and nearby conservation lands.

Study Area pedestrian and bicycle circulation



Sidewalk/path on one side



Sidewalk/path on two sides

Study Area Parking

Parking in the study area is a critical component of the access and use of the properties. Parking is provided on each individual property with private parking lots. No public parking resources are provided in the study area. Parking is primarily provided as surface parking lots adjacent to the building. The one exception is a parking deck that has been constructed to the rear of the Solomon Pond Mall.

The study area is subject to Section 650-46 Off-street parking of the City of Marlborough Zoning. The following minimum parking requirements apply in the district. Stores and shops for retail require one parking space for each 100 square feet of public floor area. Offices and banks require one parking space for each 250 square feet of office area. Shopping malls require a minimum of one parking space for each 225 square feet of gross leasable area.

Most of the concentration of surface parking in the study area is found on the properties along Donald Lynch Boulevard. That concentration is evident in the diagram on the following page. The diagram highlights in gray the surface parking lots of the study area. In the Core Subarea along Donald Lynch Boulevard, the surface parking areas account for about 3.2 million square feet of impervious area. That is about 22% of the land

area in this subarea. The Outer Subarea has much less of a concentration of surface parking. The surface parking lots that exist in the subarea add about 1 million square feet and bring the total impervious surface parking area of the total study area to 4.1 million.

No on-street parking supply exists in the study area. The nature of the parking supply in the study area may result in an over supply of parking. Each property is providing enough parking for its own use on the property. Different uses may experience different periods of peak parking time. This presents an opportunity to share the same parking supply between different uses. There is likely potential within the study area to make the use of parking more efficient and to optimize the amount of parking that is needed to effectively serve the mix of district uses. Encouraging walking between nearby uses in the study area is also beneficial in optimizing the use of parking in the district.

Study Area parking supply

3,186,525 square feet of impervious area in core area
22% of the land area



4,136,173 square feet of total impervious area

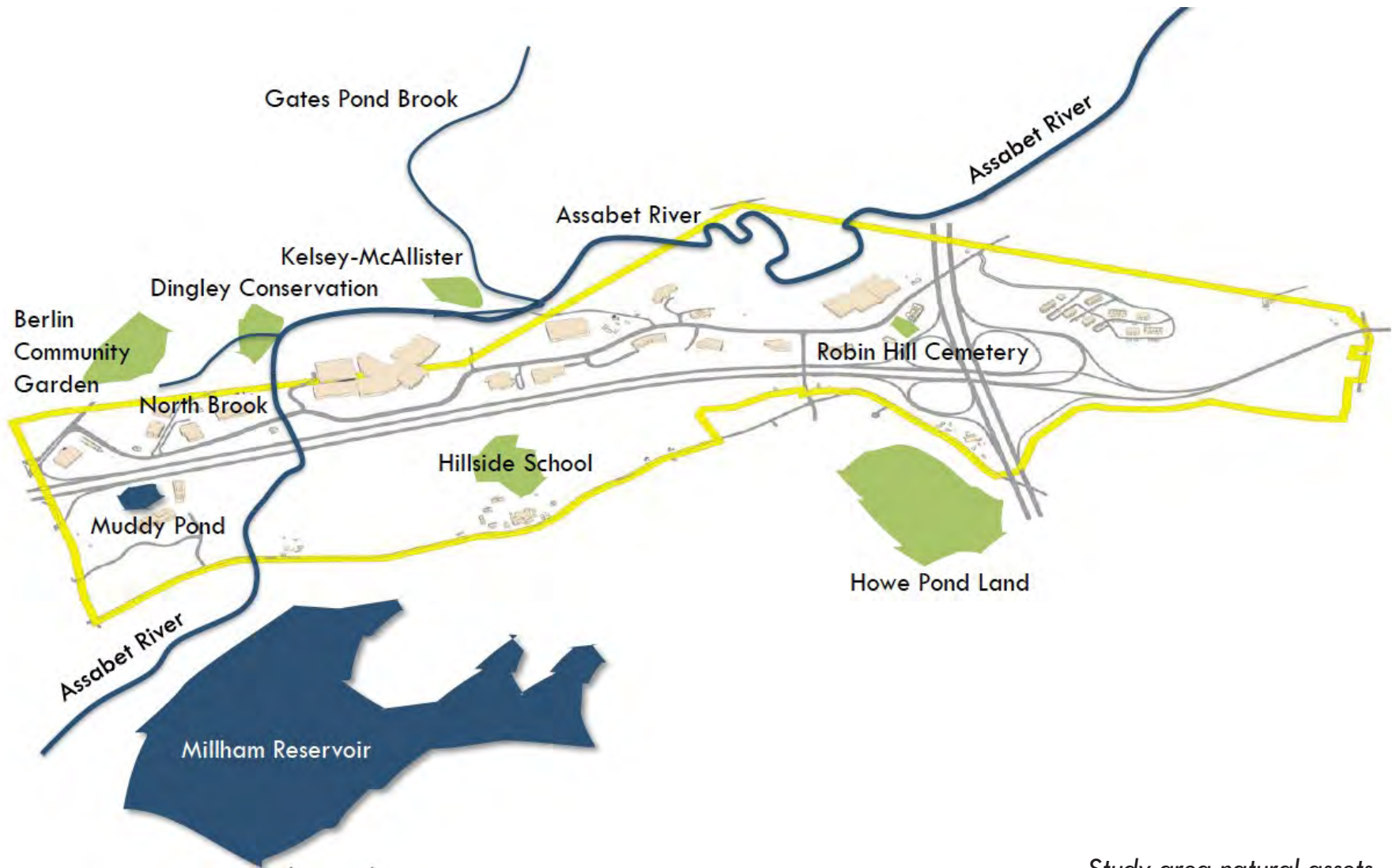
Study Area Natural Assets

One of the underutilized aspects of the study area is the collection of natural assets. The primary natural feature of the district is the Assabet River. The Assabet enters the study area near the southwest corner. It flows across the district south to north to the west of the Solomon Pond Mall. It follows near the northern edge of the study area in the Town of Berlin and then reenters the study area near the New England Sports Center. This is a substantial asset that could be a highlight of the study area. The Assabet River is the feature of nearby districts including the Assabet River Rail Trail running through Marlborough, Hudson, Stow, Maynard and Acton.

In addition to the Assabet River, the study area has two other nearby water features including the Muddy Pond inside of the study area and the nearby Millham Reservoir just south of the study area. Just north of the study area in the Town of Berlin is a tributary that feeds into the Assabet River, the Gates Pond Brook. Other study area natural assets include nearby conservation lands. These include the Howe Pond Land just south of the study area. In the study area the Hillside School does have natural and recreational resources on the school's campus, but use would require coordination with the school. Also in the district on Donald Lynch Boulevard is the Robin Hill Cemetery. Additional resources are located just north of the study area in

the Town of Berlin. These resources include the Berlin Community Garden, the Dingley conservation land, and the Kelsey-McAllister conservation land.

Each of the natural assets and resources act relatively independently in and around the study area. No larger connections or trails are yet developed to link these assets.



Study area natural assets

Market Context

From the perspective of the broader real estate market, the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area is positioned interestingly. The study area's highway access has been discussed among other characteristics and analyses, but the highway access is critically important for the market context. That ease of access places the study area in both the Boston and Worcester submarkets. For different uses and destinations the study area can attract businesses, employees, patrons, and customers from both population centers.

The context for the study area is also suburban. The suburbs have continued to grow and dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic appear to have shifted housing preferences, at least temporarily, to favor suburban locations. In July 2020, Cushman & Wakefield Research released a report entitled "Suburban Boom: How COVID-19 May Accelerate the Trend Already in the Making." The report highlights that the emphasis on suburban preferences has been occurring within the broader context of Millennials reaching home buying age. Nearly half of all Millennials are 30 years or older and the oldest are approaching their 40s. The median age to buy a home is 33 years old. Nationwide, Millennials have been the largest group of home buyers for the past three years. They are more likely than any other age group to buy homes in the suburbs. Half of

home purchases are in the suburbs, compared to only 13% of all home purchases in a central city.

However, regardless of demographic cohort, many residents and prospective residents of the suburbs find certain characteristics most attractive. Many of these characteristics point to suburban locations that can offer amenities similar to the city center including walkability and bikeability, access to multiple modes of transportation, amenities and entertainment venues, experiential retail, food options, and parking and charging stations.

The Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area has the ability to evolve to capitalize on these desirable features. Walkability and bikeability can be improved in the district, amenities, entertainment venues, experiential retail, and food options can be leveraged and expanded in the district. The strength and growth of housing in the context of places like the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area contrasts with the trends underway in suburban retail. The over-retailing of the country is a widely discussed trend. Enclosed suburban malls have been seeing the combined results of changing patterns of consumption, the desire for compact and walkable places, and the still remaining impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on retail.

Mall and retail vacancies have been trending upward for

the past five or more years, presenting challenges prior to the pandemic. Enclosed malls have been experiencing more pressure to evolve than outdoor centers. Examples of the transformation of suburban malls exist from across the country. The transformation is typically to reinvent the mall to retain its relevance as a destination. Often, these changes involve converting from an enclosed to an outdoor center, adding new uses such as healthcare, office, residential, or other mixed-uses, or evolving to more of a walkable mixed-use center. Retail is shifting from a standalone destination to an amenity in live, work, play communities. The retail, restaurants, and experiences help to define the sense of place.

The Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area already has a cluster of office uses including biotech uses. The building assets and clustering of office uses could be leveraged in the future to attract additional office uses and to expand the offerings and amenities available to office workers and patrons in the Study Area. The impacts of COVID-19 on the office outlook are uncertain. The rapid shift to remote work caused disruption in daily patterns of work and commutes, but it is unclear what the long term impact of these disruptions may be. Some businesses may see the footprint of their office needs decrease as part-time work from home patterns become more permanent.

Although the Study Area is zoned Limited Industrial, industrial,

manufacturing, and warehousing uses represent a small portion of the current uses in the study area. The broader market context for these uses is favorable for a location with good highway access. Particularly, warehousing and fulfillment centers have been growing due to the increase in e-commerce. MAPC recently released a report entitled “Hidden and in Plain Sight: Impacts of E-Commerce in Massachusetts.” The report highlights that the \$600 billion e-commerce industry now makes up 14% of all retail sales in the country and has contributed to a 42% increase in warehouse rents in Greater Boston over the last two years. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has only served to accelerate the trends toward e-commerce and the need for warehousing and distribution infrastructure. Recent economic concerns regarding inflation, rising interest rates, and questions about the future economic outlook have all paused the rapid expansion of e-commerce and warehousing space that was underway.

Case Studies

A part of the context for this study is the idea of “suburban retrofit”, meaning strengthening the development patterns of the suburbs to help them evolve in a more sustainable, walkable, and economically viable manner. Three broad strategies fall within this approach to the evolution of the suburbs - re-development, re-inhabitation, and re-greening. Re-development refers to the demolition and reconstruction of underperforming suburban assets to remake them as more mixed-use, walkable, and concentrated, more similar to a traditional town center. Re-inhabitation refers to repurposing existing spaces that have become vacant or underutilized and reinvesting in their reinvention as a home for a new purpose or use. Re-greening refers to adding ecological and flood control enhancements to suburban development patterns that are typically associated with large impervious parking lots and hard infrastructure to support stormwater, flood control, water, and wastewater needs.

A few examples of these approaches were identified that do offer some similarities with the Donald Lynch Boulevard area. Many examples of suburban transformation exist across the country with well known investments in places such as Tysons Corner Center in McLean Virginia and Belmar in Lakewood Colorado. These examples typically involve major investments by a developer in an older format suburban mall or retail



*Belmar transformed as a walkable center
(Photo June Williamson)*

center. Several local examples follow these same trends and include recent and planned investments at the Natick Mall, Woburn Mall, and Hanover Crossing. Each may offer a model relevant to the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area.

The Natick Mall underwent a transformative investment and rebranding in 2007 to become the Natick Collection. While the surrounding demographics, market conditions, and development scale may be different, the fundamental concepts may be applicable to the study area. General Growth Properties added over 500,000 square feet to the existing 1.1 million square foot retail center including anchors Nordstrom and Neiman Marcus and 98 specialty shops and restaurants. The investments included diversifying the uses on the property with the addition of Nouvelle Natick, a 215-unit luxury condominium building to add activity to the lifestyle center.



Nouvelle at Natick (Photo Boston City Properties)

In Woburn, Edens LLC owns and operates a smaller enclosed mall with close to 250,000 square feet on a 23 acre property. The owner has acquired approval to invest in the property to reconfigure it into more of a lifestyle center. The proposed development includes a 350 unit housing complex, a cinema, and new shopping destinations. The transformed mixed-use redevelopment includes about 700,000 square feet with a Market Basket supermarket, cinema, new restaurants, and new retailers. AvalonBay Communities will construct the housing complex that will include 20% of the units as affordable units developed under a 40R district.



The existing Woburn Mall (Photo Patch.com)

Planned redevelopment in Woburn (Photo Patch.com)



On the previous page the original configuration of the Woburn Mall was shown with the enclosed indoor mall circulation. In the redeveloped site plan shown above the circulation occurs outside between buildings that are arranged in a structure more similar to a grid structure with streets and blocks.

In Hanover, the Hanover Mall is perhaps the closest comparable in terms of scale and surrounding demographics. The mall was originally built in the 1980s and was a more traditional enclosed mall. The vacancies at the mall steadily grew and peaked in 2016 when revitalization plans were pursued by a new property owner, PREP. The owner sought to bring back

vibrancy to the area and proposed an open air lifestyle center mixed with luxury residential units. This transformation is now under construction and will be rebranded as Hanover Crossing. The residential portion of the redevelopment is being completed by the Hanover Company. The ownership team and the Town secured a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) plan for the redevelopment. The public financing method provides a subsidy for redevelopment through a property tax exemption that incrementally decreases over a period of time. The exemption only applies to the increase in the property's value beyond the purchase price, delaying the increased burden of taxes on the



Proposed Hanover Crossing (Photo theHanovercrossing.com)

investments. The residential component of the redevelopment is not a part of the TIF agreement.

According to the property owners in Hanover, 40% of the top malls in country are adding residential space and 33% are building hotels as part of future investments. They state that the “live, work, play” strategy is a must for future retail success. This is a similar approach to that taken in other locations throughout the region including Market Street in Lynnfield, the Third Avenue complex in Burlington, Legacy Place in Dedham, and University Station in Westwood. In this context, the addition

of a residential component to a development program has also helped to increase the financial viability of the redevelopment investments.



Previous Hanover Mall (Photo theHanovercrossing.com)



Proposed Hanover Crossing (Photo theHanovercrossing.com)

3 Study Area Vision

In addition to a concrete understanding of the characteristics of the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area today, it is equally important to articulate a vision for the future of the study area. This vision will guide the recommendations that follow in this report and can also be used to guide future public and private investments in the study area.

In order to define the vision, district stakeholders were invited to provide input on their insights into the study area. The stakeholders included district property owners and their representatives, district businesses and tenants, Marlborough residents, City Councilors, and the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation. These stakeholders were engaged in the series of meetings that were part of this study process. Much of the information presented in the previous section of this report was presented to the stakeholders in order to inform and frame the conversation around a vision and the types of recommendations that may be appropriate to achieve the vision. In addition, a coordination meeting occurred with the Town of Berlin Economic Development Committee to better understand the concerns of the neighboring municipality. Several district properties include land located within both municipalities.

The next page shows several quotes from the stakeholders that participated in two community meetings as part of this process, or that submitted comments via email during the process. Each quote and comment grounds the analysis in the previous section through the experiences of stakeholders in the district. Several themes identified through the analyses of the current conditions are reflected back through this feedback.

In addition to a wealth of information gathered through open comments, the following pages show the results of a strength, weakness, opportunity, threat (SWOT) evaluation of the district that was completed by the stakeholders. These observations offer additional context and direction for the study area vision. A vision for how the study area should transform to remain relevant and attractive is important for the property owners, tenants, patrons, and City. Such a vision should be used to inform a deliberate and targeted approach to economic development.

Donald Lynch Boulevard Stakeholder Quotes

"Lack of walkable or drive-thru amenities for office uses"

"New England Sports Center (NESC) works and is the one unique feature. Any changes should be based on that asset."

"The area is lacking a vibe and identity – the Solomon Pond Mall and New England Sports Center are magnet destinations, but the entire area needs to be reimagined and reidentified."

"It's nice to have the current retail amenities – hopefully we can keep those"

"Lack of quick food options for lunch for business"

"Existing zoning is archaic – limiting property owners' flexibility"

"Need to improve cohesiveness of the district. Currently there is no drive-thru, no bank. The key is to have visitors accomplish more than one task with a visit to the district. If getting there requires a 10-15 minute drive, then patrons need to be able to do more with that visit."

"Bike paths and walking paths connecting the various properties along Donald Lynch"

"Enhance the experience for current tenants"

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Evaluation

Stakeholders contributed to the following evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area.

Strengths

- New England Sports Center is an important/unique destination
- Solomon Pond Mall is a destination for the district
- Strong existing office uses contributing to base of weekday patrons
- Regional positioning and access to draw from both Boston metropolitan and Worcester metropolitan areas
- Good vehicular accessibility
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) offers service to Solomon Pond Mall and destinations along Route 20 in Marlborough on Route 7C
- Existing businesses and tenants providing a base of activity and amenity
- Cluster of biotech/life science uses is already an asset

Weaknesses

- More direct access from the highway does not appear possible
- Visibility of district from the highway
- Area lacking amenities that patrons of the district desire (restaurants, other attractions)
- Everyone that works or visits has to drive to their destination
- Lack of convenient amenities that are walkable or offer drive-thru convenience
- Retail vacancies in the mall and other retail buildings
- Area is lacking a vibe or identity, improve cohesiveness of district
- Visitors and patrons need to be able to combine more trips/ reasons to visit if they are driving 15-minutes to get there
- Lack of flexibility in current zoning for opportunities/uses/ parking
- High speed traffic and issues with pedestrian and bike safety

Opportunities

- Potential connection to existing Assabet River Rail Trail that is nearby and connects Downtown Marlborough to Downtown Hudson and potentially an unimproved path as part of a utility corridor to the west of the study area that runs from Northborough to West Berlin
- Repositioning retail from stand-alone destination to amenity in a live/work/play community
- Potential coordination and collaboration with Riverbridge in the Town of Berlin and nearby light industrial areas in Northborough
- Underutilized parking areas could be used to add density of uses and development
- Expansion of live/work/play uses in the district
- Pop up establishments
- Enhanced visibility and signage for the district destinations

Threats

- Future of retail market is unknown and presents a challenge in that historic data to guide decision making is not available
- Context of changing suburban enclosed malls being hit harder by trends in retail and lasting shifts from COVID-19 impacts
- Potential lasting disruptions to traditional office uses among extended remote work practices

Donald Lynch Boulevard Vision Statement

In the near term, strengthen the vitality of the district by encouraging uses, activities, and improvements that will complement the existing assets. This may include support for new restaurants, food trucks, and outdoor spaces that can be safely accessed by walking with a fully connected network of sidewalks.

