

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ZONING & PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

THURSDAY MARCH 22, 2012

Present: Ald. Johnson (Chairman), Baker, Lennon, Sangiolo, Yates, Kalis, Danberg, Swiston

Also present: Ald. Hess-Mahan, Gentile, Crossley, Harney, Albright, Merrill, Fischman  
Planning and Development Board: Joyce Moss (Chairman), David Banash, Eunice Kim, Leslie Burg, Doug Sweet, Scott Wolf

#400-11 Ald. Gentile, Harney, Sangiolo requesting amendment to Section 30-13 to establish a Mixed-Use 3/Transit Oriented District (MU3/TOD) including a list of permitted uses and a requirement for all development greater than 20,000 square feet of gross floor area to obtain a “mixed-use development” special permit. The mixed-use development special permit shall require the creation of a development parcel governed by an organization of owners and limit development to no more than 225,000 square feet of office in one building, no more than 290 dwelling units in up to two buildings, and 20,000 square feet of retail and other commercial uses with a requirement for residential, office, and retail uses. Amend Section 30-15 to create a new Subsection (v) and revised Table 3 providing dimensional standards for development in the MU3/TOD. Section 30-15(v) shall include required setbacks from public ways of one half building height with exceptions for setbacks along public highways and rail yards, a requirement for a minimum of 15% beneficial open space, a maximum height of 135 feet for buildings, and a maximum FAR of 2.4. Amend Section 30-24 to include, but not be limited to, standards for project phasing; require pre-construction and post-construction studies of road and traffic impacts, water, sewer, and storm water impacts, and net fiscal impacts; incorporate additional criteria for the granting of a special permit; and set additional special permit filing requirements. Amend Section 30-19 to create new parking standards for this mixed-use development, which incorporates a shared-parking study. Amend the definitions in Section 30-1 for key terms related to the above provisions. Amend Section 30-5 to allow those public uses described in Section 30-6 in all zoning districts.

**ACTION: HELD 8-0**

**NOTE:** Candace Havens, Director of Planning and Development, began the meeting with a Powerpoint presentation. For the details of this presentation please see the Powerpoint attached to the end of this report. Following this presentation Ald. Johnson opened the public hearing. The overwhelming sentiment by the public was that this is not a project they want as written, especially without direct access to the highway. Ald. Johnson called upon the citizens wishing to speak. Their comments are as follows and, additionally, many are attached in written form to the end of this report:

The location of this meeting is handicap accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons requiring assistance. If you have a special accommodation need, contact the Newton ADA Coordinator Trisha Guditz at 617-796-1156 or [tguditz@newtonma.gov](mailto:tguditz@newtonma.gov) or via TDD/TTY at (617) 796-1089 at least two days in advance of the meeting.

John McElduff, 46 LaFayette, Road, believes it is detrimental to his neighborhood's connection to the rest of the city. He has much experience in highway design and construction and is convinced that Mass DOT can provide a design to create a direct access ramp. Liberty mutual has direct access ramps in Weston so there's no reason why one can't be put in here. If the ramp is built the local intersections get relief.

Nick Nesgos, 65 Kapusia Street, president of Auburndale Community Association (ACA), explained that back in 2007 the ACA submitted a position paper in which the sentiments of the community are still the same today. As the committee now considers this project he'd like to remind the Aldermen of the concerns by the community in this document. The concerns are narrowed to the following 4 issues: traffic; schools and infrastructure; appearance and scale of development; environmental concerns (no negative impact on Charles River and wetlands) for the details of this document please see attached.

Lynn Slobodin, 61 Washburn Ave, commented on traffic issues. She is concerned of far reaching traffic impacts on the already serious traffic problems in Auburndale. She also feels strongly that the open space requirement be increased to 20%.

Lynn Sweet, 416 Grove Street, a direct abutter and a resident of the condominium complex believes that the desire for fiscal benefit must be weighed against the effect to the quality of life. She believes that the current plan is better than previous plans but the condominium community would still like a smaller project. She would also like a requirement in the zoning for a market needs assessment and a peer review of that assessment. Ms. Sweet's comments can also be found in her attached written submission.

Tom Rezendes, 416 Grove Street, agreed with everything Ms. Sweet said. In addition he submitted the Riverside Station Development Survey to the Committee.

Apo Toroyosan, 416 Grove Street, is a resident of the condominium complex located directly opposite the Hotel Indigo. The owners of the condos recognize the importance of the development for the city. Over the years the residents have worked with the city and the developer and it is their intent to continue to do so. The draft zoning must create a balance between the financial viability of the development, the city's desire to create tax revenue and the adjacent community's ability to prosper with disruptive construction. He expressed his opinion that the structure of the proposal is confusing in that it isn't immediately clear that special permits are required for some uses if the gross floor area is 20k square feet or more. Mr. Toroyosan submitted the remainder of his comments which are attached (under the letterhead of Lewis Associates).

Fred Abernathy, 45 Islington Road, expressed his concern over the sewer system. He explained that there is a pump station at Quinnoequin that pumps sewerage from Wellesley and area A and when too much is pumped there is overflow at the former Jordan Marsh Warehouse location, the Marriott, and Lions Field. The city has built berms to try to contain it at Lion's Field. The city has tried to make improvements to increase flow but the sewer has been the same size since it was built. He stressed that if the developer has a choice of where to connect to the sewers the easiest location is West Newton. If the city doesn't require this to prevent overflow in Auburndale then Auburndale will have much overflow from the Quinnoequin pump station.

Josh Krintzman, Crehore Street, encouraged the committee to look at the Riverside Survey. One thing the survey shows is that residents are in favor of development but on a scale more proportional to the area and more in line with the character of the neighborhood. Furthermore, he disagrees with the uses deemed as by-right believing that allowing so much as by-right limits the city's power in the special permit process. The Riverside survey expresses a preference for certain uses; he believes the city should make these preferred uses by right and require the developer to obtain a special permit for other uses.

Joel Shames, 348 Central Street, co-president of the Lasell neighborhood association expressed the need for mitigation to extend far enough into the future, more than the 1-2 years stipulated in the draft.

Aub Harden, 48 Vista Ave, shared his concerns over traffic and safety issues and the impact of additional students to the schools. He believes that the cost of the extra students should be considered when doing a financial impact analysis.

Anatol Zuckerman, 17 Noble Street, would like clarification on how the Aldermen calculated the maximums for the site. He has submitted his comments to the committee which are attached to the report.

Anne Borg, 155 Winchester Street, co-president of the League of women voters explained that the League stands firmly against this docket item. She submitted a statement on behalf of the league which is attached to this report and which encourages greater flexibility.

Phil Herr, 20 Marlboro Street, expressed his thought process and conclusion in determining that for a project that has been underway for as long as this has it is consistent with the comprehensive plan and with the recently adopted mixed use element which was implemented to guide the city in mixed use development projects. Mr. Herr also posed the question of whether this is the right type of development for the area. He stated that different areas warrant different types of developments and he believes that this type of development is appropriate for this location. The remainder of Mr. Herr's comments can be found in his written submission attached to this report.

Gary Rucinski, 40 Clearwater Road, Lower Falls Improvement Association (LFIA) concerns were documented in a report created by the LFIA which is attached to this report. The residents of Lower Falls accept a need for development but in accepting development they request high standards. The report asks for the city and developer to give them an example of a visionary urban development; this current proposal ignores these aspirations. Mr. Rucinski requests that the committee abide by what is requested in the LFIA report, especially the direct access to 128.

Polly Bryson, 11 Acorn Drive, shared that in her tenure the Board never changed the zone unless it was conditional on a special permit application for a project. She does not recall a new zone being created for one location and one specific project and not available for other locations in this city. She also requests to know how the numbers in the docket item were determined and whether a traffic study has been done. Other concerns of hers are the impacts to the schools and the impact to Grove Street as a scenic road. The development of this site has been discussed many times with the elected officials and the statement has always been that the site could not be developed unless there is an egress. Ms. Bryson submitted the rest of her statements in written form and is attached to this report.

Sean Roche, 42 Daniel Street, spoke about the quality and the character of the parking. For the details of this presentation please his presentation which is attached to this report.

Nathan Phillips, 73 Charles Street, favors a dense development to create a vital area but favors it without higher traffic or taller buildings. To achieve greater density is to substitute parking space for building space to force transit use and not vehicle use. He would like to see the city assess how a lack of parking can be used to increase density and decrease traffic.

Bill Renke, 142 Cornell Street, Lower Falls Improvement Association president, spoke as the Co-Chair for the Riverside Station Neighborhood Coalition, an advocacy group for the area. He is satisfied with the majority of the proposal but the massive size of the buildings is not acceptable since it is more than the infrastructure can support. Extensive mitigation measures will be required. He understands that a project with less density is not before the public tonight but he implores the committee not to approve a project with any more density. Mr. Renke's comments are also attached.

Paul Snyder, 9 Ardmore Road, would like to put this project in to some kind of process. He proposes that we reduce the number of housing units to 185 units and reduce the amount of commercial space to 185k square feet. He also stressed that if there is any development done there has to be direct access. This neighborhood over the years has been faced with the development of the Jordan Marsh warehouse into an office park and the construction of a regional transit station; as a matter of fairness there should be a maximum development amount outlined.

Bruce McVittie, 11 Norumbega Court, expressed his opinion that this project is too large as proposed. He understands that something will be built on this site so the question is how large of a development is acceptable. Since 40B is the alternative, he does accept the scale being proposed in this draft but there are some necessary steps to be taken: the traffic impacts need to be controlled by managing the types of opportunities allowed. Removing medical uses from the table of allowed uses would decrease traffic significantly. Post construction traffic study monitoring should be done for 5 years which should be required regardless of whether mitigation is also required. He also suggested that the proposed advisory council should have a role in the post project traffic monitoring and be given greater authority. A description for how members are appointed should also be included in the ordinance.

Cyrisse Jaffe, 8 Hallron Road, is very concerned about the prospect of such a huge development. She is a devoted resident and she believes that the size and scope of this development is more than the city can accommodate. She believes that with Riverside on the other side and the horrible traffic of Newton Lower Falls on the other their neighborhood will be trapped without free access to and from the area. This will make the riverside neighborhood a much worse place to live, downgrade quality of life and lower housing values. She stated that this is entirely in the wrong direction for Newton to take.

Norm Sieman, 100 Clearwater Road, expressed that far as he is concerned two things have to be dealt with: proximity and egress. He would like to see this be a smaller development but apparently the realities make that difficult and because of that's being proposed here makes sense to him. He also requests that if there is an advisory council that it include traffic monitoring. The capabilities of this site to accommodate the square footage are poorly understood. Furthermore, he stated that he is completely opposed to the tier 2 language; the developer shouldn't be offered an incentive for doing something they should be doing up front to mitigate traffic. He strongly encourages that the Board require these mitigation practices up front.

Greg Fried, 40 Central Terrace, gave to the committee pages 3 and 4 of the enrollment analysis report (attached). In this report it tells us that the Avalon in Newton Highlands has a population of 85 students. Avalon in Chestnut Hill has 73 students in the schools, and Arborpoint has 41 students. Residents of the riverside neighborhoods have done an analysis; they don't have a report from the developer, but when they extrapolated from what they think they know they calculate around 60-80 students added to the system through this development. Part of mitigation practices should be to deal with the space shortage.

Scott Lanciloti, 18 Baker Place, agreed with the school and traffic concerns. One other point is excellence in place making. He does not believe this is a good development for Newton. It does nothing to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood or the city.

Ald. Hess-Mahan, 871 Watertown Street, expressed that unfortunately and regretfully he cannot support the amendment as written. He explained that this particular iteration arrived out of discussions between Ward 4 Aldermen and developers. Many concessions were made on both sides to get to something agreeable. He believes it is well intentioned but he is concerned that the limits are too rigid around the square footage for the buildings. This lack of flexibility will be detrimental to the process. The way Land Use functions is that when they get a project they ask for the developer to improve that project. With such rigid requirements they will be very little room to negotiate conditions or improvements to this project.

Paul Snyder addressed the committee again to respond to Ald. Hess-Mahan's comments. Mr. Snyder is a former Alderman having served on Land Use, and is the former associate regional council for the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). He shared the opinion that this is a process question; flexibility is nice but you have to have specifics. If we don't have specific limits there are going to be negative effects. He requests that this committee look out for this neighborhood and the city as a whole.

Ald. Johnson closed the public hearing and brought the discussion into committee. Ald. Yates inquired about the person hired to vet the traffic analysis. Ms. Havens explained that the developer had requested a peer review for traffic analysis of the most current iteration of their project, which they conducted voluntarily and outside of the special permit process. The Planning Department solicited people and chose the traffic engineering firm Fay Spofford and Thorndike (FST). Land use can request further reviews during the special permit process, but this initial review is voluntary by the developer. The planning department believed that the response of this firm was head and shoulders above the others. Ms. Havens explained that there were some comments about whether this head reviewer is too pro development so the Planning Department will be getting further references. She noted though that members of the planning staff independently reviewed the responses and independently came to the same conclusion that FST was the best choice.

Mr Yates also requested the first speaker, Mr. McElduff, to clarify the access comments he made. Mr. McElduff explained that to create access from the northbound side would be possible but it would be quite difficult to do from the southbound side. It's up to MASS DOT and the City to choose how it's done, but to not do anything would be a complete failure.

Ald. Swiston requested an update on where we are with conversations with the Mass DOT and what costs would be for a direct access. Ald. Gentile responded stating that there's nothing new to report. There have been 2 meetings with Mass DOT and with members from federal highway. On both occasions they gave us a long list of warrants that needed to be met that they told us could not be met. However if someone can find a way to do it the city would be all for it. Something may come about as a result of peer review or maybe land use will be able to accomplish this

Ald. Ted Hess-Mahan expressed the importance of peer review for a traffic analysis. He also clarified that he isn't suggesting that there be no limits but that we have measures of density that are standard and recognizable and comparable to other zones in the city, such as through FAR. He also stressed the importance of flexibility since that's how Chestnut Hill Square was passed unanimously.

Ald. Gentile noted that Chestnut Hill passed because it diminished so much in size. Regarding the Riverside project, the first iteration was 1.5 million square feet, so this project has been reduced quite a bit as well. Furthermore we can't forget that a 40B looms as a possibility if a project is not accepted. The developer has already filed papers to this end should that be necessary.

Ald. Yates shared the thought that there have been many collaborative discussions thus far which is very positive. He also opined that the measure by FAR isn't necessary since FAR that would be applied would yield use restrictions similar to what is proposed in the item, therefore he doesn't disagree with this form of expressing maximum densities.

Ald. Crossley stated her concern about the low square footage proposed as a cap for the retail usage. The square footage is supposed to provide uses as it should for people who are to live and work there. Additionally, in the ordinance as proposed it isn't clear whether the 290 residential units could incorporate ancillary uses for the residents of that building that wouldn't count toward the maximum square footage of retail for the site. In closing, she agreed with Ald. Hess-Mahan that we are starting with numbers that are too rigid.

Ald. Harney stressed that he would like the written zoning ordinance language for tier 2 to be amended to require direct access from the interstate highway both northbound and southbound into the development site. There have been disagreements since day one as to what the definition of direct access is and he wants this specified.

Ald. Baker would like the Planning Department to continue to investigate access to the river.

The discussion concluded with Ald. Gentile explaining that the Ward 4 Aldermen did not try to design this project for the developer or have any hand in designing it. The developer has had a mixed use proposal from day one. The goal for the Aldermen was to set maximums for structures on the site. This project is proposed by the developer, they've designed it and they don't feel that the maximums are too fixed and rigid.

With that, Ald. Johnson adjourned the meeting. The committee will meet for a working session on Monday March 26<sup>th</sup>.

#400-11(2) The Planning Department, requesting in the event that #400-11 is adopted, to amend Section 30-15(v) and Table 3 to allow up to 250,000 square feet of additional gross floor area and a maximum FAR of 3.0 for providing direct access to and from Route 128.

**ACTION: HELD 8-0**

**NOTE:** See notes for item #400-11.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcia Johnson, Chairman

# Department of Planning and Development

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ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
MARCH 22, 2012

## RIVERSIDE REZONING

**#400-11:** Ald. Gentile, Harney, Sangiolo requesting establishment of a Mixed-Use 3/Transportation-Oriented District at the site of the current Riverside MBTA rail station. The proposed new zone shall allow by special permit a single commercial office building not to exceed 225,000 square feet with a maximum height of 10 stories or 135 feet, two residential buildings not to exceed 290 housing units in total, retail space not to exceed 20,000 square feet, along with a multi-use community center.

**\$400-11(2):** Planning Department requesting, in the event that #400-11 is adopted, to amend Section 30-15(v) and Table 3 to allow up to 250,000 square feet of additional gross floor area and a maximum FAR of 3.0 for providing direct access northbound and southbound to and from Route 128.

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## Riverside Rezoning

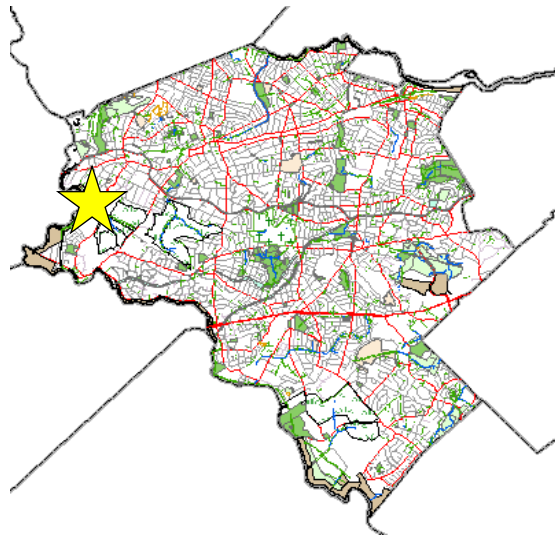
Introduction

Planning for Riverside

Process

Draft Zoning Text

Questions and comments



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### Riverside MBTA Station

22 acres bordered by:

- Charles River
- Route 128
- Woodland Golf Course
- MBTA Tracks
- Hotel Indigo

Near residential areas:

- Condos
- Lower Falls
- Auburndale




This aerial photograph shows the Riverside area in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Charles River flows through the center, with the Mass Pike (I-93) crossing it. To the east, the Woodland County Club is visible, and further east is the town of Auburndale. The area is bordered by Route 128 to the south and the Charles River to the west. The MBTA tracks and Hotel Indigo are also visible in the center of the image.

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### Riverside The Site

- MBTA service yard
- Terminus of Green "D" Line
- Terminal for MBTA and private bus services
- Conservation areas
- 960-space public parking lot



This aerial photograph provides a closer view of the Riverside site. It shows the MBTA service yard, the terminus of the Green "D" Line, and a large terminal for MBTA and private bus services. The site is bordered by the Charles River to the west and the Woodland County Club to the east. A large 960-space public parking lot is visible in the center of the site. The area is surrounded by conservation areas and residential buildings.



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### Riverside The Site

- Yellow – MBTA
- Purple – Hotel Indigo
- Orange – MassDOT
- Green - DCR



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### Riverside Development Parcel

- Potential development parcel, 9.33 acres
- BH Normandy LLC
  - Lease from MBTA
  - Controls Hotel Indigo
- Parcel doesn't include Hotel Indigo MBTA garage or service yard



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**Riverside Rezoning**

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## Planning for Riverside

- **2007 *Comprehensive Plan***
  - Identifies Riverside as an important site for mixed-use development
- **2011 Mixed-Use Centers Element**
  - Strengthens vision about mixed-use development
  - Takes lessons from traditional villages
  - Excellent places to work, live, shop recreate or just visit and be within
  - Modest commercial and residential growth
  - Aimed at City's largest sites
  - Emphasis on collaboration
  - Early voice in the process to help shape proposals
  - Predictability

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**Riverside Rezoning**

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## Smart Growth

- Uses existing infrastructure, lowers costs
- Reduced impacts compared to development on the regional fringe
- Concentration of uses in compact walkable area
- Sustainable type of development due to reduced impacts on environment
- Variety of housing types
- Places to live, work, play

**Related concepts:**

- Mixed-use development
- Transit-oriented development

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## Mixed-Use Development

- Smart growth
- Characteristic of historic development patterns e.g., village centers
- Brings uses together rather than separates them
  - Especially those that support residential or office uses and don't attract outside traffic
- Complementary uses
  - Office
  - Retail
  - Residential
- Benefits of shared parking, reduced traffic

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## Transportation-Oriented Development

- Mixed-use development
- Usually ¼ mile from transit
- Emphasizes use of transit and other alternative modes, such as bike, bus, and pedestrian travel
- Usually most dense closest to transit stops
- Destination uses and supporting uses
- Often has reduced amounts of parking, given integration of alternative modes

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**Riverside Rezoning**

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## Case Studies

- **Definition of Success**
  - Financially viable
  - Vibrant, active, interesting places
  - Attract people of various ages, interests, abilities
  
- **Lessons Learned**
  - Thoughtful and innovative master planning
  - Alignment of project design, complementary uses, location, good market for uses
  - Predictability of outcomes
  - Organic growth is possible

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## Process

### Rezoning of Riverside

- 1 **Zoning and Planning Committee (ZAP) reviews text amendment to zoning regulations**
  - Working sessions in January and February
  - Planning and Law Departments developed draft language
  - Public hearing to further inform zoning
  - P&D Board makes recommendations
  - ZAP recommends to BOA
  - Requires 2/3 vote of Board of Aldermen
  
- 2 **Land Use Committee (LUC) reviews special permit and rezoning of site**
  - Environmental and impact reviews of project and design
  - Reviews by all City committees and agencies
  - P&D Board makes recommendations on rezoning
  - LUC recommends to BOA
  - Requires 2/3 vote of Board of Aldermen
  
- 3 **Map change on execution of special permit**

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## Meetings and Reviews to date

- February 2009, BH Normandy awarded lease for site
- Spring 2009, Community visioning meetings
- December 2009, Normandy Community Proposal #1
- March 2010, Community meeting by Planning Dept.
- April 2010, Normandy filed MEPA/ENF with State
- June 2010, Normandy Community Proposal #2
- June 2011, Normandy Community Proposal #3
- June 2011, revised MEPA/ENF filed with State
- October 2011, Normandy Community Proposal #4
- December 2011, Ward aldermen docketed #400-11
- ZAP working sessions on 1/9, 1/23, 2/9, 2/15, 2/27

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**Riverside Rezoning**

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## Planning Goals for Rezoning

- No existing zoning district is ideal for mixed use
  - Outdated uses
  - No requirement for variety of uses
  - No requirement for open space or public amenities
  - Height standards in other zones don't suit site
- Goals in crafting a new zone
  - Call it what it is
    - × Unique Site
    - × Site-specific parameters
  - Include carrots *and* sticks
  - Measure, mitigate, and monitor impacts

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## ZONING TEXT

- “Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District”
- **Purpose:** The purpose of the Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District is to allow the development of a mixed-use center on a 9.33-acre parcel near the terminus of a mass transit rail line, an interstate highway, a scenic road, and the Charles River, commonly referred to as the Riverside MBTA station, pursuant to the City’s *Comprehensive Plan*, particularly the Mixed-Use Centers and Economic Development Elements. This district shall encourage comprehensive design within the site and with its surroundings, integrate complementary uses, provide enhancements to public infrastructure, provide beneficial open spaces, protect neighborhoods from impacts of development, allow sufficient density to make development economically feasible, foster use of alternative modes of transportation, and create a vibrant destination where people can live, work and play.

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## Allowed Uses

- Uses divided into four categories:
  - Office
  - Retail/service/dining/entertainment
  - Residential
  - Public and community
- Some uses allowed by right, others by SP

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Questions and comments

## Mixed-Use Development Special Permit

- All development >20,000 sq. ft. GFA requires Mixed-Use Development special permit
  - Development parcel
  - Organization of owners
- Intensity of Development
  - At least one use from each category required:
  - Office - not to exceed 225,000 sq. ft. in one building
  - Residential - Maximum 290 units
  - Commercial - uses not to exceed 20,000 sq. ft.
  - Also includes multi-use Community Center, which is allowed by right in proposed text

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**Riverside Rezoning**

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## Density and Dimensional Controls

- Add to Section 30-15, Table 3, for Mixed-Use Development 3/Transit-Oriented Development
- Maximum height 135 feet/10 stories
- FAR =2.4
- 15% Beneficial Open Space
  - 50% publicly-accessible
- Setback ½ building height
  - Stepped setbacks encouraged
- Zero-foot setbacks for nonresidential abutting State properties
- Rules don't apply public uses, structures, and takings from zoning regulations

Building Height	Required Setback
24 feet	12 feet
36 feet	18 feet
48 feet	24 feet
96 feet	48 feet

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## New Special Permit Requirements

- **Project Phasing:** Must follow schedule set in special permit, traffic improvements must be completed prior to occupancy
- **Impact Studies:** Including traffic and road infrastructure, water and sewer infrastructure, and net fiscal impacts
- **After Studies:** Verify compliance with targets approved in special permit
- **Additional special permit criteria:** Specific findings that must be made for approval of a Mixed-Use Development special permit
- **Additional filing requirements,** including Conceptual review with Land Use Committee in public forum

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Questions and comments

## Parking

- Parking requirement for Mixed-Use Development special permit based on shared-parking analysis
- Future changes in use must stay within the parking level set by the shared-parking analysis

### New Definitions

- “Development Parcel”
- “Open Space, Beneficial”
- “Community Use Space”



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**Riverside Rezoning**

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**#400-11(2) Tier II**

- If Tier I is adopted, may vote on Tier II
- Allows increase of 250,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area if direct access to the subject property from the Route 128, northbound and southbound are provided
- The impact studies, performance measures and additional special permit criteria apply

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**Riverside Rezoning**

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**SUMMARY**

- Create best mixed-use development site possible
  - Vitality
  - Sense of place
  - Economic benefits
  - Integrated publicly-accessible open space, recreational and cultural amenities
- Balance benefits to community and impacts
- Provide certainty and flexibility
- Public input

**AUBURNDALE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION POSITION STATEMENT**  
**REGARDING PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT RIVERSIDE**

**Background Facts**

- Newton Economic Development Committee (“NEDC”) contacted the MBTA about the possibility of developing the Riverside property. MBTA is interested in generating additional non-fare revenues, and has developed other T stops (e.g. Woodland).
- MBTA plans to issue an RFP (Request for Proposal) to interested developers by late November / early December. By statute, MBTA is required to accept the highest bidder meeting RFP requirements.
- Currently, Riverside is zoned as “public use.” Any commercial development would require re-zoning of the site. The development cannot interfere with MBTA’s operations at the Riverside terminal. There is approximately 22.5 acres of parking lot subject to development. Any development likely will include a structured parking garage.
- The costs of the development are anticipated to be high. Accordingly, the MBTA expects proposals for significant mixed use and/or commercial development at Riverside of up to 1.5 to 1.9 million square feet.
- MBTA has asked community groups, including the Auburndale Community Association (“ACA”), for feedback from its membership with respect to the proposed development. The MBTA will include any position statements from community groups in the RFP it issues to developers. The community input and suggestions will provide “guidance” to developers, but MBTA will not make them “requirements” of the RFP.
- MBTA officials have met with members of community groups including ACA Board members. MBTA officers also have attended several community meetings, including meetings sponsored by ACA and the LNA in September, and a meeting sponsored by the local Alderman on October 25, 2007. ACA Board representatives have been present at each of these community meetings.

**ACA Meetings and Position**

The ACA is a long-standing community organization open to all Auburndale residents. The ACA has an elected Executive Board as well as 10 at large district representatives from all of the districts of Auburndale, including the business district. The ACA Board has discussed the proposed Riverside development at several Board meetings. In addition, on November 14, 2007, the ACA held its annual open meeting at the Village Bank in Auburndale. Many Auburndale residents attended the meeting. Also present were Mayor David Cohen, State representative Kay Khan and Ward 4 Aldermen Jay Harney and Lenny Gentile. The proposed development of Riverside was one of the agenda items at the annual meeting, and this topic generated

considerable discussion. Based upon feedback received from the various meetings that have been held, it is clear that many members of the community do not believe that any significant development at Riverside is feasible or desirable. The following are the main concerns that have been articulated by the ACA Board, the ACA membership and the community:

Traffic and Parking: The principal concern raised by the ACA Board and by many members of the community relates to the expected increase in traffic on local streets. In particular, residents are concerned about increased traffic on Grove Street heading to and from the development site. Grove Street already is experiencing severe traffic backups on a daily basis. Grove Street is an important neighborhood road, which connects Lower Falls and Route 128 to Auburndale and the rest of Newton. The consensus of the ACA Board is that no development should be permitted if it leads to any significant additional traffic flow on Grove Street or other neighborhood streets. (At the annual meeting, both Mayor Cohen and Representative Kay Khan expressed support for this position.) Commuter traffic to and from the development site should be by direct access to and from Route 128, if possible. Parking for the new development must be fully adequate for the size and scope of the development while also meeting the demand for Riverside T parking, for both commuters and those attending events in Boston, such as sporting events (e.g. Red Sox games) and concerts.

Schools and Infrastructure: The ACA Board and many residents are concerned that the development (if it includes a residential component) may place excessive demands on the already overcrowded local schools. For example, Williams School is at capacity, as are the middle and high schools. Any development must include an analysis of the impact on school populations as well as the demands it will place on other local infrastructure and services. Many residents believe that the developer should pay for any required enlargement of existing schools to absorb the additional population created by the development.

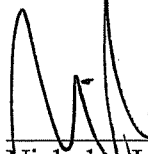
Appearance and Scale: Grove Street is and has been designated as a scenic way. The development should be largely unseen from Grove Street. Grove Street must be maintained as a scenic way. The development scale should conform to the size and character of the existing buildings in the area. There should be no large buildings close to Grove Street.

Environmental: The development should have no negative impact or encroach on the Charles River and its adjacent wetlands.

