

Zoning Amendment: Historic Bed & Breakfast Use

Joint Hearing of Land Use Committee & Planning Board

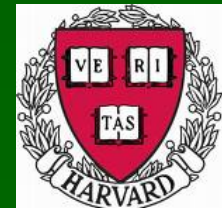
Thursday, April 30, 2009



Monica R. Lamboy
Executive Director
OSPCD

Somerville & Tourism

- Close to downtown Boston
- Base for travel throughout New England
- Site of major historic events, particularly Revolutionary War era
- Nearby colleges & universities: Tufts, MIT, Harvard, Lesley & in Boston
- Boston Independent Film Festival



Somerville's Lodging Needs

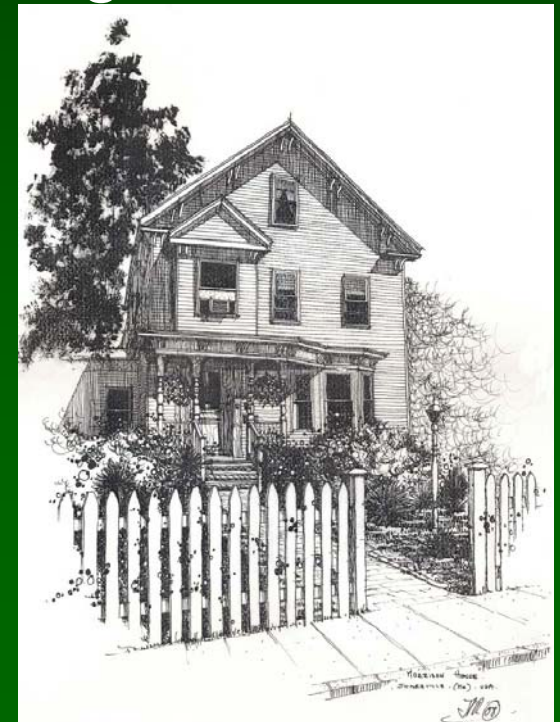
- Hotel Study: few lodging options relative to demand
 - 2 full-service hotels
 - 3 Bed & Breakfast/Tourist Homes
- Comparison: Cambridge
 - 14 hotels
 - 18 Bed & Breakfasts



Limitations of Zoning on B&Bs

- Only accessory use to owner-occupied dwelling
- No more than 3 rooms for rent
- No more than 25% of gross floor area
- Parking requirements may encourage extensive paving of property

Difficult to meet expenses even with high occupancy rates.



Background: Historic Properties

- Local Historic Districts (LHDs) are...
 - ... local cultural assets
 - ... mostly residential, with limited reuse potential
 - ... few in number:
 - Of 10,000+ pre-1928 buildings, 310 are designated; possible addition of 160 properties