In the long term, each new investment should be viewed as an opportunity to complement existing uses, add new destinations and attractions, and strengthen a district that provides a variety of compelling reasons to visit, whether it be to work, shop, play, or live. The composition of each new investment will look to enhance the sense of place, identity, and walkability of the district and define distinct nodes which feel more like compact centers of activity. Monitor progress and provide flexibility for property owners to invest in new uses and redevelopment that will respond to the real estate market and needs of the community.

Responding to the Vision

The recommendations that flow from the Vision Statement should provide opportunities for the viable and flexible evolution of properties in the study area that is consistent with the vision. These opportunities would be consistent with the broader patterns of suburban evolution that are being observed throughout the region and country. These opportunities include:

- **Re-development** – encouraging more uses that are consistent with the district vision to reinvest in underperforming assets and add to the density of activities in the study area.
- **Re-inhabitation** – encouraging more opportunities for viable uses and flexibility in the study area that could be used to repurpose or optimize existing spaces.
- **Re-greening** – encouraging future investments that will enhance the sustainability and resilience of the study area while contributing to the attractiveness of the environment. These may include private or public investments to support a network of non-vehicular connections, to optimize and reduce the amount of impervious surfaces, to make additional landscape investments, and to explore the benefits of complete streets in the study area.

One example for how the Vision Statement could be reflected in near term outcomes would be to focus improvements

on an enhanced office park setting that features retail and recreation destinations and improved connections to nearby natural resources. Specific improvements may involve enhanced pedestrian amenities, additional landscaping, and complementary activities that may even include temporary or short term approaches, such as hosting a food truck in strategic locations.

One example for how the Vision Statement could be reflected in longer term outcomes would be to focus on investments which help to define a renewed sense of place through the addition of new buildings, repositioning of existing buildings, and investment in a pedestrian network of sidewalks and trails that connect district destinations. The district destinations would expand from those that exist today to include natural resources which are made more accessible through investments in trails, modest outdoor open spaces, and outdoor seating areas. All of this would be combined with additional and enhanced landscaping, district branding, signage, and wayfinding.

The Vision Statement and these potential opportunities and outcomes would better align the study area with the broader context and trends that have been highlighted in this report.

First, the vision looks to enhance land use development and encourage desired growth patterns to support economic

development in the study area to strengthen the vitality of the district. This will occur by encouraging uses, activities, and improvements that will complement the existing assets. It is important to build on the success of the district for office and research and development and to build on the cluster of businesses that have already been established in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area.

Second, the recommendations that align with the vision will expand opportunities for success that are consistent with the district vision. Viable and complementary uses that make it more likely a building or property can be reused or redeveloped is critical for the future health of the study area. This is particularly true for the retail spaces in the study area to provide as many viable options for optimizing the use of those spaces.

Third, the vision is intended to enhance the sense of place and experience of place in the study area. This is only likely to continue to grow in importance for retail, restaurants, hospitality, and office uses. This also is a way to complement and build on the study area destinations and attractions. The New England Sports Center draws visitors to the study area. If the study area is attractive and has a clear sense of place it can leverage these visitors to become more active patrons for other uses in the study area. Another important aspect of the vision is

enhancing the sense of place and identity through the natural amenities, outdoor spaces, and landscaping. This is critically important to bring a sense of cohesion and connectedness to the study area and adds another layer of destinations and activity that can be enjoyed by patrons and visitors.

Fourth, the vision looks to enhance land use development and encourage desired growth patterns to support a healthy community. This occurs primarily through the prioritization of walkability of the study area. Future investments can create a more compact and walkable development pattern and support the creation of smaller nodes that provide a well connected network of sidewalks and paths. The importance of an active and healthy lifestyle supported by a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle network will only increase in the future. Public health data supports these important infrastructure needs.

Fifth, the vision looks to expand the relevance, visibility, and functionality of the natural assets in the district. The projected impacts of climate change include more intense storm events, greater likelihood of riverine flooding, prolonged heat and drought events, and higher temperatures. Investments in the natural assets of the district will enhance the sustainability of the study area today while increasing the resilience of the study area to these future impacts. The site design, building design, infrastructure, and natural assets should all be elevated in the

study area to become an integral part of the sense of place. This includes leveraging the unique natural assets of the district and surrounding context, including the Assabet River.

Finally, expanding the study area's range of uses to include complementary multifamily housing would strengthen the study area. The introduction of housing in the study area must be carefully considered and occur under specific conditions. It is not the intention to open the study area to a complete residential transformation. Residential uses are very likely to remain a strong component that can contribute to the financial feasibility of redevelopment efforts. In this way, housing should be leveraged in the district to help increase the viability and success of desired transformations or evolution of properties that may need reinvestment in the future. A measured amount of housing in the study area would also complement the other uses and strengthen the levels of activity there. This would add to the number of compelling reasons to visit and help the study area evolve toward a place to work, shop, play, or live.

4 Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

The vision statement has set the foundation for land use and zoning recommendations in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area. Because most of the properties in the study area are privately owned, zoning is the most effective tool to encourage changes that are consistent with the vision statement. A comparison between the existing zoning characteristics for the study area's Limited Industrial (LI) zone, as described earlier in this report, and the vision that was articulated for the study area point to the need for zoning changes.

In order to limit the applicability of the needed zoning changes, a new zoning district or overlay will need to be created for at least a portion of the study area. This will avoid the changes applying to all other Limited Industrial (LI) zoned areas of the City. Based on the analyses of the study area and the differences between the subareas, it is recommended that the boundary of this new zoning district or overlay define an area that is smaller than the study area. The recommendation is to have the new zoning district or overlay apply to all parcels that are to the north of Interstate 290 and to the west of Interstate 495, as shown on the map on the following page. This is the Core Subarea that was described previously in this report. This area could be considered as a pilot for the zoning changes. Additional portions of the study area could be added at a later date, if desired.

The recommended zoning changes include changes to eligible uses, dimensional requirements, parking, curb cut and landscaping requirements, design standards, signage, and

standards for roadways and drainage.

The recommended zoning changes and the boundary of those changes can either be implemented as a new zoning district or a new zoning overlay. Recent zoning modifications in the City of Marlborough have employed both approaches. The Wayside Zoning District was a newly created zoning district established recently to differentiate a portion of the Business District on Route 20 East. The Hospitality and Recreation Mixed Use Overlay District (HRMUOD) was a newly created overlay district to define new characteristics for a portion of Route 20 West.

Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. A new underlying zone avoids confusion and conflicts as it clearly defines one set of regulations that apply to an area. The change may require more modifications to the Zoning Ordinance to establish the new district and generally adds to the number of districts that are referenced in the zoning tables.

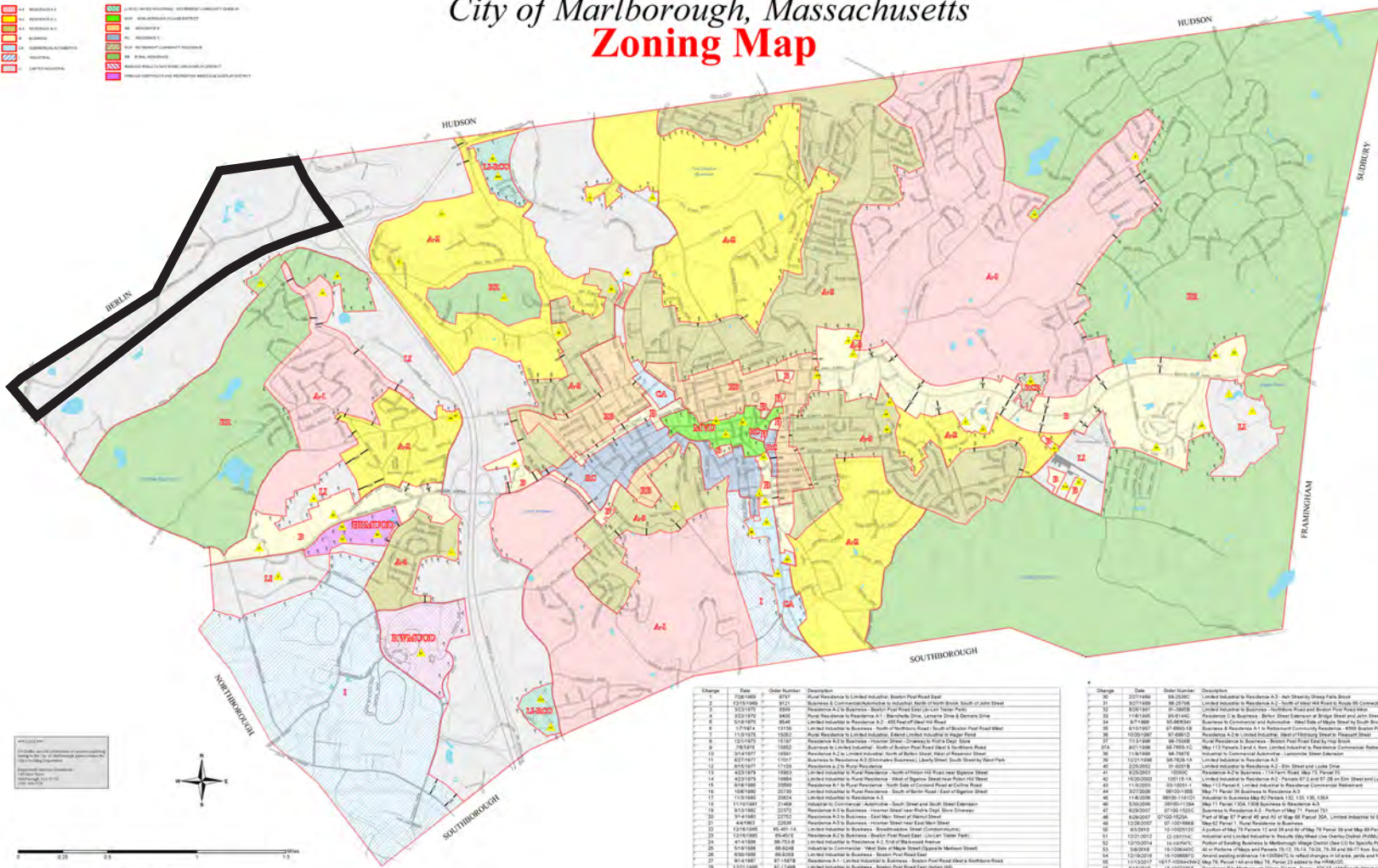
The overlay provides a simple way to add additional regulations for a specific area. In this case the overlay would modify the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) district and define the special conditions of Donald Lynch Boulevard. The overlay may sometimes cause confusion where conflicts occur between it and the underlying zoning.

The zoning recommendations written up in the appendix have been drafted as an overlay district.

City of Marlborough Zoning Map with recommended overlay boundary (outlined in black)

City of Marlborough, Massachusetts Zoning Map

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



Change	Date	Order Number	Description
1	7/28/1989	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
2	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
3	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
4	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
5	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
6	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
7	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
8	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
9	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
10	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
11	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
12	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
13	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
14	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
15	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
16	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
17	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
18	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
19	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
20	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
21	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
22	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
23	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
24	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
25	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
26	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
27	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
28	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
29	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
30	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
31	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
32	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
33	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
34	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
35	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
36	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
37	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
38	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
39	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
40	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
41	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
42	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
43	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
44	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
45	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
46	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
47	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
48	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
49	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East
50	1/31/1990	8711	Amend Ordinance to Limited Industrial, Boston Post Road East

City of Marlborough
 GIS
 Web Content as of July 1, 2018
 Author: Cecilia Building Commissioner
 Editor: Global, Commissioner D'Elia
 Lisa M. Thomas, City Clerk

City of Marlborough
 Final Report

Potential Zoning Use Modifications

The following zoning use modifications are recommended to bring potential future investments in alignment with the Vision Statement. All of the uses defined by the City of Marlborough Table of Use Regulations are not listed below. The listing focuses on the uses that would change from the current underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zone to the recommended Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District.

The first set of changes are for those uses that are currently listed as “Y” allowed as of right and are recommended to change to “SP” allowed by special permit. The additional review of these uses is recommended to ensure that they are consistent with the Vision as proposed. These recommended use changes include: residential accessory uses; customary home occupations; yard sales, charitable sales bazaars; soil removal; agriculture, horticulture or floriculture >5 acres; airports and heliports; manufacturing and/or warehousing; and data storage/telecommunications facilities.

The second set of changes are for those uses that are currently listed as “SP” allowed by special permit and are recommended to change to “N” not permitted. These uses are considered inconsistent with the vision for the study area and future investment in these uses would move the area further from

the vision, not closer to it. Any of these uses that exist in the district today would be allowed to remain and function as they do today, but depending on the circumstances, these existing uses may not be allowed to expand. These recommended use changes include: outdoor storage; contractor’s yard; and landscape contractor’s yard.

The third set of changes are for those uses that are currently listed as “SP” allowed by special permit and are recommended to change to “Y” allowed as of right. The uses are seen as desirable to align with the vision and approval should be streamlined. These recommended use changes include: restaurant, cafe.

The fourth set of changes are for those uses that are currently listed as “N” not permitted and are recommended to change to “SP” allowed by special permit. These uses are considered consistent with the vision for the study area, but additional review is recommended to ensure they are appropriately contributing to the desired outcomes. These recommended use changes include: multifamily dwelling; artists studio/live/work gallery space; recording studio/live/work space; convert buildings to office, bank, insurance use; schools for business, trade, music, dance, and television/or radio broadcasting studios (but not including towers); recreation and entertainment, indoor; private clubs, nonprofit; clubs; recreation

and entertainment, indoor; self-service laundry; dental clinics; consumer service establishments; mixed use development; copy shops, newspaper offices; open air markets; restaurant with drive-in or drive-thru facilities; drive-thru facilities; manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer; light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery; retail sales accessory to manufacturing; and dry cleaning.

The final set of changes are for those uses that are currently listed as “N” not permitted and are recommended to change to “Y” allowed as of right. These uses are considered consistent with the vision for the study area and should be added to increase the number of potentially viable uses for the district. These recommended use changes include: medical office/clinic; and public recreation and conservation.

All other uses not listed above, would remain as they are defined by the current Limited Industrial (LI) zoning district.

Refer to the Appendix for a summary Table of Use Regulations that compares the existing Limited Industrial (LI) zone uses with the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard overlay uses.

Potential Zoning Dimensional Modifications

In addition to the use modifications, the following modifications are recommended to the Table of Lot Area, Yards, and Height of Structures to bring potential investment in alignment with the Vision Statement. The purpose of these changes is to encourage a more dense and compact development pattern in the recommended overlay district.

The requirements for a typical lot would not change, except that the maximum height scale that currently defines building height in the Limited Industrial (LI) district relative to its distance from a residential district. It is recommended that this height scale be removed for the overlay district and that the maximum building height shall not exceed 60 feet which is the taller than the 52 feet maximum currently allowed in the Limited Industrial (LI) district. The Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District is isolated and separated from surrounding zoning districts by the two interstate highways, therefore the height constraints relative to adjacent zones are not necessary and the additional maximum height will increase the flexibility for redevelopment.

The other recommended change to encourage a more dense and compact development pattern is to allow a smaller lot to be subdivided and developed within a larger existing property following specific requirements for that smaller lot.

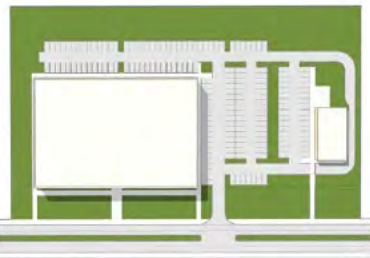
Generalized diagram of a typical study area property



On this page is a generalized diagram of a typical property in the district. The small lot development would define a new parcel subdivided from an existing parcel with the subdivision located at the street frontage of the property. The small lot development would require no minimum lot area and a reduced minimum lot frontage of 50 feet. The setbacks would also be

reduced to 30 feet for the front yard, 10 feet for the side yard, and 15 feet for the rear yard. The maximum lot coverage on this smaller lot would be increased to 80%. The existing property subject to subdivision shall retain the minimum lot area of 2 acres and the minimum lot frontage of at least 200 feet with the removal of the subdivided lot. The subdivided lot

Recommended changes to add smaller buildings and new uses



- ADDED:**
- 5,000 SF Footprint
 - 1-story
 - 34 parking spaces shown
 - Additional shade trees

will not impact the setbacks or lot coverage of the property subject to subdivision. On this page, the illustration shows the intended outcome of this type of additional zoning language to add a new smaller scale building to the property that can densify and diversify the uses and activities in the district. The subdivided property integrates with the vehicular circulation

already present on the property, adds pedestrian connectivity, and has a building that is oriented to the frontage of Donald Lynch Boulevard with parking located to the side or rear of the building. The diagram also shows additional shade trees planted as part of the improvements.

Potential Zoning Standard Modifications

Additional zoning recommendations define complementary parking, curb cut, landscaping, design standard, signage, roadway and drainage requirement recommendations. Parking in the study area should be optimized as much as possible such that large areas of impervious surface parking lots are not left unused. This also allows more of the land in the study area to be occupied by buildings, outdoor spaces, or other amenities that contribute more positively to the study area. Several zoning recommendations are intended to encourage this outcome. The first is permitting reductions in parking requirements for complementary or shared use of parking that can serve multiple activities that have different peak demand times. This makes better use of the parking that is provided.

In addition to the reductions in required parking that may occur through shared parking, it is recommended that minimum parking requirements in the overlay district be reduced. A reduction of parking minimums is in alignment with broader regulatory trends. In some contexts, parking minimums have been removed altogether and sometimes replaced with parking maximums. The specific amount of parking should be closely analyzed by the development team and aligned with projected needs. By lowering the parking minimums it is less likely that parking that is not needed would still be required. For retail

and restaurant uses the minimum requirement could be reduced to 1 parking space per 250 square feet of net floor area. For other commercial uses the minimum parking requirement could be reduced to 1 parking space per 350 square feet of net floor area. Parking for residential units could be provided at a minimum requirement of 1 parking space per unit.

The zoning should also define that parking should occur to the side or rear of buildings to minimize the visual impact of the parking areas. Additionally, the visual and environmental impact of large parking areas should be reduced by integrating the parking into the overall site design and landscape plan through the use of multiple smaller parking areas that are integrated with low impact development techniques, green infrastructure, and additional landscaping.

Design standards are recommended within the new overlay district to better align future investments with the vision. The design standards don't need to focus as much on the building and architecture in this context, but are more concerned with the site and building layout. The most important aspect of future investments is that they are thoughtfully located to enhance the sense of place and strengthen the walkability of the district. In part this should be achieved by defining shared outdoor spaces. Outdoor areas that are framed by buildings or landscape and that offer an amenity or activity to visitors or patrons of

the district. This could vary and include anything from a simple seating area, to an outdoor dining area, to a water feature, outdoor sculpture or public art, or outdoor activity such as a large chess set.