Process: The developer should submit and comply with zoning and planning oversight of the Board of Alderman and other city agencies. The planning process should be open and transparent. The developer should cooperate and work with neighborhood representatives to ensure that the development meets the needs and addresses the concerns of the community.

A draft of this position paper was circulated at the annual meeting and adopted by the membership attending the meeting. The ACA Board members have reviewed the position statements of the Lower Falls Improvement Association ("LIFA") and the Lasselle Neighborhood Association ("LNA"). The ACA Board generally supports and concurs with the LIFA and LNA statements.

Respectfully submitted,



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Nicholas J. Nesgos  
President, Auburndale Community Association

11/16/07

## Lasell Neighborhood Association Response to Proposed Development at Riverside

On Tuesday, September 11, 2007, the Lasell Neighborhood Association (“LNA”) and the Auburndale Community Association hosted a neighborhood meeting to discuss proposed development at the Riverside train yard. Mark Boyle, Director of Real Estate of the MBTA, and Gregory Dicovitsky, Project Manager for TR Advisors, the advisory firm for the MBTA on real estate related projects, spoke to the residents. They discussed the history and scope of the development plans. A second meeting which included many Lasell Neighborhood residents was hosted by the Ward 4 Aldermen on October 25, 2007.

Brief History: The Newton Economic Development Committee (“NEDC”) contacted the MBTA about the possibility of developing the Riverside property some time ago. After discussions with the NEDC, some members of the Board of Aldermen, Mayor Cohen and various state and federal officials, the MBTA now wants to move forward and prepare an Invitation to Bid (“ITB”) for developers interested in the project. The MBTA has scheduled the ITB for October/November of this year. According to Mr. Boyle, the MBTA is soliciting community opinion about the project at this stage so that any concerns can be incorporated into the ITB.

Brief Scope: The development cannot interfere with the MBTA’s continuing operations at the Riverside terminal. The potential developer can only develop the 22.5 acre parking lot. The potential exists for a 5,000 car garage and one or more buildings containing 1.5 to 1.9 million square feet for mixed-use.

After the MBTA and TR representatives made their presentations and answered questions, they left. A discussion followed with Alderman Sangiolo, Alderman Harney, School Committee member Jonathan Yeo and a potential developer of the site. The attendees expressed the following concerns:

The primary concerns are:

1. Traffic: The residents are gravely concerned about increased traffic on Grove Street heading to the development and on other local streets as drivers try to avoid a more congested 128/90 interchange. The neighborhood simply cannot sustain more traffic. Grove Street is a major artery of the neighborhood connecting Lower Falls and Route 128 to the existing Riverside Center, Williams School, Lasell College and on to Route 30. At many points along this corridor there are severe back-ups on a daily basis. The acute traffic congestion has already necessitated a daily police detail at the Riverside Center, traffic studies focused on the Williams School area (where two children have been hit by cars over the past several years) and the construction of the City’s first raised crosswalks on Woodland Road (after the tragic death of a Lasell student). The new Hotel Indigo will certainly add even more traffic

to the area. The residents also fear disconnecting Lower Falls from Auburndale due to poorly designed traffic systems on Grove Street.

2. Overcrowded Schools: The local elementary school, Williams, is already at capacity and cannot absorb any more children. The middle and high schools are also overcrowded. The School Committee is already projecting an increase of 700-1000 children system wide in the next few years. The neighborhood also fears it may need to school some additional children from the MBTA's last project at Woodland once that development is fully rented.
3. Size and Density of Project: Auburndale and Lower Falls are residential areas rich in history and character. The neighborhoods encompass the Auburndale Historic District and the residential campus of Lasell College, which was established in 1851. Preserving the character of the affected neighborhoods is a prime concern of the residents.

Given these concerns, many residents oppose any development at Riverside, feeling that it would be impossible to avoid traffic problems and/or negative impact on the schools and neighborhood at large.

Should a development proceed, the neighborhood would consider the following as absolute requirements:

1. Traffic
  - a. The sense of the neighbors is that current traffic on Grove Street is unacceptably high due to commuter traffic drawn in part from the Riverside Office Center located next door to the proposed development site. Any development scheme that causes a significant increase in the number of day trips on Grove Street will not be acceptable. The development must implement traffic mitigation features to address current traffic concerns and to eliminate any impact from the proposed development.
  - b. In particular, without limitation, the proposed site must have an entirely separate interchange with Route 128 in both directions so as to keep traffic completely off Grove Street, and, at the same time, make Grove Street more conducive to current and future use.
  - c. There must be limits on the number of parking spaces on the site so as to avoid making the site a place to park other than for occupants of the site or users of the transit system.
2. Impact on Schools
  - a. The developer must pay to enlarge Williams and/or Angier schools (if such enlargement is possible) to accommodate any new students

housed in the development or build a school on the site or other suitable location.

- b. The development will include no more residential units, if any, than can be accommodated by existing schools, or existing schools as enhanced with new additions or an additional neighborhood school(s).

### 3. Size and Use

- a. The developer must agree to submit fully to the zoning and planning oversight of the Newton Board of Aldermen and other city agencies.
- b. The developer will not seek to circumvent such oversight through the invocation of c. 40B or other statute.
- c. All buildings will be no more than four stories above current ground level; any parking facility constructed over the existing train depot will be no more than four stories above the current height of the depot. The developer must cooperate with the neighborhood's representatives to develop an exterior design that is commensurate and appropriate with the historic character and scale of the neighborhood.
- d. Any and all aspects of the project that may produce noise, air, light or other pollution, including, but not limited to HVAC equipment, parking garage, exterior lighting, etc. shall be situated so as to minimize impact on the residential neighborhoods surrounding the parcel. Noise and light mitigation measures will be detailed in advance to neighborhood representatives.
- e. Any retail use included in the development will be limited to small stores and will not be, in any way, a mall designed to draw more cars into the development.
- f. The development will include green spaces open to the neighborhood, including clean up and renovation of the recreation and park facilities adjacent to the Charles River and the development site (off Recreation Road).

### 4. Neighborhood Relations

- a. The developer will conform any proposed development of the site to community concerns, meeting regularly with the community (Lower Falls and Auburndale) and with community representatives (Ward 4 Aldermen, LNA, ACA, at a minimum).
- b. The developer will enter into binding agreements running with the land that will satisfy those community concerns. In particular, without limitation, the developer must (i) establish a permanent liaison between the site's owner, the site's management company and neighborhood representatives to handle complaints about traffic, noise and light pollution and other matters of concern, (ii) provide a 24 hour access number for emergencies and (iii) implement mitigation measures in a cooperative manner.

Submitted by LNA Co-Presidents

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# LFIA Position Statement on New Development at Riverside MBTA

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November, 2007

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The Lower Falls Improvement  
Association

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# 1. Executive Summary

Around mid-year proposals began to surface for a major mixed-use development project at Riverside. Newton and the MBTA have asked the LFIA and two Auburndale neighborhood organizations to develop position statements on the concerns of their communities if such development were to go forward. This is the LFIA's response to that request.

This report summarizes sentiments and states the positions of the LFIA in six major areas of concern. This document represents the LFIA approved position.

The major areas where the LFIA wants to limit the type and scale of development at Riverside are:

1. **Traffic:** All commuter traffic to and from the site must be by direct access to/from Route 128. Parking for the new development should accommodate normal demands and a reasonable additional allowance for special events in Boston in order to minimize overflow onto local streets. Long-term parking facilities must not be accessible for vehicles entering the site from Grove Street.
2. **Scale:** Development must be in scale with surrounding residential homes and apartment complexes. Any retail business space included must accommodate businesses that will cater to residents, not to others who would have to make a special trip to the site.
3. **Infrastructure:** Development must not put demands on local infrastructure and services that they are unable to support. For example, an analysis of potential impact on school populations must be completed as part of the permitting process.
4. **Appearance:** Riverside is visually unobtrusive when viewed from Grove Street, Lower Falls, Auburndale and the Charles River. This must continue to be the case with new development. For example, new development should present a view from scenic Grove Street consistent with the present aspect. There must not be a large building façade close to the street. Design must include modern technologies and approaches to ensure no light pollution from the site.
5. **Environment:** The development must respect the needs of recreational users of the Charles River and the need for open space. Advanced technologies should be used to minimize environmental footprints.
6. **Process:** The planning process must be transparent and include ample time for input from residents. Residents feel that no other stakeholders involved in planning or development will protect their interests and, as a result, they will need to be their own best advocates.

The following sections describe: residents' views on the existing Riverside facility; residents' impressions of what new development might mean for them; and the constraints the LFIA recommends be put on the project to ensure it is in the community's and Newton's best long-term interests. Appendix A presents a summary of community design guidelines.

## **2. Views on the Existing Riverside Facility**

### **2.1. Traffic Impact**

At peak commuting times, the traffic on Grove Street into and out of Riverside creates congestion that makes travel to and from Lower Falls difficult. One aspect of this is residents' difficulty in getting onto Grove Street from side streets in Lower Falls. Traffic on Grove provides too few breaks for pulling out of Pine Grove, Pierrepont, Asheville, and Deforrest. Second, the traffic bottleneck at Riverside presents obstacles for automobile drivers trying to access Auburndale, West Newton, and other Newton villages along the east-bound corridor. Finally, Lower Falls is used by non-residents and commuters as a pass-through corridor. Because they pass through Lower Falls while rushing to work in the morning or family commitments in the evening, they travel at high speed on Grove. This has led to persistent calls over the years by Lower Falls residents for implementation of traffic calming measures to slow traffic along Grove, make Rt. 16 to 95/128 to Grove a preferred route, and otherwise channel traffic onto the Rt. 95/128 access road. The city and the neighborhood have recently agreed on some traffic calming measures designed to reduce vehicle speeds, but to date no measures have been implemented and results are still unknown.

A less discussed aspect of Riverside-related traffic is commuter foot traffic or student traffic to and from Williams Elementary School. While commuters can generally walk to the site, the sidewalks between Lower Falls and Riverside and in front of Riverside itself are not kept clear in the winter. This can result in commuters walking on slippery streets amid rushing traffic.

Parents in Lower Falls are reluctant to allow students to walk or ride bikes to and from Williams School because of the large amount of site-related traffic and the presence of MBTA buses on Grove Street. Because of these conditions, Riverside is viewed as a barrier to easy, convenient, and safe travel to and from Williams.

### **2.2. Parking Facilities**

On the one hand, it appears that presently available parking at Riverside is more than adequate to meet the needs of daily commuters. It has been remarked that there frequently are empty spots in the lots during the workweek. On the other hand, parking is wholly inadequate during special events in Boston (July 4<sup>th</sup>, Red Sox opening day), when non-residents often park on the streets of Lower Falls (sometimes obstructing passage by emergency vehicles). Recently, parking has overflowed the lot for routine Red Sox games. The overall parking during special events and on weekends has led to a new city policy whereby the city implements temporary parking restrictions in the neighborhood. This remains necessary as cars fill the neighborhood during these times.

### **2.3. Appearance**

Residents find the present site "ugly", but are pleased that the site is well shielded from both Grove Street and the Charles River. Its appearance has little impact on the enjoyment of the Charles and does not present an obvious eyesore every time one drives or walks by the site.

## **2.4. Convenience**

Residents are pleased with the convenience of the Riverside facility for commuters and teenagers in the community who do not drive. They enjoy the easy access to the T and commuter and long-haul bus services. Riverside also serves employees of the adjacent office complex as well as teachers and staff from the Williams elementary school and its associated after-school program.

## **3. Existing Perceptions of “New Development”**

Very little was known about the details of the new development when this report was being researched. Generally, it was understood that discussions had taken place among Newton City Government, the MBTA and at least one private developer about possible major development at Riverside. All that was known about that development was that it would probably be “mixed use,” meaning that the development would encompass residential, office, and retail space. It was expected that the developer would contribute money and/or in-kind support for construction of a parking garage and infrastructure improvements to, at least, roadways.

What follows is a summary of resident reactions to this high level description of the potential new development.

### **3.1. Traffic**

As traffic has been an on-going concern in the neighborhood for many years, it is not surprising that residents expect that any development at Riverside will only worsen the situation. Reactions range from a general concern about traffic to “a lot of traffic in our neighborhood” to “a traffic disaster.”

### **3.2. Appearance**

In contrast to the fairly benign visual and noise impacts that the current site has on the neighborhood, residents expect that the new development will be much more intrusive, even to the extent of changing the character of the neighborhood. An analogy was made to the development that has grown up along Route 95 in Waltham. There, residential neighborhoods are adjacent to large commercial properties. Residents believe that multi-story commercial or residential development may loom over Grove Street (where the site is well screened today), and intrude on other views as well, becoming a constant presence in the daily lives of residents. Residents expect to be subjected to new noise from increased traffic to and from the site.

### **3.3. Environmental**

Residents are concerned about the potential for negative effects that development would have on the Charles River and adjacent wetlands and green space.

### **3.4. Neighborhood Character and Infrastructure**

Residents are concerned that new development will bring many more non-residents into the neighborhood, negatively impacting its character.

There is uncertainty over what would happen to residential property values if the neighborhood suddenly found itself in close proximity to a major commercial development.

Residents understand that new development will add to the tax base, but fear that infrastructure will be over utilized. One example of this is the need for schools to handle an influx of new students if the development adds even moderately to family housing stock in the area.

### **3.5. The Development Process**

In addition to the long-term impact of new development, residents are concerned about the conditions during construction.

There is suspicion that neighborhood concerns will not be addressed and that a developer will skirt the intent of applicable laws and permitting processes and get away with it – to the detriment of the neighborhood. This was implied by one participant’s remark that the City should “really enforce and penalize developers who don’t hew to the letter of the law”. The development at Woodland was suggested as an example where such enforcement did not occur, although the substance of the supporting argument was not captured as part of this research.

## **4. The Lower Falls Vision for “New Development”**

### **4.1. Traffic**

*“Include direct/dedicated access to/from the site and 128.”*

The residents of Lower Falls have long been dissatisfied with increased traffic in their neighborhood due to the presence of the existing Riverside facility. This has led to initiatives, coordinated with the City Traffic Department, to introduce traffic calming measures on Grove and Concord streets. Today intersections at Grove and Hagar and Hagar and Concord are being redesigned to slow traffic. The intersection of Grove and the Route 95 access road has also been reconfigured with new striping to slow traffic in that area.

Despite these measures, residents are still unhappy with traffic patterns in the neighborhood including:

- High speed traffic along Grove and Concord Street (with its direct access to the Mass Pike)
- Use of Grove as a cut-through to go from Route 16 East in Wellesley to Riverside
- Difficulty turning onto Grove from DeForrest, Pierrepont, and Asheville at peak commuting times
- The bottleneck at Riverside, preventing easy access to Auburndale and other north-side Newton villages

The LFIA believes that any new development at Riverside must include plans to take existing traffic off of Lower Falls’ streets and channel it to roads designed to take traffic directly from

Routes 16 and 95 into and out of the site. Traffic redesign must refocus the use of Grove Street on the access needs of existing residents and businesses.

While the LFIA is familiar with the use of comprehensive traffic studies associated with new development, our experience with the existing facility and a project on Washington Street some years ago, both of which have brought unwanted parking to our streets, have led to a loss of faith in the process. The LFIA seeks more effective means of protecting against negative impacts of new development.

## **4.2. Appearance**

*“Shouldn’t be visible from the street.”*

The residents of Lower Falls moved to the neighborhood because it offered a nice balance among a wooded, residential setting, convenient access to major traffic arteries, public transportation, and locally available businesses and services.

The LFIA feels strongly that any new development in the area must preserve the residential feel of the area, including but not limited to:

- Present a front to the neighborhood that is at least as aesthetically pleasing as the current screening of Riverside Station.
- Use best design practices and lighting fixtures to prevent light pollution or degradation of the nighttime sky
- Include significant open space and emphasize pedestrian access and use

## **4.3. Environmental**

*“A walking park. A wild meadow with flowers.”*

*[Two possible outcomes of new development at Riverside as suggested by Lower Falls residents.]*

Lower Falls derives its name from its position on the Charles River. Its history is linked to the river which once supplied power to local paper mills. Today, many residents appreciate the recreational value of living close to a wonderful natural resource and would like to see the river protected and access to it increased. The LFIA insists that no project that would damage or encroach on the river even be considered. In addition, improved pedestrian access to the river from the site should be an integral part of any proposed site plan.

Generally, Lower Falls’ residents are environmentally conscious. For 18 years they have twice annually held Lower Falls Planting Days when they gather at Hamilton Park to beautify it by planting trees, shrubs and flowers, weeding and mulching. This concern for the environment includes awareness of the dangers of overdevelopment and “business as usual” in planning and building for economic growth. Residents of Lower Falls recognize the need to conserve and preserve natural systems that cleanse and restore our environment. They understand the need to fight global warming. A damaged environment is not a legacy that they want to leave their



children. And they believe that individuals, governments and businesses must do their part to minimize carbon and other environmental footprints. Therefore, the LFIA insists that new development at Riverside lead in sustainable design including but not limited to:

- Energy self sufficiency to the maximum extent possible through use of active and passive solar, geothermal or other renewable sources
- Energy conserving designs
- Extensive use of recycled materials
- Preservation of normal volumes and cleanliness of local aquifers
- Self-contained water collection for on-site reuse and replenishment of local aquifers

#### **4.4. Neighborhood Character**

*“This is a village and any development should be consistent with a village concept”*

The residents of Lower Falls agree with neighbor quoted above. Consistency with the village concept includes:

- Quiet
- Modest scale
- Public open space
- Facilitation of close, personal communication
- Services cater to the needs of residents
- Safety
- Size and scope that infrastructure can support

In order to preserve the residential character of the area, development of new living units should encourage permanent, not transitory, residency. The size and density of new residential population on the site should be consistent with those of other attached-unit-style complexes (e.g., apartments or condominiums) in the Lower Falls and Auburndale communities. To ensure that new residents become integrated into the adjacent communities, the design should incorporate elements that foster easy, safe and aesthetically-pleasing pedestrian access to and from Lower Falls and Auburndale.

The design of the site should not foster the perception of Lower Falls as a pass-through neighborhood. The goals of this section are intended to ensure this and the LFIA opposes any major influx of people or traffic that would disrupt the village feel enjoyed by residents today.

#### **4.5. Desired Services**

*“Shops included in the development should meet the needs of the people who live here”*

Suggestions for specific services and business establishments at Riverside abound, but they can be summed up by the above quote.

Retail establishments brought onto the site should cater to the needs of a local, residential population, not people who would have to make a special trip to get to the site. As an extreme case, the LFIA would categorically oppose placement of a “big box” retailer on the site. Services that are already provided by establishments in Auburndale and Wellesley Lower Falls should also be discouraged. In fact, with two nearby, small-retail centers already, the need for additional small retail space at Riverside as well is unproven. The LFIA recommends a careful analysis of what type of retail would be most beneficial to residents and commuters, including extensive dialog with both groups.

The LFIA stresses the need for development on the site to invite pedestrian traffic including access to the river. The design should incorporate open space, including pedestrian or mixed use paths for children from Lower Falls to walk or ride to Williams School on their own.

#### **4.6. Mitigation Strategies**

*“There should be no negative impacts.”*

Mitigation strategies only come into the discussion if Riverside development will result in degraded quality of life for residents. The LFIA does not accept that development will necessarily degrade quality of life. Instead, we believe local politicians and other public officials should ensure that development improves existing conditions for residents of Newton Lower Falls.

Nonetheless, to the extent that there is honest disagreement between residents and other parties, the LFIA requests consideration of the following mitigations of impact and strategies for settling disagreements:

- Work with the DCR and help fund a multi-use (bicycle, pedestrian, etc.) path along the Charles River instead of the more contentious proposed route that runs through Lower Falls.
- Dramatically shorten the time needed to travel by T into Boston
- Improve access to the commuter rail from Riverside
- Endow the LFIA generally and the Beautification Committee in particular
- Implement pedestrian access to Wellesley Lower Falls over the abandoned rail bridge
- Implement noise abatement for Route 95 and improve the quality of pedestrian access to Riverside from Lower Falls year round
- Pay for fees associated with legal actions the community may choose to take against the City, T or developer or other fees required to pay a professional neighborhood advocate

## 4.7. The Development Process

*“There should be a comprehensive city-wide long-range planning initiative concluded before [Riverside development] goes forward”*

It is generally believed that Riverside development is being pursued to address revenue shortfalls in the city and MBTA budgets. For the City these shortfalls come at a bad time, particularly in light of the decision to build a very expensive new high school.

In the case of development at Riverside, residents fear that the primary goal will be to increase revenue and all other priorities or concerns will be secondary. Specifically, residents anticipate the following:

- Conventional wisdom will trump development tailored to the site and surroundings: Because of the desperate need for new revenue, city officials and T planners will only view Riverside through the lens of what its potential is for enhancing city coffers. Instead, the analysis ought to start with a study of the site, its surroundings and potential uses. After taking an open-minded look at the possibilities, a statement of goals for development should be published and used to evaluate proposals. The LFIA hopes that this type of process will avoid development of yet another generic mixed use complex with nothing tying it to its surroundings, its environment, or the history of the area.
- The spirit of local zoning laws will be compromised: Developers will try to wring as many concessions out of the city as possible in order to reduce financial risk and maximize profits. City officials, afraid of losing the potential property tax revenues included in budget predictions, will rationalize decisions that subtly violate zoning laws to the long-term detriment of the neighborhood. We want all zoning laws applied consistent with the letter of the law and the developer penalized immediately and to the maximum extent for violations.
- Conditions in the neighborhood during construction will be lower priority than getting the job done on time and under budget: Whatever the outcome of decisions about what development will happen at the site, residents and the children of Williams School want to know that they will not be subjected to noise, dirt, toxins, disruption or inconvenience during the construction period. Because this is predominantly a residential area, construction and movement of construction related equipment into and out of the site must only occur during normal business hours, not evenings or weekends except in cases (if any) where public safety is a concern. For example, contractors should not expect to work weekends to avoid schedule penalties built into their contracts. All construction traffic must be channeled to the major arteries and must respect the Grove Street truck exclusion in Lower Falls.
- Developers and officials will talk about communication and cooperation but not follow through: Anyone involved with the new development must come and talk with the

neighborhoods to keep them constantly informed and solicit feedback. Developers and city officials must establish a continuing, two-way line of communication for any questions or concerns that may arise during implementation of a development plan.

The LFIA believes that the “development process” has already begun but has skipped a critical initial phase that should have been dedicated to discovering the best long-term use and configuration of the Riverside site. Everyone recognizes the importance of the role played by the facility in supplying public transportation and its commercial value as a large, undeveloped parcel along Route 95. But it is also a large, undeveloped parcel along the Charles River and abutting two quiet residential areas. It is one of the few remaining parcels of this size left in Newton. In the rush to consider and place generic “mixed use” development on the site, is the city missing an opportunity to leave a different legacy?

#### **4.8. The Citizen’s Role**

*“Don’t be lulled into thinking that the developer is your friend.”*

It should be clear that the LFIA is under no illusions about the situation regarding new development at Riverside. We understand the overwhelming pressure public officials feel to find new revenue. We understand the pressure real estate developers feel to find new opportunities and maximize revenue from those they identify. And we understand that the state can no longer find the will to fund needed infrastructure improvements and is willing instead to resort to cutting deals with developers who can throw in cash or services in exchange for development rights on public property.

But the LFIA also understands that these conditions are in direct conflict with our values and rights. We do not believe in a “growth at all costs” public policy with respect to new development. We do not believe that city planners or developers have a right to impede public access to, and enjoyment of, natural resources. We do not believe that it is a foregone conclusion that “progress” must result in fundamental changes to the character of our, or anyone else’s, neighborhood. And we do not believe that grasping for quick tax revenue today is in our best interests or the interests of future generations of families in Lower Falls.

In response to this perceived clash of interests between proponents of new development and the residents of Lower Falls, the LFIA requests that development proponents execute a highly participatory process beginning immediately. Such a process should include:

- Respect for residents by elected officials and developers.
- Inclusion of residents in conversations at all stages, beginning with open presentations of preliminary plans by developers, and transparency in evaluations of these plans by city departments.
- Early and thorough communication of related presentations and meetings and scheduling of meetings at times when residents can reasonably be expected to be able to attend.

- Willingness on the part of the T and developer to modify and adjust plans based on community input, resulting in minimization of impacts to the neighborhoods and quality of life if not improvement in these areas.
- Effort by all parties to tailor the development to the unique character and needs of the surrounding communities.

For their part, the LFIA does not plan to take a passive wait-and-see attitude towards these proposals. We intend to start a thoughtful and comprehensive review of our legal options. We will also contact environmental organizations who might be able to be more informed advocates for the Charles River and the preservation and intelligent use of open space generally.

Hopefully the way forward to an improved Riverside facility will not be an adversarial situation. But, as mentioned earlier, the LFIA is under no illusions about the situation regarding new development at Riverside.

### ***5.0 Other Neighborhood Groups***

The LFIA board has read the statements prepared by the Auburndale Community Association and the Lasell Neighborhood Association. The LFIA board generally supports and concurs with those positions.

## **Appendix A. LFIA Community Design Guidelines for Development at Riverside**

The following is a summary of points made in the body of this position paper.

- A task force which includes neighborhood representatives must be formed to study the best long-term use and configuration of the Riverside site before evaluation of developer proposals.
- Exit and entry to the site directly from Route 95/128 must be provided. No access to long-term parking for vehicles entering from Grove Street.
- A comprehensive remediation plan addressing adverse impacts during construction must be provided before construction starts including but not limited to: minimization of noise pollution; completion of Route 95/128 access roads as the first step and channeling of all construction related traffic to the new roads; plans for handling displaced commuter parking; etc.
- Development in scale with existing residential character and available infrastructure. For example, the size and density of new residential population on the site should be consistent with those of other attached-unit-style complexes in the Lower Falls and Auburndale communities. The developer should bear the cost of expanding Williams and Angier schools to accommodate development-related increases in school-age populations.
- Well-landscaped pedestrian amenities. The streetscape and public areas should be attractive and pedestrian-friendly. Final project should not present solid, fortress-like walls to pedestrians. Best design practices and lighting fixtures used to prevent light pollution.
- Site design to include access to the Charles River if possible and project must not impose its presence on the river or adjacent green space.
- Project should decrease noise pollution experienced by residents of Lower Falls, pedestrians, or people out to enjoy the Charles River or adjacent green space.
- Development should be a showcase of sustainable design and development.
- Awarding of contract to a developer with a good track record of dealing with community groups and neighborhood concerns.
- Community involvement, including public hearings, on special permit requests that require approval by the Newton Aldermen.
- Sufficient parking to accommodate special event parking.

- Street level retail spaces with small floor area to encourage local businesses.
- Local retail operations only—no national chains with pre-determined areas and floor plans or big ‘destination’ shopping venues.
- Ongoing design review with community groups during entire development and approval process, to include the working out of pedestrian and traffic issues.
- Construction mitigation plan agreed on by neighborhood associations with 24-hour access number for emergencies, access to project managers and frequent, regular meetings during construction.

**Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey  
March 13, 2012**

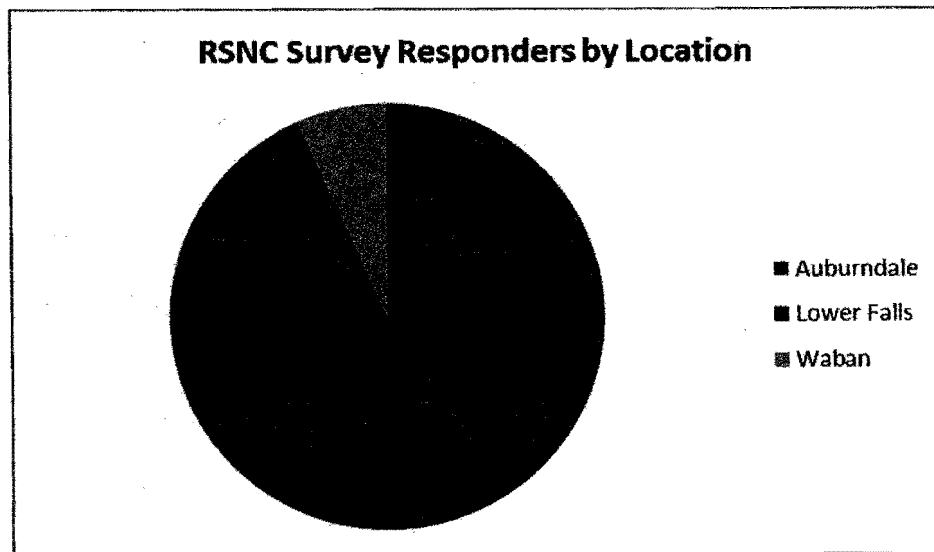
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2012 MAR 22 PM 10:18  
David A. Olson, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459

On January 29<sup>th</sup> the Riverside Station Neighborhood Coalition ("RSNC") held a meeting for the residents of Auburndale, Lasell Village, Newton Lower Falls, and Waban to inform residents of the status of the proposed development by BH Normandy at Riverside Station and to get feedback on a neighborhood questionnaire. The resulting survey, which is intended to capture the sentiments of residents living in Auburndale, Lower Falls, and Waban, was conducted from February 9, 2012 – February 24, 2012, predominately over the internet. The RSNC advertised the survey via various e-mail lists as well as word of mouth to reach area residents. In addition, it set up a dedicated e-mail account for respondents, as well as physical drop boxes and a mailing address for participants. The survey was also available on the RSNC web site. As a result of the RSNC efforts, 120 surveys were received and entered into the survey results.

The RSNC readily admits that it was not the easiest survey to complete and members of the RSNC spent time working with some residents to assist them in completing the survey. The survey was designed to be completed in 30 minutes. Not all residents chose to respond to all questions. We limited our responses to two per household, and many households responded with one survey for more than one family member.