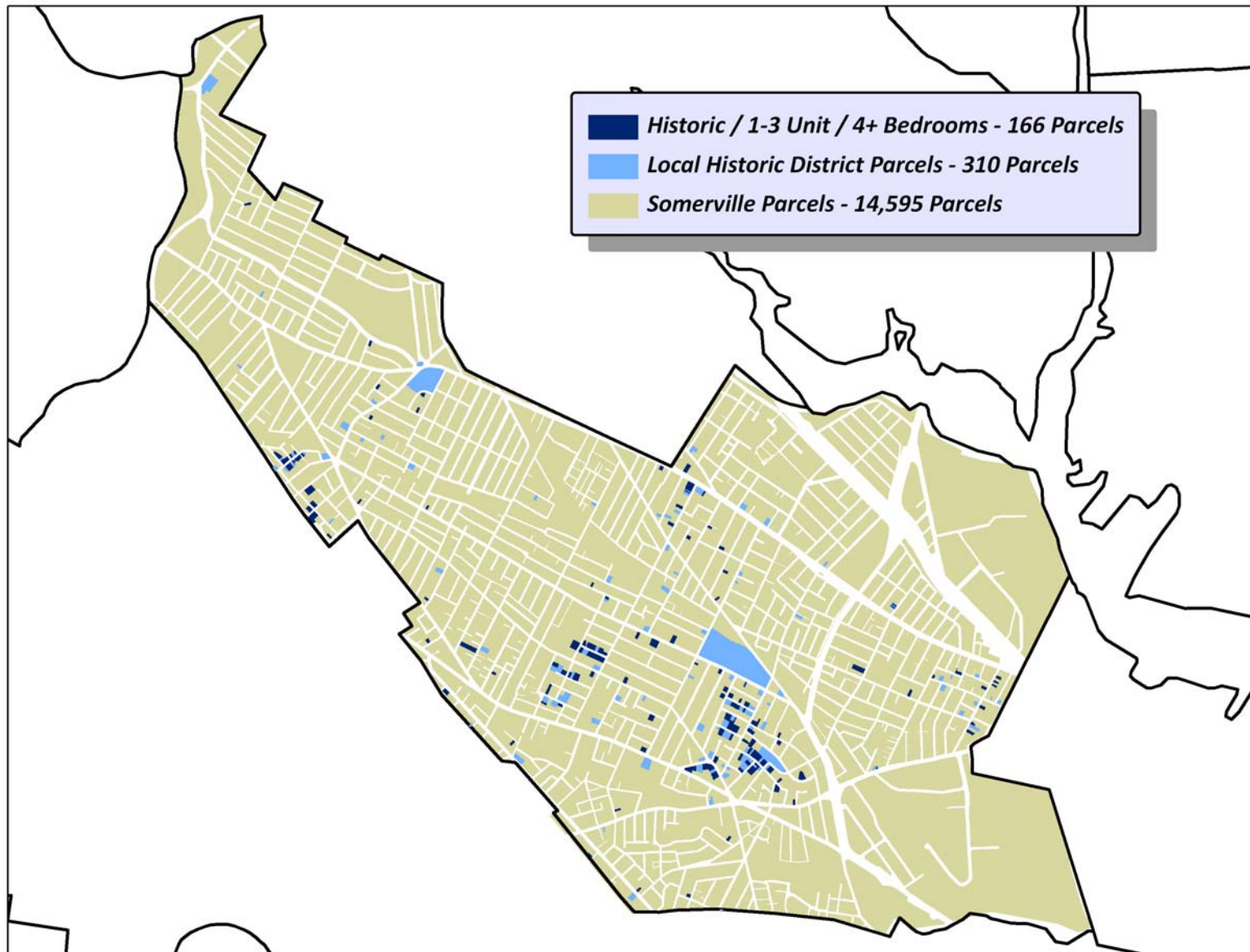


Challenges: Historic Properties

- High repair & maintenance costs not feasible for many homeowners
- Alternatives limited to creating multiple units
- Historic Outbuildings—carriage houses, barns, & stables—have almost no reuse potential



LHDs & Potential B&Bs



Benefits to Owners of LHDs & Neighbors

- B&Bs more viable
- Income-generating use encourages restoration & maintenance
- Use for Historic Outbuildings
- Compatible with residential
- Alternative to dividing into multiple units—only 1 dwelling per site
- Practical parking strategy—not parking lots



Economic Impact to City

- Expansion of 4% hotel excise tax
 - B&Bs could contribute an additional \$1000 or more per room per year
- New dollars being spent in City
 - Daytime foot traffic
 - Multiplier effect on local business



Review Standards

- Maximum of 9 rooms
- Only one dwelling on site—resident operator
- No kitchens in rooms
- Common spaces must be provided inside
- SPD required in Residential, NB, UN districts
- Design Review under Historic Preservation Commission Guidelines
- Parking Management Plan:
how guests will access cars; tandem parking allowed



Operational Standards

- Innholder's License required
- State Sanitary Code:
 - property maintenance
 - room furnishings
 - housekeeping
 - enforced by Health Inspectors
- Somerville Licensing Commission regulations:
 - management practices
 - housekeeping
 - enforced by Police

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SCORES
IMMEDIATE HAZARD TO YOUR HEALTH
EMERGING HAZARD TO YOUR HEALTH

Best Score 100
previous: 100
60

Best Score 100
previous: 84
89
94

GENERAL MAINTENANCE **97**

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SANITATION GRADE: **82**

Snelling Hall #105 8/25/07

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