The shared outdoor spaces should be set within the context of enhanced landscape features that are occurring throughout overlay district on private properties and public rights-of-way. Sustainability and green infrastructure features should be integrated into the site layout and be featured alongside the other types of amenities discussed.

Additional guidance and flexibility for signage in the overlay district was also desired by study area stakeholders and would benefit the district identity and branding. A signage plan should be created as part of future improvements and approvals processes. The signage plan is an effective way to ensure a thoughtful and coordinated approach to this component of the visual identity of a place. A signage plan will also help to identify opportunities for coordination across the district for cohesive branding features and wayfinding elements. Stakeholders expressed a desire to increase visibility from Interstate 290. This could be accomplished through a modification to the sign regulations for this overlay district. Additional sign locations could be allowed by special permit for the purpose of increasing visibility from Interstate 290. Such

sign types may include a sign that projects above the highest line of the roof, a sign mounted on the roof of the building, a freestanding pole, monument, or pylon sign, or an off-premise sign in a visible location.

Potential Development Context

In order to consider the potential outcomes that may result from the recommended zoning modifications, a susceptibility to change analysis was performed for the study area. This analysis examines the assessor's data for each parcel in the study area. The features that were examined included the relationship between the value of buildings on the property and the value of the land, the size of the parcel, the ownership of the parcel, assessor's notes on the current use of the parcel, the presence of wetlands, streams or other natural encumbrances on the parcel, the potential to combine the parcel with another abutting parcel, and the ability to provide access to the parcel. Each of these characteristics were evaluated and then based upon the combination of these characteristics placed into one of the four classifications defined below and illustrated on the following page.

Based on the consistent set of characteristics and features that were examined, each parcel was classified as having new investment potential where development was more likely in the near term (green). Or, a parcel was determined to have less investment potential where development may be more likely in the longer term (yellow). Or, a parcel was determined to have the least development potential where it is not likely in the future (red) due to a recent investment or property constraint.

Or, a parcel was determined to have redevelopment/additional development potential where the parcel may have a valuable structure and the land area for potential additional investments (pink).

The majority of properties that would be located in the recommended Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District fall into the redevelopment/additional development potential category. It is less likely that these properties will find enough value in a new development to completely demolish a structure and develop something new. The approach to the zoning recommendations accounts for this circumstance and therefore is focused more on the optimization of these properties to both add new smaller scale buildings and complementary uses, optimize the use of parking and land, add shared open spaces and landscape enhancements, and strengthen the sense of place and pedestrian environment.

Study area susceptibility to change diagram



5 Public Realm and Open Space Recommendations

The vision statement has defined the importance of a high quality public realm and open space network in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Study Area. The following public realm and open space recommendations are intended to strengthen the public realm and open space to be consistent with the vision statement. The public realm includes all components of circulation and public space that occur within the public rights-of-way that are typically owned and maintained by the City. These rights-of-way support circulation for all modes of travel including vehicular, pedestrian, and bicyclist. A comparison between the existing public realm and open space conditions, as described earlier in this report, and the vision that was articulated for the study area point to the need for improvements.

The current conditions reflect a prioritization of vehicular travel. Safe and convenient vehicular travel is a priority for the study area and is a critical component of access and economic development. However, supporting vehicular travel should not come at the expense of other forms of travel. Currently, the pedestrian network of sidewalks and paths is not continuous and lacks safety features that would reinforce the safety and convenience of walking. Bicycle infrastructure is limited in the district and should continue to be improved to help bicycle travel feel safe and convenient. A Complete Streets approach

is a useful framework in this context. Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. That definition is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation. It is also important to note that MassDOT has a Complete Streets Funding Program that may align well with the public realm and open space recommendations. Marlborough has been awarded Complete Streets funding for past roadway improvement projects.

In terms of the pedestrian infrastructure, the first priority should be completing a continuous pedestrian network of sidewalks and paths along Donald Lynch Boulevard. This should include sidewalks or paths along both sides of the boulevard with marked crosswalks at all cross streets and access drives and new crosswalks across the boulevard at streets and access drives at intervals of about 400 to 500 feet. Crosswalks should be a typical ladder marking pattern with white stripes to increase visibility more than two parallel stripes. These investments would bring the pedestrian infrastructure up to a baseline condition so that walking feels safe and supported by the configuration of the infrastructure. The recommended connections are highlighted in the diagram on the following page.

Study area circulation recommendation concept



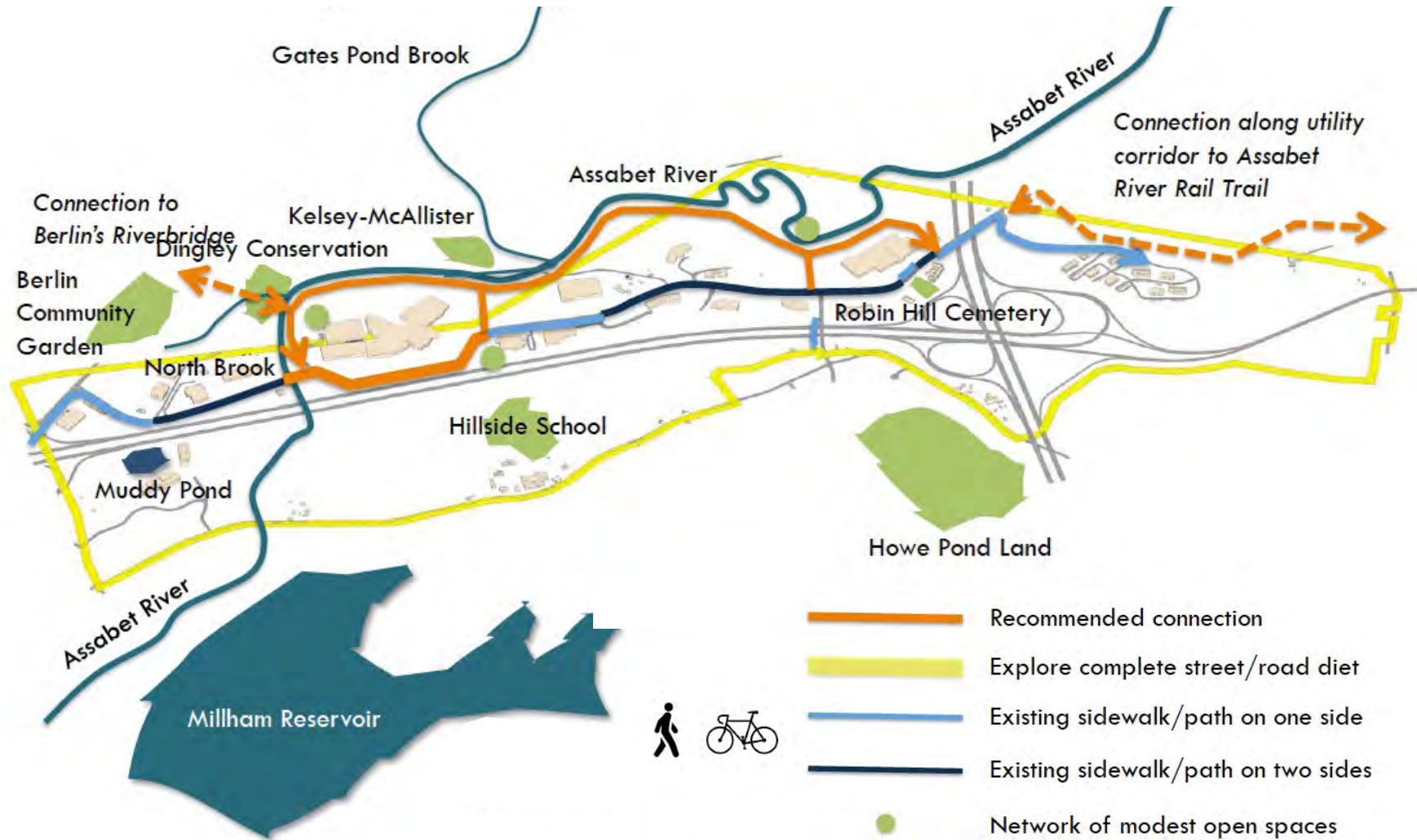
The ease of access from the highway and convenience for vehicles has been highlighted as one of the strengths of the district. Stakeholders also raised concerns about the speed of travel for vehicular traffic on Donald Lynch Boulevard. The convenience of access should be rebalanced with the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists. This rebalancing could take the form of a Complete Streets approach to Donald Lynch Boulevard. The generous two-lane divided boulevard encourages faster speeds for vehicles. The design of the roadway itself could help to reduce travel speeds on Donald Lynch Boulevard. The lanes could be narrowed adding more space for sidewalks, shared use paths, and landscaping. The travel lane widths could be reduced at pedestrian crossings. This is called a neckdown and is an effective tool to draw attention to pedestrians at crossings and tends to slow travel speeds. Other features that tend to slow travel speeds would be a rapid flashing beacon that could be installed at pedestrian crossings. The rapid flashing beacon is pedestrian activated and enhances the visibility of pedestrians at crossings for vehicles.

Another effective tool would be to install radar speed signs along Donald Lynch Boulevard in locations where travel speed tends to increase. A radar speed sign displays the speed of a passing vehicle under “Your Speed.” These devices have been effective in reducing travel speed. Lastly, the travel speed of

vehicles could be measured on the roadway. This data would help to inform how best to regulate vehicle speed. If many vehicles are traveling over the 35 mile per hour speed limit, additional signs could be posted with some new signs being the radar speed sign type. It may also be desirable to consider a reduced speed limit on Donald Lynch Boulevard. The risk of serious injury or death is much higher for pedestrians when a vehicle is traveling 35 miles per hour or more. The risk is reduced significantly at 25 miles per hour.

All of the aforementioned recommendations occur in the public right-of-way and would be more directly under the control of the City. Additional improvements to the pedestrian environment are recommended to be encouraged on private property in the study area. This next level of complementary private investments in pedestrian infrastructure would define a connected network of shared paths throughout the study area that can be used by both pedestrians and bicyclists. These paths would form loops around or through properties with a focus on the north side of Donald Lynch Boulevard to increase access to the Assabet River. It is important to note that critical segments of this type of network of paths would occur in the Town of Berlin and require coordination with the neighboring municipality and those additional property owners. The concept of these potential paths are shown on the following page with the surrounding natural resources.

Study area circulation recommendation concept with surrounding natural resources



This expanded pedestrian network of sidewalks and paths would connect to the existing network of natural resources and conservation areas and could also connect a network of modest outdoor open spaces. These shared outdoor open spaces would also occur on private property and would be designed as part of a property's overall site and landscape plan. These spaces may offer outdoor areas that are connected to the circulation network and framed by buildings or landscape. The intention is that the shared outdoor spaces could offer an amenity or activity to visitors or patrons of the district. This could vary and include anything from a simple seating area, to an outdoor dining area, to a water feature, outdoor sculpture or public art, or outdoor activity such as a large chess set.

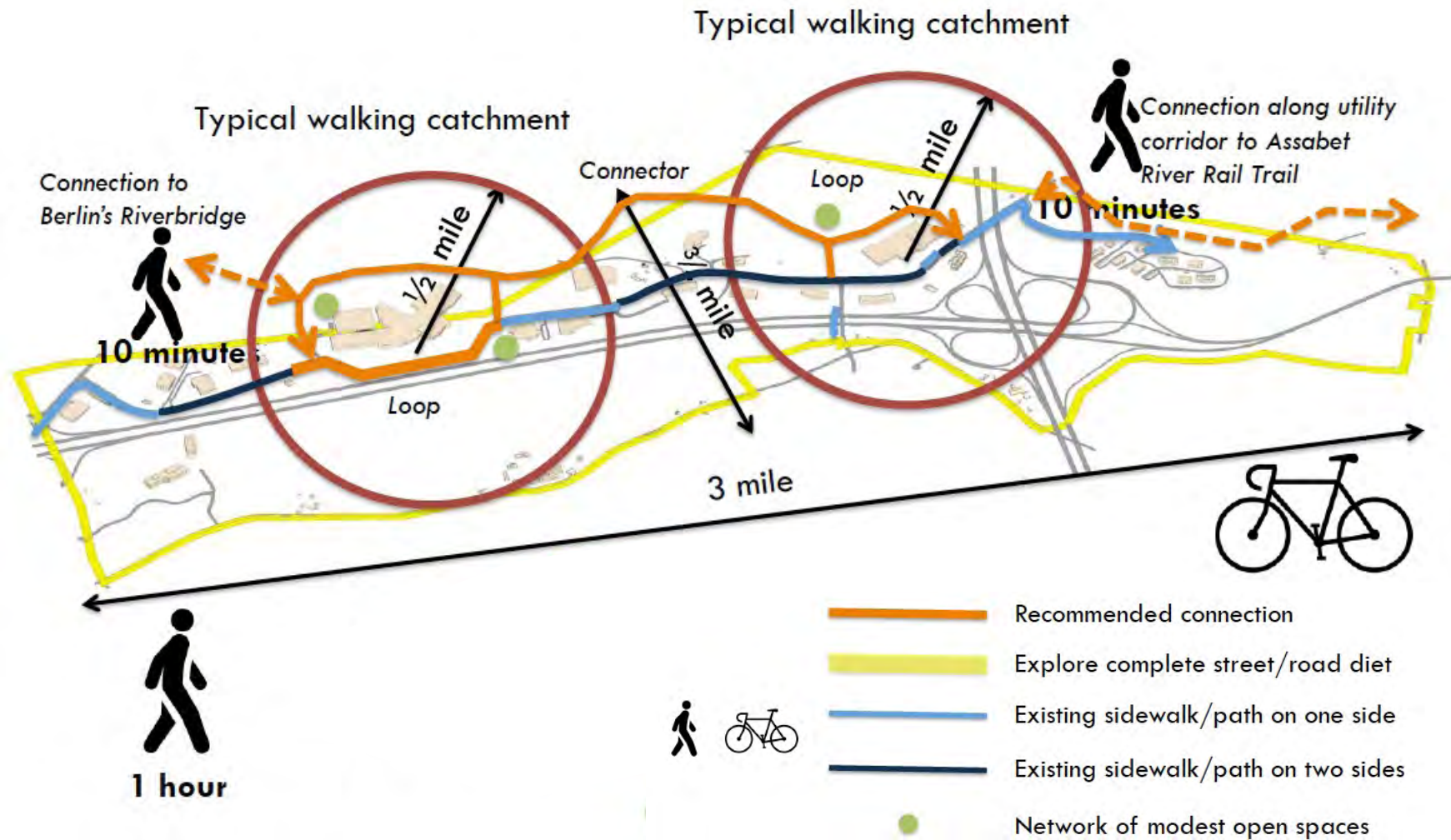
These improvements are critical to elevating the sense of place and identity of the district. This approach moves the study area from a place where each property is acting independently to a place where each property is contributing to a larger shared vision and set of amenities. Due to the scale of the district, one important concept in the diagram on the following page is creating loops and subareas with these paths. The loops would offer a visitor, patron, or office worker the option of scaling the walk to the moment. A pedestrian could walk a shorter loop or longer loop depending on the purpose of the trip and the amount of time at hand. These loops would respond

to the typical walking catchment area of about a mile for a 20 minute walk. The diagram on the following page shows the recommended circulation concept with these loops and the walking catchment areas around the Solomon Pond Mall and New England Sports Center. These smaller loops would connect to larger loops and be suitable for travel by bicycle as well.

Most of the pedestrian and bicycle improvements previously outlined enhance the options and experience within the study area. Several improvements could expand the pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the study area as well. First, if additional uses are added to the south of Interstate 290 in the future, an additional north-south pedestrian connection between Donald Lynch Boulevard and Robin Hill Street may be desirable. Currently only Bigelow Street and Solomon Pond Road are available for the connection. Robin Hill Street is such a narrow right-of-way that it may be desirable to connect pedestrians and bicyclists more directly to the extended connections along Donald Lynch Boulevard. Additional study could be explored for how best to achieve the connection, but a pedestrian bridge or tunnel at the highway could present one of the safest and most efficient approaches.

Similarly, a new pedestrian and bicycle connection could be considered to more directly connect to the Riverbridge development in the Town of Berlin. The Riverbridge is only

Study area circulation recommendation concept with typical walking catchment areas



about a quarter mile away from the northwest corner of the Solomon Pond Mall. This would be a connection that occurs within the Town of Berlin and would require crossing the Assabet River, but could have benefits for the residents at Riverbridge and the study area. This potential connection is shown on the aerial below. Increasing multimodal connections and decreasing vehicular trips will be important for the desirability and sustainability of the study area. The same connecting path could enhance the multimodal accessibility and use of the Dingley Conservation area and Berlin Community Garden.

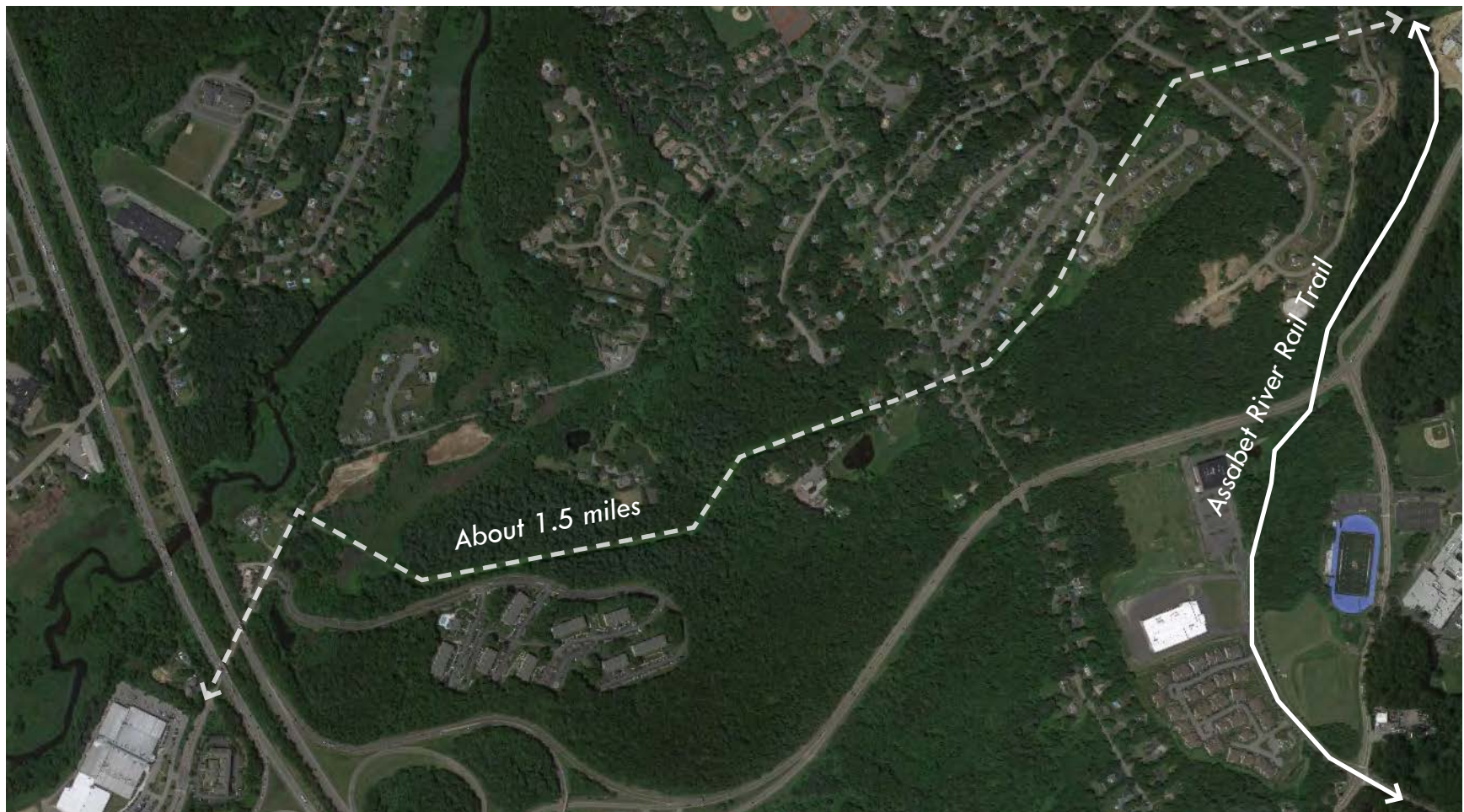
Connection consideration to Riverbridge in Berlin



Lastly, there appears to be potential for a more ambitious bicycle connection that could benefit the regional bicycle network. The Assabet River Rail Trail is a partially completed multi-use trail connecting Marlborough, Hudson, Maynard, and Acton. When fully completed the rail trail will be 12.5 miles in length from end to end. As of June 2020, the southwest 5.1 mile portion of the trail from Marlborough to Hudson and the 3.4 mile northeast portion of the trail from the South Acton MBTA station to the Maynard-Stow border are now complete. No current plan exists for paving the 4.0 mile gap in Stow and Hudson between the two trail ends.