The overall survey results show that residents would like to see a smaller project, with less retail and office space, and fewer residential units. There is a strong desire for restaurant space, smaller residential units, and outdoor recreational space. Residents do not want a big box store, bio manufacturing or a drive through restaurant. Residents want traffic and pedestrian impacts addressed, with a number one choice of direct access to and from Route 128. They want school safety issues addressed. They also want storm water and waste water impacts to be addressed.

The first chart shows the number of respondents as self-identified by neighborhood. It shows that 53% of the responses were from residents residing in Newton Lower Falls, 41% from residents residing in Auburndale and 7% from residents residing in Waban.





## Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey March 13, 2012

### Size of Development

The first section of the survey asked residents to respond to the proposed size of the development by use. The instructions for this section, entitled: "SITE DESIGN MATTERS", were as follows: *"The current zoning proposal by our Ward 4 Alderman, #400-11: is as follows: Requesting establishment of a Business 5/Riverside Zone: a mixed-use transit-oriented district at the site of the current Riverside MBTA rail station. The proposed new zone shall allow by special permit a single commercial office building not to exceed 225,000 square feet with a maximum height of 9 stories, two residential buildings not to exceed 290 housing units in total, retail space not to exceed 20,000 square feet, along with a multi-use community center. According to information provided by the developer in connection with the new site plan, the residential units will be broken down into 65% one bedroom units, 30% two bedroom units and 5% three bedroom units. The purpose of this section is to see if you agree with this proposal, or if you would like to have something different so please put "X" by the items with which you most agree."*

The first section asked about office space, and the majority of respondents, 65% would like to see a decrease in the amount of office space and only 7% felt it should be increased.

The second section asked about multi-family rental space, and the majority of respondents, 68% would like to see a decrease in the amount of multi-family rental space and only 4% felt it should be increased.

The third section asked about retail rental space, and there was no clear preference.

The chart below shows the response by real estate type:

	Office	Multi-Family	Retail
<b>Increase</b>	7%	4%	21%
<b>Decrease</b>	65%	68%	39%
<b>Appropriate</b>	28%	29%	39%

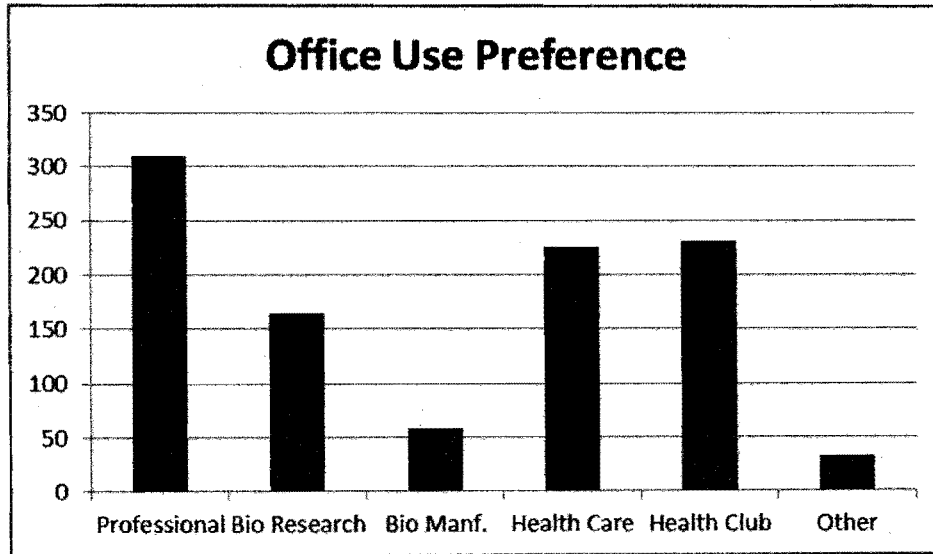
### Preferences

The next section asked for preferences for uses within a real estate type as well as preferences for uses that residents do not want on the site. This was the part of the survey that caused the most difficulty for responders; however because of the volume of responses, clear trends did emerge. A number of responders only entered a number for preferences and did not use their "no" votes and vice versa. For purposes of calculating results for this section, we added all numbers entered into a category, and for no votes, we gave each a value of one.

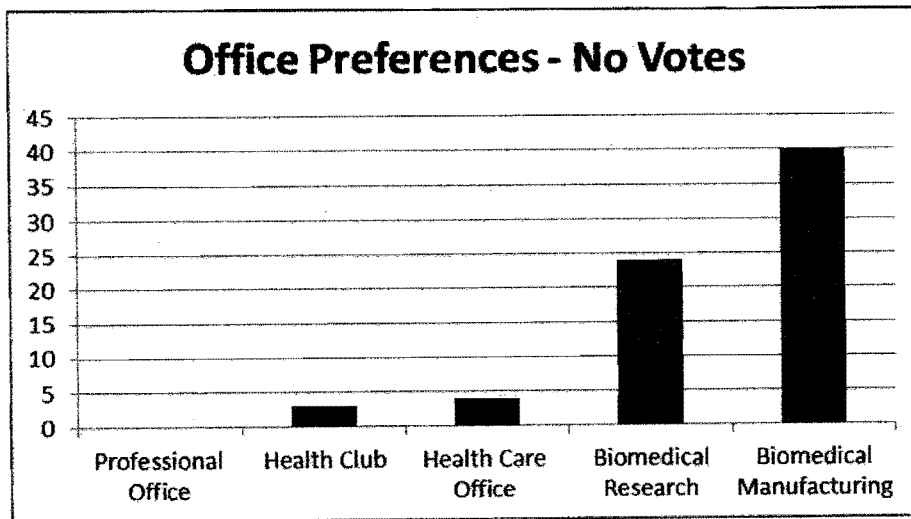
The following were the instructions: *"Please select your top 5 desired uses of the development (within each category – Office, Retail, Residential, and Community Space) and rank from 5-1, the uses you want to see on the site by type, with 5 as the most desired and 1 of lesser importance. ALSO – if there are any uses to which you are absolutely OPPOSED, please write "NO" on that line. You may do this for up to 10 uses total, including all four categories."*

### Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey March 13, 2012

The first category was office uses, however this section only had six possible selections and many persons may not have understood that they could leave a line blank, so they responded to all lines. There was a strong preference for professional office use. Other suggestions included day care, start up incubator space, community pool, bookstore café, law offices and psychotherapy offices.

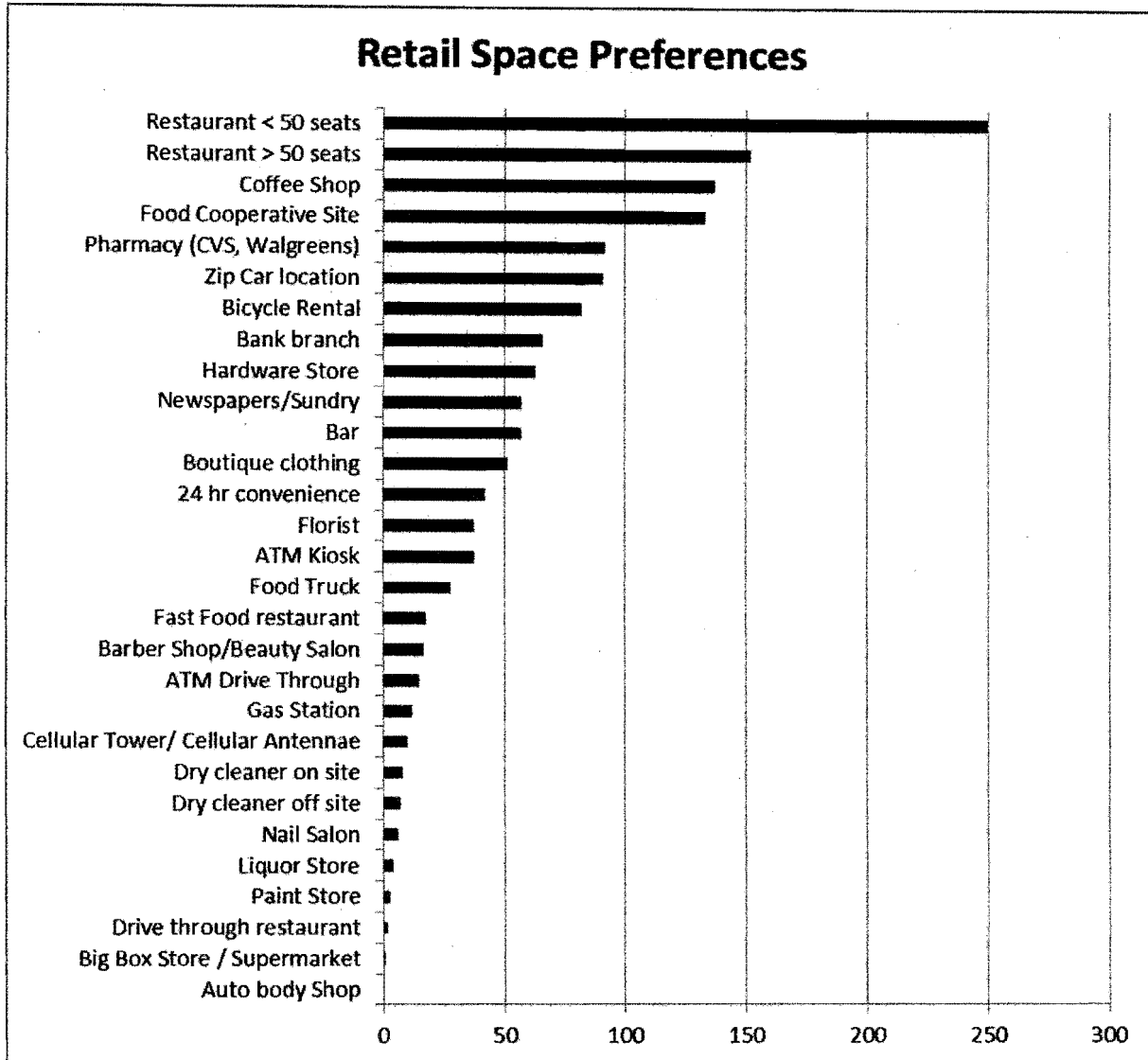


Looking at respondents who did not want specific office uses, the one that was least desirable was biomedical manufacturing with 40 votes or 1/3 of all respondents.



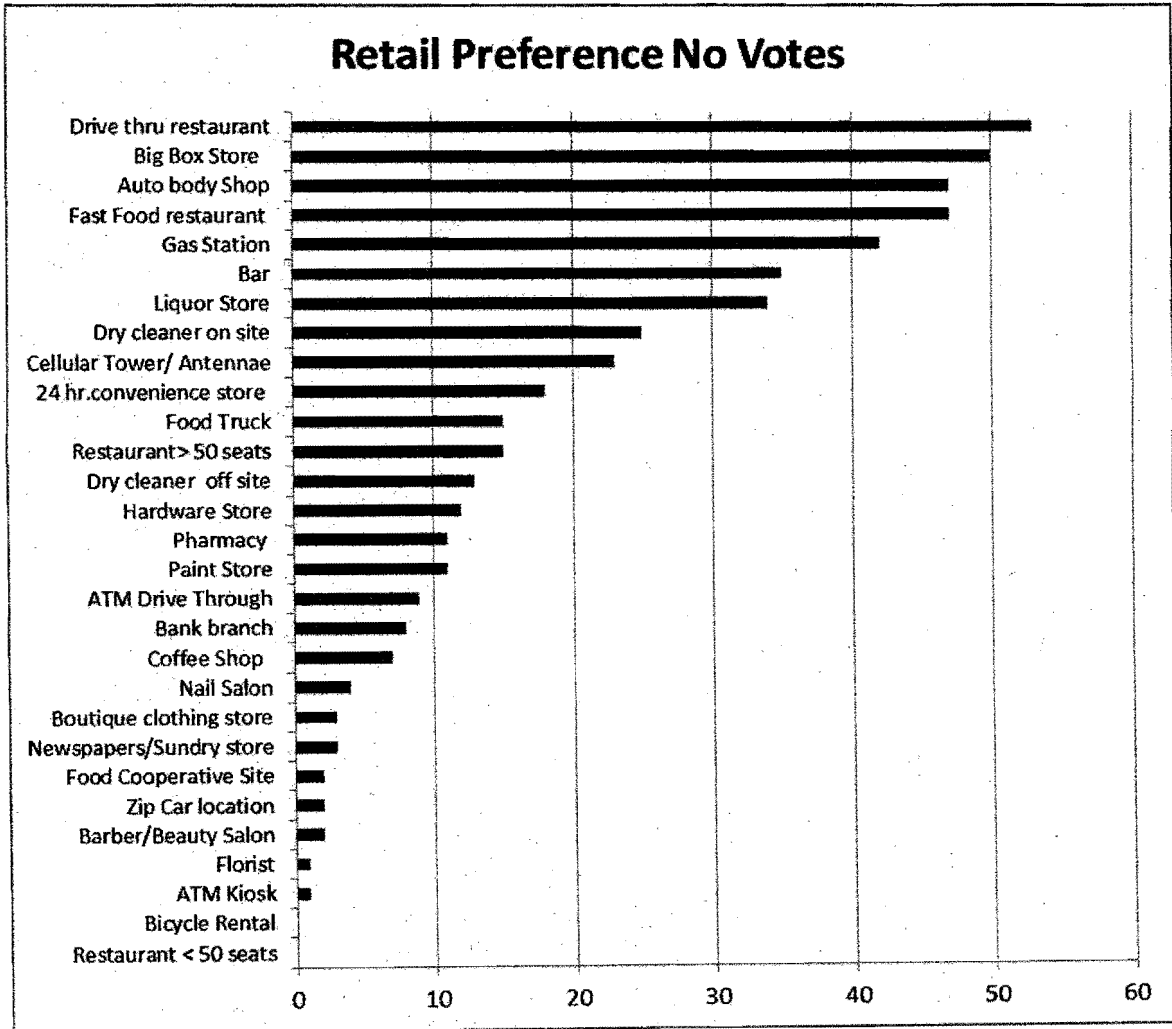
### Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey March 13, 2012

The next category was retail uses and there were 28 choices in this category. The majority of responders in this section favored sit down restaurants or a coffee shop. A large number wanted smart growth related uses such as Zip Car and Bicycle Rental, and sustainable uses such as a food cooperative site, as shown on the following chart:



**Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey  
March 13, 2012**

Looking at respondents who did not want a specific retail use, the least desirable retail uses were drive through and fast food restaurant, big box store, auto body shop, gas station, liquor store, bar, dry cleaner with cleaning on site, cellular tower/cellular antennae and a 24 hour convenience store, as shown on the following chart:



The next category was residential uses.

- 29 respondents had a strong opinion about owner occupied housing, with 23 in favor and 6 opposed.
- 33 respondents had a strong opinion about age restricted housing, with 22 in favor and 11 opposed.

When asked to state if they like the current unit mix, many respondents suggested no three-bedroom units, and also more one-bedroom units.

**Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey  
March 13, 2012**

The next category was community space uses.

- 51 respondents had a strong opinion about outdoor community space, with all 51 in favor.
- 53 respondents had a strong opinion about indoor community space, with 46 in favor and 7 opposed.
- 42 respondents had a strong opinion about a community garden, with 39 in favor and 3 opposed.

**Community Space comments:** We have listed below for specific uses desired in outdoor and indoor community space. Most frequently we heard that people wanted walking paths for outdoor space and meeting/community flexible space for indoor space.

**Outdoor:**

- Walking paths
- Playground
- Biking
- Ice skating rink/Dog Park with fence
- Garden Plots
- Bike, walking trail, connecting to Lower Falls and Auburndale. Design safe recreational path so kids don't have to walk on Grove/ highway to Williams School
- Recreational park
- Outdoor Music Gazebo
- Seating and a fountain
- Public gardens
- Community recreations center including park, walking paths, playground, pool, skating rink
- Basketball court, soccer field, tennis court, jogging paths, outdoor track
- Access to Charles for boating/canoeing
- Green space / conservation area
- Outdoor swimming pool, outdoor café, music pagoda
- Field, tennis/basketball court

**Indoor:**

- Meeting/community function rooms for , classrooms and/or, flexible space Exercise/Gym space for classes, volleyball, basketball court, indoor track, indoor soccer, swimming pool
- Cultural arts center, performance hall, concert, dance, theater space
- Library branch, party space

## Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey March 13, 2012

### Mitigation

The next section dealt with mitigation matters described as “What does the neighborhood need to have to function somewhat normally after the project is built (rather than it would be nice to have).” We asked respondents to score from 10-1 the items that matter most to them across four categories with 10 as the most important and 1 as of less importance: Traffic and Pedestrian, Schools, Storm water and wastewater management, and off-site amenities. In certain instances we asked for respondents to enter suggestions. Our instructions were as follows:

#### Traffic and Pedestrian

*“Some of these matters address the rate of speed traffic will flow or move through the neighborhood, either keeping it moving, or slowing it down. We know the developer is still proposing roundabouts over Route 128, but since the peer review has not yet been done, the most beneficial solution is still unclear. There are some matters that are essential to the development that have previously been included in plans proposed by the developer and we anticipate that they will continue to be included (such as a left hand turning lane into the Riverside Station from Grove Street, two lanes only over the Route 128 bridge, planted median similar to Riverside Center on Grove Street) therefore we have intentionally left them off this list.”*

#### Schools

*“There are several issues in which the school system will be impacted by the development of Riverside Station. In the case of Williams School it may exacerbate traffic/pedestrian access, and in the case of the local elementary schools, it may add students.”*

#### Stormwater and Wastewater Management

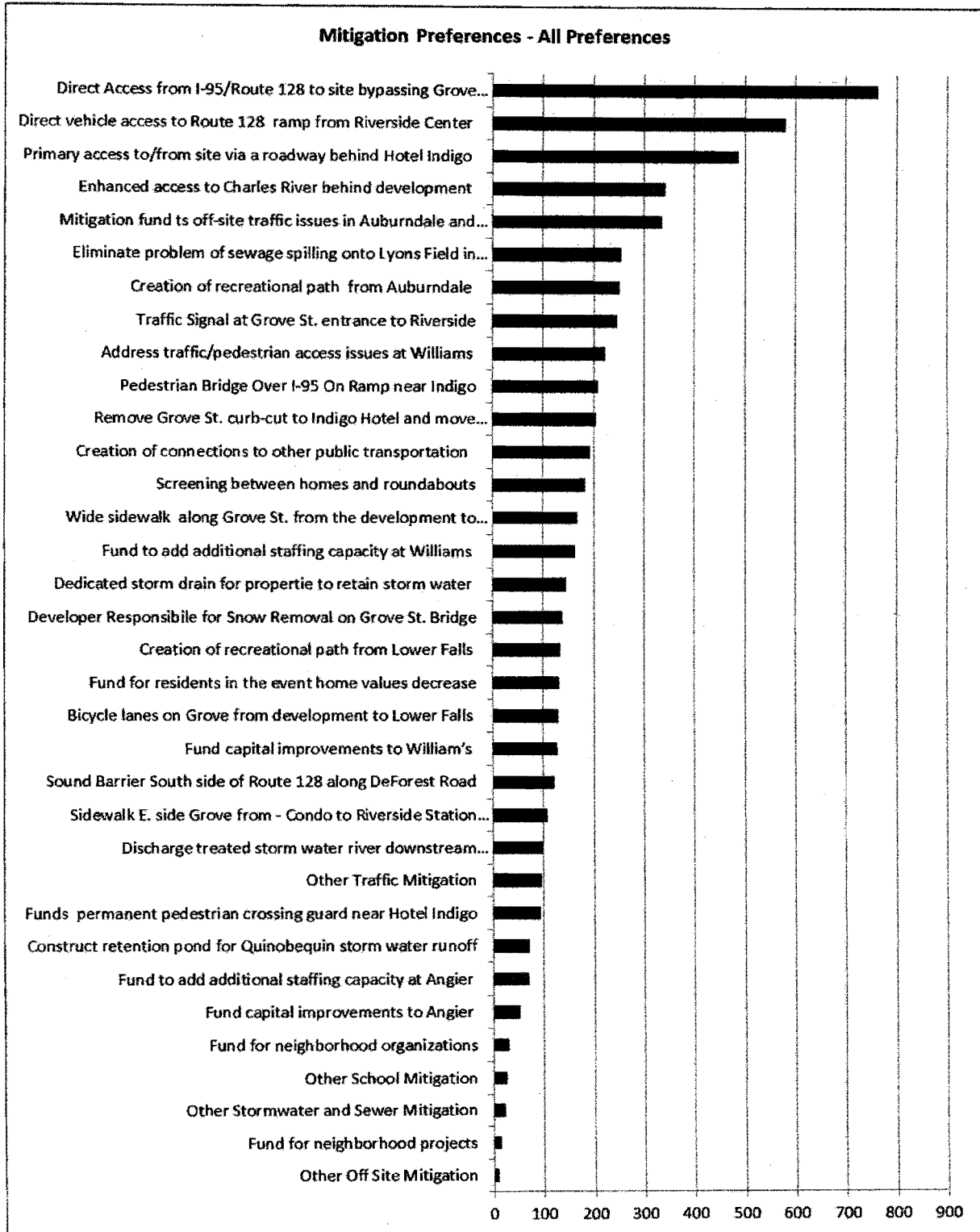
*“There will be regulatory mandates to manage impacts to the existing systems created by the new development. In addition to this, would you like to see the developer address any of these other issues in the neighborhood?”*

#### Off Site Amenities

*“Many of the requirements as to what can be built on site will be dictated by the zoning change and during the special permit process; the following are suggestions of off-site improvements or funds.”*

Traffic and pedestrian issues dominated the mitigation items most chosen by respondents. Direct access to route 128 was listed as a first choice by 54 respondents and a priority by 89. Direct access from Riverside Center, through the MBTA Station to Route 128 and bypassing Grove Street was the second most popular mitigation choice. It is clear that impacts from traffic and pedestrian safety are the most important issues, but wastewater and school issues matter as well. The graph on the next page shows all of the responses.

**Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**



**Results of the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey  
March 13, 2012**

The next section provides comments for other mitigation matters not listed in our survey, or descriptions of what people want to see:

**Traffic and Pedestrian Matters:**

- Pedestrian walk signal from condo to hotel.
- Bike lanes on Grove and surrounding streets (not roundabouts).
- Add platform to north side of Auburndale commuter rail station so trains can stop for inbound travelers during evening hours, ample parking for residents and offices.
- Mitigation of traffic on Quinobequin (5 responses).

**Storm Water and Waste Water Management:**

- Development and funding for a comprehensive plan to address all existing and potential water management issues within the affected region including analysis of how climate change will exacerbate problems in the next 100 years.
- Only in context of mitigating direct impacts from the project. In general and in principle, I am opposed to asking/making a condition of, the developer paying to mitigate preexisting conditions. That is a town/state responsibility.

**Off Site Amenities:**

- Fund Auburndale Community Library
- Fund Lower Falls Community Center
- Fund new playground at Lower Falls
- Handicap accessible commuter rail station in Auburndale
- Creation of continuous recreational path from Concord Street pedestrian bridge to Marriott
- Detail traffic study of Waban, Quinobequin Road, Route 16, Walnut St., Wellesley
- Detailed study of water/waste management for Lower Falls and Waban specifically along Quinobequin & all connecting systems from Route 16 inward

**Survey Personal Opinions**

The last section of the survey asked respondents *"What do you think about the latest site plan and proposal?"* and allowed for narratives. All the comments have been included in a separate 10 page attachment. We did not proof for typos/spelling/grammar etc. due to the sheer volume of responses.



Free-Response Comments  
from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey  
March 13, 2012

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2012 MAR 22 PM 10:18  
DAVID A. DYSON, CMC  
NEWTON, MA 02459

It is an improvement, but it is dismaying that the developers have not studied the expected traffic impacts on Quinobequin Road between Route 16 and Route 9. Furthermore, there is no evidence that any official at any level, is looking at the combined impact of the Riverside Project and the anticipated development of the Route 9/Route 128 interchange.

too big; infrastructure concerns and schools are already overcrowded

Can't say I'm familiar with all the latest details, but I do have an overwhelming concern about increased traffic and congestion on Grove Street. Also, with all the new housing, retail buildings and potential restaurants, office space, etc. where are all those (new) vehicles going to find parking??

So much better than all the earlier ones. Not sure how far we can push additional changes. What do you think?\_

Under no circumstances would I welcome a big-box store, major retail center, or anything else that creates significant traffic, garbage, noxious fumes, or toxic by-products (regardless of whether they are properly disposed of). I do not want a new mall or shopping center built in my neighborhood.

Most of your retail options I'm strongly opposed to, but the addition of independent, community-minded small shops, bistros, urban food centers (e.g.: small food markets) would be OK—essentially, "green" businesses with a small footprint.

Two smaller buildings (4 stories) are far more desirable than a 9-story high-rise, which dwarfs everything short of the N-W Hospital.

I think that the biggest concern revolves around traffic and that direct access from I-95 is key to mitigating this issue. The second most important thing is to create something positive with this project that the neighborhood will enjoy being next to. This might be accomplished by creating recreational paths to the development and enhancing access to Charles River behind the development. Selecting more prestigious commercial endeavors may also help — nice restaurants and shops.

Overall the developers have made good strides and have been very accommodating. The project numbers have to work for them of course, but also no one doubts, the neighborhood and City. I actually look forward to this project advancing and have no stake whatsoever in the project.

It's getting there but still seems like it will add an awful lot of traffic. That is really my only concern\_\_

For our work with the developer it is all about traffic; direct access to and from 95/128, real support for public transportation.

It is up to the city to plan for the schools and to fund them adequately

Still too big

Still needs direct access 128, not enough open space, not adequate river access, if no direct access then still too big, no three bedrooms, handicap access to Charles River

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

The project is still way too big, I am very concerned about traffic on grove street and the impact on Williams School

Too much traffic on Rt. 16 & Quinobequin

The reduction in size is good. I still don't see how the traffic issues will be dealt with so there are not too many entrances/exits. I like the idea of improved river access very much, wish we could have a walking path like the Newton/Waltham/Watertown river paths. It makes sense to have residential and commercial development at a transit center. There should be provisions for electric car charging for both residents and commuters. A gated community feel/reality should be resisted.

Overall density and office building height needs to be further reduced. Most importantly, the project should not be permitted unless a combination of:

- (1) reduction in project size (scale and massing); and
- (2) direct ingress/egress to Rt. 128 to the site, the Indigo and Riverside Center

are sufficient to achieve no degradation in the level of service on Grove Street ***without the need to widen any portion of Grove Street to four lanes and without the need for roundabouts.***

In addition, the height of the buildings on the site must be reduced to be consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhoods and Riverside Center.

The City must resist a zoning change which would permit a development of a scale which necessitates such dramatic changes in the character of Grove Street. For most Lower Falls residents, these changes will transform everyday errands, such as a trip to Star Market, into a project requiring the negotiation of a left turn across multiple lanes of heavy traffic (for example exiting DeForest) and/or navigating two roundabouts just to get as far as the entrance to the Indigo. For the residents of the condominiums across from the Indigo, the roadway changes and increased traffic will have an even more serious impact –making it impossible for them to exit their parking lot in either direction without significant hazard. The City should not be cowed by threats of a c.40B project – a common scare tactic rarely implemented.

I'm opposed to any development of the site, I think that the proposal is too large and will have a dramatic effect on the quality of life in LF at every level

project is still too large and doesn't do enough to address traffic concerns for Lower Falls

Still too big for this community. City may want more taxes but at what cost. The rest of the city has to realize Lower Falls and Auburndale are villages. Not just an access way to the highways. The city will lose revenue if values of residences change due to the traffic issues and changes of the look and feel of the community. The infrastructure cannot handle such a large project. The roads already cannot handle the traffic flow. Sewer and gas lines are overloaded and leaking. The attempts to clean up the Charles are hampered already by untreated overflow of runoff and waste.

It is larger than we would like.

It does not address the sewage problem.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

Newton will not gain as much from the increased tax base as it will cost in additional services, police & school, etc., - See Philip Herr studies on this subject. Aldermen from other wards should be informed (lobbied) of this.

I continue to be extremely concerned about the effect on traffic, commuting to downtown, etc. We bought in this area because of ease of commuting access to downtown and good schools; this proposal will significantly affect the neighborhoods commuting access (along with the MBTA's plans to cancel express bus service to Riverside! And will create crowding at the schools, while significantly decreasing pedestrian safety in walking to Riverside station from Lower Falls.

I FEAR MOST FOR THE SEWER OVERFLOWS INTO LYONS FIELD AND THE WARE'S COVE AREA NEAR THE ISLINGTON PENINSULA. MAJOR TRAFFIC IN AUBURNDALE, AND IN THE GROVE STREET NEIGHBORHOOD, IS ALSO A DANGER.

I think this site is extremely development-friendly. The site is wedged between an off-ramp, hotel parking lot, the highway, a train repair depot, and a T-stop. This is clearly an area that the city and residents should support improving. Naturally, we need to balance the project against nearby residents and environmental concerns, and consider the impact on local schools. I do believe that this is an excellent opportunity to improve access to the river and nearby parkland, creating a unique asset for Lower Falls and Auburndale. Further, I think it is important to embrace potential new sources of tax revenue to support our community schools and services. I look forward to a well-reviewed plan and ultimately the completed project.

Still an order of magnitude too big not to be disruptive to the surrounding communities

Traffic analysis using linear extrapolation of existing vehicle trips on Grove St unrealistic  
\_\_\_\_\_ Unacceptable until *direct* North AND South-bound access to 128 is resolved

I am still very concerned about the traffic that would be generated by this proposal. The number of additional vehicle trips is overwhelming and I am so worried about the negative impact on the neighborhood. The City and developer have competing interests vis-a vis the neighborhoods and are just focused on the \$\$\$\$\$\$. They really don't care about our quality of life. I am also concerned about the dangers presented to pedestrians walking to and from Riverside.

