

Lesley Porter Overlay District

20.200 Lesley Porter Overlay District

20.201 Establishment and Scope

There is hereby established the Lesley Porter Overlay District which shall be governed by the regulations and procedures specified in this section. The District encompasses property constituting Lesley University's Porter Square campus and has a Business-C District base zoning designation.

20.202 Purpose

It is the purpose of this Section to augment existing zoning regulations to respond to issues associated with institutional uses and unique planning opportunities immediately adjacent to Porter Square's MBTA station. These regulations are intended to allow for the establishment of an emerging art district associated with the University, to enhance the vitality of Massachusetts Avenue by encouraging ground floor uses that will serve the needs of abutting neighborhood residents and enhance the established streetscape, to create a more harmonious and consistent character for the development along Massachusetts Avenue and where such development faces or abuts low density residential districts, and to encourage the retention and appropriate reuse of buildings of historic value.

20.203 Applicability

The Lesley Porter Overlay District shall be an Overlay District on the Zoning Map of the City of Cambridge established in Section 3.20.

20.203.1 The buildings and land uses within this district shall be controlled by the pertinent regulations of the applicable base Business C zoning district and the Massachusetts Avenue Overlay District, Section 20.100 except as modified by the requirements of this Section 20.200. Where regulations differ among the several applicable zoning districts, the provisions of this Section 20.200 shall apply.

20.203.2 Floor Area Ratio Limitations

1. **Institutional Uses**

Notwithstanding the FAR limits set forth in Article 5.000 or elsewhere in this Ordinance, the maximum FAR permitted in the Lesley Porter Overlay District shall be 2.5 for those lots located easterly of Massachusetts Avenue and 2.0 for those lots located westerly of Massachusetts Avenue for all

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS

Zoning Petition

The undersigned owner of land to be affected by this petition, hereby petitions the Cambridge City Council as follows:

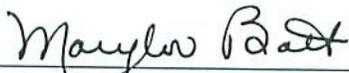
7881 FEB 26 P 255
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

To see if the City Council will vote to amend the Zoning Map of the city of Cambridge as follows:

1. To extend the Business C District along the centerline of Massachusetts Avenue for 160 feet in a southerly direction from its current location at the centerline of Roseland Street and its intersection with the centerline of Massachusetts Avenue, to the northerly sideline of Frost Terrace so as to encompass all of the land in assessors map Block 153, Lots 1 and 18 and the adjacent portions of Roseland Street and Massachusetts Avenue abutting those lots.
2. To create a new Lesley Porter Overlay District, all as shown on the attached map entitled "Proposed Lesley Porter Overlay District."

To see if the City Council will vote to amend Article 20.000 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge by adding "Section 20.200 Lesley Porter Overlay District" to read as set forth below.

Lesley University
by its Authorized Representative



Marylou Batt
Vice President for Administration

educational institutional uses set forth in Article 4.33.b, after the granting of a Special Permit from the Planning Board, subject to the following conditions and limitations:

- a. Notwithstanding the definition of Lot in Article 2.000, a development project in this Lesley Porter Overlay District may consist of non-contiguous lots and lots separated by streets, which lots are held in common ownership. In calculating the gross floor area (GFA) permitted for a development consisting of institutional uses, the area of noncontiguous lots held in common ownership within the Overlay District may be combined. For those lots located easterly of Massachusetts Avenue, the resulting permitted Gross Floor Area may be located on or transferred to any one of the constituent lots located easterly of Massachusetts Avenue without limit as to the FAR on any individual lot.
- b. Any Special Permit issued by the Planning Board that includes development rights involving any of the lots located westerly of Massachusetts Avenue shall result in a prohibition on dormitory uses on said lots.

2. Retail Uses

A building abutting Massachusetts Avenue that is occupied by retail uses set forth in Section 4.35 that are located on the ground (first) floor of that building, which is otherwise at least 50% occupied by institutional uses, shall be exempt from the requirements of FAR and shall not be counted as Gross Floor Area. In no event, however, shall this retail FAR exemption exceed more than 25,000 square feet of gross floor area in any single building.