A connection to this asset would open new possibilities for bicycle trips and commuting. It appears that a connection along an existing utility corridor could warrant further exploration. The corridor is about 1.5 miles in length and runs roughly east-west between the Donald Lynch Boulevard corridor and the Assabet River Rail Trail. The potential connection is highlighted diagrammatically on the following page.

Connection consideration to the Assabet River Rail Trail



6 Action Plan

The following action plan provides an outline of next steps to advance the Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard. The Action Plan organization follows the recommendations of the Final Report and divides actions into implementation for the Study Area Vision, Land Use and Zoning, and Public Realm and Open Space. All implementation actions are also compiled and summarized in the Implementation Summary Table.

The action plan is organized in two phases. The first phase is to advance the zoning recommendations. This phase is within the control of the City of Marlborough to proactively align the zoning with the vision that has been articulated for the district. This first phase of zoning modifications would set the stage for future investment by private property owners consistent with the district vision.

Following implementation of the zoning recommendations, several other actions and activities could be supported or pursued by the City to advance the vision for the district. These actions fall under Phase 2 of the action plan and would follow the completion of Phase 1 and may take place over the course of years to offer continued support for Donald Lynch Boulevard.

The implementation actions of both phases are focused on the initial purpose and intended outcomes of this study to provide a work plan for coordinated and immediate actions that can be

undertaken by the City to improve physical conditions for the public realm, publicly controlled properties, and other assets that could be leveraged for area improvements. The actions are focused on economic development and vitality, land use and a sense of place, transportation and connectivity, and open space and quality of life.

Action Plan Phase 1: Land Use and Zoning Implementation

The implementation of land use and zoning recommendations focus on advancing the recommended Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District. The changes articulated in Chapter 4 Land Use and Zoning Recommendations and written as draft zoning language in Appendix B should be presented and discussed with the Urban Affairs Committee, Planning Board, and City Council. Input and feedback from these discussions should be integrated into a zoning package for the district that is better aligned with the district vision than the current zoning.

One aspect of the recommended zoning that is important to highlight relative to implementation is the suggested boundary. The recommended boundary is an area that is smaller than the study area for this process. Other areas, particularly the western portion of Robin Hill Street may benefit from a similar overlay zoning district. If the recommended overlay is adopted

after discussion and refinement, and is successful in aligning the district with the vision, then the overlay could be considered for expansion in the future.

Another aspect of the recommended zoning that may be worthy of discussion is the minimum lot size. Currently, the minimum lot size is 2 acres. In order to provide an option for adding density to the district and properties, a secondary lot was introduced with no minimum lot size requirement along with several other dimensional regulations. An alternative to consider would be to eliminate the minimum lot size for all lots, primary or secondary. This elimination would also provide an option for adding density to the district and may be less restrictive and would have less potential for confusion. Or, as an option between those two alternatives, lot size could be waived by special permit for circumstances where a development proposal is seeking to add density to the district.

The other aspect of dimensional regulations that was adjusted with the secondary lot was an increase in lot coverage. The current lot coverage is 60% and the smaller secondary lot is recommended to allow 80% maximum lot coverage. Similarly, another option would be to allow a lot coverage higher than the current maximum of 60% by special permit.

It will also be important to continue discussion of the district with the Town of Berlin. In initial discussion with the Berlin Economic Development Committee during this process, interest was expressed to learn more about future zoning for the district. It would be beneficial to the district to have similar zoning regulations on the properties that are in both municipalities. The

Solomon Pond Mall is the largest and highest profile property that is located in both municipalities. As an example of the coordination that is needed, this property may benefit from allowing multifamily development as a secondary property use under certain conditions. The most viable locations for adding housing on the property may be the rear parking areas near the Assabet River that are located within the Town of Berlin.

Housing would be an important aspect of coordination between the two municipalities. Adding housing to a potential redevelopment program benefits both the property and the district. Housing is likely to remain in high demand and would be a strong contributor to a financially viable redevelopment program. Housing is also beneficial to add activity and spending power to the district to help support retail and restaurant uses. The addition of residents would complement the office population and expand the hours of activity for the district beyond the work day.

A valuable implementation action could be the exploration of inter-municipal agreements to support redevelopment. In particular, the agreement could include discussion of housing in the district that may, in some cases, be proposed on properties that are located in both Marlborough and Berlin. An inter-municipal agreement would give both municipalities a clear understanding for the provision of public services to the residential uses including fire and public safety services, school bus routes, and infrastructure for the provision of water and wastewater. A joint agreement could define each municipality's expectations and set the conditions for a successful redevelopment with benefits and impacts to both municipalities.

Action Plan Phase 2: Study Area Vision Implementation

In order to build a coalition that supports and contributes to the vision for the Donald Lynch Boulevard district it is important to share and communicate the vision to property and business owners present in the district. While some of the stakeholders were involved in the planning process to define the recommendations of this study, others were not involved. This study should be shared widely with all property owners and business owners in the district. Every owner should be invited to relate the vision and recommendations of this study to their plans for the future of their property or business. Synergies should be identified between individual, collective, and City investments.

The district may benefit from additional stewardship that could collaborate closely with the City, Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and individual properties. One such stewardship entity could be the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID). A Business Improvement District could provide an entity that will closely coordinate efforts that occur across properties in the district and could provide an additional funding mechanism to make desired investments in the district.

A Business Improvement District (BID) can provide additional services to supplement City services within the district. These may include district management and administrative services, marketing and promotional efforts, economic development initiatives, event support, and maintenance, capital, and physical improvement activities. A BID is a special assessment district with

financial support built into the establishment of the district. A BID is established under Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 40O by a petition signed by owners of at least 60% of the real property and at least 51% of the assessed valuation of the real property in the proposed district.

The amount of the assessment is decided by participants in the district and is a common area fee levied on property in the district. As part of district establishment, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would be defined with the City to outline the relationship, involvement and support of the City as a member and partner in the district. The process to explore, create, and authorize a BID takes anywhere from 18 to 24 months. A BID would be well-positioned to build on the foundation of this study and advance the detailed implementation actions defined here. Business Improvement Districts have been employed throughout the Commonwealth to support business districts. The nearest example is Downtown Hudson, which is supported by a Business Improvement District.

Action Plan Phase 2: Public Realm and Open Space Implementation

A few important implementation actions should be pursued based on the public realm and open space recommendations. The first would be to pursue pedestrian and bicycle roadway improvements on Donald Lynch Boulevard through the City's Complete Streets program. The design of the roadway improvements could close any gaps in the sidewalk network, add pedestrian crossings, add bicycle lanes, and explore roadway lane reductions. This infrastructure investment should

also include traffic calming features such as the radar speed signs, flashing beacons at crossings, and a reduction in the speed limit.

Another set of actions would be to promote and coordinate additional shared use paths that may occur on City-owned land, conservation land, or private properties. Advancing this network of paths is an important part of the vision for the district and should be shared and communicated with property owners and encouraged through pilot and demonstration projects, and could potentially be supported by a funding source such as a revolving loan fund, or funding from a business improvement district.

Additional shared use path connections outside of the district should be explored as possibilities. This would involve communication and coordination with the Town of Berlin to explore a connection to the nearby Riverbridge and communication and coordination with the utility corridor to explore a potential connection to the Assabet River Rail Trail.

The final actions that could be taken relative to the vision and recommendations for public realm and open space improvements relate to the enhanced landscape of the district. Specifically, the City should pursue actions to add shade trees to the district and encourage additional landscape plantings on private properties in the district, whether or not redevelopment is occurring. While street trees are present on Donald Lynch Boulevard, locations exist where an additional street trees could be added. These locations should be identified and prioritized when the City plans street tree planting. In addition to planting

trees in the public realm, the City could support a private tree planting program in the district. Often with this type of program a municipality will provide the tree and planting of the tree with permission and agreement from the property owner. As part of the agreement, the property owner then cares for and maintains the tree. Models of this type of program exist across the Commonwealth as part of “Greening the Gateway Cities” with the MA Urban Canopy Project.

Implementation Summary Table

The following implementation summary table compiles these implementation actions in summary form and adds potential funding sources that may be available and potential leads or partners that may be associated with the actions.

Implementation Summary Table

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Action</i>
Action Plan Phase 1:	Land Use and Zoning	1 Adopt Zoning Recommendations
		2 Coordinate with Town of Berlin
Action Plan Phase 2:	District Vision	3 Share Vision and Study Widely
		4 Consider Business Improvement District

LEGEND:

- CC** = Marlborough City Council
- DPW** = Marlborough Department of Public Works
- MEDC** = Marlborough Economic Development Corporation
- MO** = Office of the Mayor
- PB** = Marlborough Planning Board
- UAC** = Marlborough City Council Urban Affairs Committee

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Potential Funding</i>	<i>Potential Lead/Partner</i>
1 Adopt Zoning Recommendations		
1 Facilitate UAC meetings discussing zoning changes	Staff time	UAC/MEDC
2 Facilitate PB meeting discussing zoning changes	Staff time	PB/MEDC
3 Refine zoning per discussion and adopt changes	Staff time	CC/UAC/PB/MEDC
2 Coordinate with Town of Berlin		
1 Facilitate informational meeting regarding zoning	Staff time	MEDC
2 Discuss potential for inter-municipal agreement	Staff time	MEDC/MO/CC
3 Coordinate on future redevelopment proposals	Staff time	MEDC/CC/PB
3 Share Vision and Study Widely		
1 Distribute vision statement to all district stakeholders	Staff time	MEDC
2 Share study with City Council, Boards, and Committees	Staff time	MEDC
3 Share study with the Town of Berlin	Staff time	MEDC
4 Consider Business Improvement District		
1 Facilitate informational meeting with property owners	Staff time	MEDC
2 Poll property owners' interest in forming a BID	Staff time	MEDC
3 If interest is present, pursue forming a BID	Massachusetts Downtown Initiative	MEDC

Implementation Summary Table (continued)

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Action</i>
Action Plan Phase 2:	Public realm and open space	5 Pedestrian and bicycle roadway improvements

6 Network of shared use paths

7 Plant additional shade trees

LEGEND:

- CC** = Marlborough City Council
- DPW** = Marlborough Department of Public Works
- MEDC** = Marlborough Economic Development Corporation
- MO** = Office of the Mayor
- PB** = Marlborough Planning Board
- UAC** = Marlborough City Council Urban Affairs Committee

<i>Next Steps</i>	<i>Potential Funding</i>	<i>Potential Lead/Partner</i>
5 Pedestrian and bicycle roadway improvements		
1 Donald Lynch Boulevard Completed Streets improvements	MassDOT Complete Streets funds	DPW
2 Install traffic calming features on Donald Lynch Boulevard	MassDOT Complete Streets funds	DPW
3 Explore lowering speed limit on Donald Lynch Boulevard	Staff time	MO/CC/DPW
6 Network of shared use paths		
1 Expansion of city-owned shared use paths	City budget, staff time	PB/DPW
2 Encourage expansion of private property shared use paths	Staff time	CC/PB
3 Explore additional multimodal connections outside of district	City budget, MassTrails grants	MEDC/PB/DPW
7 Plant additional shade trees		
1 Plant additional shade trees in the public realm	Urban Forestry Challenge Grant	DPW
2 Develop tree planting program for private properties	Urban Forestry Challenge Grant	DPW

City of Marlborough

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Final Report

April 2023



Final Report



Marlborough Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

City of Marlborough

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Appendices

April 2023



MEDC



Acknowledgments



Prepared for
City of Marlborough



With support from
**Marlborough Economic Development Corporation
(MEDC)**
Meredith Harris, Executive Director



Prepared by
Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

With funding from
**Marlborough Economic Development Corporation
(MEDC)**
District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA)
**Planning for MetroFuture Technical Assistance
(PMTA)**

Contents

Appendices

A Meeting Notes

B Draft Zoning

City of Marlborough

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Appendix A
Meeting Notes
April 2023



MEDC





Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard Update
April 10, 2023

Introduction

In 2021 MAPC facilitated a planning process with the City of Marlborough and Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) to develop a Vision for the Donald Lynch Boulevard area in the northwest corner of the City. The process resulted in a draft Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District which has not yet been submitted for adoption. The City of Marlborough seeks to revisit some of the characteristics of the proposed overlay district based on feedback received on the draft document and overlay district. MAPC has evaluated the comments received and provides the following commentary and suggested approach to integrating changes into an updated Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard Report and proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District. For each potential update, the specific change under consideration is written followed by a commentary about the potential change and a recommendation for how to proceed with updating the proposed zoning.

Evaluating Potential Updates

- **Changes to the boundary considered for the overlay to potentially expand to include light industrial area south of I-290 (north of Robin Hill Street). Previously the district boundary was proposed to be bound by I-290 to the south and I-495 to the east.**
 - **Commentary:** The character of the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zoning district includes a unique and diverse context. Specifically, the area to the north of I-290 and west of I-495 is mostly developed today and is occupied by larger scale nonresidential uses including offices, a shopping mall, and indoor sports complex among other uses. This area is relatively isolated from abutting residential uses by the highway infrastructure and the Assabet River. At its center is Donald Lynch Boulevard, a primary roadway designed to accommodate the traffic generated by these larger non-residential uses including the Solomon Pond Mall and the New England Sports Center. The roadway is striped with a median, turn lanes and other traffic safety improvements.
The area south of I-290 and west of I-495 is only partially developed today with larger scale non-residential uses on its western edge. The Hillside School is at the center of this area. Undeveloped land is at the eastern end of this subarea. Single family residential uses abut the LI district to the south and are located across Robin Hill Street. The street providing access to this portion of the district is Robin Hill Street. Robin Hill Street is a narrow paved two-lane road with utilities and trees very near to the roadway shoulder. The roadway is unstriped for much of its length. Robin Hill Street was designated as a Scenic Road by the City Council on June 22, 1992, under Marlborough's Scenic Roads Bylaw (Chapter 497). Bigelow Street which provides a connection between Robin Hill Street and Donald Lynch Boulevard is also designated as a Scenic Road.

The area south of I-290 is currently zoned with the same underlying Limited Industrial district. However, it is not as well-suited to larger scale real estate development because of its access and roadway conditions on Robin Hill Street. Additionally, the LI properties south of I-290 are in closer proximity to existing residential abutters. The zoning modifications proposed with the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District introduce potential additional uses beyond what is allowed by the underlying LI zoning district. These potential additional uses are not likely to be compatible with Robin Hill Street in its current configuration and under its current Scenic Road regulation. For example, the new uses allowed by right or special permit by the proposed overlay (multifamily dwelling; artist studio/live/work gallery; recording studio/live/work space; schools for business, trade, music or dance; self-service laundry; medical office/clinic; dental clinics; consumer service establishments; mixed use development; copy shops; newspaper offices; restaurant; cafe, and restaurant with drive-in or drive-thru facilities; and drive-thru facilities; public recreation and conservation; and dry cleaning) may generate more traffic than the underlying allowed uses.

The portion of the LI properties south of I-290 and west of the Hillside School could potentially be included in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay as they are previously developed and improved access to them has already been created.

These new uses may provide additional economic justification for improvements to Robin Hill Street. Any new project proposed in this area will face the additional review and potentially mitigation required to comply with the Scenic Roads Bylaw and the additional costs of investing in roadway improvements to accommodate the new uses.

- **Recommendation:** The recommendation is to not incorporate the area south of I-290 into the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay at this time. If there is interest in supporting development on these Limited Industrial properties, the first step could be exploring either removing the Scenic Road designation on this segment of Robin Hill Street and Bigelow Street or exploring a roadway improvement design that would safely support additional traffic generation. The exploration of a roadway improvement design could include undertaking the process required of Scenic Roads modifications, namely prior written consent of the Planning Board, after a public hearing duly advertised. Following the process of removing the Scenic Road designation or exploring roadway improvements and their approval, the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay could be expanded to include the LI district properties south of I-290. Additionally, engaging more of the community south of I-290 would be appropriate to gather additional feedback from the neighboring properties and surrounding residential uses.

- **Consider potential subdistricts for the proposed overlay district that could allow for expanding the boundary of the overlay and account for the different contexts of the expanded area.**
 - **Commentary:** For the new uses allowed by the proposed overlay outlined above, it is not clear which of those uses could be added that would offer new opportunities with the same level of potential impacts on the roadway infrastructure. The uses added by the proposed overlay include multifamily dwelling; artist studio/live/work gallery; recording studio/live/work space; schools for business, trade, music or dance; self-service laundry; medical office/clinic; dental clinics; consumer service establishments; mixed use development; copy shops; newspaper offices; restaurant; cafe, and restaurant with drive-in or drive-thru facilities; and drive-thru facilities; public recreation and conservation; and dry cleaning. Perhaps the only use listed in the category of a new opportunity with similar or lesser impact than what is currently allowed by the underlying zone would be public recreation and conservation. There does not appear to be a rational division of new uses that would justify the creation of a subdistrict. It would appear that the best approach would be to add all the potential new uses or retain the uses allowed in the underlying zone.