**Thanks to all of you on the RSNC working hard on our behalf.**

We doubt that this plan/development will yield sufficient revenue for Newton to justify the cost of all the adjustments/betterments that it will require. Additional children will crowd Williams and Angier schools -- another expense for the taxpaying public.

It's not transit-oriented. We should have 4, 5 and 6 story buildings -- village scaled businesses -- maybe 1 big office building close to the highway -- as long as there is direct access. The MBTA parking garage should incorporate retail as well as the office building. Rather have a massive reduction in the housing units -- no more than 200 studio and one bedroom units. Need more restaurants and maybe a bowling alley.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

This plan does NOT provide strategies to address traffic down Quinobequin Rd. as well as Route 16 and Beacon St. through Waban and Route 9 at the end of QBQ. It also does not address the issues of water and sewer flow and overflow for Quinobequin Rd. and all the streets that intersect. This area is already stressed and broken in many locations. Any additional stress could cause catastrophic results. Many residents along these routes are extremely

I am very concerned that the size of this development as currently proposed will have a hugely negative impact on our wonderful Lower Falls neighborhood. My primary worries are about traffic and decreasing home values. Traffic is already terrible on days of Red Sox games; I hate to imagine what it will look like with thousands of additional vehicle trips per day, despite the roundabouts. We chose to live in Lower Falls because it is a quiet, family-friendly neighborhood. Additional traffic could change that.

It is an improvement over others. My major concern is the safety when pedestrians cross the street from the condo and the hotel and when cars are leaving the condo and make a left turn. I think that since the retail and community space only have the parking garage this make that area unappealing to potential renters and users of the area.

I think it is still awful and does not address community needs. I think instead of being a draw for neighbors across Newton it will destroy the neighborhood character and make Lower Falls and Auburndale congested and ugly, and I think it will cause unimaginable costs that can't be measured now to the schools over time

The roundabouts do not make sense. Even with them, there will be traffic backups that will prevent residents entering and leaving Lower Falls for hours in morning and evening. We need to have a safe way to walk to Riverside from Lower Falls that includes safe ways to cross the entrance ramps to 95 24/7 (traffic lights and better street lighting.) Residents want easy and safe access to Auburndale from Lower Falls 24/7 without having to get stuck in traffic jams. We already have this problem on Red Sox home game days and during morning rush hour to a much smaller degree than will occur if more traffic is added, due to this proposed development, unless a way is found to bypass Grove St

PROJECT WILL LINE THE POCKETS OF A FEW AND DO LITTLE GOOD FOR THOSE WHO NOW LIVE HERE. A BETTER EXPLANATION OF THE WHOLE PROJECT SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC IN AUBURNDALLE. WHO ARE THE INVESTORS AND HOW MUCH MONEY DO THEY PLAN ON MAKING AT THE EXPENSE OF PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE AREA. THIS PROJECT TAKES A QUIET AREA AND TURNS IT INTO A CITY. IT IS TRASHING AUBURNDALE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE REST OF THE CITY. IT IS AS GOOD AS STEALING.

It is mandatory to do all items under Stormwater and Wastewater management.

I don't know how to really react until the thing is built. To me, the impact may be predictable but not conclusive until it is built. Personally we live far enough away from the hotel and Riverside that if we have to go another way to get from place to place, we will. I have other concerns that far outweigh the Riverside Development Project.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNCRiverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

It is still too big, I'm concerned about the impact on Williams, and very concerned about the traffic impact during rush hour, particularly afternoon.

Thank you for allowing community input! I would like to see more retail and community-oriented space and less residential. I am concerned about the strain on the already overcrowded school situation of added students. I think it is essential to have resident-friendly access via a bike path along the river and bike paths on the street from Auburndale Square (and bike racks available and conveniently located) so that nearby residents don't have to drive there. I am in favor of smart growth and don't want everything to be car-dependent. I do like that the parking is not facing Grove Street - that is a big plus. It should be pedestrian-friendly (and bike-friendly), not only designed for cars. In order for the community to benefit, there should be more amenities for residents rather than more residences and offices, though I'm not opposed to some office and residential space. But looking at the plan online (unfortunately I have not been able to make the public meetings thus far), it looks like very little of the development is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for existing residents.

\_\_I think that the current parking lot/MBTA station is ugly, and I would be in support of some sort of development. I just don't think that the developers have a realistic idea of what the increased traffic could do to access in and out of Lower Falls, especially now that Washington Street in Wellesley Lower Falls has become much more congested with the new construction there. I believe there is a real possibility that we could become "trapped" in the neighborhood without appropriate traffic mitigation measures - therefore, this would be my priority for the development. I would actually really like a restaurant and/or sundry store within easier walking distance.

It will be a problem and a negative for the families that live around it, no way to get around that. Anytime that "industry" is moved in or around a residential area it is a negative for the neighborhood. Folks picked this area to live because of the balance that existed when they moved in, not for the hope that there might someday be another "drive through" next door. I worry about increased traffic on roads that were never meant for it and that are already stressed. I worry about who will be coming into our neighborhood, for what reasons, in what numbers and for what purpose. I truly hope that these choices are real and not "carrots" of intention, designed to lull the neighborhood into a false sense of security, only to be pulled away after the construction actually starts due to "circumstances beyond our control".

I think there are too many empty office and apartment buildings along the 128 corridor and building another is a waste of space and money.

Roundabouts don't work, look at the Bourne Bridge area, traffic does not flow. No change in zone should be allowed, too much vacant office space.

Cars do not stop at stop signs

Project too big

Developer should assume all responsibility for any damages due to the project. Developer pay life time payments for deaths related to traffic injury on Grove St.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

The plan is great improvement in size. Developer should consider partnering with LaSelle to expand their campus to create truly commuter friendly academic campus or 55 plus housing community, emphasis on green/smart growth including access to recreation, Charles river, golf course, and dedicated space for community gardens and local food

Concern about noise, traffic, pollution at roundabouts impacted adjacent homes. Scale still too big. Will ruin quality of life in NLF.

I think the proposal is way too big, it is like adding another village to Newton at a huge cost to the existing neighborhoods. I understand and agree that the site needs to be developed. There is such an opportunity here to make this truly transit oriented. How it is currently configured insures more traffic, more congestion and not a way to decrease how much cars are used, to increase pedestrian and bike use, to facilitate greater use of transportation. I think the idea of trying to develop this to increase tax revenue without fully considering the costs to the city and the costs to the existing neighborhoods is really too bad. I understand that there is a fear (and probably a reality?) of 40B but really that doesn't make sense for the developers unless I am totally misinformed.

I applaud efforts to reduce the size of the project but believe any form of development on this site is irresponsible until effective sewers/systems/infrastructure—based on quantitative analysis-- is in place to eliminate sewage and groundwater from running directly into the Charles at Quinobequin at Ware Cove/Lyons Park where discharges are clearly evident. Current capacity and overload of these systems precludes further development. Newton must honor state and federal environmental mandates and look to protecting the environmental health of its residents, recreational resources, and river.

I am most concerned about the traffic congestion and think the office park should be no more than 5-6 stories tall rather than 9 or 10 as proposed, in this RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD and thereby contain far fewer parking spaces. Let us save this Auburndale from becoming just another congested suburban site.

It is lacking in imagination and will lead to development of a cultural desert. There are examples of mixed use zoning proposals out there that truly integrate the uses so that all regions of the site would be utilized 24 hours a day. I can imagine a site that would be like a very upscale village with retail distributed throughout at the lowest levels, business throughout at second and third levels, and upscale residential in the upper levels. This may strike us as strange, but it how people live in dense urban settings. Such development would be extremely desirable to a certain demographic (that could afford it), offer very desirable amenities to adjacent neighborhoods, not overburden schools, and not lead to such an increase in transportation demands that they would overburden Grove Street.

I do not think that the elementary school can handle the increased number of students from the current proposal (which greatly underestimates the number of students that will result from this project) and I also think that the increased volume of traffic will cut us off from the rest of Newton, at least during rush hours. There are already serious traffic issues getting on to 128 N in the morning – this will make a bad situation worse. Also, I am pretty certain that the increased traffic and rotary in front of my house will decrease my house's value

I think the latest site plan is still too large. I would prefer a 400K sq.ft. project (150K office, 200 residential units and 30K retail).

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

Off site: creating an ice rink/gardening. Concerned about capital improvements due at Williams and perhaps Burr. The schools must have the space, staffing, Angier particularly due to age, Williams and Burr should have added space if needed

I think we need to think of this proposal in tandem with the MBTA proposal too. With that in mind, the proposal has way too much parking which means more cars. Until the state proposes a way to mitigate already bad rush hour traffic problems, I think any proposal is too much for our neighborhood. I want to support public transportation but don't want to support traffic jams.

Much too large, traffic problems, health, population, problems school crowding, school safety, roundabouts a nightmare.

9 stories is too high, businesses that generate few cars.

I think the proposal is way too big, it is like adding another village to Newton at a huge cost to the existing neighborhoods. I understand and agree that the site needs to be developed. There is such an opportunity here to make this truly transit oriented. How it is currently configured insures more traffic, more congestion and is not a way to decrease how many cars are used or to increase pedestrian and bike use and to facilitate greater use of transportation. I think the idea of trying to develop this to increase tax revenue without fully considering the costs to the city and the costs to the existing neighborhoods is a travesty. I understand that there is a fear of 40B being invoked but that really doesn't make sense for the developers. Which proposal would actually increase traffic the most, 40B housing or the proposal as currently drafted?

I continue to have grave concerns about the scope of this project.

It's moving in the right direction, but the project still is too big for the neighborhood. We are very concerned about the impact on traffic and the schools, given the size and scope of the proposal. We do favor some kind of development, as the current Riverside station is an eyesore. We would like to see an appropriately scaled, mixed-use development that brings greenery and life to that asphalt-laden spot. Thanks to the coalition for all your hard work!

Question: Can we do a neighborhood field trip to see a roundabout?

I think the proposed plan is still too big. I don't want to see any projects of this scale anywhere in Newton. I want Newton to be primarily a residential community with businesses in the existing villages that serve residents.

Retail space hours: Rather than any 24 hour facilities, it may make more sense to have something open the same hours the T operates.

I wrote "NO" for retail uses I thought would generate excessive traffic and idling cars. In general retail that will serve occupants of the new buildings, T users and neighbors without generating more car trips would be most desirable

It does not address the traffic issues properly, that will be required for Auburndale and Lower Falls to function. A serious infrastructure plan from BH Normandy needs to be put on the table, i.e. direct access/exit ramps from I-95. Round about is not the answer, as it will never mitigate the number of vehicles on Grove St.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

I think it lacks the vision to be an interesting multi-use development, along the lines of a Coolidge Corner type of destination area with housing/office and interesting shops/restaurants. If it turns out to be an office park with some apartments and only one sandwich shop, drycleaners/bank, etc. this will be a hugely missed opportunity to be more than a transportation hub/office park development

\_As a resident of waban whose home is impacted by water issues on quinobequin road I am concerned about the increased traffic and sewerage that will tax out overburdened system. Additionally, our schools cannot handle additional students without significant improvement to infrastructure. What happens to the middle schools when these students get there – are our schools all ready to handle issues? Elementary is addressed but what about Middle and High School?

1. I am against roundabouts.
2. I think the residential section is too large. I'm not concerned with the number of units, but think that five stories is too tall.
3. I do not believe there will be enough parking for the residential units. Each adult will probably own a car. If only 1.5 spaces are provided per unit, then where will these cars park? Where do visitors for these units park? They should not be able to take up space in parking reserved for commuters, since increasing the parking space for commuters has been described as one of the major goals of the developers. (I have been a visitor to other 'residential' developments where parking was a major problem.)
4. Where will delivery trucks park for residential units. Fedex, etc, trucks shouldn't block traffic while driver is running around looking for a signature.

Same goes for delivery trucks for the retail space.

We are of the opinion that this development is too large for the already burdened sewage and flooding problems in this part of town .Please review the sewer/water department presentation about DIMINISHING WETLANDS given at Mayor Warren's meeting with Quinobequin's flood victims of March 2010.

Fundamentally I am opposed to this entire project because it will exacerbate the traffic problem in Auburndale square.

I favor density and the economic revenue benefits, but not with tall buildings that dominate the skyline. Rather, I favor density that comes from space freed up by curtailing parking spaces. This has the added effect incentivizing public transit, and reducing the need for costly traffic engineering to mitigate traffic. Objections related to spillover parking in neighborhoods is unfounded and easily mitigated by residential-only parking and parking time limitations, with exceptions made for residents for party parking. Preventing spillover parking is not difficult; it is routine and effective in Boston neighborhoods.

There should be a Hubway bike station at the Auburndale Commuter Rail station, and one at the Riverside station, that allow commuter rail users to easily ride to and from the development.



**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

Prefer to eliminate residential space or restrict it to senior citizen housing as was done in Wellesley Lower Falls development. Prefer that retail space be reduced or eliminated. Prefer office space to residential/retail as office space will not generate traffic 24 hours a day. A transportation hub is not a safe or healthy place to raise children, so there should be no housing for families with children. I don't understand why the many health professionals in Newton aren't opposed to locating family housing at a transportation hub. Prefer that Grove Street be bypassed altogether.

I continue to believe that the project as proposed is far too big to be wedged in between 2 neighborhoods that are as cohesive, residential, quiet, and historic as Lower Falls & Auburndale. As currently configured, the Riverside project would overwhelm the neighborhoods with noise, pollution, and impossible traffic. In addition to the problems it would create on Grove St, the affect on other, already congested routes (such as Route 16 and Concord St, 128 to the Mass Pike) would be unbearable. I believe that the project would make Lower Falls a LESS desirable place to live and reduce the value of our houses, as well as the quality of life.

**Free-Response Comments**  
**from the RSNC Riverside Station Development Survey**  
**March 13, 2012**

I agree that something should be built on the site. However, the current mixed-use proposal would not improve the city for its residents nor its reputation as the "Garden City" or a city dedicated to being a green pioneer. Public transportation is very important, and enhancing the Riverside depot makes sense. But does Newton really need more office space? If there was an existing structure for commercial space (such as Linden St in Wellesley), some shops & restaurants would be great. But imposing this use onto our residential neighborhood just doesn't make sense.

(P.S. In terms of retail store suggestions, above, I'd like to add: bookstore.)

It is an improvement, but it is dismaying that the developers have not studied the expected traffic impacts on Quinobequin Road between Route 16 and Route 9. Furthermore, there is no evidence that any official, at any level, is looking at the combined impact of the Riverside Project and the anticipated restructuring of the Route 9/Route 128 interchange.

RECEIVED  
Newton City Clerk

Woodland Grove Condominium

March 20, 2012

2012 MAR 22 PM 10:18

David A. Olson, CMAA  
Dennis Sweet, CMAA  
Newton, MA 02459

Submission to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the Board of Alderman

My name is ~~Dennis Sweet~~, I am not only a direct abutter, but I have a 12 year old real estate planning and market research business based in Newton, and over 25 years in the real estate industry so I work with developments such as these regularly. My husband and I enjoy living and working in Newton and trying to make a positive impact on our City...I sit on the Newton Housing Partnership and my husband Tom Rezendes is on the mayor's IT Advisory Committee.

I recognize how important this development is to the City. In the past decade, our neighborhood has worked with developers and the City to create carefully planned, well executed and successful real estate developments that have contributed greatly to the tax base in Newton – Riverside Center and Lasell Village.

We understand that there are those in the City that might want something bigger, something that might provide a higher tax base, or something that might be more aesthetically appealing. **We believe that the desired fiscal benefit must be weighed against the impact on the quality of life of residents, which is mentioned in the pre-amble to the City of Newton Zoning Ordinance.**

The reality is that as we have gone through the planning process, the developer has not been able to link the site access directly to Route 128. There is a limited amount of actual developable space on the site due to the MBTA maintenance uses. As the RSNC survey shows, there are many who would like more retail, some who would like to see smaller scale buildings and many that would like to see less overall development. Therefore, without direct access and little land, there have had to be tradeoffs to get a project that will work financially for the developer, provide revenue to the City and have less direct impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.

While I can't be overly enthusiastic about a development that will greatly impact our resident's everyday life for the many years it takes to develop, I do believe what we have seen recently is better than previous plans. While the devil is in the detail, the zoning text appears to be something that can be fine-tuned and create a framework for a development that is beneficial to the community.

**As noted in our attorney's comments, the condominium would still like to see a smaller project, and in particular, as you will see in our attorney's notes, we have suggested a reduction of 50 units of multi-family housing and 50,000 square feet of office.** We have provided a copy of the developers plan, and penciled in the condominium location. To put density into context and explain why we are asking for a further reduction, the 9 unit condominium sits on a one acre parcel. As best we can tell from the site plan, the developer is proposing 290 units on 4.5 acres, or 53 units an acre, extremely dense. In fact, the 40B standard for multi-family rental in an urban area is 40 units an acre. Therefore we hope you can understand our concerns about the residential density if you compare our condominium 9 units an acre (the 1983 standard?) to the proposed 53 units an acre on the opposite side of the street.

**Studies and Peer Reviews.** We would like to see a requirement in the zoning text for a market needs assessment for all the proposed uses on the site as well as a peer review of the market needs assessment. A market needs assessment will show what the supply and demand is for the various types of uses proposed on the site. We are asking for this because we want to ensure that the fiscal impact that is being assumed for this project be realized, and that we are not just left with an apartment development and no office development (the portion that will be responsible for the bulk of the City tax revenue).

For you information, we have provided the following vacancy information on office and retail buildings in Massachusetts, from a report run on co-star on March 20, 2012. Co-star offers and tracks commercial space listings, akin to the multi-listing service for residential real estate. We provide this to show you why we believe the office space should be reduced. We don't want more vacant space in our neighborhood. Vacant space does

not pay taxes, and smart growth also means getting existing buildings redeveloped and leased; not always new development.

The first chart is for office vacancy in Newton, showing 1,124,622 of vacant space and an overall vacancy rate of 13.9%.

**Availability and Vacancy Analysis**

Grand Totals Office										
Bldgs	Existing	Direct	Vacant Rate %	Direct w/	Vacant % with Sublet	Total SF	Direct	Sublet	Max	Avg Rate
189	5,423,756	725,404	13.4%	751,698	13.9%	1,124,622	1,036,797	87,825	170,710	\$21.34/fs

The second chart is for retail vacancy in Newton, showing 1,405,498 available square feet and 9.5% vacancy rate.

Grand Totals Retail										
Bldgs	Existing Rentable Bldg Area	Direct SF Vacant	Vacant Rate %	Direct w/ Sublet SF Vacant	Vacant % with Sublet	Total SF Available	Direct SF Available	Sublet SF Available	Max SF Contig	Avg Rate
429	10,129,511	932,462	9.2%	963,172	9.5%	1,405,498	1,311,057	94,441	170,710	\$17.51/nnn

The last chart shows the vacancy for Riverside Center Office Park, the building on Grove Street just beyond the MBTA station that was formerly Jordan Marsh building. It shows 63,116 square feet vacant.

Riverside Center Office Park		
Total Avail:	63,116 SF	Typical Floor Size: 123,678 SF
		RBA: 494,710 SF

**Outside Studies and Peer Review Base Requirements:** We would like to see detailed requirements with regard to outside studies and peer reviews. For example, we are concerned that the peer review that is taking place now on the Riverside Development is on drawings that are basic concept plans, not even 20% engineered,

and do not have any state approvals. Therefore, the plans are subject to change as they are engineered and the state provides it parameters. In particular, the intersection near our condo coming off Route 128 now shows a slip lane, but in recent meetings with development team members, we are hearing a right hand turn will be required. So the question is, when will a plan with this new configuration be available, and will it be peer reviewed? **Perhaps there needs to be a requirement for multiple reviews as the plans progress and also a standard?**

**We would like to see two uses excluded: Bio-chemical manufacturing and on site dry cleaning.**

**We would like to see two uses not by right, but by Special Permit and with size limitations: Eating and Drinking Establishments and Wireless Communications Devices.**

We are particularly sensitive to these issues because of the numerous issues that have occurred since the Hotel Indigo opened which is located directly across the street from the condominium, and is owned by the potential developers of Riverside Station. Evidently the prior hotel had a function room, which was eliminated to make room for a substantially larger restaurant and bar for the Hotel Indigo. The condominium was never invited into the permitting/licensing process for these changes and after three years, we are still trying to get matters resolved. The issues range from illegal signs left on all night and shining in our windows, rowdy patrons speaking loudly and peeling out of the parking lot late at night, service vehicles turning on our sidewalk and blocking Grove Street as they back into the Hotel Indigo parking area and odor due to the use of duck fat for cooking. **In addition to requiring special permit approval, we would like the size of the restaurant and bar limited to less than 50 seats, and the bar seating limited to less 12 seats of those 50 seats, much like Boca Bella in Auburndale, which is mostly restaurant with a small bar.**

With regard to the potential use of wireless devices, we are again dealing with the potential of gas fired generators on top of the Hotel Indigo. There is no way this type of equipment would not make a large amount

of noise; therefore we would like this type of use regulated by a special permit so the type and kind of equipment could be reviewed.

During the process we have been fortunate to meet and work with well-intentioned neighbors, alderman and City workers and recognize that this not an easy decision.

I leave you with the following quotes to consider as you deliberate: *“Greed for lack of a better word is good”*, Gordon Gekko Wall Street and *“What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world yet forfeits his soul”* Mathew 1626.

We hope that the decisions that you make are based on facts and we look forward to continuing our positive and informative working relationship.

Thank you for your consideration on these matters.

### **Woodland Grove Condominium Unit Owners and Occupants**

A-1 Liqun Yu and Jun Qian

A-2 Duncan Po and Annie Lei

A-3 Lynne D. Sweet and Thomas P. Rezendes

B-1 Newton Housing Authority/Edward, Nella and Sash Bogushevsky Nella and Sasha

B-2 Lois Crandall

B-3 Yixin Xu

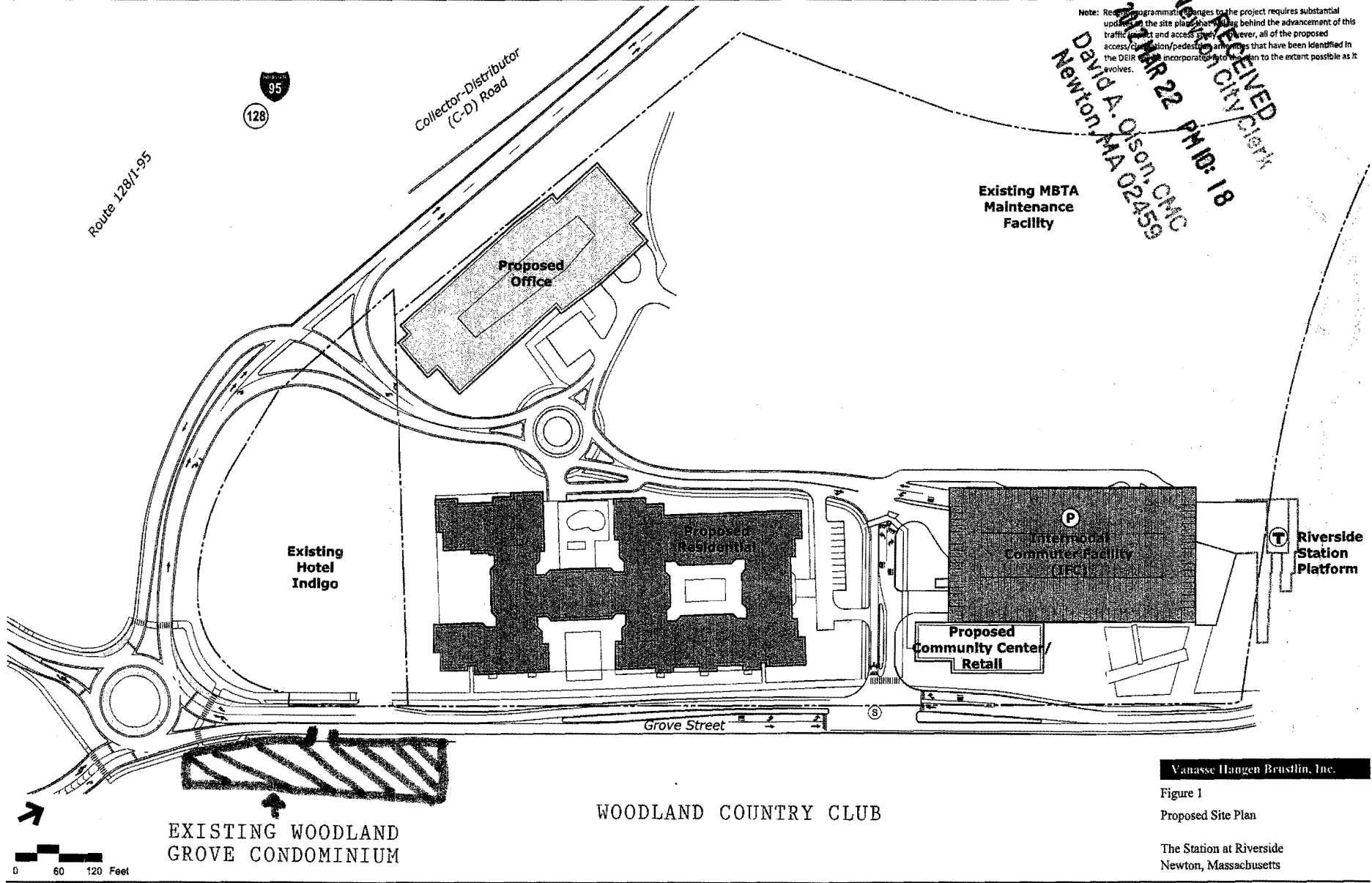
C-1 Judy Sudhalter and Abraham Torosyan

C-2 Helen Adelman

C-3 Julie Messer and Randy Messer

Note: Revisions to the project requires substantial updates to the site plan. However, all of the proposed access/circulation/pedestrian amenities that have been identified in the DEIR are incorporated into the plan to the extent possible as it evolves.

RECEIVED  
2012 MAR 22 PM 10:18  
David A. Olson, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459  
City Clerk



Vannasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.  
 Figure 1  
 Proposed Site Plan  
 The Station at Riverside  
 Newton, Massachusetts



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David A. Olson, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459

One Grant Street  
Framingham, MA 01701-9005  
(508) 903-2000  
(508) 903-2001 fax  
[www.rizzo.com](http://www.rizzo.com)

December 10, 2001

Mr. Juan Prieto  
Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
99 Summer Street  
Boston, MA 02110

**Re: MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts**

Dear Mr. Prieto:

Rizzo Associates, Inc. is pleased to submit herein our study of alternative access for the MBTA Riverside Station in Newton, Massachusetts. This study incorporates recent work completed by the Commonwealth's Central Transportation Planning Staff regarding travel patterns of users of Riverside Station. It also documents "Build" traffic conditions at the Riverside Place office development. This study was prepared in accordance with the City of Newton's waiver for the redevelopment of the property at 275 Grove Street, now know as Riverside Place.

This study reaches the following conclusions.

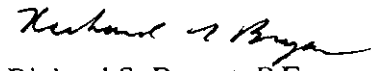
- A new access road for Riverside Station can be constructed at the Northbound Route 128/I-95 service road for an estimated \$750,000. Total implementation cost with permitting and design would be \$1,000,000.
- A new traffic signal at the Route 128/I-95 Northbound Ramps and Grove Street intersection would be required to support the new access road concept.
- Morning peak hour traffic volumes on Grove Street between Route 128/I-95 and the existing Riverside Station entrance could be reduced by 25 percent with construction of the new access and a restriction on left-turns into the station from Grove Street.
- Sixty-two percent of the morning peak hour traffic destined to Riverside Station originates from Route 128/I-95.

Mr. Juan Prieto  
December 10, 2001  
Page 2

- The actual traffic generation for Riverside Place 18 percent less than the forecasted volumes presented in the permitting phase of this project. Additionally, the trip distribution for Riverside Place matches the earlier forecasts.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our services for this study. Please call if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Richard S. Bryant, P.E.  
Vice President

PA7129\_Riv\Reports\de05\_01 Access Study.doc

**RIZZO**

ASSOCIATES

A PETRA TECH COMPANY

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Rizzo Associates, Inc. has conducted a study of access alternatives for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Riverside Station in accordance with the City of Newton's waiver requirements for the redevelopment of the property at 275 Grove Street in Newton, Massachusetts. The station location with respect to the local roadway system is shown in Figure 1. This study presents an analysis and assessment of existing conditions, a proposed alternative vehicle access for Riverside Station, and the impact of this proposal on the surrounding roadway network. The study also incorporates recent motorist origin/destination studies completed by Massachusetts's Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) for Riverside Station and traffic surveys of the 275 Grove Street property. The alternative analysis includes an estimated construction cost for the improvements and a determination of the additional roadway system capacity generated by the improvements.

### **1.1 Project Description**

As a condition of the permit for redevelopment of 275 Grove Street, now known as Riverside Place, Cabot, Cabot and Forbes agreed to conduct a study of alternative vehicle access to the MBTA Riverside Station. The suggested new access plan would create a new vehicle access for Riverside Station at the Route 128/Interstate 95 (I-95) northbound frontage road and eliminate left turns into the Station at the current entrance on Grove Street. This would help provide smoother traffic operations along Grove Street in front of Riverside Station and remove much of the regional traffic destined for Riverside Station from Grove Street.

### **1.2 Study Area**

The study area encompasses the roadways and intersections in the vicinity of Riverside Station that would be most affected by the proposed access changes. The study intersections are graphically depicted on Figure 1 (referenced above). These locations are:

- MBTA Riverside Station Driveway/Grove Street
- Route 128/I-95 Northbound Ramps/Grove Street
- Route 128/I-95 Southbound Ramps/Grove Street
- Route 128/I-95 Northbound Ramps/Proposed Riverside Station Driveway

The study also include traffic surveys at the driveways to Riverside Place as a means of validating the trip generation and trip distribution assumptions used in the planning phase of the development.