20.203.3 Height

1. Height shall be that permitted in the base Business C Zoning District and shall be measured from grade.

However, the height of any historic structure (including any building determined to be a Preferably Preserved Significant Building by the Cambridge Historical Commission under the provisions of Ordinance No. 965, designated as a landmark pursuant to Chapter 2.78 of the Cambridge Municipal Code or the subject of a Preservation Easement granted to the Cambridge Historical Commission) shall be exempted from the provisions of Article 5.33.2 and 5.43.

2. For lots located westerly of Massachusetts Avenue, the maximum height shall be limited to 45 feet and shall be measured from grade.

20.203.4 Setbacks

Setbacks shall be the same as required in the base zoning district (Business C) provided, however, that historic structures shall not be subject to the yard requirements of Article 5.41 and 5.42, including if all or a portion of such structures is relocated on the same lot in the Overlay District.

20.203.5 Parking and Loading

Parking and loading requirements for any institutional use contained in the Overlay District may be waived by the granting of a Special Permit from the Planning Board.

Any new gross floor area authorized by Special Permit in the Lesley Porter Overlay District that results in the elimination of existing parking spaces on the lots located westerly of Massachusetts Avenue or in the surface parking lot along Roseland Street shall not be permitted unless replacement parking is provided.

Above ground parking structures shall not be permitted in the Overlay District, with the possible exception of the area bordered by Roseland Street, the MBTA railroad right of way, and a line parallel to and 250 feet easterly of the easterly street line of Massachusetts Avenue, but only after a determination by the Planning Board that the parking structure will be architecturally and visually well integrated within the overall development. In order to make such a determination the Planning Board must find the following:

1. The structure shall contain a principal use other than parking.
2. Portions of the structure containing parking that can be viewed from a public way shall be architecturally treated so as to not appear to be a parking facility.
3. The portion of the structure where parking is located does not have an adverse effect on the architectural character of the proposed building.
4. Portions of the parking structure are located below grade where feasible.

20.203.6 Open Space Requirements

The following Open Space requirements shall apply to those lots or portions of lots located easterly of Massachusetts Avenue:

1. For lots in the Business C District located south of Roseland Street there shall be a minimum ratio of Usable Open Space to Lot Area of ten (10)

percent. For purposes of calculating Usable Open Space under this provision the following requirements shall apply:

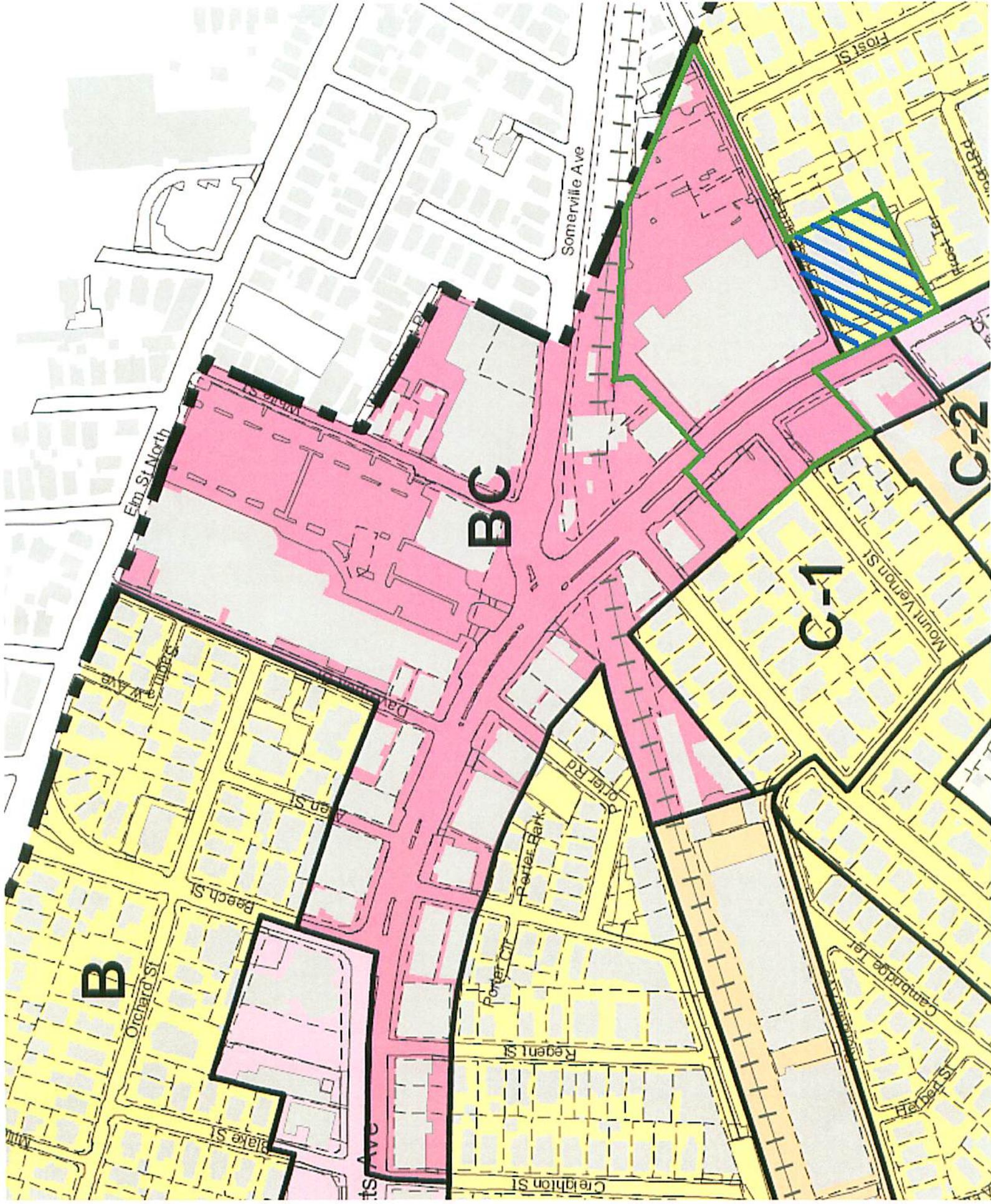
- a. Usable Open Space shall be located along the Massachusetts Avenue frontage and have a depth of at least twenty (20) feet and shall have a minimum area of 3,000 contiguous square feet;
 - b. Area that is covered by a portion of a building but is open on three (3) sides with a height of at least twelve (12) feet may be included;
 - c. Area that is ten (10) feet or more in any direction may be included.
2. For that portion of the lot bordered by Roseland Street, the MBTA railroad right of way, and a line parallel to and 250 feet easterly of the easterly street line of Massachusetts Avenue there shall be a minimum ratio of Usable Open Space of twenty (20) percent and contain a minimum of 5,000 contiguous square feet of Usable Open Space.

20.203.7 Special Permit Criteria

In granting a Special Permit under this Section 20.200, in addition to the other criteria specified in Section 10.40, the Planning Board shall take into consideration the following and make appropriate findings related thereto:

1. Contribute to the vitality of Porter Square by concentrating academic activities that will provide publicly accessible uses including arts libraries, galleries and a wide range of activities and classes and that will have positive spillover effects on the retail environment of the Square.
2. Contribute to Porter Square's vitality, identity and sense of place by removing existing on-grade parking lots and constructing new structures that spatially define and enrich Massachusetts Avenue and incorporate active ground floor uses and buffering them from the activity and noise along Massachusetts Avenue.
3. Minimize adverse impacts on abutting low-density housing by appropriately designing and programming new structures' location on the lot, massing, scale, use and operations.
4. Preserve, reuse and highlight historic structures as integral, publicly accessible parts of the overlay district.
5. Provide retail activity that serves local residents' and Lesley community needs, strengthens the corridor's existing retail base and provides a more dynamic, mixed-use image.

6. Minimize vehicular traffic and demand for on street parking in the residential neighborhood by concentrating activity near the T station, maximizing a mix of uses that reinforce each other, and enhance the pedestrian environment.
7. The Usable Open Space along the easterly side of Massachusetts Avenue south of Roseland Street described in Section 203.6.1 should be inviting and provide places for rest and gathering with an appropriate public art focus.
8. The Usable Open Space along Roseland Street described in Section 203.6.2 should reflect an “urban campus” character, which would include an entry forecourt along the axis of neighboring Frost Street. There shall also be a well-defined walkway through this area that provides pedestrian connections from Roseland Street to Massachusetts Avenue.



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