The concept of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is discussed below. If TDR is desirable in this area, a subdistrict approach may be warranted. In this case subdistricts could be used to distinguish between “sending” and “receiving” areas as part of the transfer of development rights. For example, “public recreation” could be appropriate for the eastern portion of the LI area south of I-290 under transfer of development rights as a “sending” area.

- **Recommendation:** The recommendation would be to not define a new subdistrict to incorporate the area south of I-290 in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay at this time. If there is interest in supporting development on these Limited Industrial properties, the first step should be exploring removing the Scenic Road designation on this segment of Robin Hill Street and Bigelow Street or exploring a roadway improvement design that would safely support additional traffic generation while adhering to the Scenic Road regulations. Following the process of removing the Scenic Road designation or improving the roadway, the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay could be expanded to include the LI district properties south of I-290 with the same characteristics as proposed north of I-290. This would most likely be an expansion of the overlay district not the creation of a subdistrict with different characteristics. Additionally, engaging more of the community south of I-290 would be appropriate to gather additional feedback from the neighboring properties and surrounding residential uses.

- **Changes to off-site sign requirements to review specific characteristics to allow for a proper entrance into the DLB business district.**

- **Commentary:** Signs are regulated by Chapter 526 Signs of the City of Marlborough Code. An “Off-premises Sign” is defined in Section § 526-2 “Definitions” as “Any sign which advertises or announces a use conducted or goods available elsewhere other than on the lot where the sign is located.”

Section § 526-6 “Signs permitted in all zoning districts” defines “Permanent off-premises directional signs (other than official traffic or street signs).” The purpose is defined as “Off-premises directional signs allowed herein are intended solely to assist pedestrians or motorists in finding their way to specific destinations. They are not for advertising purposes or for temporary events. The intent of the Sign Ordinance is that off-premises directional signs shall be approved only when there is a demonstrated need, taking into account the intent of this chapter to minimize the number of separate freestanding signs near the public way.”

Directional signs located within the public way are limited to “Major uses.” “These uses shall include public or quasi-public services or institutions or other major destinations.” Directional signs located on other lots are limited to major uses that do not have signs within the public way and minor uses which are situated behind and obstructed from public view by other buildings. The language below provides additional requirements for directional signs from the Sign Ordinance.

“The sign area for major uses, where the sign is placed on another lot, shall not exceed six square feet per business establishment identified on the sign. The sign area for minor uses shall not exceed two square feet per business establishment identified on the sign. The sign shape shall generally be a narrow rectangle, with an arrow at one end pointing in the required direction.”

“There shall be no more than the necessary number of locations at which any particular business may be identified by an off-premises sign as provided hereunder. It is the intention of this Sign Ordinance that, in circumstances where several businesses are similarly situated, their off-premises sign panels shall all be attached to one freestanding pole or be combined into one integrated flat wall sign, with each business having its own replaceable panel.”

Currently off-premises directional signs are located on Solomon Pond Road for the Solomon Pond Mall (two locations) and Solomon Pond Park, and on Donald Lynch Boulevard for Regal Cinemas.

Additional language could be added to the proposed overlay to supplement the language quoted above from the Sign Ordinance. The language could be specific to the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay and would focus on the concept of a coordinated district-wide

gateway and wayfinding signage system. The gateway signage would provide for additional off-premises signs to be provided at the entry points to the district. The language could introduce “freestanding pole, monument, ground or pylon sign” types that could be part of an off-premises gateway and wayfinding signage system. The signs should be coordinated in design and material and feature a reasonable number of individual tenants in a hierarchy that reinforces an identity for the district. The signs should be designed in such a way that individual tenants can be changed to keep signs relevant and up to date with uses in the district.

Section § 650-35 “Hospitality and Recreation Mixed Use Overlay District” (HRMUOD) defines this type of signage and characteristics for it. This sign addition for the Donald Lynch Boulevard District could parallel the HRMUOD’s requirements. The total allowed illuminated cabinet square feet of signage shall not exceed 200 square feet per side, per freestanding sign. The height of any freestanding sign shall not exceed 30 feet from the ground measured directly at the sign base. No freestanding sign shall be located closer than five feet to any property line. Sign, logos, or cabinets may be either externally illuminated or internally illuminated with translucent or transparent faces. Additional requirements could include a signage profile that is tall and narrow. A structural frame that is engineered to site specifications and sign materials that may include stone, brick, aluminum, or other metal materials. As defined in Section § 650-35.H. for the HRMUOD, signage should be “subject to approval by the City Council.”

Interest has also been expressed in an electronic message center (EMC) or digital display sign that would be visible from I-290. Electronic message center signs and digital display signs are defined by § 526-13. Much of the same rationale described above could apply to this type of sign. This would also likely be an “off-premises sign.” This off-premises sign should be viewed as a district wide opportunity to enhance visibility and direction to major destinations. A single shared digital display sign on the north side of I-290 could be allowed by Special Permit that is coordinated for the entire district at a location that is visible without requiring clearance of trees or that may pose a risk to roadway safety. Such a sign would be subject to approval by the City Council.

Recommendation: In the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay allow (1) freestanding pole, monument, ground, or pylon sign that is coordinated for the entire district at the principal points of entry to the district with a total number not to exceed (3) and (1) digital display sign located on the north side of I-290 in the City of Marlborough that would be visible from I-290 that is coordinated for the entire district. Subject to approval by the City Council. Additional secondary directional signs may also be approved by the City Council. The signs should be coordinated in design and material and feature a reasonable number of individual tenants in a hierarchy that reinforces an identity for the district. The signs should be designed in such a way that individual tenants can be changed to keep signs relevant and up

to date with uses in the district. The total allowed illuminated cabinet square feet of signage shall not exceed 200 square feet per side, per freestanding sign. The height of any freestanding sign shall not exceed 30 feet from the ground measured directly at the sign base. No freestanding sign shall be located closer than five feet to any property line. Sign, logos, or cabinets may be either externally illuminated or internally illuminated with translucent or transparent faces. Signs should not require clearance of trees or pose a risk to roadway safety. Additional requirements could include a signage profile that is tall and narrow. A structural frame that is engineered to site specifications and sign materials that may include stone, brick, aluminum, or other metal materials.

- **Changes to the height limit on multifamily dwellings to be not less than 60 feet. Currently, the maximum building height shall not exceed 52 feet.**
 - **Commentary:** The intention of introducing multifamily dwellings into the proposed overlay is to provide new opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment in properties which may be facing future vacancies. Increasing the maximum building height by 8 feet may increase the likelihood that this intention is a practical and useful addition to the zoning. The proposed overlay district is isolated from nearby abutters by both the highway infrastructure and the Assabet River. This increase in height is not likely to have a substantial impact on surrounding uses.
 - **Recommendation:** Increase the height limit on multifamily dwellings to be 60 feet.

- **Clarifying the definition of how building height is measured, for example does it include the roof top, top of the bulkhead, or mechanical spaces?**
 - **Commentary:** In Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” of the Marlborough Zoning Ordinance “Height” is defined as “The vertical dimension measured from the average elevation of the finished lot grade at the front of the building to the highest point of the ceiling of the top story in the case of a flat roof; to the deck of a mansard roof; and to the average height between plate and ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof.” A new definition of height should not be added to the proposed overlay district. If additional clarification is needed it should be added to the definition in Section § 650-5. A clarification could be added that states “Mechanical and elevator equipment, chimneys, or other utilities are not limited to maximum building height.”
 - **Recommendation:** Add clarification to Section § 650-5 that “Mechanical and elevator equipment, chimneys, or other utilities are not limited to maximum building height. Mechanicals shall be screened to maximum extent feasible from view from street level and integrated with the architectural style and materials of the building. Screening of mechanicals are not limited to maximum building height.”

- **Changes to minimum lot size to eliminate minimum lot size entirely.**
 - **Commentary:** The intention of reducing the minimum lot size for an existing parcel that is subdivided was to increase flexibility for reinvestment and redevelopment. Eliminating the minimum lot size entirely would extend this same rationale and intention.
 - **Recommendation:** Modify the proposed overlay dimensional requirements to state that when subdividing an existing property for an additional building, no minimum lot size shall be required. The other proposed requirements for the subdivided parcel would remain, such as reduced minimum lot frontage of 50 feet, reduced minimum side yard of 10 feet, reduced minimum front yard of 30 feet, reduced minimum rear yard of 15 feet and increased maximum lot coverage of 80% shall be allowed and applicable to a new parcel subdivided from an existing parcel with the subdivision occurring at the street frontage of the property. Additional language may need to be added regarding access requirements to subdivided properties to limit the number of curb cuts to the main roadway and establish shared secondary access roads.

- **Changes to prohibited uses to consider allowing private clubs, or clubs, specifically if this includes health and wellness retail that requires a membership (not currently allowed in underlying zone or proposed overlay).**
 - **Commentary:** In the current Zoning Ordinance Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” the use “Private Club, Nonprofit” is defined as “Buildings or facilities owned or operated by a corporation, association or persons for a social, educational or recreational purpose not for profit; excludes synagogues, churches, mosques or other houses of worship.”

Most health and wellness retail would likely fall under the definition of “Retail Sales and Services.” In Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” the use is defined as “Establishments offering goods and services, not specifically listed in the Table of Uses, to the public. Sales of a wide variety of goods and services include, but are not limited to: antiques, apparel, books, food, drugstore, sporting goods, and similar; custom services such as tailoring, photography, framing and similar; and services such as insurance, optometry, banks; dry-cleaning and laundry dropoff stations; hairdressers and barbers; **health clubs, gyms, dance or yoga studios**; repair services for appliances, shoes, etc.; catering and similar. Retail sales and services do not include adult entertainment, check-cashing services, pawn shops, gold exchange shops, medical marijuana facilities or drug treatment facilities.” Bold highlight has been added. Retail sales and services are currently allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay district.

The other collection of uses that may be relevant are “Private Indoor Recreation,” “Private Outdoor Recreation,” “Public Indoor Recreation,” and “Public Outdoor Recreation.” These are defined in Section § 650-5

“Definitions; word usage” as “Sports or leisure time activities or facilities which are operated by a private entity/public agency and which occur principally outside/within a building.” A “Recreation Center, indoor and outdoor” is currently allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay district.

In Section 650-35 The Hospitality and Recreation Mixed Use Overlay District adds a use permitted by right in the HRMUOD the “Health, sports and fitness clubs (indoor and/or outdoor) and related facilities.”

All these uses would fall into the general category of uses that may be complementary to the mix of uses in the Donald Lynch Boulevard district. Each may present a future opportunity for new investment and additional vitality in the district and should therefore be allowed.

Recommendation: In the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay change Private clubs, nonprofit from not permitted “N” to allowed by special permit “SP” granted by the City Council. Change Clubs from not permitted “N” to allowed by special permit “SP” granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay district. Add a new permitted use “Health, sports and fitness clubs (indoor and/or outdoor) and related facilities” to match the HRMUOD language.

- **Changes to clarify what entertainment uses are allowed or prohibited; recreation center, indoor and outdoor is a broad term, it is desired by a property owner for this to be as flexible as possible (currently allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in overlay and underlying zone).**
 - **Commentary:** “Recreation Center” is defined further through a footnote to the use under Section § 650-18 “Conditions for uses.” The note states that it is a “Recreational center for the purpose of providing ice-skating rinks, swimming pools, tennis courts and any other indoor or outdoor recreational facility and use.

As a comparison, “entertainment” is not defined more specifically in the Zoning Ordinance aside from references to “adult entertainment” which should remain as not permitted in the district. Since the use is not narrowed by any additional defining language, entertainment uses could be interpreted as flexible.

A definition of “Recreation and Entertainment, Indoor” could be added and that use could be allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District. The definition could be “Participatory and spectator-oriented recreation and entertainment uses conducted within an enclosed building, excluding any sexually oriented businesses.”

- **Recommendation:** Add a new use to the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District as “Recreation and Entertainment, Indoor” that is allowed

by special permit granted by the City Council. Add a new definition to Section § 650-5 of the Zoning Ordinance that states “Recreation and Entertainment, Indoor - Participatory and spectator-oriented recreation and entertainment uses conducted within an enclosed building, excluding any sexually oriented businesses.”

- **Changes to prohibited uses to consider allowing “Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer” (not currently allowed in underlying zone or proposed overlay).**

- **Commentary:** “Manufacturing” is currently defined in Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” of the Zoning Ordinance. The use is defined as “The use of land or buildings for fabrication or assembly requiring chemical reduction, metal stamping and similar activities as primary uses.”

As a comparison, currently in the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zone “manufacturing and/or warehousing” related to footwear, precision instruments, tool and die, dental, medical, and optical equipment, electrical or electronic instruments, hobby vehicle storage, biomedical or biotechnology products is permitted. The proposed overlay would allow this use by special permit granted by the City Council.

Manufacturing and warehouse more generally defined for Limited Industrial districts is currently not permitted in either the underlying zone or proposed overlay.

“Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer” may be appropriate as a future use in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area but would depend on the nature of the specific use. The use could add a complementary use for the district. This use could be adjusted to be allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay district.

- **Recommendation:** Change “Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer” from “not permitted” to “allowed by special permit granted by the City Council” for the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.

- **Changes to prohibited uses to consider allowing “Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery” (not currently allowed in underlying zone or proposed overlay).**

- **Commentary:** “Light manufacturing” is currently defined in Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” of the Zoning Ordinance. The use is defined as the “Fabrication, assembly, processing, finishing work or packaging in such a manner that noise, dust, vibration or similar objectionable features are confined to the premises.”

Currently in the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zone “Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery” is not permitted. The proposed overlay retains this use as not permitted.

“Light manufacturing using portable electric machinery” may be appropriate as a future use in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area but would depend on the nature of the specific use. The use could add a complementary use for the district. This use could be adjusted to be allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay district.

- **Recommendation:** Change “Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery” from “not permitted” to “allowed by special permit granted by the City Council” for the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.
- **Changes to prohibited uses to consider allowing “Retail sales accessory to manufacturing,” experiential retail where customers can see their products being made (not currently allowed in underlying zone or proposed overlay).**

- **Commentary:** “Retail Sales and Services” is currently defined in Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” of the Zoning Ordinance. The use is defined as “Establishments offering goods and services, not specifically listed in the Table of Uses, to the public. Sales of a wide variety of goods and services include, but are not limited to: antiques, apparel, books, food, drugstore, sporting goods, and similar; custom services such as tailoring, photography, framing and similar; and services such as insurance, optometry, banks; dry-cleaning and laundry dropoff stations; hairdressers and barbers; health clubs, gyms, dance or yoga studios; repair services for appliances, shoes, etc.; catering and similar. Retail sales and services do not include adult entertainment, check-cashing services, pawn shops, gold exchange shops, medical marijuana facilities or drug treatment facilities.” The use is defined further through a footnote to the use under Section § 650-18 “Conditions for uses.” The note states that “Retail sales accessory to manufacturing. Retail outlets accessory to manufacturing firms are permitted, provided that they use less than 1/3 of the floor and/or ground area.”

Currently in the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zone “Retail sales accessory to manufacturing” is not permitted. The proposed overlay retains this use as not permitted.

“Retail sales accessory to manufacturing” may be appropriate as a future use in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area but would depend on the nature of the specific use. The use could add a different type of experiential retail or complementary destination for the district. Accordingly, this use could be adjusted to be allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.

- **Recommendation:** Change “Retail sales accessory to manufacturing” from “not permitted” to “allowed by special permit granted by the City Council” for the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.
- **Changes to prohibited uses to consider allowing “Open air markets,” hosting and helping small local businesses (not currently allowed in underlying zone or proposed overlay).**
 - **Commentary:** “Open air markets” is not currently defined in Section § 650-5 “Definitions; word usage” of the Zoning Ordinance. However, the use is defined further through a footnote to the use under Section § 650-18 “Conditions for uses.” The note states that “Open air markets, including flea markets, conducted by one or more sellers in the open air or under tents or other temporary structures, where the primary purpose of the markets is business related, provided the market operator responsible for the entire market receives a license from the City Council as specified in Chapter 444 of the Code of the City of Marlborough.”

Currently, in the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) zone, “Open air markets” is not permitted. The proposed overlay retains this use as not permitted.

“Open air markets” may be appropriate as a future use in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area but would depend on the nature of the specific use. The use could create new opportunities for strengthening the vitality, density of activity, and walkability in the district. This use could potentially activate an empty or vacant lot, or underused parking lot. Accordingly, this use could be adjusted to be allowed by special permit granted by the City Council in the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.

- **Recommendation:** Change “Open air markets” from “not permitted” to “allowed by special permit granted by the City Council” for the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay.
- **Consider other zoning and development approaches that may be appropriate for the area south of I-290 on Robin Hill Street, such as transfer of development rights (TDR).**
 - **Commentary:** Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a regulatory strategy that harnesses private real estate market forces to protect undeveloped land while adding development opportunity to land that has been or is proposed to be developed. Development rights are transferred from one area (the “sending district”) to another (the “receiving district”). If this concept were applied to the Donald Lynch Boulevard area, a TDR regulation could be established where portions of the Limited Industrial district that are not currently developed could transfer their development rights (through a sale and deed restriction) to other properties in the proposed overlay district to increase the scale of development that could otherwise occur. This transfer of development rights may be a successful model of unlocking real estate value for undeveloped properties on Robin

Hill Street while providing additional redevelopment opportunities on Donald Lynch Boulevard. This would be one approach to offering options to properties currently limited due to Robin Hill Street's configuration and restrictions as a designated Scenic Road.

If TDR is desirable in this area, a subdistrict approach may be warranted. In this case subdistricts could be used to distinguish between "sending" and "receiving" areas as part of the transfer of development rights. For example, "public recreation" could be appropriate for the eastern portion of the LI area south of I-290 under transfer of development rights as a "sending" area.

- **Recommendation:** TDR does introduce additional complexities and requires additional support, discussion, and drafting of language to clarify the intent and detail of the regulations. The idea of TDR should be introduced into the conversation about the proposed Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay, but TDR should not be integrated into the proposed overlay until the degree of potential support for the concept can be assessed.

City of Marlborough
Donald Lynch Boulevard Vision Study

May 12th, 2021

The following memorandum compiles all notes to date for Marlborough's Donald Lynch Boulevard Vision Study. The discussions reflected in these notes are the foundation for the Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) evaluation and the draft vision statement for the district. Both of products guide the recommendations of this study for land use, zoning, economic development, and public realm improvements in the district.

DRAFT District Vision Statement

In the near term, strengthen the vitality of the district by supporting uses, activities and improvements that will complement the existing uses. This may include support for new restaurants, food trucks, and outdoor spaces that can be safely accessed by walking with a fully connected network of sidewalks.

In the long term, provide flexibility for property owners to invest in new uses and redevelopment that will respond to the real estate market and needs of the community. Each new investment should be viewed as an opportunity to complement existing uses, add new destinations and attractions, and strengthen a district that provides a few reasons to visit, whether it be to work, shop, play, or live. The composition of each new investment will look to enhance the sense of place, identify and walkability of the district and define distinct nodes which feel more like compact village centers.