## **2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS**

An investigation was conducted of existing roadway facilities and traffic patterns in the study area. The investigation was completed through field visits, a traffic count of the Riverside Place site driveways, and a review of recent traffic studies. The data reviewed included impact studies for projects in the Riverside Station area, the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) license plate survey of the Newton Lower Falls area, a survey of Riverside Place employees, and the 1994 CTPS survey of passengers using the MBTA Riverside Station. The results of the existing conditions analysis are presented below.

### **2.1 Roadway Conditions**

Vehicular access for Riverside Station is provided on Grove Street. Grove Street traverses the City of Newton in a northeast to southwest direction and connects parts of Newton with Route 128/I-95. Southwest of the study area, Grove Street passes through Newton Lower Falls and provides connections to Route 16 and by way of Route 16 to Route 9. Northeast of Route 128/I-95, Grove Street passes by Riverside Station and Riverside Place and enters the village of Auburndale. Land uses along Grove Street in the vicinity of Riverside Station include a golf course, hotel, Riverside Place, and two residential apartment complexes. Land uses immediately outside the study area are primarily residential and dominated by single family homes.

Between Route 128 and Riverside Place, Grove Street is a two-lane, two-way roadway. Grove Street is a median divided roadway in front of Riverside Place and undivided elsewhere. The only signalized intersection along this section of Grove Street is at the main entrance to Riverside Place. Here the median divided roadway widens to three lanes providing a dedicated left-turn lane into Riverside Place. The entrance to Riverside Station is a T-type intersection with STOP sign control on the station driveway. The intersection is located approximately 1000 feet northeast of the Route 128/I-95 northbound off ramp. The driveway is median divided and provides separate exiting lanes for left and right turns. Grove Street is only 24feet wide at this location with one 12feet wide lane in each direction. As such, motorists waiting to turn left into the station block through traffic on Grove Street.

At the Route 128/I-95 interchange Grove Street is much wider than elsewhere and provides full width shoulders. The curb to curb roadway width is approximately 44

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feet on the bridge over Route 128/I-95. The northbound and southbound ramps at Grove Street each have full channelization for the left and right turn movements to and from the Route 128/I-95. Sidewalks are present on both sides of Grove Street on the bridge and on at least one side of the street throughout the study area.

## **2.2 Existing Traffic Conditions**

Existing traffic flow patterns were developed for the AM peak hour. As described above, the proposed roadway system changes would provide relief to the left-turn movement into Riverside Station from Grove Street. This movement is at its highest level during the AM peak commuter period. Consequently, the AM peak hour is the focus of this study.

The baseline or existing traffic networks were compiled using data from several sources. As noted above these include new traffic counts, traffic counts from recent studies and origin/destination surveys. The origin/destination information provides an enhanced level of understanding of traffic flows as volumes can be traced through a sequence of intersections. Development of the traffic flow networks and travel routes are described in the following sections.

### **2.2.1 Riverside Place Planning Study**

A traffic impact study was prepared for the Riverside Place redevelopment proposal in 1996. The study included peak period traffic counts at each of the intersections included in this current study. Figure 2 provides the 2000 volumes along Grove Street prior to the construction of Riverside Place. As shown, the segment of Grove Street between Route 128 and the Riverside Station driveway is the highest volume roadway link in the study area. This link carries 876 vehicles per hour in the heavier northbound direction during the morning peak hour. A much lower volume occurs, 595 northbound vehicles per hour, north of Riverside Station adjacent to Riverside Place. The total volume on the link adjacent to Riverside Station is approximately 1,390 vehicles per hour. In comparison, approximately 1,015 vehicles pass over Route 128/I-95 on Grove Street during the AM peak hour.

### **2.2.2 Origin/Destination Studies**

The baseline traffic flow network provides a description of traffic flow patterns in the study area but does not describe the origin of trips to and from Riverside Station. A complete understanding of vehicle approach patterns is necessary to support the traffic reassignments associated with the proposed Station access

improvements. Presently, traffic can approach Riverside Station from four different routes:

- Grove Street, from the northeast
- Grove Street, from the southwest
- Route 128/I-95 from the north
- Route 128/I-95 from the south

The volume of Station traffic approaching from the northeast can be readily determined by examining the driveway counts and noting the volume that turns right into the Station. The other three routes contribute to the left-turn movement into the station. However, to identify the split among these three routes reference is made to the CTPS origin/destination studies. The two studies referenced include:

- A 1994/1995 survey of Green-line passengers at Riverside Station
- An April 2000 license plate survey in Newton Lower Falls

Relevant information from each study is presented below.

### **2.2.3 1994/1995 Survey of Riverside Patrons**

In 1994 and 1995 the CTPS conducted a survey of passengers using the MBTA Riverside Station. This survey was conducted from 6:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The arrival method of boarding passengers and the originating town of those passengers were surveyed. Alighting passengers were also surveyed about their departure method and the town of their final destination. Stopping the survey before the evening peak hours was an attempt to avoid surveying the same passengers twice (boarding in the morning and alighting in the evening). Figure 3 shows the origin town of passengers boarding at Riverside Station while Figure 4 shows the destination towns of passengers exiting at Riverside Station based on the CTPS data.

Rizzo Associates used the CTPS information presented in Figures 3 and 4 to assign traffic to/from individual towns to one of the four approach routes listed above in Section 2.2.2. The towns associated with each route are also noted in Figures 3 and 4. Based on this analysis, 12 percent of Riverside patrons arriving by auto make a right turn into Riverside Station and 88 percent make a left turn into the Station. Of those 88 percent of arriving patrons who made a left turn into the site:

- 51 percent used the Route 128/I-95 from the north
- 11 percent used the Route 128/I-95 from the south
- 26 percent used Grove Street southwest of Route 128/I-95

improvements. Presently, traffic can approach Riverside Station from four different routes:

- Grove Street, from the northeast
- Grove Street, from the southwest
- Route 128/I-95 from the north
- Route 128/I-95 from the south

The volume of Station traffic approaching from the northeast can be readily determined by examining the driveway counts and noting the volume that turns right into the Station. The other three routes contribute to the left-turn movement into the station. However, to identify the split among these three routes reference is made to the CTPS origin/destination studies. The two studies referenced include:

- A 1994/1995 survey of Green-line passengers at Riverside Station
- An April 2000 license plate survey in Newton Lower Falls

Relevant information from each study is presented below.

### 2.2.3 1994/1995 Survey of Riverside Patrons

In 1994 and 1995 the CTPS conducted a survey of passengers using the MBTA Riverside Station. This survey was conducted from 6:00 AM to 3:30 PM. The arrival method of boarding passengers and the originating town of those passengers were surveyed. Alighting passengers were also surveyed about their departure method and the town of their final destination. Stopping the survey before the evening peak hours was an attempt to avoid surveying the same passengers twice (boarding in the morning and alighting in the evening). Figure 3 shows the origin town of passengers boarding at Riverside Station while Figure 4 shows the destination towns of passengers exiting at Riverside Station based on the CTPS data.

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- 51 percent used the Route 128/I-95 from the north
- 11 percent used the Route 128/I-95 from the south
- 26 percent used Grove Street southwest of Route 128/I-95

The 12 percent/88 percent split at the Station driveway is comparable to the traffic patterns at the Station driveway observed in the 1996 planning study for Riverside Place. The split observed in 1996 was 17 percent/83 percent.

### 2.2.2 Review of the CTPS May 2000 License Plate Survey

On May 17, 2000, the CTPS undertook a license plate survey in Newton Lower Falls. The survey covered the morning peak period from 7:00 to 9:00 AM and was conducted at selected locations including two locations on Grove Street. CTPS Location 2 was on Grove Street just northeast of Route 128/I-95 and CTPS Location 3 was on Grove Street just northeast of the MBTA Riverside Station entrance. The survey indicates that over the two-hour morning peak period:

- there were 829 westbound vehicles and 1,611 eastbound vehicles at Location 2 (Grove Street, just northeast of Route 128/I-95)
- there were 754 westbound vehicles and 1,125 eastbound vehicles at Location 3 (Grove Street, just northeast of the MBTA Riverside Station entrance)
- 59 percent of the eastbound vehicles at Location 2 also passed Location 3 in the eastbound direction
- 89 percent of the westbound vehicles at Location 3 also passed Location 2 in the westbound direction.

Based on the CTPS license plate survey data, 89 percent of the traffic entering the station during the morning peak period approaches from the southwest and 11 percent approaches from the northeast. This result is consistent with the findings of the earlier ridership survey presented above. Also, the survey indicates that 744 vehicles enter the Station over the two-hour period.

The license plate data were also used to estimate baseline (existing) peak hour volumes entering the Station driveway/Grove Street intersection. The morning peak period counts from the traffic impact study for Riverside Place indicate that within the 7:00 to 9:00 AM peak period, 58 percent of traffic occurred during the peak hour. Consequently, the morning peak period volumes recorded by CTPS were multiplied by 58 percent to obtain peak hour volumes at the intersection. This analysis suggests that 383 vehicles turn left into the station during the morning peak hour. In comparison, the 1996 counts for this intersection showed 340 vehicles making this turning movement. For the current study, the higher volumes were used to represent existing traffic conditions.

For Grove Street at the Route 128/I-95 ramp intersections, the 275 Grove Street study was used to determine the turning and through percentages at each intersection. These percentages were used to distribute traffic through the study area and are depicted in Figure 5. Since Riverside Place was not fully occupied at

the time of the 2000 CTPS License Plate survey, it was necessary to determine the number of trips into Riverside Place and the distribution of those trips through the study area. The Riverside Place site drive count and a survey of the employees at Riverside Place provided the necessary information to completely construct the baseline condition.

### **2.2.3 Riverside Place Site Drive Count**

Rizzo Associates conducted peak period traffic counts at the three driveways serving the Riverside Place office building. These surveys, conducted in November 2000, were specifically scheduled to occur once the new office building reached full occupancy and during a normal working season (i.e. not during a major Holiday period). Traffic counts were performed between 7:00 and 9:00 AM for the three site driveways at Riverside Place. These counts were conducted to determine the number of vehicles entering and exiting the Riverside Place development project during the morning peak hour. (This development was not fully occupied at the time of the CTPS license plate survey. Consequently, trips to and from this development are not fully considered in the CTPS database.) The counts, depicted on Figure 6, show 468 vehicles entering Riverside Place and 26 vehicles exiting during the morning peak hour. Twenty seven percent of the entering trips approached the site from the east while 73 percent approached the site from the west.

A comparison of the expected generated traffic from the traffic study for 275 Grove Street with the November 2000 traffic counts reveals that Riverside Place is actually generating fewer trips than anticipated. The predicted volume was 610 trips. The actual volume is 468 trips. The predicted trip distribution, a 75 percent/25 percent split closely matches the actual 73 percent/27 percent split. One consequence of this is that all study area intersections are experiencing lower volumes than anticipated.

### **2.2.4 Review of Riverside Place Employee Residence Data**

A survey of the employees of the tenants of Riverside Place was performed by Rizzo Associates to determine where these employees live. The employees at Riverside Place reside throughout the metro Boston area. Due to the proximity of the MBTA Riverside Station, the traffic impact report for 275 Grove Street (Riverside Place) assumed that 15 percent of these employees will take transit, particularly those living along the Riverside Branch (D branch) of the Greenline. Fifteen percent is considered to be the largest percentage of employees who will use transit to reach Riverside Place because of the limited catchment area of the D

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Greenline and the unattractiveness of transfers for most commuters. Most employees do not live within walking distance of a Greenline station.

It is expected, therefore, that the majority of employees will commute to work in a single occupant vehicle. A likely approach route for employees driving to work was determined based upon the towns of employee residence. Each town was assigned a preferred route and every employee in a town was considered to use the same route to work. The routes are based upon the employee survey. Most employees working at Riverside Place approach the site using Route 128/I-95 from the north and therefore will use the Route 128/I-95 southbound ramps to access the site.

Figure 7 shows the towns where employees live and the work trips assigned to that town. Based on this distribution 62 percent of the Riverside Place traffic arrives from I-95 North; 20 percent arrives from I-95 South; and, 10 percent arrives from Grove Street west of the I-95. The 10 percent figure is consistent with the predicted traffic distribution for Riverside Place. The percentage using I-95 is higher than predicted, 82 percent compared to 65 percent. Based upon the assigned approach route, the breakdown of employees by their arrival route to work at Riverside Place is as follows:

- 13 percent arrive on the Greenline
- 87 percent arrive driving an automobile

The 13 percent transit share is within the expected 15 percent transit share assumed in the original report for 275 Grove Street.

The 2000 AM Peak Hour traffic network, including the Riverside Place site drive counts, the CTPS License Plate Survey and the 2000 driveway counts performed at Riverside Place, is given in Figure 8.

### **3.0 FUTURE CONDITIONS**

#### **3.1 Alternative Access Conditions**

The potential modifications to the MBTA Riverside Station access are the relocation of the main access from Grove Street to the west side of the Station. The new main access would be located on the Route 128/I-95 northbound ramp service road north of Grove Street. It would allow right turns in and right turns out. Right and left turns out and right turns in would still be permitted at the current access along Grove Street. Left turns into the current access would not be allowed and would be relocated to the new access. As part of these improvements, the

intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128/I-95 northbound ramps would be signalized. These proposed improvements are schematically depicted in Figure 9. The estimated cost of these improvements is \$750,000 not including engineering and permitting costs. Additional costs may be required to reconfigure parking lots and traffic circulation on the Station property.

### **3.2 Future Roadway Operating Conditions with New Riverside Access**

Figure 10 shows the AM peak hour traffic volumes in the study area with the new MBTA Riverside Station access. Table 1 gives the results of a level of service (LOS) analysis for the proposed access with these volumes. The level of service analysis was conducted using the procedures defined in the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual* published by the Transportation Research Board (TRB). The level of service analysis methodology is described in Appendix B.

**Table 1 AM Peak Levels of Service with New Riverside Access**

Location	Intersection Control	Existing Condition			Future Condition with New Access		
		V/C Ratio <sup>1</sup>	Delay <sup>2</sup>	LOS <sup>3</sup>	V/C Ratio <sup>1</sup>	Delay <sup>2</sup>	LOS <sup>3</sup>
Grove Street/Riverside Station Access	Unsignalized	3.08	>180	F	0.23	33.8	D
Grove Street/Northbound 128 Ramps	Unsignalized/ Signalized*	1.21	149.2	F	0.78	10.2	B
Grove Street/Southbound 128 Ramps	Unsignalized	0.76	27.3	D	0.76	27.3	D
Northbound 128 Ramps/ New Station Access	Unsignalized	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.08	10.0	B

<sup>1</sup> V/C = Volume to Capacity ratio.

<sup>2</sup> Average Delay in seconds per vehicle.

<sup>3</sup> LOS = Level of Service.

N/A = Not Applicable

\* Proposed signalization

With the addition of the new Riverside Station access and signalization of the Grove Street/Route 128/I-95 northbound ramps intersection, several intersections experience improved levels of service. The newly signalized intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128/I-95 northbound ramps improves from LOS F to LOS B. The current Riverside Station entrance improves from LOS F to LOS D. With the new Station access, over 400 vehicles will be relocated from Grove Street during the morning peak hour. This represents approximately 25 percent of the peak hour traffic volume on Grove Street between Route 128/I-95 and the existing MBTA Riverside Station entrance.



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Grove Street/Riverside Station Access	Unsignalized	3.08	>180	F	0.23	33.8	D
Grove Street/Northbound 128 Ramps	Unsignalized/ Signalized*	1.21	149.2	F	0.78	10.2	B
Grove Street/Southbound 128 Ramps	Unsignalized	0.76	27.3	D	0.76	27.3	D
Northbound 128 Ramps/ New Station Access	Unsignalized	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.08	10.0	B

<sup>1</sup> V/C = Volume to Capacity ratio.

<sup>2</sup> Average Delay in seconds per vehicle.

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With the addition of the new Riverside Station access and signalization of the Grove Street/Route 128/I-95 northbound ramps intersection, several intersections experience improved levels of service. The newly signalized intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128/I-95 northbound ramps improves from LOS F to LOS B. The current Riverside Station entrance improves from LOS F to LOS D. With the new Station access, over 400 vehicles will be relocated from Grove Street during the morning peak hour. This represents approximately 25 percent of the peak hour traffic volume on Grove Street between Route 128/I-95 and the existing MBTA Riverside Station entrance.



Movement	EBL	EBR	NBL	NBT	SBT	SBR
Lane Configurations	↙	↘		↙	↘	
Sign Control	Stop			Free	Free	
Grade	0%			0%	0%	
Volume (veh/h)	94	97	378	840	437	50
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	99	102	398	884	460	53
Pedestrians						
Lane Width (ft)						
Walking Speed (ft/s)						
Percent Blockage						
Right turn flare (veh)						
Median type	None					
Median storage (veh)						
vC, conflicting volume	2166	486	513			
vC1, stage 1 conf vol						
vC2, stage 2 conf vol						
tC, single (s)	6.4	6.2	4.1			
tC, 2 stage (s)						
tF (s)	3.5	3.3	2.2			
p0 queue free %	0	82	62			
cM capacity (veh/h)	32	581	1053			

Direction/Lane #	EB 1	EB 2	NB 1	SB 1
Volume Total	99	102	1282	513
Volume Left	99	0	398	0
Volume Right	0	102	0	53
cSH	32	581	1053	1700
Volume to Capacity	3.08	0.18	0.38	0.30
Queue Length (ft)	Err	16	45	0
Control Delay (s)	Err	12.5	8.9	0.0
Lane LOS	F	B	A	
Approach Delay (s)	4927.3		8.9	0.0
Approach LOS	F			

Intersection Summary			
Average Delay	502.1		
Intersection Capacity Utilization	111.4%	ICU Level of Service	G



Movement	EBL2	EBI	EBR	NBL2	NBI	NBR	SEL	SER	SWL	SWR	SWR2
Lane Configurations		Free			Stop	↑	Stop		Free	↑	↑
Sign Control		0%			0%		0%		0%		
Grade											
Volume (veh/h)	41	799	0	25	0	419	0	0	0	411	120
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	43	841	0	26	0	441	0	0	0	433	126
Pedestrians											
Lane Width (ft)											
Walking Speed (ft/s)											
Percent Blockage											
Right turn flare (veh)											
Median type					None		None				
Median storage veh											
vC, conflicting volume	559			1360	1486	841	1360	1360	841		
vC1, stage 1 conf vol											
vC2, stage 2 conf vol											
tC, single (s)	4.1			7.1	6.5	6.2	7.1	6.5	4.1		
tC, 2 stage (s)											
tF (s)	2.2			3.5	4.0	3.3	3.5	4.0	2.2		
p0 queue free %	96			78	100	0	0	100	100		
cM capacity (veh/h)	1012			121	119	365	0	142	794		

Direction Lane #	EBL1	NB1	NB2	SW1	SW2
Volume Total	884	26	441	433	126
Volume Left	43	26	0	0	0
Volume Right	0	0	441	0	126
cSH	1012	121	365	1700	1700
Volume to Capacity	0.04	0.22	1.21	0.25	0.07
Queue Length (ft)	3	19	462	0	0
Control Delay (s)	1.1	42.6	149.2	0.0	0.0
Lane LOS	A	E	F		
Approach Delay (s)	1.1	143.2		0.0	
Approach LOS		F			

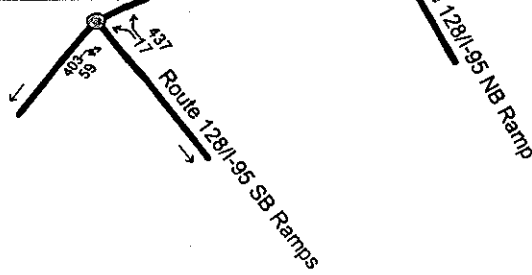
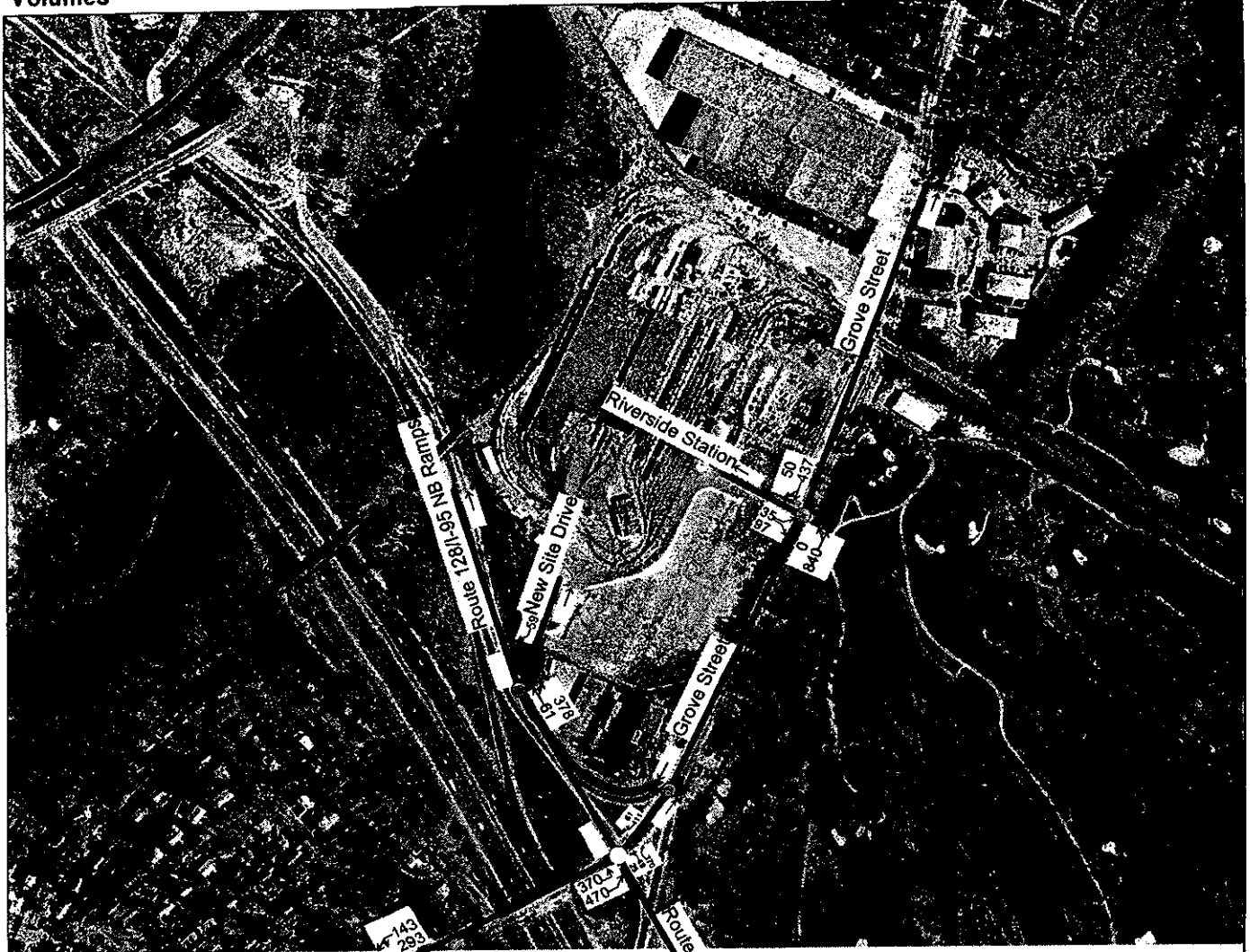
Intersection Summary	
Average Delay	35.6
Intersection Capacity Utilization	89.1%
ICU Level of Service	D



Movement	WBL2	WBL	NWL	NWR	NER	NER2
Lane Configurations						
Sign Control		Free	Stop		Free	
Grade		0%	0%		0%	
Volume (veh/h)	293	143	17	437	403	59
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	308	151	18	460	424	62
Pedestrians						
Lane Width (ft)						
Walking Speed (ft/s)						
Percent Blockage						
Right turn flare (veh)						
Median type			None			
Median storage veh						
vC, conflicting volume	486		1223	455		
vC1, stage 1 conf vol						
vC2, stage 2 conf vol						
tC, single (s)	4.1		6.4	6.2		
tC, 2 stage (s)						
tF (s)	2.2		3.5	3.3		
p0 queue free %	71		87	24		
cM capacity (veh/h)	1077		141	605		

Direction Lane #	WBL1	NWL1	NWL2	NE1
Volume Total	459	18	460	486
Volume Left	308	18	0	0
Volume Right	0	0	460	62
cSH	1077	141	605	1700
Volume to Capacity	0.29	0.13	0.76	0.29
Queue Length (ft)	30	11	172	0
Control Delay (s)	7.5	34.1	27.3	0.0
Lane LOS	A	D	D	
Approach Delay (s)	7.5	27.6		0.0
Approach LOS		D		

Intersection Summary			
Average Delay		11.7	
Intersection Capacity Utilization	65.3%		ICU Level of Service B





Movement	EBL	EBR	NBL	NBT	SBT	SBR
Lane Configurations	↘	↗		↕	↕	
Sign Control	Stop			Free	Free	
Grade	0%			0%	0%	
Volume (veh/h)	35	97	0	840	437	50
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	37	102	0	884	460	53
Pedestrians						
Lane Width (ft)						
Walking Speed (ft/s)						
Percent Blockage						
Right turn flare (veh)						
Median type	None					
Median storage (veh)						
vC, conflicting volume	1371	486	513			
vC1, stage 1 conf vol						
vC2, stage 2 conf vol						
tC, single (s)	6.4	6.2	4.1			
tC, 2 stage (s)						
tF (s)	3.5	3.3	2.2			
p0 queue free %	77	82	100			
cM capacity (veh/h)	161	581	1053			

Direction Lane #	EB 1	EB 2	NB 1	SB 1
Volume Total	37	102	884	513
Volume Left	37	0	0	0
Volume Right	0	102	0	53
cSH	161	581	1053	1700
Volume to Capacity	0.23	0.18	0.00	0.30
Queue Length (ft)	21	16	0	0
Control Delay (s)	33.8	12.5	0.0	0.0
Lane LOS	D	B		
Approach Delay (s)	18.2		0.0	0.0
Approach LOS	C			

Intersection Summary	
Average Delay	1.6
Intersection Capacity Utilization	56.5%
ICU Level of Service	A

5: Grove Street & Route 128/I-95 NB Ramp  
 Newton, MA

AM New Entrance  
 11/26/2001



Lane Group	EBL	EBL	EBR	NBL	NBT	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR	SWL	SWR	SWR
Lane Configurations	↖	↖			↖	↖						↖
Ideal Flow (vphpl)	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900	1900
Total Lost Time (s)	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Leading Detector (ft)	50	50		50	50	50						50
Trailing Detector (ft)	0	0		0	0	0						0
Turning Speed (mph)	15	15	9	15		9	15		9	15	9	9
Lane Util. Factor	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Fr						0.850						0.865
Flt Protected	0.950	0.950			0.984							
Satd. Flow (prot)	1770	1770	0	0	1833	1583	0	0	0	0	1611	0
Flt Permitted	0.243	0.950			0.984							
Satd. Flow (perm)	453	1770	0	0	1833	1583	0	0	0	0	1611	0
Right Turn on Red			Yes			Yes			Yes			Yes
Satd. Flow (RTOR)						376						14
Headway Factor	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Link Speed (mph)		30			30			30		30		
Link Distance (ft)		672			468			514		217		
Travel Time (s)		15.3			10.6			11.7		4.9		
Volume (vph)	370	470	0	25	49	370	0	0	0	0	411	61
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Adj. Flow (vph)	389	495	0	26	52	389	0	0	0	0	433	64
Lane Group Flow (vph)	389	495	0	0	78	389	0	0	0	0	497	0
Turn Type	pm+pt			Perm		Perm						
Protected Phases	7	4			2							8
Permitted Phases	4			2		2						8
Detector Phases	7	4		2	2	2						8
Minimum Initial (s)	4.0	4.0		4.0	4.0	4.0						1.0
Minimum Split (s)	10.0	22.0		22.0	22.0	22.0						22.0
Total Split (s)	13.0	43.0	0.0	22.0	22.0	22.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	0.0
Total Split (%)	20%	66%	0%	34%	34%	34%	0%	0%	0%	0%	46%	0%
Maximum Green (s)	8.0	38.0		17.0	17.0	17.0						25.0
Yellow Time (s)	4.0	4.0		4.0	4.0	4.0						4.0
All-Red Time (s)	1.0	1.0		1.0	1.0	1.0						1.0
Lead/Lag	Lead											Lag
Lead-Lag Optimize?	Yes											Yes
Vehicle Extension (s)	3.0	3.0		3.0	3.0	3.0						3.0
Recall Mode	None	None		Min	Min	Min						None
Walk Time (s)		5.0		5.0	5.0	5.0						5.0
Flash Dont Walk (s)		11.0		11.0	11.0	11.0						11.0
Pedestrian Calls (#/hr)		0		0	0	0						0
Act Effct Green (s)	33.6	33.6			9.8	9.8						20.2
Actuated g/C Ratio	0.65	0.65			0.19	0.19						0.39
v/c Ratio	0.73	0.43			0.22	0.64						0.78
Uniform Delay, d1	3.9	4.3			17.6	0.6						13.0
Delay	13.6	5.2			19.0	3.4						16.4
LOS	B	A			B	A						B
Approach Delay		8.9			6.0							
Approach LOS		A			A							
Queue Length 50th (ft)	36	50			21	0						113

5: Grove Street & Route 128/I-95 NB Ramp  
 Newton, MA

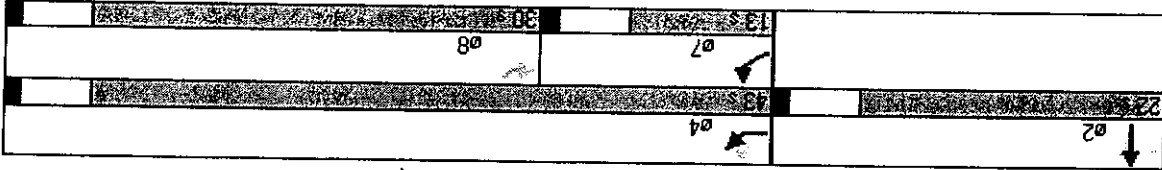
AM New Entrance  
 1/1/26/2001



Lane Group	EBL2	EBL1	EBR	NBL	NBR	SBL	SBT	SBR	SWL	SWR	SWR
Queue Length 95th (ft)	#169	154	592	53	59						
Internal Link Dist (ft)				388							
50th Up Block Time (%)											
95th Up Block Time (%)											
Turn Bay Length (ft)											
50th Bay Block Time %											
95th Bay Block Time %											
Queueing Penalty (veh)											

Intersection Summary  
 Area Type: Other  
 Cycle Length: 65  
 Actuated Cycle Length: 51.7  
 Natural Cycle: 65  
 Control Type: Actuated-Uncoordinated  
 Maximum v/c Ratio: 0.78  
 Intersection Signal Delay: 10.2  
 Intersection Capacity Utilization: 72.3%  
 IGV Level of Service: C  
 # 95th percentile volume exceeds capacity, queue may be longer.  
 Queue shown is maximum after two cycles.

Splits and Phases: 5: Grove Street & Route 128/I-95 NB Ramp







Movement	WBL1	WBL2	NWL	NWR	NER	NER2
Lane Configurations						
Sign Control		Free	Stop		Free	
Grade		0%	0%		0%	
Volume (veh/h)	293	143	17	437	403	59
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	308	151	18	460	424	62
Pedestrians						
Lane Width (ft)						
Walking Speed (ft/s)						
Percent Blockage						
Right turn flare (veh)						
Median type			None			
Median storage (veh)						
vC, conflicting volume	486		1223	455		
vC1, stage 1 conf vol						
vC2, stage 2 conf vol						
tC, single (s)	4.1		6.4	6.2		
tC, 2 stage (s)						
tF (s)	2.2		3.5	3.3		
p0 queue free %	71		87	24		
cM capacity (veh/h)	1077		141	605		

Direction Lane	WBL1	NWL	NWR	NER
Volume Total	459	18	460	486
Volume Left	308	18	0	0
Volume Right	0	0	460	62
cSH	1077	141	605	1700
Volume to Capacity	0.29	0.13	0.76	0.29
Queue Length (ft)	30	11	172	0
Control Delay (s)	7.5	34.1	27.3	0.0
Lane LOS	A	D	D	
Approach Delay (s)	7.5	27.6		0.0
Approach LOS		D		

Intersection Summary			
Average Delay		11.7	
Intersection Capacity Utilization	65.3%		ICU Level of Service B



Movement: NBT, NBR, SBT, SBL, SWL, SWR

Movement	NBT	NBR	SBT	SBL	SWL	SWR
Lane Configurations	Free	Free	Free	Free	Stop	Stop
Sign Control	Free	Free	Free	Free	Stop	Stop
Grade	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Volume (veh/h)	61	378	0	0	0	59
Peak Hour Factor	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95
Hourly flow rate (veh/h)	64	398	0	0	0	62
Pedestrians						
Lane Width (ft)						
Walking Speed (ft/s)						
Percent Blockage						
Right turn flare (veh)						
Median type					None	
Median storage (veh)						
VC, conflicting volume	462		263		263	
VC1, stage 1 cont vol						
VC2, stage 2 cont vol						
tC, single (s)	4.1		6.4		6.2	
tC, 2 stage (s)						
fF (s)						
p0 queue free %	100		100		92	
cM capacity (veh/h)	1099		726		775	

Direction: Lane, NBT, SWL

Volume Total	462	62
Volume Left	0	0
Volume Right	398	62
GSH	1700	775
Volume to Capacity	0.27	0.08
Queue Length (ft)	0	7
Control Delay (s)	0.0	10.0
Lane LOS	B	B
Approach Delay (s)	0.0	10.0
Approach LOS	B	B

Intersection Summary

Average Delay	1.2
Intersection Capacity Utilization	38.4%
ICU Level of Service	A

# RIZZO ASSOCIATES

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

One Grant Street  
 Framingham, MA 01701-9005  
 (508) 903-2000  
 (508) 903-2001 fax  
 www.rizzo.com

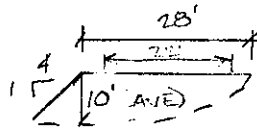
JOB GRDIE ST  
 SHEET NO. 1 OF 4  
 CALCULATED BY BJA DATE 7/01  
 CHECKED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

## RAMP PAVEMENT

6" BT	1 <sup>SF</sup> x 6' x 1/4" x 0.036	x \$ 5	= \$ 1.49
4" REINFORCED CONCRETE	1 <sup>SF</sup> x 4 1/2" x 1/27	x \$ 25	= 0.31
10" GRANULAR	1 <sup>SF</sup> x 10" x 1/27	x \$ 11	= 0.41
FG CONTACT	1 <sup>SF</sup> x 1/4"	x \$ 1.50	= 0.17
			<u>\$ 2.38/SF</u>

## EXIT RAMP TO VUE'A -

PROFILE UP TO 20' (±) FILL REQ'D. SAY, 10' AVE FILL FOR 260' BY 28' WIDE



ORDINARY TERROR	(28' x 10') + (5) (10' x 40') / 27	x 260' x \$ 6	= \$ 27,700
RAMP PAVT	(22' x 260')	x \$ 2.38	= 13,600
GUARDRAIL	260' (LET SIDE ONLY)	x \$ 15	= 3,900
CBS	2	x \$ 1500	= 3,000
12" RCP	260'	x \$ 30	= 7,800
SLOPED EDGING	200' (ISLAND ONLY)	x \$ 15	= 3,000
TYPE A BERM	260'	x \$ 3	= 780
			<u>SUBTOTAL 1 = \$ 59,780</u>

## MODIFY EXIST. MASS PRICE CONNECTOR

SLOPED EDGING	500	x \$ 15	= \$ 7,500
REMOVE PAVT	260' x 7' x 1/27	x \$ 25	= 600
RAMP PAVT	80' x 22'	x \$ 2.38	= 4200
EXCAV	80' x 22' x 2' / 27	x \$ 5	= 650
2' R CURBS	SAY, 200'	x \$ 10	= 2000
			<u>SUBTOTAL 2 = \$ 14,950</u>

# RIZZO ASSOCIATES

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

One Grant Street  
 Framingham, MA 01701-9005  
 (508) 903-2000  
 (508) 903-2001 fax  
 www.rizzo.com

JOB GRAND ST  
 SHEET NO. 2 OF 4  
 CALCULATED BY BWA DATE 7/01  
 CHECKED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

1-95 NB EXIT RAMP TO GRAND  
 WIDEN 6' FOR 600', RT SIDE

EXCAV 6' x 600' x 2' / 27  
 PAINT 6' x 600'  
 TYPE 2 KERB 600'  
 OVERLAY 22' 22' x 600' x 3" x 20% U / 9  
 GUARDRAIL 400'  
 REMOVE PAINT 400' x 22' x 6" / 12" x 1/27

x \$5	= \$1400
x 2.38	= \$3,200
x \$3	= \$1800
x \$10	= \$10,000
x \$15	= \$6,000
x \$5	= \$900
<hr/>	
SUBTOTAL 3 =	\$28,600

GRAND ST

SPOT WIDENING, INTERSECTION ISLAND, COLD PLANE/OVERLAY, DRIVEWAY

EXCAV 200' x 6' x 2' / 27 (INTERSECTION)  
 100' x 6' x 2' / 27 (ISLAND)  
 PAINT 200' x 6'  
 SLOPED EDGES 400' (ISLAND)  
 REMOVE PAINT (GRAND TO ENTRANCE PAINT) 230' x 22' x 6" / 12" x 1/27  
 VERT. CURB 350' + 350'  
 COLD PLANE 1300' x 26' x 1/4  
 OVERLAY 1300' x 26' x 3" x 20% U / 9  
 DRIVEWAY TO METX 100' x 20' (PAINT)  
 100' x 20' x 2' / 27 (EXCAV)  
 200' (CUCB)

x \$5	= \$450
x \$5	= \$200
x 2.38	= \$2900
x \$15	= \$6000
x \$5	= \$470
x \$22	= \$15,400
x \$3	= \$11,300
x \$10	= \$25,250
x 2.38	= \$4,800
x \$5	= \$740
x \$22	= \$4400
<hr/>	
SUBTOTAL 4 =	\$71,910

# RIZZO ASSOCIATES

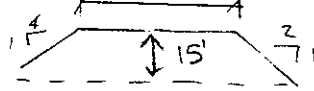
A TETRA TECH COMPANY

One Grant Street  
 Framingham, MA 01701-9005  
 (508) 903-2000  
 (508) 903-2001 fax  
 www.rizzo.com

JOB GLOBE ST  
 SHEET NO. 3 OF 4  
 CALCULATED BY BWT DATE 7/01  
 CHECKED BY \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

## ENTRANCE RAMP FROM MBTA

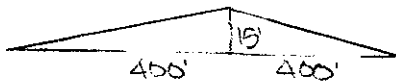
PROFILE AT 15' FILL REQ'D FOR 100' WIDE / 28' WIDE



ORDINARY BURROWS	$(28' \times 15') + (2 \times 15' \times 30')$	$\times 100'$	$\times \$6$	= \$ 14,300
RAMP PAVT	$(22' \times 100')$		$\times \$2.38$	= 5200
GUARDRAIL	100' (RT SIDE ONLY)		$\times \$15$	= 1500
CBS	1		$\times \$1500$	= 1500
12" RCP	30'		$\times \$30$	= 900
SLOPED EROSION	100' (ISLAND ONLY)		$\times \$15$	= 1500
TYPE A BERM	100'		$\times \$3$	= 300
			SUBTOTAL 5 =	\$ 25,200

## RAMP FROM EXIT TO MBTA TO TOUCHDOWN WITH EXIST. PAVT

PROFILE TRANSITIONS FROM 0 CHANGE TO ABOUT 15' OF FILL TO 0  
 USE 4% PROFILE,  $\therefore 15' \div 0.04 = 375'$ , SAY, 400'



USE 28' WIDE SECTION FOR 500'  
 USE 2:1 SLOPES

ORDINARY BURROWS	$(28' \times 400') \times \left[\frac{0+15}{2}\right] \times 2$ (MAIN SECTION)	$\times 2$	$\times \$6$	= \$ 37,300
	$(400') \times (7.5' \times 15') \times 2$ (SLOPES)	$\times 2$	$\times \$6$	= \$ 10,000
RAMP PAVT	22' x 500'		$\times \$2.38$	= 26,100
GUARD RAIL	500' + 200'		$\times \$15$	= 10,500
CBS	4		$\times \$1500$	= 6000
12" RCP	500'		$\times \$30$	= 15,000
SLOPED EROSION	200' (ISLAND ONLY)		$\times \$15$	= 3000
TYPE A BERM	700'		$\times \$3$	= 2100
			SUBTOTAL 6 =	\$ 107,000

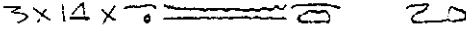
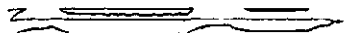
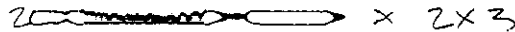
# RIZZO ASSOCIATES

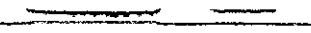

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

One ~~9~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ Grant Street  
 Framm ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ~~1111~~ ingham, MA 01701-9005  
 (508) ~~888~~ ~~888~~ ~~888~~ 903-2000  
 (508) ~~888~~ ~~888~~ ~~888~~ 903-2001 fax  
 WWW.RIZZO.COM

JOB GROVE ST  
 SHEET NO. 4  
 CALCULATED BY BWA  
 CHECKED BY \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCALE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNAL

GUIDE SIGNS  3x14x7  $\times$  20  $\times$  \$ 25  
 GUIDE SIGN SUPPLIES   $\times$  10,000  
 REF. SIGNALLING   $\times$  2x3  $\times$  \$ 15  
 LOAM SAY,  $(20' \times 10' \times 600') + (400' \times 30') + (250' \times 30')$   
 $+ (25' \times 10' \times 20') (800' \times 20' \times 2) \times \frac{4}{12} \times 15$

TEMP PRECAST CONC BARRIERS  SAY 800'  $\times$  \$ 20'  
 TPCB, E/R SAY 2000  $\times$  \$ 10  
 TMP VARIOUS  MESSAGE SIGNS, DRUMS, CONES, SIGNS

- SUBTOTAL 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

OTHER ITEMS (10%)  
 CONTINGENCY (20%)

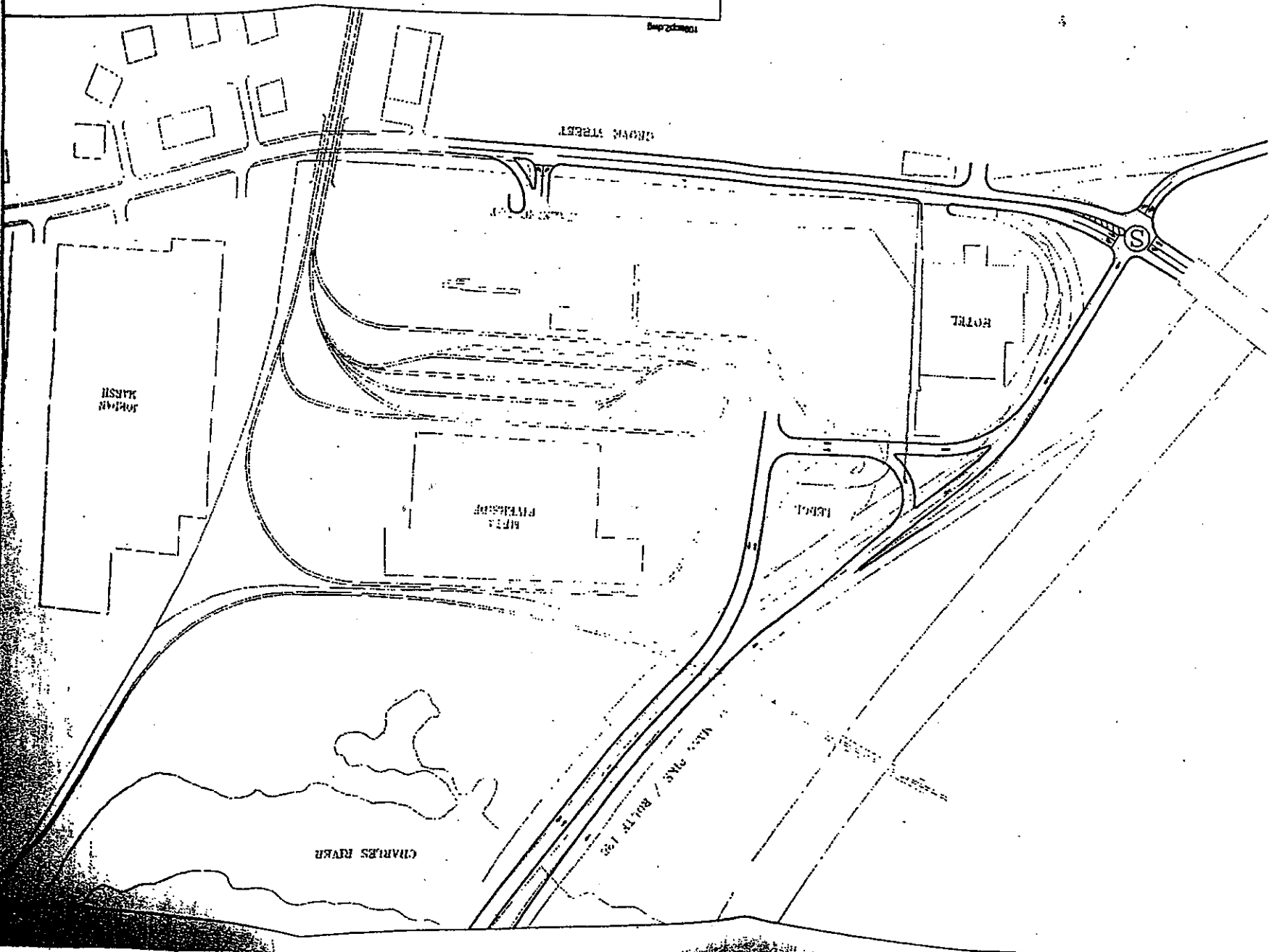
SAY \$ 750,000

POLICE NOT INCLUDED  
 I-95 TMP NOT INCLUDED  
 RIGHT OF WAY NOT INCLUDED

C-2

Ramp Access to  
MBTA Station w/ Two-Way  
Recreation Rd. Access  
Cove Street / House 128  
Ramp Alignment

RIZZO ASSOCIATES, INC.



**DRAFT**

**Proposed Justification Report  
Proposed Roadway Modifications  
Newton, Massachusetts**

**Submitted to:  
City of Newton, Massachusetts**

**Prepared by:  
Rizzo Associates, Inc.**

**May 1998**



**DRAFT**

**Proposed Justification Report  
Proposed Roadway Modifications  
Newton, Massachusetts**

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- Traffic Counts
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- Capacity Analyses
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- Other Concepts (C-2, C-3)

## INTRODUCTION

As a condition of the approval of the renovation of the Jordan Marsh building on Grove Street in Newton, Massachusetts, the project proponent agreed to fund the study of long range plans to reduce the amount of station traffic using Grove Street by modifying the existing Route 128 northbound ramps. Rizzo Associates, Inc. has been retained on behalf of the city of Newton to prepare and study concept plans for the modification of the Route 128 northbound ramps at Grove Street to provide direct connections to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Riverside station. The project area extends along Grove Street from the Riverside MBTA station driveway to the Route 128 southbound ramps intersection. It includes both the Route 16 and Grove Street interchanges with Route 128.

This Project Justification Report (PJR) has been prepared to document existing and future traffic conditions within the study area. This PJR includes an assessment of the design and operational characteristics of the Preferred Improvement Plan.

The study examines existing (1996) traffic volumes and operating conditions along roadways in the study area. Traffic projections are then made to future design years (2002 and 2017) based on anticipated project-specific traffic growth and other background traffic growth. Anticipated future traffic volume levels are evaluated with respect to proposed roadway system capacity to determine the sufficiency of the proposed modifications.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

A detailed investigation was conducted of existing roadway and traffic conditions in the study area for the Jordan Marsh Building Redevelopment<sup>1</sup>. This investigation was completed through field visits, a review of earlier traffic studies and a detailed traffic counting program. The results of the existing conditions study are presented below.

### Roadway Conditions

Grove Street traverses the city of Newton in a northeast to southwest direction connecting parts of the city and the project site with Route 128

<sup>1</sup> Traffic Impact Study, Proposed Jordan Marsh Building Redevelopment, March 1997, Sam Park Associates, Inc.

(Interstate 95). Southwest of the site Grove Street passes through Newton Lower Falls and connects with Washington Street (Route 16) by way of Hager Road and a section of Concord Street. Northeast of Route 128 Grove Street passes by Riverside Station and then enters the village of Auburndale. Grove Street ends in Auburndale just south of the Massachusetts Turnpike and Route 30 at its intersection with Central Street and Auburn Street.

Grove Street is a two-lane, two-way roadway. Abutting land uses are primarily residential. The only section which contains commercial development within the study corridor is the 0.2 mile section of Grove Street between Route 128 and the Jordan Marsh building. This section of roadway abuts a golf course, a hotel and the MBTA Riverside station. Other non-residential land uses along Grove Street include the Williams Elementary School in Auburndale located approximately 0.5 miles east of the Riverside station.

Traffic controls along the study corridor are consistent with the relatively low traffic volume conditions experienced. All sides streets entering Grove Street are under STOP or YIELD control. Speed limits are posted at several locations within the corridor. Posted speeds on Grove Street near the project site are 25 miles per hour westbound and 30 miles per hour eastbound.

Full channelization is provided for left and right turns to and from the Route 128 ramps at Grove Street. The only other channelization provided is a median island separating entering and exiting traffic flows on the Riverside station driveway.

There are generally good provisions for pedestrians throughout the study area. Sidewalks are present along at least one side of Grove Street in the study area. Street lighting is also provided throughout the study area.

### **Traffic Volumes**

Daily and peak period traffic counts were conducted on the roadway system and traffic data were reviewed from previous studies. Vehicle classification and turning movement counts were taken in October and November of 1996 at most of the study area intersections. The manual turning movement counts were conducted during the normal commuter peak traffic periods (7:00 AM to 9:00 AM, and 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM). The turning movement counts were conducted by 15-minute time increments and summarized to provide peak hour traffic flow conditions within each

of the time periods surveyed. Automatic traffic recorders were used to monitor daily traffic volumes on an hourly basis for Grove Street at the Williams School; at the Jordan Marsh driveway; just west of the Riverside Station; and in Newton Lower Falls. Manual traffic counts were also conducted in February 1997 to validate some of the 1996 data. The February traffic counts closely match the earlier counts. All of the traffic count data are included in the report appendix.

The daily traffic volume data are summarized in Table 1. As shown, Grove Street traffic volumes are at their highest level on the short section between the Riverside station driveway and Route 128. This segment of Grove Street carries nearly 12,500 vehicles per day (vpd). Continuing east from the Riverside station, volume levels decline to only 8,255 vpd just east of the Jordan Marsh building and to 7,595 vpd at the Williams School. Volumes in Newton Lower Falls are substantially lower than experienced in Auburndale with a recorded volume of 3,890 vpd on Grove Street at Cornell Street.

**Table 1**

**Existing Traffic Volumes**

Location	Direction	Time Period		
		AM Peak Hour <sup>a</sup> Volume (Vehicles)	PM Peak Hour <sup>b</sup> Volume (Vehicles)	Daily
Grove Street/Newton Lower Falls (just west of Cornell Street)	Eastbound	255	165	2,255
	Westbound	<u>100</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>1,635</u>
	TOTAL	355	290	3,890
Grove Street (just west of Riverside Station)	Eastbound	940	570	6,565
	Westbound	<u>475</u>	<u>635</u>	<u>6,035</u>
	TOTAL	1,415	1,205	12,600
Grove Street (just east of Jordan Marsh)	Eastbound	505	370	4,540
	Westbound	375	<u>370</u>	<u>3,715</u>
	TOTAL	880	740	8,255
Grove Street/ Auburndale (at Williams School)	Eastbound	425	270	4,175
	Westbound	<u>260</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>3,420</u>
	TOTAL	685	570	7,595

<sup>a</sup>8:00 to 9:00 AM

<sup>b</sup>5:00 to 6:00 PM

Source: Volumes based on automatic traffic recorder counts conducted in September, October, and November, 1996. Peak hour volumes are based on the automatic traffic recorder counts and may differ from the manual traffic count results reported elsewhere in this document.

Morning and evening peak hour traffic flow networks are based on the manual vehicle turning movement counts and historic traffic data. The networks, illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, reflect existing average monthly traffic volume conditions. (A discussion of seasonal adjustment factors is included in the appendix.) In general, peak hour traffic on Grove Street is balanced by direction. One notable exception is that during the morning peak hour there is a very heavy eastbound flow on Grove Street between Route 128 and the Riverside station. The unbalanced flow reflects traffic demands generated by the Riverside station. However, the peak for traffic departing from the Riverside station is less sharp resulting in a more balanced flow on this segment during the evening peak hour.

### **Accidents**

The Newton Police Department was contacted in order to identify traffic accidents occurring at the study area intersections over the last three years. Data was received and reviewed for all of the study area intersections. The currently available data indicate a low rate of accident occurrence with only four accidents reported in the study area over the entire three-year period. The greatest number of accidents occurred at the Grove Street and Riverside station driveway intersection. An analysis of the accident reports indicates that no accidents occurred in 1996, two accidents occurred in 1995, and two accidents occurred in 1994. The accidents were split between angle and rear-end type accidents as noted in Table 2.



MBTA RIVERSIDE LINE

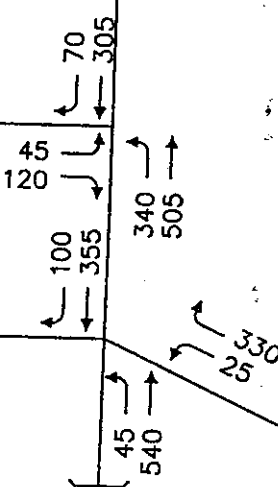
RIVERSIDE STATION

NORTHBOUND RAMP

ROUTE 128 / INTERSTATE 95

SOUTHBOUND RAMP

GROVE ST.

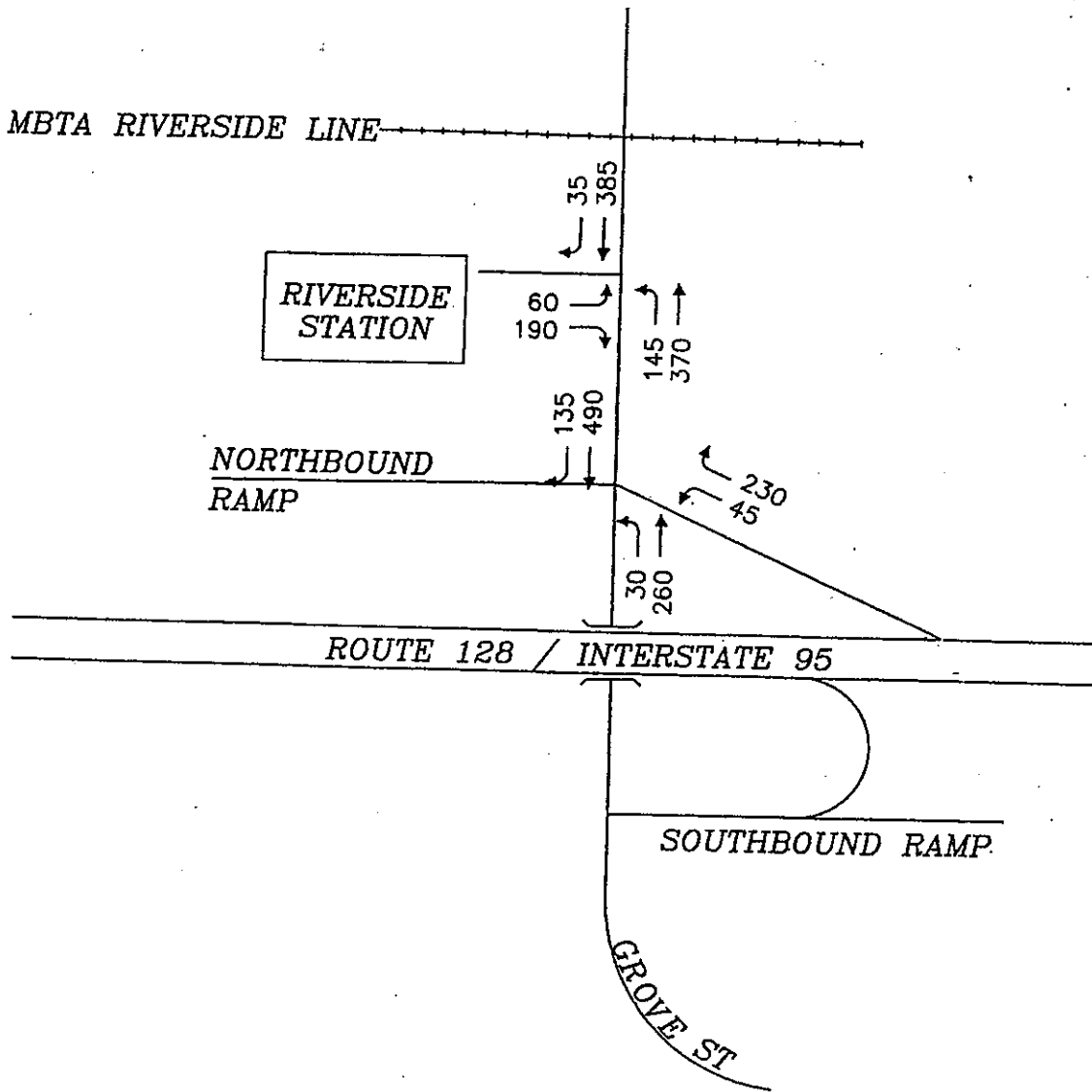


1109gr16.dwg



RIVERSIDE STATION  
Newton, Massachusetts

Existing Weekday AM  
Peak Hour



1109gr17.dwg

RIVERSIDE STATION  
Newton, Massachusetts

Existing Weekday PM  
Peak Hour

Figure



**Table 2**                      **Accident Data 1994-1996**

	Rte 128 Southbound Ramps at Grove St.	Rte 128 Northbound Ramps at Grove St.	Riverside Station Driveway at Grove St.
<b>Year</b>			
1994	0	1	1
1995	0	0	2
1996	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Type</b>			
Pedestrian	0	0	0
Angle	0	1	1
Fixed Object	0	0	0
Rear End	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Severity</b>			
Personal Injury	0	0	2
No Injury	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Time</b>			
7:00 AM-9:00 AM	0	1	2
9:00 AM-4:00 PM	0	0	1
4:00 PM-6:00 PM	0	0	0
6:00 PM-7:00 AM	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Day of Week</b>			
Monday-Friday	0	1	2
Saturday-Sunday	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Newton Police Department. Accident data for the period of January 1994 through May 1996.

### Vehicle Speeds

Speed studies were conducted at several areas along Grove Street to determine compliance with local speed limits. Three locations were

## 4.0 CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 New Access to MBTA Riverside Station

An analysis of the existing conditions in the study area surrounding the MBTA Riverside Station results in the following conclusions:

- A new Riverside Station access off the northbound I-95 service road would remove 25 percent of the morning peak hour traffic from Grove Street.
- Traffic operations would improve at the intersection of the I-95 northbound ramps and Grove Street as a result of the project.
- Delays and vehicle queues associated with traffic waiting to turn left into Riverside Station from Grove Street would be eliminated.