DRAFT Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Evaluation

Strengths

- New England Sports Center is a unique and important destination
- Solomon Pond Mall is a destination for the district
- Strong existing office uses contributing to base of weekday patrons
- Regional positioning and access to draw from both Boston metropolitan and Worcester metropolitan areas
- Good vehicular accessibility
- MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) offers service to Solomon Pond Mall and destinations along Route 20 in Marlborough on Route 7C
- Enhancing the existing businesses and tenants and providing more amenity for them
- Cluster of biotech/life science uses is already an asset

Weaknesses

- More direct access from the highway does not appear possible
- Visibility of district from the highway
- Area lacking amenities that patrons of the district desire (restaurants, other attractions)

- Everyone that works or visits has to drive to their destination
- Lack of convenient amenities that are walkable or offer a drive-thru
- Retail vacancies in the mall and other retail buildings, such as the Sports Authority and Old Navy building
- Area is lacking a vibe or identity, improve cohesiveness of the district
- Visitors patrons need to be able to combine more trips/reasons to visit if they are driving 15-minutes to get there
- Lack of flexibility in current zoning for new opportunities, uses, and parking
- High speed traffic and issues with pedestrian and bike safety

Opportunities

- Potential connection to existing Assabet River Rail Trail that is nearby and connects Downtown Marlborough to Downtown Hudson with a paved path to the east and potentially an unimproved path as part of a utility corridor to the west of the study area that runs from Northborough to West Berlin
- Repositioning retail from stand-alone destination to amenity in live/work/play communities
- Potential coordination and collaboration with Riverbridge in the Town of Berlin and other nearby light industrial areas in Northborough
- Underutilized parking areas could be used to add density of uses and development
- Expansion of live/work/play uses in the district
- Pop up establishments
- Enhanced visibility and signage for the district destinations

Threats

- Future of retail market is unknown and presents a challenge in that historic data to guide decision making is not available
- Context of changing suburban enclosed malls being hit harder by trends in retail and COVID-19 impacts

Compiled Meeting Notes

Community Stakeholder Meeting #2

On March 10th, 2021 MAPC and MEDC hosted a community stakeholder meeting to share feedback received from stakeholder at the first stakeholder meeting, a draft vision statement, and initial recommendations for the Donald Lynch Boulevard Area. MAPC gave a brief presentation to the attendees that offered a study introduction including the purpose and objectives of the study, the study scope and work plan, stakeholders and outreach. The presentation then provided a recap of the stakeholder input and feedback received to date, an outline of the vision and recommendations, and invited stakeholders to offer feedback and input. Stakeholders included business and property owners in the district, prospective developers, nearby residents, and City Councilors. The stakeholders expressed the following during the discussion:

- One stakeholder mentioned that he's very pleased with what he's hearing.
- It would be great to convert Donald Lynch Boulevard to a single lane. It is scary with drag racing that occurs down the boulevard. Slow cars down on Donald Lynch Boulevard.
- Would love to see a grocery store or Trader Joe's down by the bank.
- A stakeholder that lives in Berlin is very interested and would like to make Berlin and the surrounding area more walkable.
- One stakeholder asked if public investment would occur based on the planning?
- Another stakeholder said that the discussion was spot on and that for the zoning it should be all about easing restrictions and adding flexibility. One part of the discussion caught my attention, the parking. The ratio to public space is somewhat unconventional, parking requirements are archaic for large shopping malls. Maybe a stepped approach would be better to scale it to different users. As a general rule, mall properties are about 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of leasable area. It is a pretty typical rule of thumb.
- Larger retail properties are often times over parked. Through the dimensional requirements in the zoning offer more densification to incorporate new uses where retail uses are.
- Sports Authority, Old Navy, Sears – how do we help businesses survive? – do we think the changes will go a long way in helping?
- Make the changes to neighborhood district zoning, and then move on to improvements with a Massworks Grant. This is the model that was followed for Route 20. The fruits of this work are 5 to 10 years away helping Donald Lynch Boulevard to thrive. If we start with a core area, then it can be expanded if it is needed.
- We are really trying to listen to the owners – what would you see to enhance your property.
- Shrink down parking, add restaurants and drive-thru's, and get additional activity down toward the mall.
- Is a traffic study going to be performed, the speeding traffic occurs on Bigelow, cars are traveling 45 miles per hour.
- Fill commercial building with office and research and development users connect it as much as possible directly to I-495, do leverage the visibility from the highway with signage.

- Do like the direction of the study and think it is all right. Increasingly seeing a cohabitation of uses in the businesses increasingly developing, manufacturing, all together. Specifically with the zoning change, rethink manufacturing and industrial use to special permit. Need to think about 21st and 22nd century industrial and manufacturing uses and make sure they are also welcome and that they can invest here.

Additional comments were received from stakeholders by email after the meeting:

- Live, work, play is not just a trendy phrase. It is an important mantra to develop a well-balanced and successful neighborhood, where there are residents activating the area in the evenings and weekends, office workers activating it by day, and goods and services to cater to both of those groups. To that end, I would recommend allowing a mix of uses in the corridor, which would include office, retail, housing and hotel. Industrial is an outlier in these mixed-use neighborhoods because it can be a turn off to those other aforementioned uses.
- Since many of the parcels in this corridor are large, density and height (probably no more than 5 stories) would make sense here. View corridors and access to light won't be a problem given the distance between the various land holdings, and so I think allowing for density on the parcels will help accelerate the activity. If this were more of an urban setting, where this was more of an adjustment of a currently dense area, like what was done in Somerville, then measuring that growth might be important otherwise one might get "too much too soon". Here, I don't see that as a problem. In addition, a critical mass needs to occur to ensure the success of these various uses, because the area is currently lacking the energy needed to create a vibrant, safe and fun neighborhood. Moreover, in order to attract real investment in the area, a certain amount of density needs to be allowed otherwise only local groups will be interested, and growth will occur very slowly, which becomes a vicious cycle of survival.
- It would be great to create better connectivity to other parts of Marlborough, such as bike and nature paths, and nearby communities so the area does not feel like an island. Part of its charm is its isolated and bucolic setting but I don't think that would be lost with some more connection points.
- I would certainly love to have as much flexibility as possible. Also, I did notice that not a mention of Hotels? Any reason why?
- The part of the presentation I saw looked great, I really enjoyed how you optimized the potential of the businesses with the areas abundance of natural resources.
- I asked the question about a traffic study for Bigelow as it is an old country road with a speed limit of 25 and 30 mph. Aside from Bigelow's traffic issue, the part of the presentation I did see looked like a great addition to this already convenient and bustling area. I also missed any talks about how this new development will grow the business clusters that are already in the region.

Town of Berlin Economic Development Committee

On December 10th, 2020 MAPC and MEDC presented to the Town of Berlin Economic Development Committee to introduce this planning process and to learn more about the Town of Berlin's perspectives on the Donald Lynch Boulevard Area. MAPC gave a brief presentation to the Committee that offered a study introduction and initial district analysis including the purpose and objectives of the study, the study scope and work plan,

stakeholders and outreach, and description of the characteristics of the study area. The Town of Berlin Economic Development Committee expressed the following during the conversation:

- Concern about the health and viability of the Solomon Pond Mall, a portion of the mall property is in the Town of Berlin. All you have to do is walk through the mall to know that it is not doing great.
- Excitement to begin to generate a dialogue with Solomon Pond Mall owners, Simon Properties, to enhance viability and make modifications to zoning that may be needed. The Committee expressed that they are available and willing to work.
- Excitement to be on the same page with the City of Marlborough in thinking proactively about the success of this district.
- Shared that the Town is considering a host agreement for a marijuana dispensary at the former Milano Marble Solutions property at the end of Banner Road.
- The Berlin Planning Board keeps getting a number of proposals for the 50-acre site at the Worcester Sand and Gravel Pit on River Road
- Discussion about the Burlington Mall working with Sears, who owned their site at that location as well, created a partnership for redevelopment in that location.
- Suggested coordinating with Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) and Northborough.
- Area lacks amenities when trying to attract workers.
- Riverbridge is trying to get a restaurant and having difficulty.
- A lot in front of Sears is available for a restaurant.

Marlborough Economic Development Corporation Board

On December 9th, 2020 MAPC presented to the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Board to introduce this planning process and to learn more about the Board's perspectives on the Donald Lynch Boulevard Area. MAPC gave a brief presentation to the Committee that offered a study introduction and initial district analysis including the purpose and objectives of the study, the study scope and work plan, stakeholders and outreach, and description of the characteristics of the study area. The Board expressed the following during the conversation:

- Great to hear about the natural assets of the area
- The mall has 22 vacancies in the building, so this is a good undertaking, excited to see this happen.
- The goal is to think about what this area is going to look like 10 years from now. Malls across the country are struggling. What does that new model look like? Constant talk about the need for restaurants and drive-thru's in the district. It won't change tomorrow, but will lay the groundwork for the future of the district.
- It is good to see engagement with the owner of the mall. Getting the mall to the table is important to work collaboratively and to continue working with decision makers of the ownership team, working with the Director of Development for Simon Properties from Indianapolis.
- Concern for the district becoming host to an Amazon distribution center, not the direction the City wants to see things go.
- The three big box stores at the mall are owned by Macy's, Sears, and JCPenny potentially complicating the future redevelopment options.
- About half of the mall is in the Town of Berlin.

- Need more complementary activity around the New England Sports Center
- The example from the nearby Auburn Mall was discussed where a medical/healthcare use was brought into the mall to provide a new type of anchor tenant. Potential interest and openness to the medical/healthcare use.
- Look at demographic studies. What do people want for the future? What are the 3 or 4 demographic trends that are going to point to where the opportunities lie?
- Not thinking about this as a major housing area. City has done their share and is going to back off the housing here. Although housing has been a part of some of the successful mall redevelopment models.
- At 200 Donald Lynch Boulevard there are about 200 employees. They enjoy walking the paths of the area and getting outside during the workday. On the wish list for these employees are restaurants you can walk to during the day to grab some food and lunch.
- This area is either going big box or adding residential with smaller retail users. It is not currently zoned for big box and we don't want it to be. Therefore, it has to be a mix of retail, medical uses, and housing. Light industrial uses are being done in a tight space and need to think about how we integrate it all. On the periphery of the City with I-290 and I-495 it attracts people from other areas. It is not just feeding off of Marlborough, but feeding off of the region. The rest of the city or other communities around us won't sustain it. It will compete with the downtown and the impact to downtown will need to be considered.
- The future direction must also consider the burden on the highway. If it becomes more of a draw, assuming the traffic impacts on I-290 and I-495 will have to be reviewed with MassDOT. It is not likely that we are talking about the scale of change to have dramatic impacts on highway traffic volumes, for example, potential housing units would likely be measured in hundreds, not thousands.
- Connection of Donald Lynch Boulevard to other nearby assets or commercial/light industrial clusters – for example to the west is the Northborough Industrial Park on Whitney Street.

Community Stakeholder Meeting #1

On November 18th, 2020 MAPC and MEDC hosted a community stakeholder meeting to introduce this planning process and to learn more about stakeholder's perspectives on the Donald Lynch Boulevard Area. MAPC gave a brief presentation to the attendees that offered a study introduction and initial district analysis including the purpose and objectives of the study, the study scope and work plan, stakeholders and outreach, and description of the characteristics of the study area. The stakeholders expressed the following during the discussion:

- The area needs more amenities, more flexible parking, and more mixed-uses.
- This study should be a vehicle for how owners can work together to create added value.
- The area is lacking a vibe and identity – the Solomon Pond Mall and New England Sports Center are magnet destinations, but the entire area needs to be reimagined and reidentified.
- Think about adding senior housing and medical uses.
- The area needs shuttle services to better connect it to other parts of the City. Many visitors and activity are going to Apex Center.

- What is the future of malls? Simon Properties Group expressed that their business is quite challenged and that they need flexibility. Existing zoning is limiting use of the property. For example, the Auburn Mall redevelopment included medical uses with Reliant Medical occupying a former anchor space at the mall. No silver bullet exists for mall redevelopment.
- At the Sports Authority/Old Navy property a potential self storage use is interested, but not currently allowed, the property has been vacant for some time.
- Everyone that works in the area has to drive there – need improved last mile circulation.
- Need to improve cohesiveness of the district. Currently there is no drive-thru, no bank. The key is to have visitors accomplish more than one task with a visit to the district. If getting there requires a 10-15 minute drive, then patrons need to be able to do more with that visit.
- Live/work/play is what the area needs
- Will the study be contemplating a new interchange? Another interchange can't be added within 1 mile of the existing interchange and exits/entrances.

In addition to the open discussion several in-meeting survey questions were asked and the responses for each are listed below.

- What is your name and connection to the Donald Lynch Boulevard area?
 - Bob McGuire, broker with JLL, representing tenants and landlords in Marlborough
 - Kenneth Fries, property owner
 - Samantha Perlman, City Councilor and Millennial
 - Kelly Johnson, Digital Federal Credit Union
 - Mario Minardi, ownership/management 200 Donald Lynch Boulevard
 - Kelley Borer-Miller, Crossroads School 295 Donald Lynch Boulevard
 - Sandra Rennie Austin, counsel for Ferris Development property owner at 325 Donald Lynch Boulevard
 - Paul Cincotta, New England Development, owner former Sports Authority/Old Navy
 - Michael Ossing, City Council
 - Kevin Kuros, Central MA Director for MA Office of Business Development
 - Sam Crossan, JLL, leasing agent for 325 Donald Lynch Boulevard and tenant advisor to commercial tenant on the street
 - Matthew Russell, Ferris Development Group, owner of 325 Donald Lynch Boulevard
 - Bill Bailey, JLL Commercial Broker representing landlords and tenants
 - Timothy Fox, Development Director, Simon Property Group
 - Chris Bastien, General Manager, Solomon Pond Mall
 - Arthur Bergeron
 - Meredith Harris, Economic Development for the City of Marlborough
- Do you have any questions or comments about the study introduction?
 - No questions
 - Intriguing
 - Is multi-family development being considered?
- What works in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area?
 - Good vehicular accessibility
 - Lack of walkable or drive-thru amenities for office uses

- New England Sports Center (NESC) works and is the one unique feature. Any changes should be based on that asset.
- It's nice to have the current retail amenities – hopefully we can keep those
- Existing zoning is archaic – limiting property owners' flexibility
- Would like to see joggers have a safe route
- What doesn't work in the Donald Lynch Boulevard area?
 - The lack of directional signage off of 495. The visibility from 290.
 - High speed drivers on Donald Lynch Boulevard makes using crosswalks dangerous.
 - Safe route to walk during lunch hour
 - Lack of flexibility of potential uses for zoning
 - Lack of quick food options for lunch for business
- What would you like this study to accomplish?
 - Has the City evaluated whether or not direct access off Route 495 is achievable?
 - I have heard walk/bike a number of times. I appreciate the discussion around bike lane but would like to have a place to walk more safely and not have to cross four lanes.
- What is your vision for this part of the City?
 - Live/work/play seems to be a popular idea. A vibrant destination where people want to “be”, not just go to work
 - Echo need to leave area after work or during lunch for entertainment
 - Pop-up establishments are good for small business as well
 - Better signage is very important
 - Reimagining mall structure is an interesting concept. I would like to see structures that enhance mom and pop usage
- What should be considered for zoning and land use improvements?
 - Pop-up shops, pop-up beer garden, encourage food trucks
 - Drive thru permitted by right
 - Flexibility on mixed use
 - Marijuana, 40B, dense housing on larger lots
 - Flex parking requirements with blended use of adjacent parking
- What should be considered for public realm and circulation improvements?
 - A shuttle service for Donald Lynch Boulevard would be nice, especially if more entertainment and destination options become available
 - Bike paths and walking paths connecting the various properties along Donald Lynch
 - Are four lanes necessary?
- What should be the top priority to keep in mind for this district?
 - Enhance the experience for current tenants

Previous Process Meetings and Notes

Donald Lynch Boulevard Business Owner Meeting

On June 6th, 2017 the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) hosted a meeting with business owners along Donald Lynch Boulevard with MAPC. The business owners expressed the following during the conversation:

- Discussion of zoning uses:
 - Strength of the retail along Donald Lynch Boulevard, including both Solomon Pond Mall and independent stores, are viewed as important to the health of the industrial/office park areas of Donald Lynch Boulevard
 - In order to facilitate the establishment of additional amenities along Donald Lynch Boulevard (e.g., some place where one could purchase a cup of coffee), it was suggested that allowing for smaller lots within this district be allowed (e.g., perhaps 1-acre sites instead of 2-acre sites).
 - Allow for more diversity of uses at Donald Lynch Boulevard to reduce vacancies and offer additional potential opportunities. Add to the list of allowable uses or allowed by special permit:
 - Medical offices and/or urgent care facilities
 - Brewery
 - Schools for music
 - Business trade
 - Test preparation
 - Need less restrictive rules that will allow for drive-thru's in order to support amenities along Donald Lynch Boulevard. It took 7 years to find an operator for the cafeteria at 325 Donald Lynch Boulevard – operators feel they need the drive-thru to break-even/make money. Drive thru's could be allowed by special permit for banks and restaurants to address any design issues.
 - Do not want small kiosk style drive-thru's, so maybe associate a minimum structure size (e.g. 5,000 square feet) for a facility with a drive-thru. Also, maybe allow these on smaller lots of 1-acre as previously mentioned, but make sure there is adequate space for vehicle queuing.
 - Consider requiring less parking for retail stores as there seems to be a large surplus of parking. If stores, such as Target, could put a pad restaurant site in the frontage of the parking lot, this would provide amenities for the Donald Lynch Boulevard while also providing additional income to property owners. In order to do this the zoning ordinance limit on the number of structures per lot would need to be changed. The mall has significant extra parking.
 - One business owner was concerned that he did not have enough parking and was interested to learn if there could be an increase in the number of spaces and how this may be limited by percent lot coverage or percent open space requirements. This particular property already has a parking deck.
- Discussion of public realm issues:
 - Sidewalks and the need for full connectivity of sidewalks along Donald Lynch Boulevard was noted as a need in order to make the area more

- walkable and desirable for visitors to explore (for example, patrons at hotels visiting for a hockey tournament)
- Need for outdoor seating areas along Donald Lynch Boulevard connected to sidewalk network
- Discussion of sign issues:
 - Need to improve business visibility from highways including I-495 and I-290 to draw patrons to the Donald Lynch Boulevard area. This may include signage on the highways or signage in the district.
 - On the highway a blue board sign is needed along I-290 advertise the diversity of shops available. The signs offer 6 names per sign and could be used to illustrate the diversity of destinations. Coordination with MassDOT may be required as the standard is typically to advertise for businesses within one mile of the exit. MEDC suggested that blue board signs result in about a 30% increase in business.
 - For retail need sign height to be visible from I-290 or need to coordinate location of signs that can be visible from I-290
 - Need for sign exemptions to allow for signs on top of buildings or for additional height
 - Potential revisions to Pylon type signs
 - Need for process of approvals for “off-site” signs to advertise in those locations where signs can be placed and would be visible
 - Need for “secondary signs” on buildings at the mall to better advertise the diversity of vendors that are in the mall. Best to be located over the mall entrances closest to these stores.
 - It was noted that the Shops and Chestnut Hill in Newton are allowed to add 350 square feet of secondary signs on architectural panels near entrances in order to advertise interior stores.
 - Need for additional directional or directory type signage along Donald Lynch Boulevard to advertise for additional stores down the boulevard from particular locations. For example, visitors may not know that a Target is located further down the boulevard.
 - There is need for a more effective entrance sign at the beginning of Donald Lynch Boulevard at River Road to advertise the diversity of businesses and destinations in the district.
 - An alternative to increasing sign height would be to work with MassDOT to undertake selective clearing of trees along I-290 in order to increase visibility of Solomon Pond Mall area and other businesses along Donald Lynch Boulevard from the highway. This visibility would support existing businesses and help to prevent additional losses/closures. Significant mitigation would need to occur to offset the loss of vegetation and could consist of lower-growing wildlife habitat-enhancing plants (e.g., high bush blueberries) within the I-290 right-of-way. Mitigation may also consist of habitat enhances in other areas of Donald Lynch Boulevard such as along the Assabet River which may require coordination with the Town of Berlin.

City of Marlborough

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Appendix B
Draft Zoning
April 2023



MEDC



ORDERED:

THAT, PURSUANT TO § 5 OF CHAPTER 40A OF THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARLBOROUGH, HAVING SUBMITTED FOR ITS OWN CONSIDERATION CHANGES IN THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARLBOROUGH, AS AMENDED, TO FURTHER AMEND CHAPTER 650, NOW ORDAINS THAT THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARLBOROUGH, AS AMENDED, BE FURTHER AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:

I. Chapter 650 Article VI, entitled “Special Districts, Overlays and Special Requirements” is hereby **amended** as follows:

(1) By **inserting** a new § 650-**XX**, entitled “Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District”, as follows:

§ 650-XX**. Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District (DLB).**

Within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District (DLB), the following provisions govern. Where these provisions conflict with other sections of the Zoning Ordinance, the provisions of this section shall apply.

A. Purpose and objectives.

- (1) The Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District defines supplemental land use controls within the boundaries of the overlay district that amend and supersede the land use controls that exist in the underlying district, Limited Industrial (LI).
- (2) The goals of the overlay district are to **enhance land use development** and **encourage desired growth patterns** for the benefit of the public health, safety, and welfare and the **economic development objectives** of the City.
- (3) The vision for the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District is to **strengthen the vitality of the district** by encouraging uses, activities, and improvements that will complement the existing assets. Each new investment should be viewed as an opportunity to complement existing uses, add new destinations and attractions, and strengthen a district that provides a variety of compelling reasons to visit, whether it be to work, shop, play, or live.
- (4) The vision shall be achieved through the mix of uses defined by the overlay district and the composition of each new investment, including the site design and building design, and the relationship of the investment to the surrounding context. Each new investment

shall enhance the sense of place that helps to define a recognizable district identity and create an attractive and comfortable environment where people feel invited to visit again.

(5) The site design, building design, and design of the circulation system shall **strengthen the walkability** of the district by defining distinct nodes and compact centers of activity in the district. This may include using buildings to define shared outdoor spaces, creating safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle paths that connect to abutting properties and amenities, creating new outdoor spaces and seating areas, and adding new investments in the landscape of the district.

(6) The site design, building design, and design of site infrastructure shall **enhance the natural assets and sustainability** of the district through enhanced landscape with an emphasis on adding shade trees, an investment in green infrastructure and low impact development techniques, and strengthened connections to natural assets such as the Assabet River and a connected network of open spaces.

B. Site plan review. Projects within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall be subject to site plan review as provided in § 270-2, entitled “Site plan review and approval,” of the City Code.

(1) Applicability.

(a) Site plan review applies to both as of right and uses available by grant of a special permit within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District. Site plan review applicability includes, but is not limited to, new construction of any building or structure; addition to an existing building or structure; and increase in area of on-site parking or loading areas. [See § 270-2(3).]

(b) Site plan review shall be conducted administratively, as provided in § 270-2, except for those projects over 10,000 square feet, which projects shall undergo administrative site plan review with final review and approval by the City Council.

(c) The City Council may elect to vary the dimensional and parking requirements of this section by special permit or site plan approval if, in its opinion, such change shall result in an improved project and will not nullify or substantially derogate from the intent or purpose of this section. This authority continues subsequent to occupancy.

C. Special permit granting authority. The City Council shall be the special permit granting authority within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District.

D. Exclusivity/control. This section of the Zoning Ordinance exclusively controls the establishment, development, and design of any development undertaken in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District and supersedes any other provision of the Zoning Ordinance. In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this section and any other provision of the Zoning Ordinance, the provisions of this section shall govern and control.

E. Eligible uses. Except as specifically provided herein, any uses, which are not permitted, whether as of right or by a special permit, within the Limited Industrial District under § 650-17, Table of Use Regulations, of the Zoning Ordinance, shall be prohibited.

(1) The following uses are permitted by right in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District:

- (a) Comprehensive developments
- (b) Offices, banks, insurance and financial institutions
- (c) Residential conference and training center with food and recreation services
- (d) Commercial greenhouse
- (e) Medical office/clinic
- (f) Brewpubs
- (g) Accessory uses
- (h) Restaurant, cafe
- (i) Restaurants for employee use
- (j) Winery, brewery, or distillery with tasting room
- (k) Churches and religious buildings
- (l) Public recreation and conservation
- (m) Public, private and religious schools, museums, libraries, parks, recreation facilities, buildings and playgrounds
- (n) Child-care centers
- (o) Public utilities, not including storage yards or repair shops
- (p) Public buildings
- (q) Water towers, reservoirs
- (r) Floodplain and Wetland Protection District
- (s) Water Supply Protection District
- (t) Newspaper printing and publishing, job printing
- (u) Research, experimental labs
- (v) Light non-nuisance manufacturing
- (w) Light manufacturing incidental to research
- (x) Accessory uses and service buildings

(2) The following additional uses are permitted by special permit in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District:

- (a) Multifamily dwelling
 - a. Multifamily dwellings allowed by special permit when added to a property with existing nonresidential uses that will remain or when part of a larger redevelopment that includes a majority of nonresidential uses.
 - b. Multifamily dwellings shall follow the City of Marlborough Multi-family Development Review Criteria and Design Review Guidelines.
 - c. Multifamily dwellings shall be located to the rear of the property and designed to be secondary and less visually prominent than the primary nonresidential uses.
 - d. Multifamily dwellings shall be oriented to natural assets at the rear or side of a property. For example, if the property abuts the Assabet River or has a

wooded edge. The site design shall use landscape to integrate the multifamily dwellings with the natural assets and transition between the multifamily dwellings and nonresidential uses.

- e. Multifamily dwellings shall be connected by a network of pedestrian paths and outdoor open spaces.
- (b) Trailer mobile homes
- (c) Retirement Community Overlay
- (d) Residential accessory uses
- (e) Customary home occupations
- (f) Yard sales, charitable sales bazaars
- (g) Artist studio/live/work gallery space
- (h) Recording studio/live/work space
- (i) Convert buildings to office, bank, insurance use
- (j) Retail sales and services <75,000 square feet gross floor area
- (k) Retail sales and services >75,000 square feet gross floor area
- (l) Schools, for business, trade, music, dance, and television\or radio broadcasting studios (but not including towers)
- (m) Commercial radio and television towers and wireless communication facilities
- (n) Health, sports and fitness clubs (indoor and/or outdoor)
- (o) Hotels
- (p) Hotels <100 rooms
- (q) Hotels with conference facilities and commercial uses
- (r) Recreation center
- (s) Recreation and entertainment, indoor*
- (t) Private clubs, nonprofit
- (u) Clubs
- (v) Self-service laundry
- (w) Dental clinics
- (x) Consumer service establishments
- (y) Motels
- (z) Mixed use development
 - a. Refer to notes under “Multifamily dwelling” for mixed use development that includes residential uses.
- (aa) Copy shops, newspaper offices
- (bb) Outdoor recreation uses
- (cc) Open air markets
- (dd) Shopping malls
- (ee) Soil removal
- (ff) Public, private or commercial recreation establishments, recreation grounds or places of amusement
- (gg) Restaurant with drive-in or drive-thru facilities
 - a. Vehicular circulation for the drive-thru shall be optimized to efficiently integrate with a site plan that prioritizes pedestrian access and connections.
 - b. Integrate enhanced site landscaping, pedestrian paths, and outdoor seating areas and open spaces with the design of the vehicular circulation.
- (hh) Restaurants serving food outdoors

- (ii) Drive-thru facilities
 - a. Vehicular circulation for the drive-thru shall be optimized to efficiently integrate with a site plan that prioritizes pedestrian access and connections.
 - b. Integrate enhanced site landscaping, pedestrian paths, and outdoor seating areas and open spaces with the design of the vehicular circulation.
- (jj) Narcotic detoxification and/or maintenance facility
- (kk) Medical marijuana treatment center
- (ll) Adult use marijuana retail; marijuana accessories retail
- (mm) Medical and/or adult use marijuana cultivator, independent testing laboratory, product manufacturer or transporter
- (nn) Agriculture, horticulture or floriculture >5 acres
- (oo) Airports and heliports
- (pp) Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer
- (qq) Transportation terminal and freight depots
- (rr) Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery
- (ss) Associated/accessory research uses
- (tt) Manufacturing and/or warehousing
- (uu) Retail sales accessory to manufacturing
- (vv) Recreation center, indoor and outdoor
- (ww) Dry cleaning
- (xx) Electric power substation for changing bulk power to distribution voltage
- (yy) Data storage/ telecommunications facilities
- (zz) Coffee roastery

*Recreation and Entertainment, Indoor is defined as participatory and spectator-oriented recreation and entertainment uses conducted within an enclosed building, excluding any sexually oriented businesses.

(3) All uses not noted in Subsection E(1) and Subsection E(2) above shall be deemed prohibited in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District, including but not limited to the uses listed below, except where so to deem would interfere with or annul any other City of Marlborough ordinance, rule, regulation, permit or license, or any state or federal law or regulation:

- (a) Single-family
- (b) Single-family, attached
- (c) Conversion of detached one-family to a two-family
- (d) Two-family homes
- (e) Conversion of a two-family dwelling to a three
- (f) Boarding and lodging homes
- (g) Tourist home\bed-and-breakfast
- (h) Open space development
- (i) Two residential structures on a lot less than 80,000 square feet
- (j) Assisted living facilities
- (k) Commercial kennels and animal hospitals
- (l) Veterinary hospital
- (m) Commercial kennels

- (n) Riding academy
- (o) Private clubs, nonprofit
- (p) Clubs
- (q) Salesroom
- (r) Wholesale office or showroom
- (s) Wholesale sale and warehousing
- (t) Place of repair for cars, boats, trucks and farm equipment
- (u) Places of assembly
- (v) Outdoor storage
- (w) Car parking lots, garages
- (x) Gasoline filling stations
- (y) Auto service facilities for minor repairs, changing tires and lubrication
- (z) Auto sales and service
- (aa) Car wash
- (bb) Open air markets
- (cc) Funeral homes, parlors and mortuaries
- (dd) Adult bookstore
- (ee) Adult video store
- (ff) Adult paraphernalia store
- (gg) Adult movie theatre
- (hh) Adult live entertainment establishment
- (ii) Tattoo and body piercing parlors and shops
- (jj) Contractor's yard
- (kk) Landscape contractor's yard
- (ll) Forest, woodlots, portable, woodworking mills
- (mm) Livestock farms > 10 acres
- (nn) Farms and poultry farms
- (oo) Cemeteries
- (pp) Hospitals and sanitarium
- (qq) Correctional institutions
- (rr) Golf courses, country clubs and beaches
- (ss) Charitable and philanthropic buildings
- (tt) Day camps
- (uu) Convalescent and nursing homes
- (vv) Chicken hens, personal use (6 or fewer)
- (ww) Chicken hens, personal use (between 7 and 12)
- (xx) Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer
- (yy) Food processing plants
- (zz) Bakery (nonretail)
- (aaa) Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery
- (bbb) Manufacturing or warehouse
- (ccc) Retail sales accessory to manufacturing
- (ddd) Power laundries
- (eee) Dye works
- (fff) Packaging or bottling plants
- (ggg) Large tract development

(hhh) Self-service storage facility

F. Dimensional requirements. The Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall be subject to the dimensional standards in accordance with Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance as described for the underlying Limited Industrial (LI) district, with the following exceptions granted by special permit by the City Council:

- (1) No minimum lot area, reduced minimum lot frontage of 50 feet, reduced minimum side yard of 10 feet, reduced minimum front yard of 30 feet, reduced minimum rear yard of 15 feet and increased maximum lot coverage of 80% shall be allowed and applicable to a new parcel subdivided from an existing parcel with the subdivision located at the street frontage of the property. The property subject to subdivision shall retain the minimum lot area of 2 acres and the minimum lot frontage of at least 200 feet with the removal of the subdivided lot. The subdivided lot will not impact setbacks or lot coverage of the property subject to subdivision. Access to the subdivided lot shall be coordinated with other site circulation to limit the number of curb cuts to the main roadway and establish shared secondary access roads where feasible.
- (2) Maximum building height in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall not exceed 60 feet. The maximum height is allowed by right and is not subject to distance from a residential zone. Note: Mechanical and elevator equipment, chimneys, or other utilities are not limited to the maximum building height. Mechanicals shall be screened to the maximum extent feasible from view from street level and integrated with the architectural style and materials of the building. Screening of mechanicals are not limited to the maximum building height.

G. Parking, curb cut and landscaping requirements. Except as otherwise provided in this section, parking, circulation and landscape requirements shall conform with the provisions of § 650-47, § 650-48 and § 650-49 of the Zoning Ordinance.

- (1) General. In the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District, adequate off-street parking shall be provided. The parking facilities provided should be used efficiently to minimize the area of land to be paved for this purpose. The City Council may consider, at its discretion, permitted reductions in the parking requirements for complementary or shared use of parking areas serving activities that have different peak demand times. It is the applicant's responsibility to determine and request a shared parking reduction for review by the City Council. The visual and environmental impact of large parking areas shall be reduced by breaking the total required parking into smaller parking areas that are integrated with the site design and landscape plan. Low impact development techniques and green infrastructure shall be integrated with the parking areas.
- (2) Parking locations. Parking shall be located to the side and/or rear of all building structures. Existing parking that is located between a building and Donald Lynch Boulevard shall integrate enhanced landscaping into the parking area to reduce the visual impact of the parking through the addition of landscape islands and shade trees. Parking may be provided at ground level, underground, or in a parking garage. Parking garages

can be freestanding or as part of a building that is dedicated to other permitted uses, but must be integrated with the surrounding site plan and oriented so as to minimize visual impact of the parking garage on surrounding uses.

- (3) Parking requirements. Parking in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall be provided at a minimum of 1 parking space per 250 square feet of net floor area for retail and restaurant uses. Parking for other commercial uses shall be provided at a minimum of 1 parking space per 350 square feet of net floor area. Parking for residential units shall be provided at a minimum of 1 parking space per unit.
- (4) Pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle features shall be designed to promote connectivity. Curb cuts shall be minimized and shared between multiple parking areas and uses. Bicycle parking shall be provided for all new development and shall be located as close as possible to the building entrance(s).
- (5) Location of landscaped islands in parking areas. Landscaped islands with shade trees shall be contained within or project into a parking lot and be so located that some part of every parking space is not more than 90 feet from a landscaped area on the perimeter or interior of the parking lot.

H. Design standards. The following design standards apply to all developments within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District:

- (1) Site layout
 - (a) Site and building layout. Buildings shall be located to define shared outdoor spaces in coordination with adjacent buildings located on the same property or an abutting property and the design of the surrounding landscape.
 - (b) Site and parking layout. Parking shall not be the dominant feature of a site plan. Parking shall be one of the components integrated into a cohesive site and landscape design. Large parking lots shall be broken into smaller separated parking areas or through the use of islands and landscape. Landscape features such as plantings and berms shall be used to reduce the visual impact of parking and define shared outdoor spaces that are integrated with other features of the site. Pedestrian circulation shall be integrated into the design of the parking.
 - (c) Sustainability and green infrastructure. Sustainability and green infrastructure shall be integrated into the site layout and features in a meaningful way. Approaches may include protecting and retaining existing vegetation, supporting biodiversity, integrating low-impact stormwater management techniques, reducing impervious surfaces, and reducing water use for irrigation.

(2) Pedestrian and bicycle circulation

- (a) Pedestrian circulation. Safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian circulation shall be incorporated into the site plan design. Where appropriate, new pedestrian and bicycle paths shall connect the site with abutting sidewalks, trails, amenities, or parks to contribute to a system of pedestrian and bicycle circulation. Where appropriate, pedestrian access should be expanded into a shared-use path to provide safe, convenient, and attractive bicycle access.
- (b) Pedestrian connections. Sidewalks shall provide access from internal site uses, building entries, shared outdoor spaces, parking areas, amenities adjacent to the property, connections along Donald Lynch Boulevard, and connections between adjacent properties.
- (c) Bicycle amenities. All developments shall include provisions for the parking of bicycles at locations that are safely separated from vehicular and pedestrian circulation and convenient to building entries. Bicycle racks shall be placed as to not obstruct pedestrian walkways or impede the parking area for automobiles.

(3) Shared Outdoor Spaces

- (a) Shared Outdoor Spaces. Buildings and site features shall be arranged to create functional shared outdoor spaces, including outdoor seating areas, outdoor gathering areas, outdoor areas for eating, and outdoor activities. Landscape features, topographic changes, art, or other features may accent these shared outdoor spaces. Shared outdoor spaces shall be provided and integrated with the site plan and building design. Multiple shared outdoor spaces should be integrated within a larger property. All shared outdoor spaces should be accessible through a network of connected sidewalks and paths. Shared outdoor spaces shall enhance visual connections between buildings, streets, open spaces, and pedestrian circulation.
- (b) Location of outdoor seating. Outdoor seating areas may be provided for restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, or other establishments with seating and may overlap with shared outdoor spaces. Outdoor seating areas shall be located adjacent to or near the use they are serving. Amenities and seating shall not reduce the required sidewalk widths of pedestrian circulation or negatively impact pedestrian or bicycle circulation.

I. Signage. Except as otherwise provided in this section, signage shall conform to the provisions of Chapter 526 of the City Code, the Sign Ordinance. In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this section and any provision of Chapter 526 of the City Code, the provisions of this section shall govern and control.