The access improvements to the MBTA Riverside Station have an estimated construction cost of \$750,000 and total implementation costs of \$1,000,000.

### 4.2 Newton Lower Falls Traffic Calming

The western side of the study area borders the Lower Falls neighborhood of Newton. Residents have expressed concern with the development of Riverside Place and its impact upon Lower Falls. The specific concern is the rate of cut-through traffic in Lower Falls by persons wishing to find an alternate route around the Route 128/MassPike interchange. Motorists destined for Newton and approaching the city along southbound Route 128/I-95 may exit at South Avenue and turn onto Concord Street, which runs through Lower Falls. Other motorists may remain on southbound Route 128/I-95 and use one of the Newton interchanges.

In order to address the neighborhood's concerns, the May 2000 CTPS license plate survey, which included a measuring station in the neighborhood, was examined to determine the extent of the cut-through traffic. The measuring station was located along Concord Street at the Leo Martin Memorial Golf Club. During the morning peak period, 417 vehicles passed the CTPS checkpoint in the southbound direction along Concord Street. Seven percent of these vehicles passed the CTPS checkpoint just east of Route 128/I-95 on Grove Street. Two percent of these vehicles continued past the CTPS checkpoint just east of the MBTA Riverside Station entrance. Thus, five percent, or approximately 20 vehicles, of the southbound traffic along Concord Street enters the MBTA Riverside Station during the morning peak period. This represents slightly over five percent of the total traffic entering the MBTA Riverside Station.

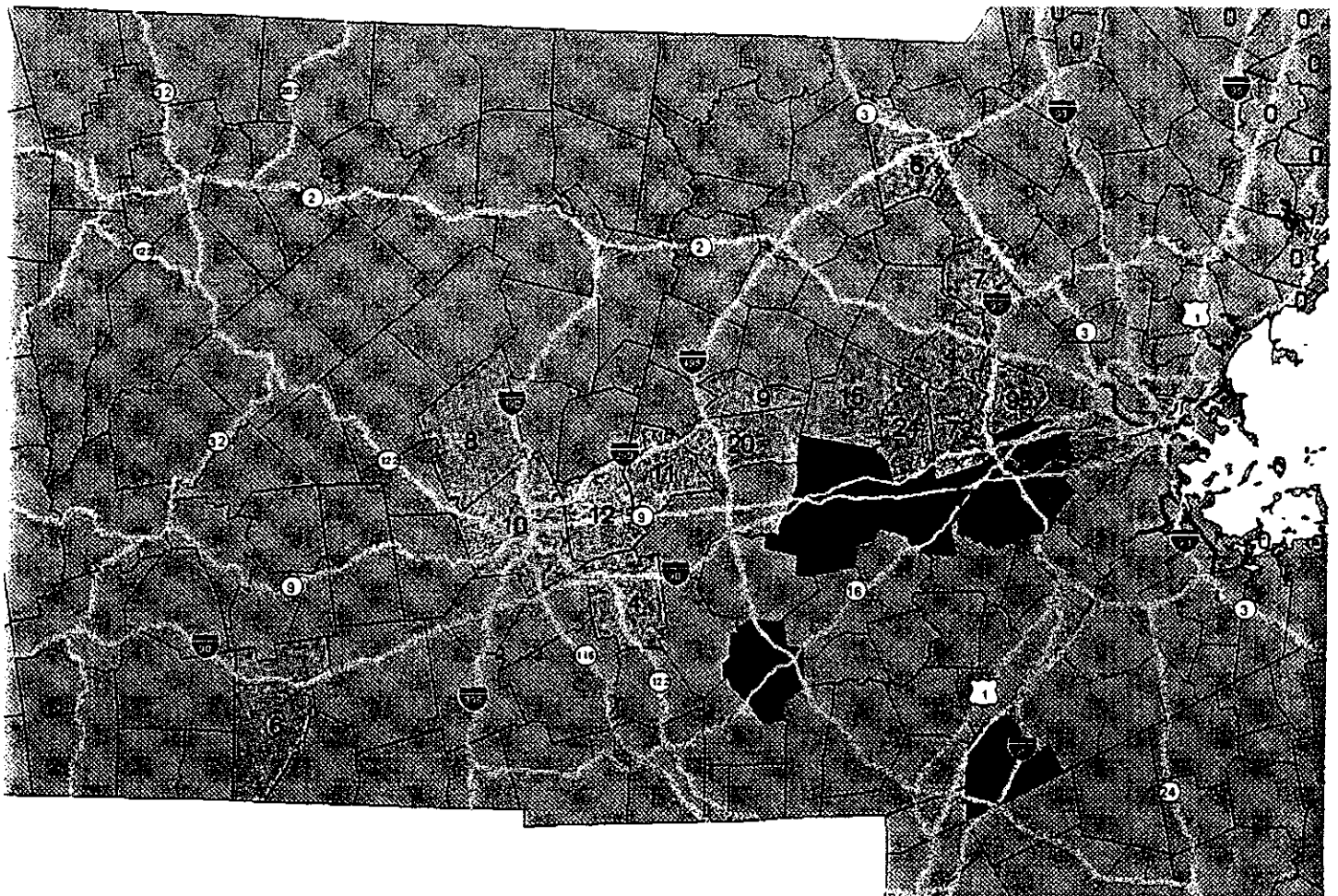
Based upon the CTPS license plate survey, cut-through traffic to the MBTA Riverside Station does not appear significant through Lower Falls. Additionally, opportunities exist to construct effective traffic calming measures within Lower Falls. Traffic calming measures under presently under review by the community that include median islands to narrow the street pavement, thereby constraining vehicle speed.

P:\7129\_Riv\Reports\de05\_01 Access Study.doc



Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts





**Legend**

Highways

**Riverside Boardings**

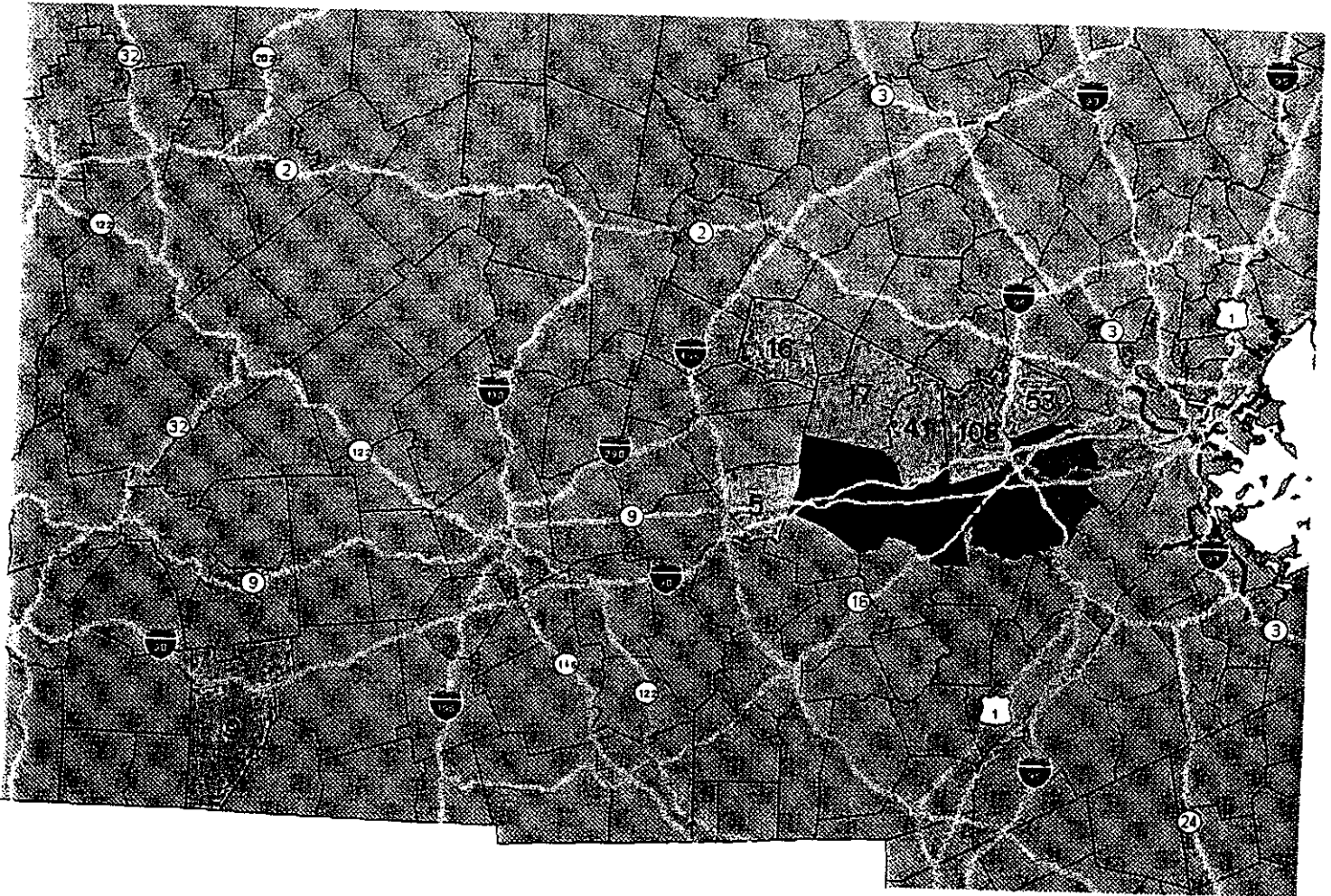
- Grove Street from East
- Grove Street from West
- I-95 from North
- I-95 from South

 Not To Scale

Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts

### Origin of Boarding Passengers at Riverside Station

Figure 3



**Legend**

Highways

**Riverside Exits**

- Grove Street to East
- Grove Street to West
- I-95 to North
- I-95 to South



Not To Scale

Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts

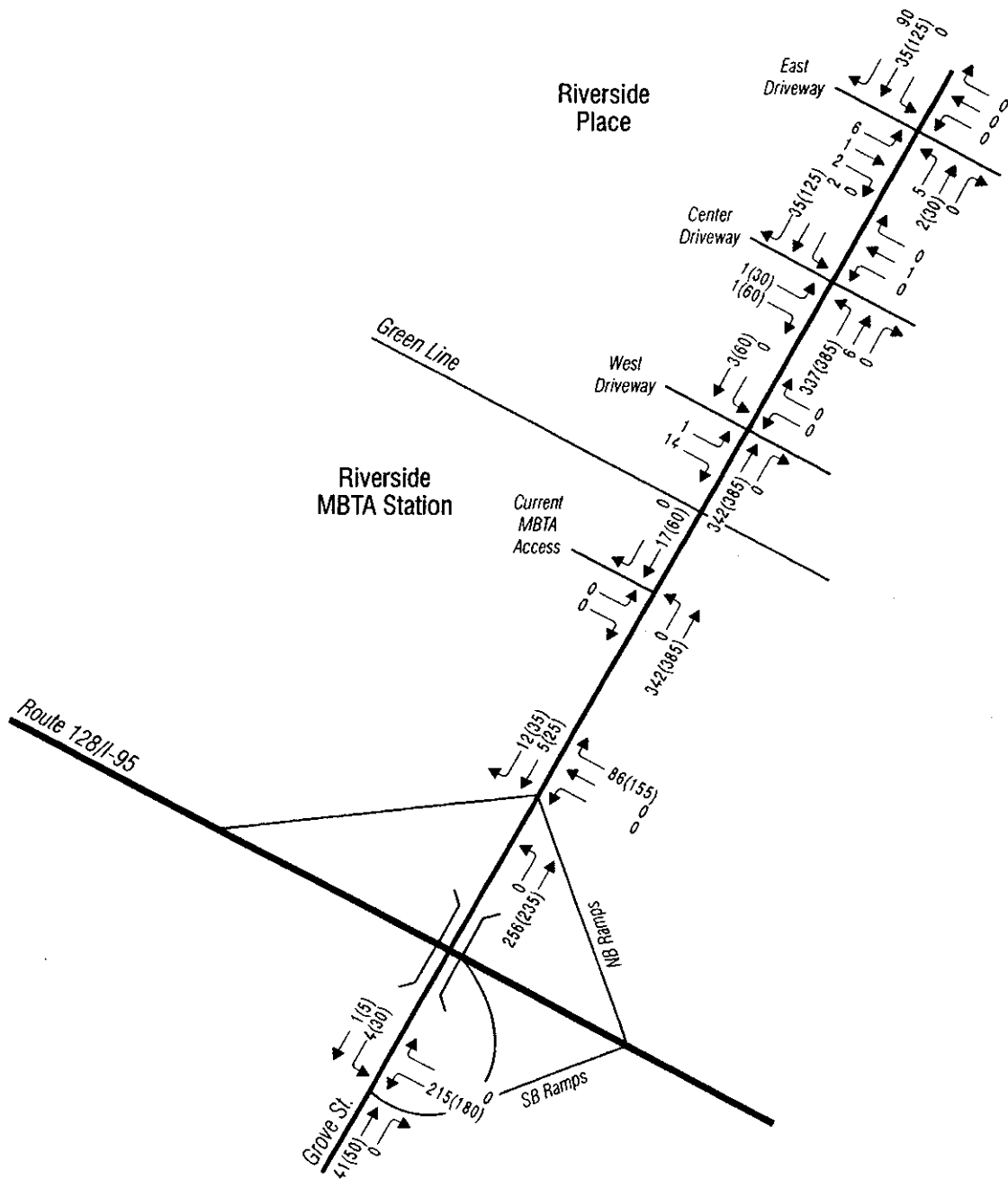
Destination of Alighting  
Passengers at Riverside Station

Figure 4

**RIZZO**  
ASSOCIATES

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

Base Map: MassGIS, 1987

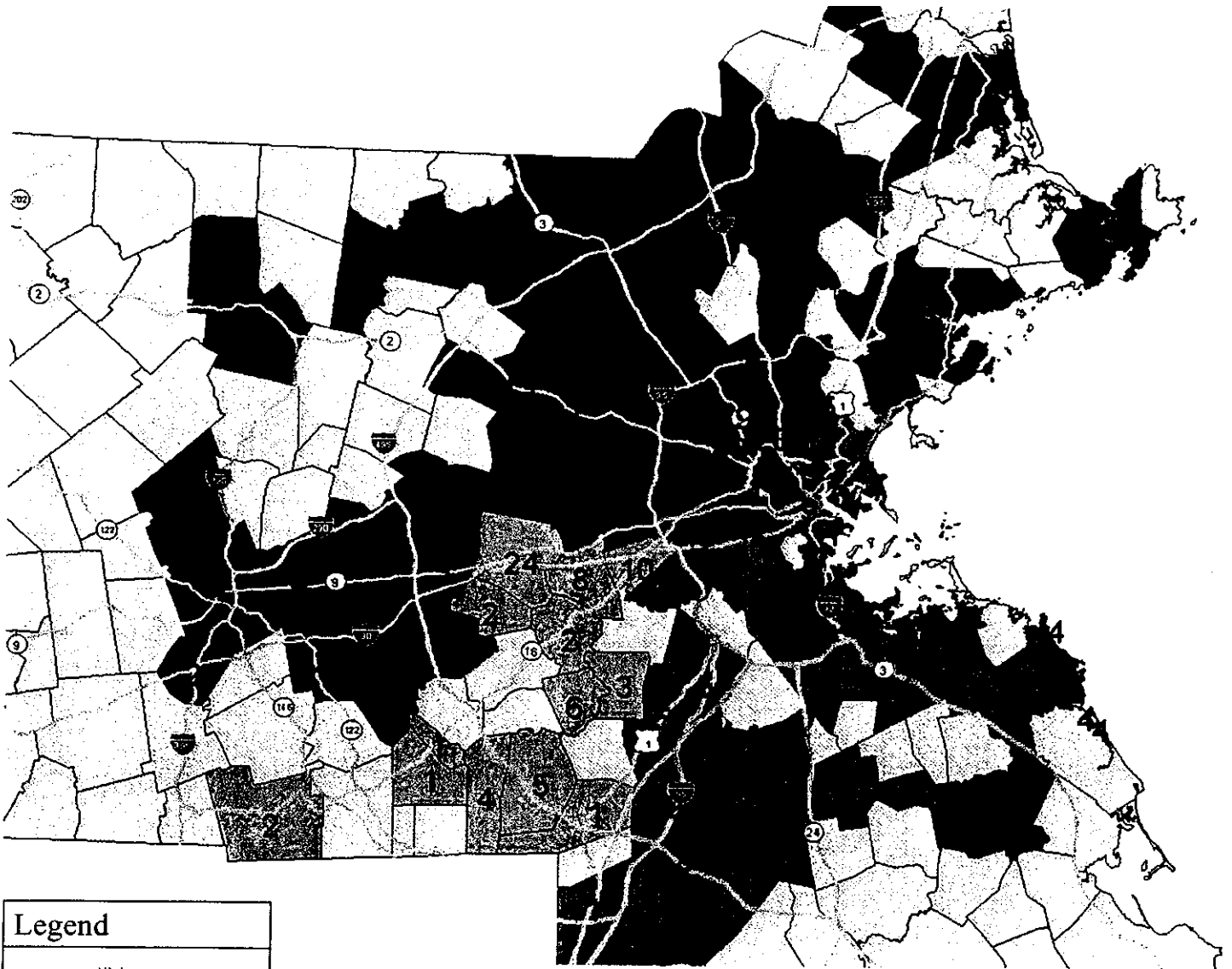


XX = Actual Riverside Place Trips  
 (XX) = Predicted Riverside Place Trips

 Not To Scale

Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
 MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
 Newton, Massachusetts





**Legend**

Highways

**Route to Work**

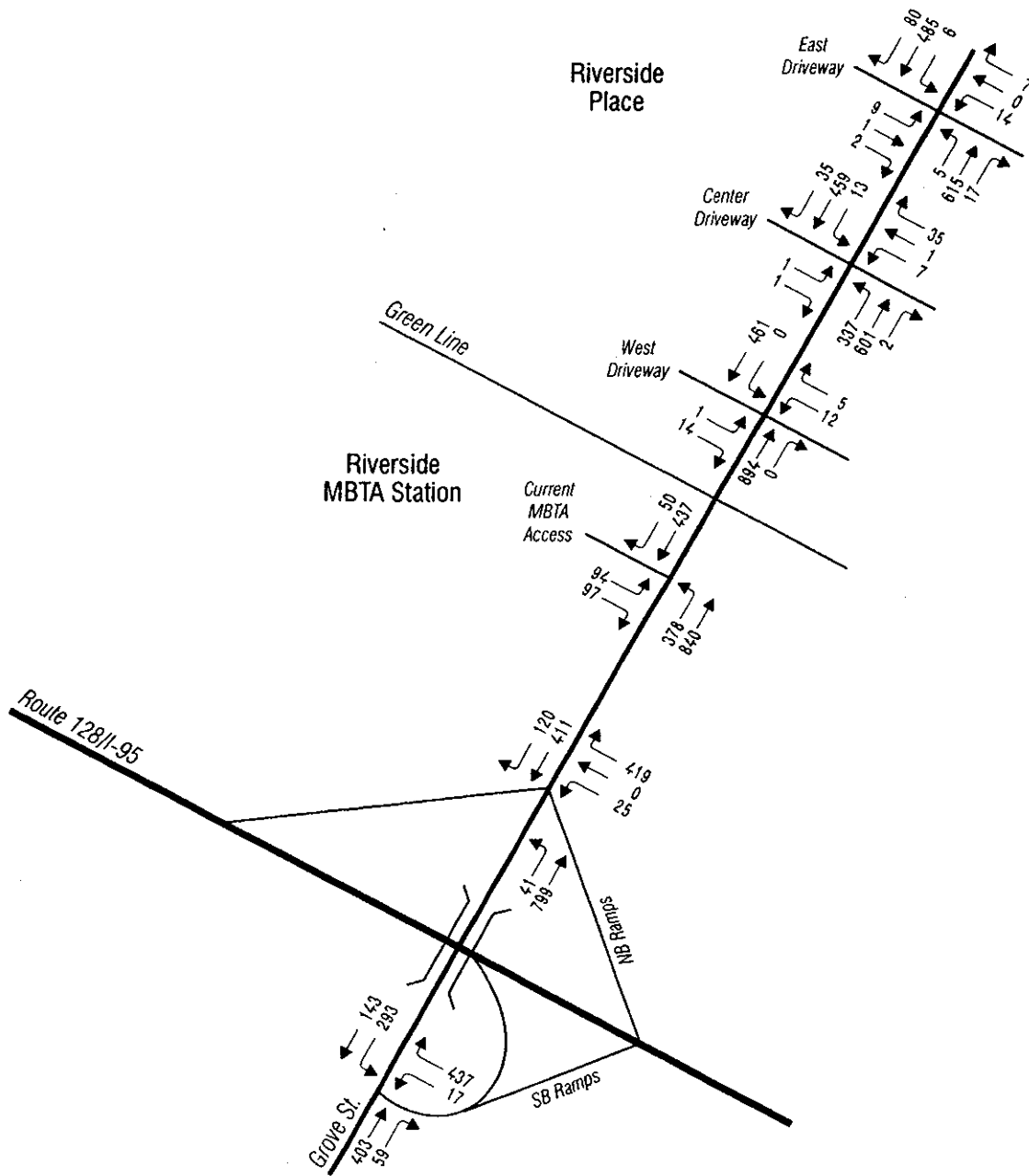
- Green Line
- Grove Street from East
- Grove Street from West
- I-95 from North
- I-95 from South

 Not To Scale

Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts

Town of Residence of Employees  
at Riverside Place

Figure 7

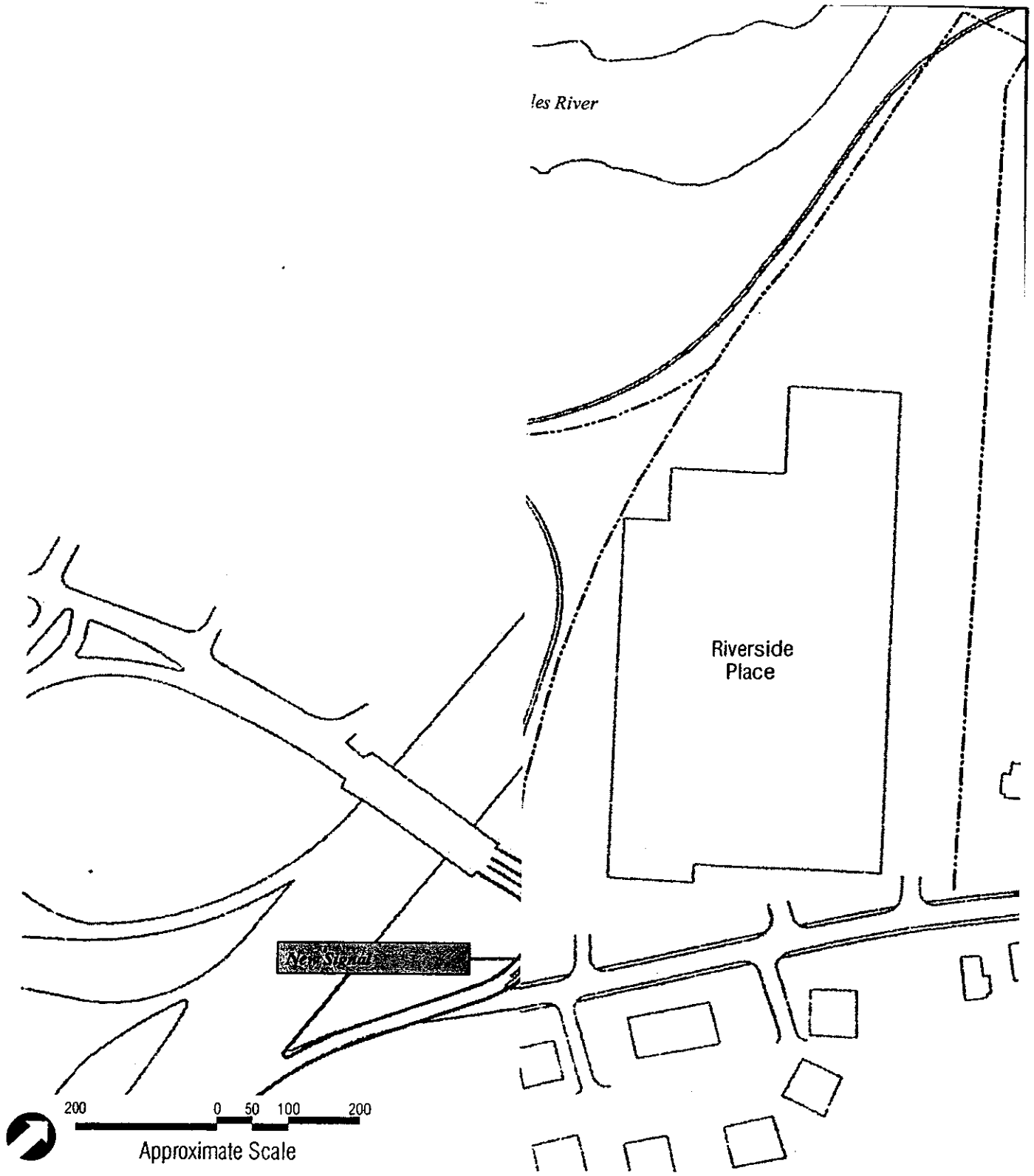


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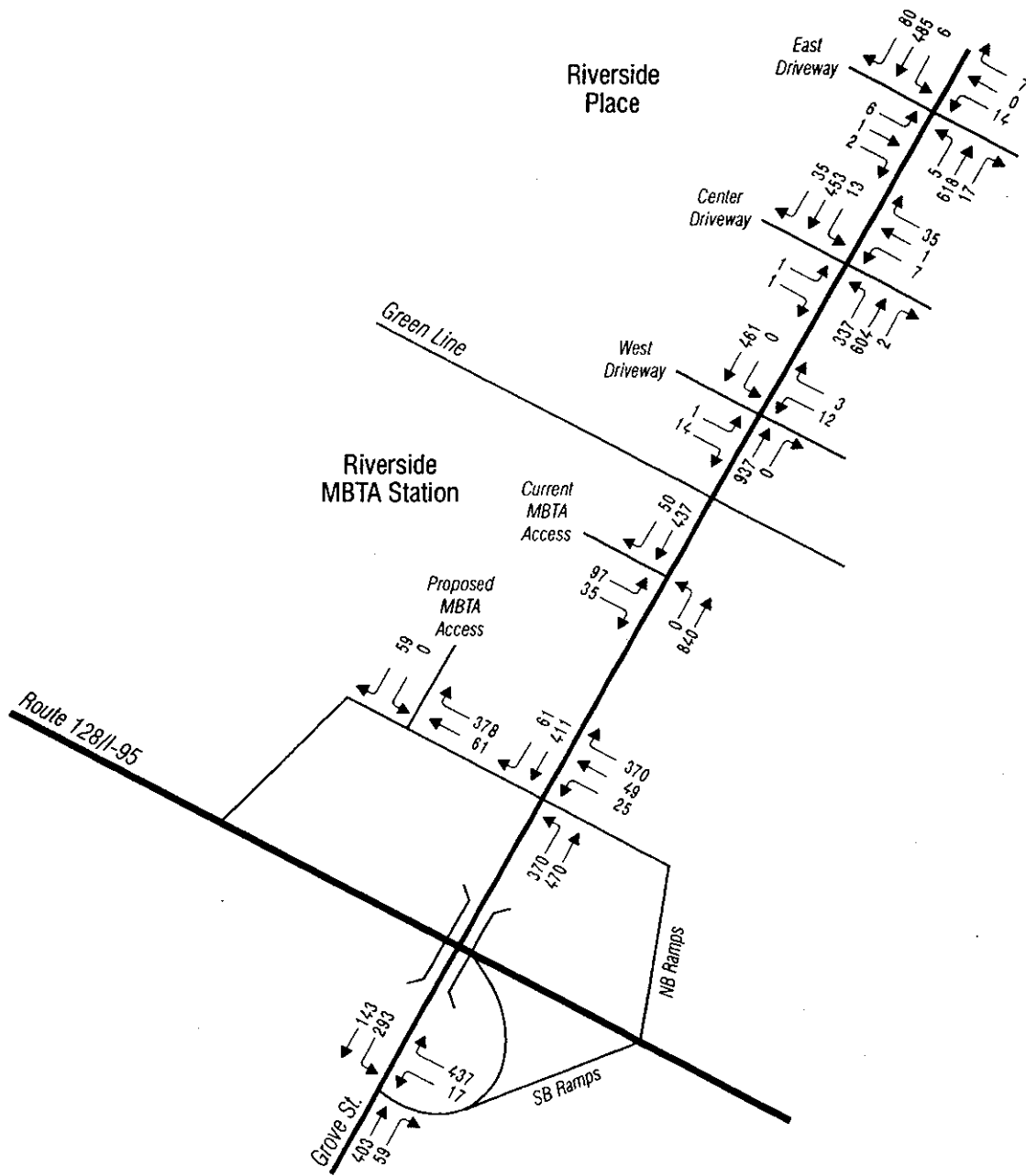
Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts

AM Peak Hour  
Total Existing Traffic

Figure 8



bot, Cabot & Forbes  
3TA Riverside Station Access Study  
wton, Massachusetts



Not To Scale

Cabot, Cabot & Forbes  
MBTA Riverside Station Access Study  
Newton, Massachusetts

AM Peak Traffic  
New Riverside Station Access

Figure 10

**RIZZO**  
ASSOCIATES

A TETRA TECH COMPANY

November 15, 2000

7:00 - 9:00 Am

Intersection 2 (Center Driveway - Signalized)

Interval	Driveway SB			Grove St WB			Driveway NB			Grove St EB			Total
	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	
1	0	0	0	5	97	1	3	1	0	0	145	46	298
2	0	0	0	3	107	4	16	0	2	1	156	51	340
3	0	0	0	6	139	6	10	0	2	0	140	54	357
4	0	0	0	13	105	0	3	0	1	1	158	93	374
5	0	0	0	6	100	3	6	0	1	0	136	83	335
6	0	0	1	10	85	1	6	0	1	0	111	89	304
7	1	0	0	5	95	1	4	0	4	1	128	72	311
8	0	0	0	10	99	0	3	0	1	1	87	37	238

Intersection 3 (Eastmost Drive)

Interval	Driveway SB			Grove St WB			Driveway NB			Grove St EB			Total
	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	
1	0	0	3	9	97	2	2	0	4	3	161	0	281
2	0	0	1	8	142	2	1	0	1	0	145	0	300
3	1	0	3	11	130	1	1	0	0	5	163	1	316
4	0	0	2	22	104	1	0	0	1	7	147	0	284
5	1	0	0	15	108	2	0	0	3	2	115	0	246
6	0	0	0	16	83	1	2	0	2	3	126	3	236
7	0	0	0	27	115	0	4	0	2	3	106	0	257
8	0	1	0	9	72	2	1	0	7	2	72	2	168

Intersection 1 (Westmost Drive)

Interval	Driveway SB			Driveway NB			Total
	Right	Through	Left	Right	Through	Left	
1	2	0	1	2	0	0	5
2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
3	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
4	5	0	0	1	0	4	10
5	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
6	4	0	0	0	0	4	8
7	1	0	0	0	0	4	5
8	5	0	0	1	0	1	7

\* Highlighted areas are peak hours

## APPENDIX B

### Level of Service Criteria

Level of service (LOS) is a term used to describe the quality of the traffic flow on a roadway facility at a particular point in time. It is an aggregate measure of travel delay, travel speed, congestion, driver discomfort, convenience, and safety based upon a comparison of roadway facility capacity to travel demand. Operating levels of services are reported on a scale of A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F representing the worst operating conditions. LOS A represents free-flow conditions with little or no traffic delays, while LOS F represents a forced-flow condition with long delays and traffic demands exceeding roadway capacity.