- (1) Signage plan. A master sign plan for the premises shall be provided for review and approval by the City Council, setting forth the types, locations and dimensions of proposed signs. A signage plan shall be required for any project that involves more than two signs. For a project that involves one or two signs, a master sign plan is not required.
- (2) Special permit sign locations. In order to enhance visibility for businesses from Interstate 290 on the north side of the interstate, a property owner may seek special permit approval for a sign that is coordinated for the entire district to project above the highest line of the roof, or sign to be mounted on the roof of the building, or one freestanding pole, monument, or pylon sign designed for visibility from Interstate 290, or one off-premise sign location within the district for one freestanding pole, monument, pylon, or digital display sign when such a location has been identified and is available for such for the purpose of improving business visibility from Interstate 290. The special permit sign shall be subject to the following requirements:
 - a. Sign design shall conform with § 526-9C unless waived by the City Council;
 - b. Message board signs are prohibited for special permit sign locations;
 - c. No freestanding sign shall be located closer than five feet to any property line;
 - d. Signs, logos or cabinets should be externally illuminated where possible, otherwise with translucent or transparent faces if no reasonable alternative is possible;
 - e. Sign location shall be integrated with landscaping into the overall site design, should not require clearance of trees or pose a risk to roadway safety.
- (3) Special permit sign locations. In order to enhance visibility and wayfinding for the district at district gateways in a coordinated manner, a property owner may seek special permit approval for signs coordinated for the entire district at the principal points of entry to the district. Allowing (1) freestanding pole, monument, ground, or pylon sign that is coordinated for the entire district at the principal points of entry to the district with a total number not to exceed (3). Subject to approval by the City Council.
 - a. Additional secondary directional signs may also be approved by the City Council.
 - b. The signs shall be coordinated in design and material and feature a reasonable number of individual tenants in a hierarchy that reinforces an identity for the district.
 - c. The signs shall be designed in such a way that individual tenants can be changed to keep signs relevant and up to date with uses in the district.

- d. The total allowed illuminated cabinet square feet of signage shall not exceed 200 square feet per side, per freestanding sign.
- e. The height of any freestanding sign shall not exceed 30 feet from the ground measured directly at the sign base.
- f. No freestanding sign shall be located closer than five feet to any property line.
- g. Sign, logos, or cabinets may be either externally illuminated or internally illuminated with translucent or transparent faces.
- h. Sign location shall be integrated with landscaping into the overall site design, should not require clearance of trees or pose a risk to roadway safety.
- i. Signage profile shall be tall and narrow. A structural frame that is engineered to site specifications and sign materials that may include stone, brick, aluminum, or other metal materials to match the district identity.

J. Application.

- (1) Special permits. An application for a special permit for a use in a development in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall comply with the requirements of § 650-59 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (2) Site plan approval. An application for site plan approval in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 270 of the City Code, Article II, Permits and Approvals, § 270-2.

K. Site plan; special permit approval review criteria. An application for site plan approval or special permit approval in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District under this section shall adhere to the following review criteria, in addition to those specified in § 270-2 of the Marlborough City Code:

- (1) Compliance of the design with the Design Standards in the above subsection H;
- (2) Compliance of sidewalks and paths with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) design standards;
- (3) The placement of utilities and wiring underground, to the extent practical;
- (4) The placement of HVAC equipment, fans, generators, and other site-related structures and items so that they are not visible on roofs or building frontage areas, or that such

features are suitably screened from view wherever reasonably practicable and where elevation permits;

- (5) Enhanced pedestrian amenities with sidewalks providing access from internal site uses to Donald Lynch Boulevard, property adjacent sidewalks or trails, between parking areas and uses, between abutting properties, to adjacent natural assets and amenities, and to outdoor open spaces on the property or abutting the property;
- (6) All lighting proposed shall be sensitive to the night sky, utilizing Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) guidance for any lighting design.
- (7) Submission requirements, in addition to those specified in § 270-2 of the Marlborough City Code:
 - (a) Site plan depicting proposed development, buildings, parking, vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation, and outdoor open spaces;
 - (b) Building elevations;
 - (c) Landscape plan;
 - (d) Lighting plan with photometrics; and
 - (e) Site and building signage plan.

L. Standards for roadways and drainage.

- (1) Roadways. Internal Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District roadways and site circulation shall be private ways and shall be maintained by owners/developers. Private ways within the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District, to the extent feasible, shall be constructed using the methods and materials prescribed in the City of Marlborough Subdivision Regulations, but shall not be required to conform to the dimensional requirements thereof, provided that those private ways shall be adequate for the intended vehicular and pedestrian traffic and shall be maintained by the owner/developer or an association of owners. The design of private ways and parking circulation shall be as efficient as possible to reduce the overall development impact and area of impervious surfaces.
- (2) Stormwater management system. Developments proposed in the Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall have a stormwater management system designed in accordance with the City of Marlborough Subdivision Regulations, the Department of Environmental Protection's Storm Water Handbook, and the Standards and the City's Stormwater Ordinance (Chapter 271 of the City Code), as amended. The stormwater

design shall infiltrate all stormwater on site and avoid run-off onto adjacent properties and is encouraged to integrate low impact development techniques and green infrastructure such as bioswales, rain gardens, or other surface stormwater treatment features that are integral to the function of the site’s stormwater management and highlighted as a landscape feature.

M. Amendments.

- (1) After approval, the owner/developer may seek modifications to any approved special permits or site plan approvals.
- (2) Minor amendments to a special permit and major or minor amendments to a site plan approval may be made by a super majority (2/3) vote of the City Council or by the Building Commissioner administratively as to site plan amendments when approval was granted for a site plan approval administratively in accordance with §270-2. It shall be a finding of the Building Commissioner, not subject to dispute by the applicant, whether a requested amendment is deemed to be a major amendment or a minor one. In general, a minor modification shall not produce more than a material increase in the scale of a project nor produce more than a material increase in impact on City services, the environment or the surrounding neighborhood.
- (3) If it is determined that revisions to a special permit are not minor, per § 650-59 of the Zoning Ordinance, an application for a revised special permit shall be filed, and a public hearing shall be held in the same manner as required for a new application, subject to the fee schedule under Subsection C(3) of § 650-59.

II. The Zoning Map described in § 650-8 is amended as shown on the accompanying Map (Exhibit “A”). The newly established Donald Lynch Boulevard Overlay District shall include all properties as shown in highlighted format on the Map as existing at the passage of this Ordinance, which properties include the following parcels of land (herein identified by the Assessors’ Map and Parcel Number):

Map and Parcel Number
13-2
13-4
13-4A
13-5
13-5A
13-6
13-7
13-8
25-1
25-4
25-4A
25-5

26-1
26-1A
26-7
26-8
26-9
26-20
26-21A
26-21B
26-22
26-23
26-24
26-25
26-26
26-29
26-30
26-31
26-32
38-1B
38-1C
38-2
38-3
38-4
38-5
38-6
38-7
39-29A
50-1
50-2
50-3A
50-3B
50-3C
50-3D
50-3E
50-4A
50-4B
50-4C
50-7
50-7B
50-8
50-9
51-5

Vision for Donald Lynch Boulevard

Potential Zoning Revisions

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

04/12/2023

TABLE EDITED FOR DLB VISION PROCESS - ALL ZONING DISTRICTS ARE NOT SHOWN. THE OVERLAY IS INCLUDED FOR COMPARISON BUT WOULD NOT BE ADDED TO THE TABLE OF USE REGULATIONS

ZONING

650 Attachment 1

City of Marlborough

Table of Use Regulations (§ 650-17)

[Amended 5-9-2005 by Ord. No. 05-100713C; 11-23-2009 by Ord. No. 09-1002277F; 3-11-2013 by Ord. No. 12/13-1005235B; 10-7-2013 by Ord. No. 13-1005481D; 2-10-2014 by Ord. No. 13/14-1005578C; 4-28-2014 by Ord. No. 14-1005693C; 8-14-2014 by Ord. No. 12/13/14 1005247I; 12-1-2014 by Ord. No. 14-1005947C; 11-28-2016 by Ord. No. 16-1006631D; 10-16-2017 by Ord. No. 17-1006980B; 11-27-2017 by Ord. No. 17-1007002C; 4-2-2018 by Ord. No. 18-1007163-1C; 5-21-2018 by Ord. No. 18-1007163-2D; 9-10-2018 by Ord. No. 18-1007311C; 11-19-2018 by Ord. No. 18-1007337E; 12-16-2019 by Ord. No. 19-1007716E; 5-18-2020 by Ord. No. 20-1007915D; 6-22-2020 by Ord. No. 20-1007947H]

KEY:

All uses noted with "Y" are allowed as of right, subject to any referenced conditions.

All uses noted with "SP" are allowed by special permit, subject to any referenced conditions.

All uses noted with "N" are not permitted.

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Overlay
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Residential Use		
Single-family	N	N
Single-family, attached (1)*	N	N
Conversion of detached one-family to a two-family (2)	N	N
Two-family homes	N	N
Conversion of a two-family dwelling to a three (3)	N	N
Multifamily dwelling (4) (42)	N	SP
Comprehensive developments (§ 650-27)	Y	Y
Boarding and lodging homes	N	N
Tourist home\bed-and-breakfast	N	N
Open space development (§ 650-28)	N	N
Trailer mobile homes (5)	SP	SP
Retirement Community Overlay (§ 650-22)	SP	SP
Residential accessory uses (6)	Y	SP
Customary home occupations (7)	Y	SP

* (Numbers in parentheses correspond to subsection numbers in § 650-18, Conditions for use as noted in the Table of Uses.)

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Zone
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Yard sales, charitable sales bazaars (8)	Y	SP
Two residential structures on a lot less than 80,000 square feet (9)	N	N
Artist studio/live/work gallery space	N	SP
Recording studio/live/work space	N	SP
Assisted living facilities (44)	N	N
Business Uses		
Convert buildings to office, bank, insurance use (18)	N	SP
Commercial kennels and animal hospitals	N	N
Veterinary hospital	N	N
Commercial kennels	N	N
Riding academy	N	N
Retail sales and services <75,000 square feet gross floor area (19) (43)	SP	SP
Retail sales and services >75,000 square feet gross floor area (19) (43)	SP	SP
Offices, banks, insurance and financial institutions	Y	Y
Schools, for business, trade, music, dance, and television\or radio broadcasting studios (but not including towers)	N	SP
Commercial radio and television towers and wireless communications facilities (20)	SP	SP
Health, sports and fitness clubs (indoor and/or outdoor)	-	SP
Hotels (41)	SP	SP
Hotels <100 rooms	-	SP
Hotels with conference facilities and commercial uses (21)	SP	SP
Residential conference and training center with food and recreation services (22)	Y	Y
Recreation center (23)	SP	SP
Recreation and entertainment, indoor	-	SP
Private clubs, nonprofit	N	SP
Clubs (24)	N	SP
Self-service laundry	N	SP

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Zone
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Medical office/clinic	N	Y
Dental clinics	N	SP
Consumer service establishments	N	SP
Salesroom	N	N
Wholesale office or showroom	N	N
Wholesale sale and warehousing	N	N
Commercial greenhouse	Y	Y
Motels	SP	SP
Mixed use development (42)	N	SP
Brew pubs	Y	Y
Copy shops, newspaper offices	N	SP
Place of repair for cars, boats, trucks and farm equipment (25)	N	N
Places of assembly	N	N
Outdoor recreation uses	SP	SP
Outdoor storage (26)	SP	N
Car parking lots, garages (27)	N	N
Gasoline filling stations (28)	N	N
Auto service facilities for minor repairs, changing tires and lubrication (28)	N	N
Auto sales and service (25)	N	N
Car wash (28)	N	N
Open air markets (29)	N	SP
Shopping malls	SP	SP
Soil removal (30)	Y	SP
Accessory uses	Y	Y
Funeral homes, parlors and mortuaries	N	N
Public, private or commercial recreation establishments, recreation grounds or places of amusement	SP	SP
Restaurant, cafe	SP	Y
Restaurant with drive-in or drive-thru facilities (31)	N	SP
Restaurants serving food outdoors (31)	SP	SP

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Zone
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Restaurants for employee use	Y	Y
Drive-thru facilities	N	SP
Adult bookstore (32)	N	N
Adult video store (32)	N	N
Adult paraphernalia store (32)	N	N
Adult movie theatre (32)	N	N
Adult live entertainment establishment (32)	N	N
Tattoo and body piercing parlors and shops (32)	N	N
Narcotic detoxification and/or maintenance facility	SP	SP
Medical marijuana treatment center (45)	SP	SP
Adult use marijuana retail; marijuana accessories retail (46)	SP	SP
Medical and/or adult use marijuana cultivator, independent testing laboratory, product manufacturer or transporter (47)	SP	SP
Winery, brewery, or distillery with tasting room	Y	Y
Contractor's yard (48)	SP	N
Landscape contractor's yard (48)	SP	N
Agriculture, Public, and Institutional Use		
Agriculture, horticulture or floriculture >5 acres (10)	Y	SP
Forest, woodlots, portable, woodworking mills (11)	N	N
Livestock farms > 10 acres (12)	N	N
Farms and poultry farms (13)	N	N
Cemeteries	N	N
Hospitals and sanitarium	N	N
Correctional institutions	N	N
Golf courses, country clubs and beaches (14)	N	N
Charitable and philanthropic buildings	N	N
Churches and religious buildings (15)	Y	Y

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Zone
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Public recreation and conservation	N	Y
Day camps	N	N
Public, private and religious schools, museums, libraries, parks, recreation facilities, buildings and playgrounds	Y	Y
Child-care centers (16)	Y	Y
Public utilities, not including storage yards or repair shops	Y	Y
Public buildings (17)	Y	Y
Water towers, reservoirs	Y	Y
Floodplain and Wetland Protection District (§ 650-23)	Y	Y
Water Supply Protection District (§ 650-24)	Y	Y
Convalescent and nursing homes	N	N
Chicken hens, personal use (6 or fewer) (49)	N	N
Chicken hens, personal use (between 7 and 12) (49)	N	N
Industrial Uses		
Airports and heliports	Y	SP
Newspaper printing and publishing, job printing	Y	Y
Manufacturing where the majority of items are sold on premises to the consumer	N	SP
Transportation terminal and freight depots	SP	SP
Food processing plants	N	N
Research, experimental labs (33)	Y	Y
Bakery (nonretail)	N	N
Light non-nuisance manufacturing	Y	Y
Light manufacturing, using portable electric machinery (34)	N	SP
Light manufacturing incidental to research	Y	Y
Associated/accessory research uses (35)	SP	SP
Manufacturing and/or warehousing (36)	Y	SP
Manufacturing or warehouse (37)	N	N

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

	Zoning District Abbreviations	
	Existing Zones	Proposed Zone
	LI	Donald Lynch Boulevard
Retail sales accessory to manufacturing (38)	N	SP
Recreation center, indoor and outdoor	SP	SP
Power laundries	N	N
Dry cleaning	N	SP
Dye works	N	N
Packaging or bottling plants	N	N
Electric power substation for changing bulk power to distribution voltage	SP	SP
Accessory uses and service buildings (39)	Y	Y
Large tract development (40)	N	N
Data storage/ telecommunications facilities	Y	SP
Self-service storage facility	N	N
Coffee roastery	SP	SP

EXCERPTED CONDITIONS LISTED BELOW FOR USES WITH NOTES THAT ARE IMPACTED BY CHANGES (NO CHANGES TO THE CONDITIONS ARE RECOMMENDED)

§ 650-18 **Conditions for uses.**

A. Conditions for use as noted in the Table of Uses

(4) Multifamily dwelling. One structure or multiple structures consisting of a multifamily dwelling containing three or more dwelling units on a single lot, provided that the lot meets all the requirements of Article VII and, in addition, has a landscaped area meeting all the requirements of § 650-18A(9)(e). The above provision shall not apply to mixed use or multifamily developments within the Marlborough Village District.
[Amended 12-1-2014 by Ord. No. 14-1005947C; 12-16-2019 by Ord. No. 19-1007716E]

(18) Buildings converted to offices, banks, insurance and financial institutions. Buildings converted to offices, banks, insurance and financial institutions, provided that the exterior character of the building shall not be altered.

(26) Outdoor storage. Outdoor storage, but not an auto junkyard, may be permitted in the Business, Commercial Automotive, and Industrial Districts if it is accessory to one of the permitted uses in the zoning district in which the main building and lot is located. Outdoor storage is allowed as an accessory use in a Limited Industrial District only for light non-nuisance manufacturing and assembly of specialized vehicles for use by municipal, state and other public agencies. Further, the outside storage must be adequately screened from the street and adjacent properties to obscure the materials stored therein.
[Amended 5-9-2005 by Ord. No. 05-100713C]

DRAFT FOR REVIEW
MARLBOROUGH CODE

(31) Restaurants and cafes.

(a) Restaurants and cafes serving food outdoors, including drive-in facilities.

[1] Outdoor dining areas shall not be located in parking or landscaped areas required by Article VII.

[2] Outdoor dining areas shall be screened from any abutting lot residentially zoned or used by a solid fence at least six feet high.

[3] Any raised structure (such as a deck) on which the outdoor dining occurs shall comply with the building setback requirements of this chapter.

[4] Any at-grade area on which the outdoor dining occurs shall be located no closer to the lot line than would otherwise be allowed of exterior parking areas.

[5] Service of alcoholic beverages out of doors shall require a separate license from the License Commission and any appropriate state approval.

[6] Within the Marlborough Village District, a special permit may be granted to allow for rooftop, sidewalk, or other outdoor restaurant seating that varies the provisions of this section.

[Added 12-1-2014 by Ord. No. 14-1005947C]

(b) Restaurants and cafes for employee use. Service buildings, built and maintained by one or more of the permitted uses, containing either or all of the following uses: restaurant, drugstore, bank or other similar services primarily for the use of employees of the permitted uses, are allowed in Limited Industrial and Industrial Districts.

(36) Manufacturing or warehousing. Manufacturing and/or warehousing of footwear, precision instruments, tool and die, dental, medical and optical equipment, electrical or electronic instruments, biomedical or biotechnology products, subject to the provisions governing biomedical research in Subsection A(33) above, provided truck loading and parking areas are effectively screened from abutting office and residential use. Oil or asphalt manufacturing is prohibited.

(42) Mixed-use development, including multifamily residential uses, shall not be subject to special permit provisions for multifamily uses. In the Wayside District, multifamily dwelling shall be allowed only as part of a mixed-use development. Mixed-use development may include vertically mixed uses in a single building or horizontally mixed uses in which multiple buildings create the mix of uses on a single parcel. Each individual building may include a single use with multiple uses occurring next to each other and within multiple buildings on the single parcel. [Added 12-1-2014 by Ord. No. 14-1005947C; amended 12-16-2019 by Ord. No. 19-1007716E]

51-6
51-7

III. The effective date of these amendments shall be the date of their passage.

ADOPTED

In City Council
Order No XX-
Adopted

Approved by Mayor
Arthur G. Vigeant
Date:

A TRUE COPY
ATTEST:

DRAFT