LOS C is often cited as a design standard for rural roadways and LOS D is often used for urban roadways. However, when trying to establish minimum "acceptable" level of service thresholds for existing roadways a number of factors must be considered. These would include existing operating levels of service at other similar and nearby facilities, the duration of the peak traffic periods, applicable state and local regulations, and the feasibility and cost of providing traffic mitigation.

Roadway operating levels of service are calculated following procedures defined in the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual*, published by the Transportation Research Board. For both signalized and unsignalized intersections, the operating level of service is based on the travel delay. Delay can be measured in the field, but is generally calculated as a function of the traffic volume, quality of traffic progression, the green ratio, the cycle length, the v/c (volume/capacity) ratio, and the capacity of each intersection approach, as appropriate for signalized intersections. Delay at unsignalized intersections is calculated for the side street or minor street approach and for left turns from the major street. Delays at unsignalized intersections are generally influenced by the traffic volume levels on the major and minor streets. The delay based level of service thresholds provided in the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual* are summarized in the following Table.

**Table IA Intersection Level of Service Criteria**

Level of Service	Average Daily per Vehicle (seconds)	
	Signalized	Unsignalized
A	≥ 5.0	≥ 5.0
B	> 5.0 and ≥ 15.0	> 5.0 and ≥ 10.0
C	> 15.0 and ≥ 25.0	> 10.0 and ≥ 20.0
D	> 25.0 and ≥ 40.0	> 20.0 and ≥ 30.0
E	> 40.0 and ≥ 60.0	> 30.0 and ≥ 40.0
F	> 60.0	> 40.0

Source: *Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Third Edition*, (Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, Washington, D.C.:2000)

speeds are six mph above the posted speed limit in the eastbound direction and nine mph above the posted speed limit in the westbound direction.

**Table 3 2000 Observed Grove Street Travel Speeds**

Roadway	Posted Speed Limit <sup>1</sup>	Average Speed <sup>1</sup>		85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed <sup>2</sup>	
		1996	2000	1996	2000
Grove Street, at Williams School					
Eastbound	30	29	31	33	36
Westbound	25	29	31	34	34
Grove Street, east of Riverside Center					
Eastbound	30	39	35	44	40
Westbound	25	36	30	43	34

<sup>1</sup> In miles per hour (mph).

<sup>2</sup> 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed is the speed at which 85 percent of the vehicles travel at or below.

In the vicinity of Riverside Center and Norumbega Court, the average speed was observed to be five mph over the posted speed limit in each direction (35 mph vs. 30 mph in the eastbound direction and 30 mph vs. 25 mph westbound). The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds at this location are ten mph above the speed limit in the eastbound direction and nine mph above the limit in the westbound direction

The vehicle speeds measured on Grove Street were taken at approximately the same locations at which speeds were measured in 1996 for the Riverside Center traffic impact study. A comparison of the speeds observed in 1996 and 2000 is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4 Comparison of 1996 and 2000 Observed Grove Street Travel Speeds**

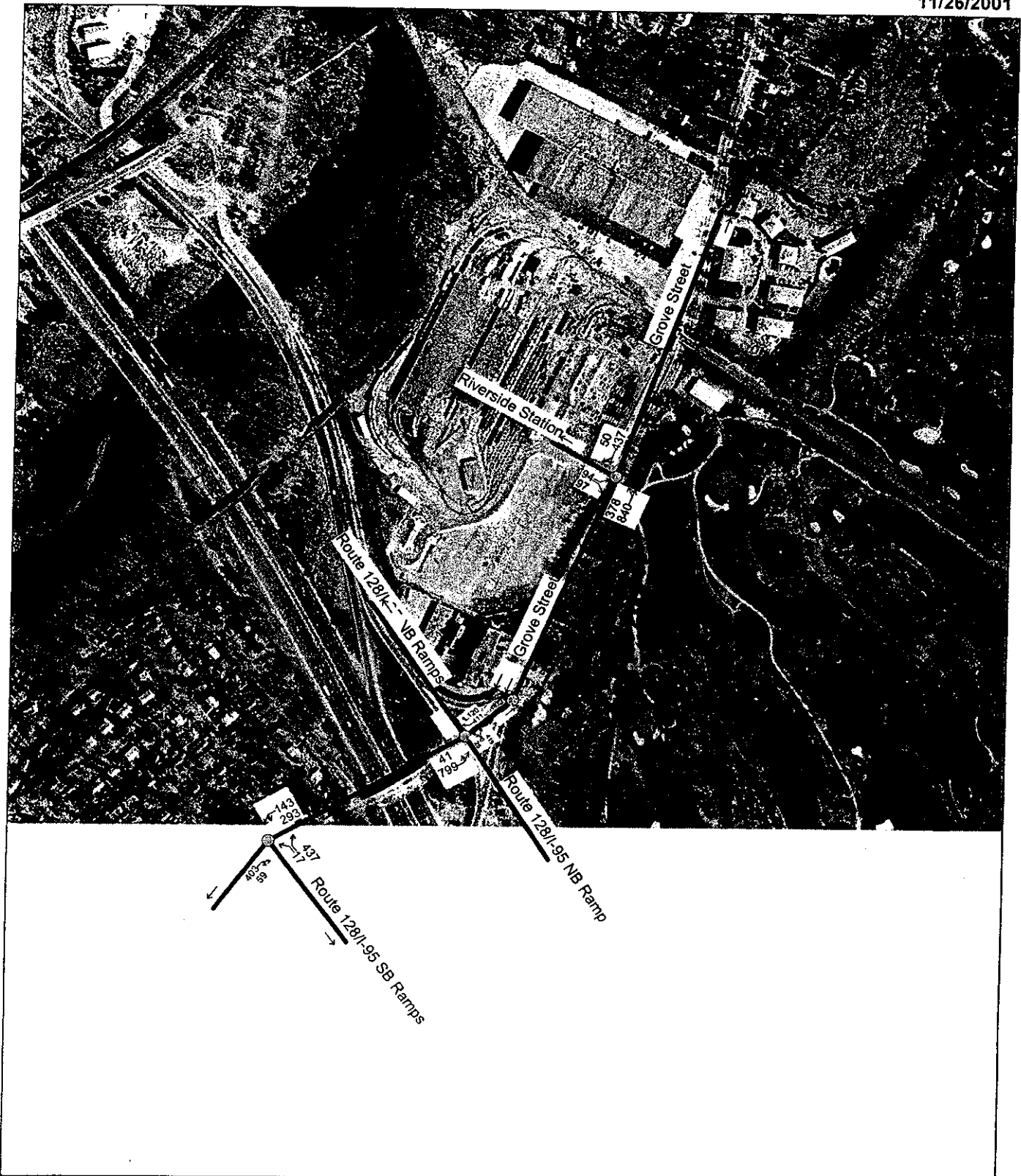
Roadway	Posted Speed Limit <sup>1</sup>	Average Speed <sup>1</sup>		85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed <sup>2</sup>	
		1996	2000	1996	2000
Grove Street, at Williams School					
Eastbound	30	29	31	33	36
Westbound	25	29	31	34	34
Grove Street, east of Riverside Center					
Eastbound	30	39	35	44	40
Westbound	25	36	30	43	34

<sup>1</sup> In miles per hour (mph).

<sup>2</sup> 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed is the speed at which 85 percent of the vehicles travel at or below.

AM Existing  
Volumes

Map - AM Existing  
11/26/2001





Proposed Justification Report  
Proposed Roadway Modifications

8 Newton, Massachusetts

surveyed concurrent with the traffic counting program and using the automatic traffic counting equipment. The surveys include more than forty-eight hours of data for each location and are summarized in Table 3. As shown, there is better compliance with local speed limits and lower travel speeds on Grove Street in the vicinity of the Williams School and in Newton Lower Falls than in the vicinity of the project site. Away from the site, average travel speeds are approximately 30 miles per hour (mph) which is consistent with the posted speed limit. Higher speeds occur adjacent to the project site where average travel speeds were approximately ten miles per hour above the posted speed limits. The proposed roadway improvements associated with the Jordan Marsh building redevelopment will help reduce travel speeds on this segment of Grove Street.

Table 3

Observed Vehicle Speeds

Location	Direction	Observed Speeds (mph)		
		Average Speed	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed	Posted Speed Limit
Grove Street at Williams School	EB	29	33	30
	WB	29	34	25
Grove Street at Site	EB	39	44	30
	WB	36	43	25
Grove Street at Cornell Street	EB	27	32	30
	WB	30	34	25

EB-Eastbound

WB-Westbound

Based on speed surveys conducted by Sam Park Associates, Inc., November 1996.

## **FUTURE CONDITIONS**

To assess the requirements of the proposed improvements, existing traffic volumes were projected to two future design years. Five year and twenty year traffic projections were utilized. Future conditions include the 2002 and 2017 scenarios which consist of existing volumes increased to account for anticipated future traffic growth as well as expected traffic associated with the proposed office re-use of the Jordan Marsh building. The development and analysis of these future traffic flow conditions are described below.

### **2002 and 2017 Traffic Conditions**

The 2002 and 2017 traffic volumes were developed in a multi-step process as described below.

Future background traffic growth in the traffic study area was estimated by considering data from previous studies, other proposed development projects and historic Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) traffic data. Earlier traffic studies completed for projects in the site area include daily and peak hour traffic volumes for study area roadways. A comparison of traffic volume data collected in these earlier studies with current traffic data is included in the report appendix section titled "Seasonal Adjustment Factors." The analysis indicates that for all but one location studied, traffic volumes have declined from 2 to 18 percent within the study area between 1990 and 1996.

The city of Newton identified potential land development projects which could impact future background traffic growth. Three such projects were identified. One is the Lasell Village project which would be located off of Grove Street east of the project site. This is predominantly an elderly housing project and will have minimal traffic impacts on the street system. The traffic study prepared for this project indicates that the development would add only 2 to 11 peak hour vehicle trips to Grove Street past the project site. The second project identified is an assisted living and office development proposed on Washington Street (Route 16). This too is a relatively low traffic generator and due to its location would add few if any new vehicle trips to the Grove Street corridor. In fact, this project was fully constructed and partially occupied at the time of the traffic counting program. The final project identified is the redevelopment of the Grossman's site in Wellesley on Route 16 as a Stop & Shop supermarket.

This proposal was in litigation and accordingly, was not considered in the traffic analysis based upon the suggestion of city staff.

The last factor considered is historic traffic volume data available from MassHighway. MassHighway maintains permanent traffic counting stations at a few key locations throughout the state. The nearest counting station to the site is on Route 128 in Newton south of the Massachusetts Turnpike. At this location traffic volumes have grown at an average rate of 1.8 percent per year since 1992.

Considering all of the factors mentioned above, a one percent per year growth factor was applied to existing volumes as a first step in developing 2002 and 2017 peak hour traffic networks. This growth factor is consistent with the one percent per year factor used in the Lasell Village traffic study for local streets and is certainly conservative in light of recent traffic trends for Grove Street near the site.

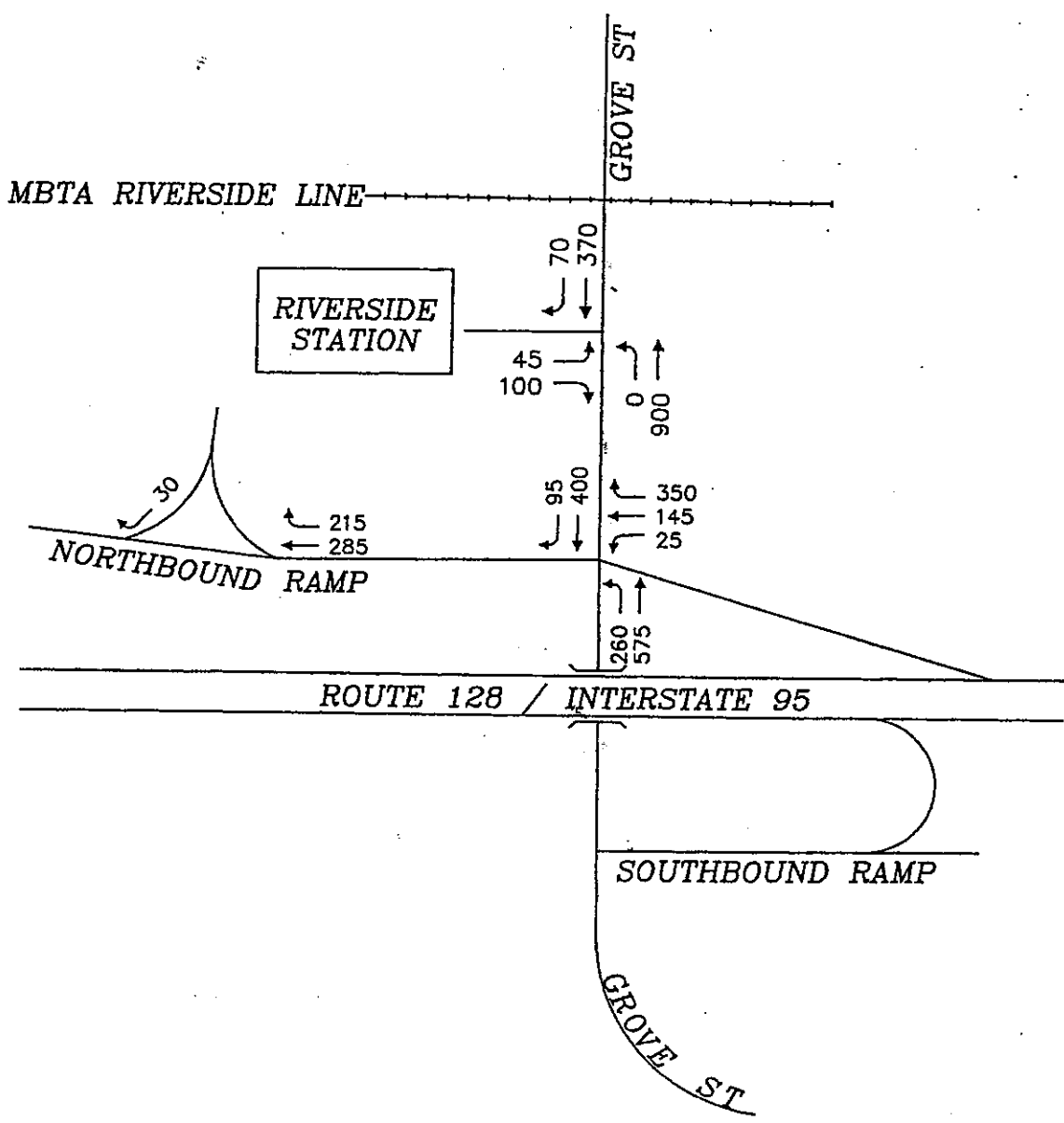
Anticipated traffic volumes to be generated by the proposed redevelopment of the Jordan Marsh building were then assigned to the roadway network in order to develop the 2002 and 2017 traffic scenarios, as shown in Figures 3 through 6.

## **Proposed Improvements**

### **Design Issues**

A number of design issues and general concerns were reviewed with respect to existing traffic operations in the Grove Street study area. These issues include the amount of traffic using Grove Street to access the MBTA Riverside station, the high speed of vehicles entering onto Grove Street from the Route 128 northbound exit-ramp, pedestrian crossing opportunities on Grove Street, and bus access to the Riverside station.

Several options were evaluated for modifying the intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128 northbound ramps and for improving access to the MBTA Riverside Station. These options include the signalization of the intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128 northbound ramps, direct access from the ramps to the Riverside Station parking area, and possible connections to the Jordan Marsh site and Recreation Road north of Grove Street. All of the options eliminate direct access to Recreation Road from the Route 128 northbound ramps and the existing weave associated with this move. The option of providing two-way access to



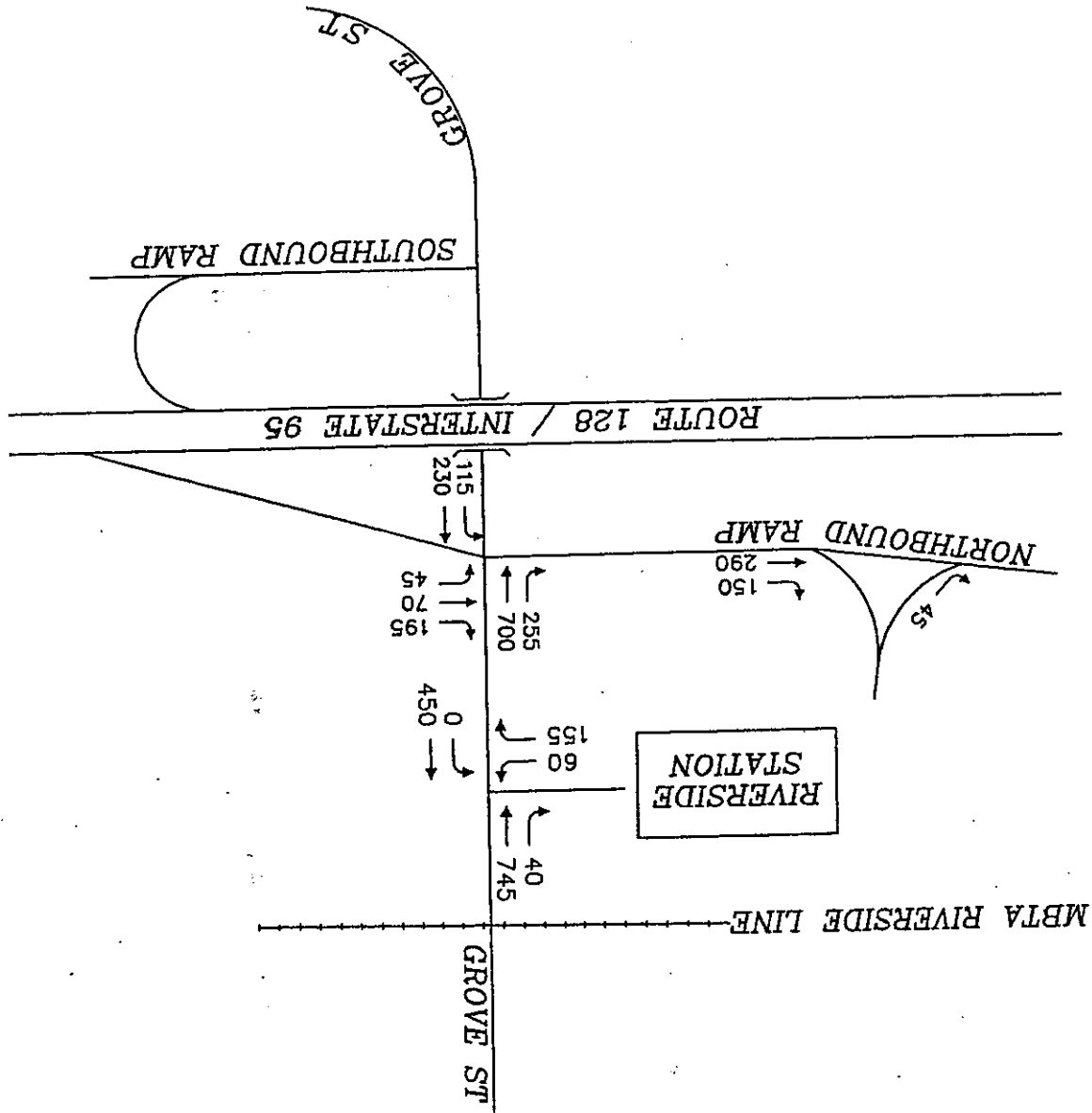
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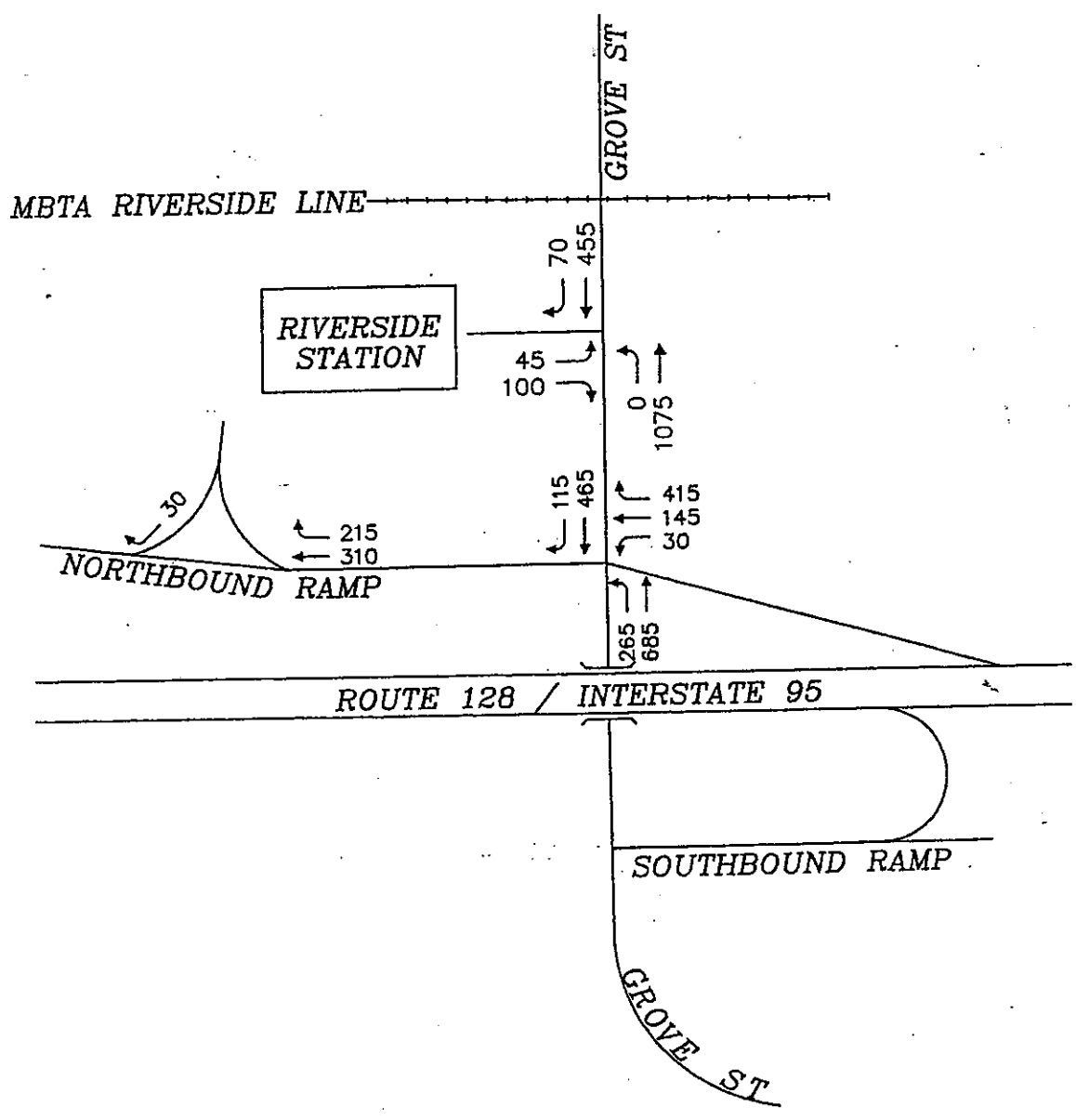
RIVERSIDE STATION  
Newton, Massachusetts

2002 Weekday AM  
Peak Hour  
Traffic Volumes

Figure  
2

RIVERSIDE STATION  
Newton, Massachusetts  
2002 Weekend PM  
Peak Hour  
Traffic Volumes





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RIVERSIDE STATION  
Newton, Massachusetts

2017 Weekday AM  
Peak Hour  
Traffic Volumes

Recreation Road provided little benefit and was not justifiable. Potential connections to the Jordan Marsh site would further reduce volumes on Grove Street, but environmental impacts due to the proximity to the Charles River and the costs associated with this connection preclude the implementation of this option. The discarded options are illustrated in the Appendix.

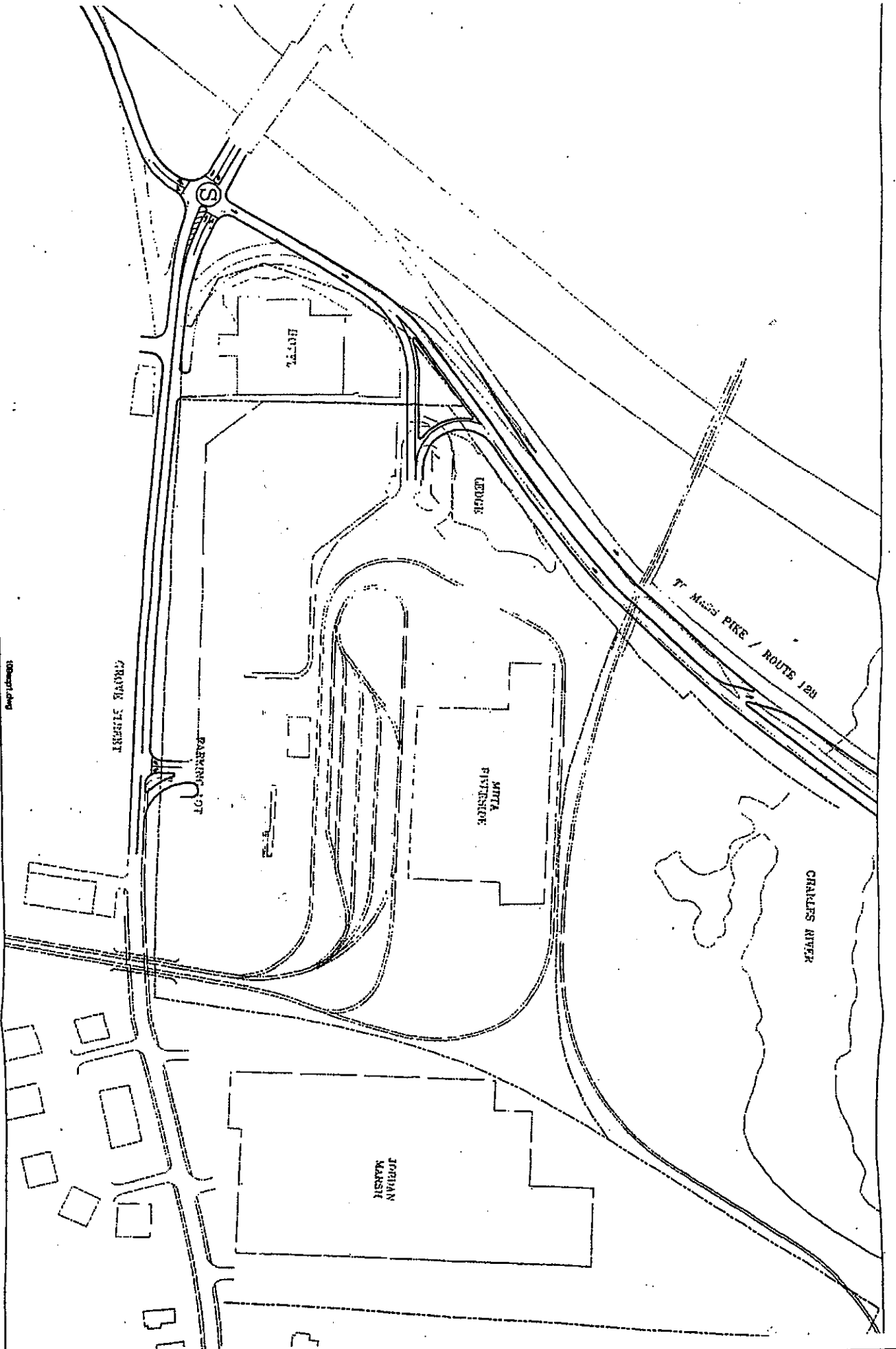
The proposed alternative is illustrated in Figure C-1 and includes the signalization of the intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128 northbound ramps, and the elimination of the channelized right turn lanes. These modifications would reduce vehicle speeds currently promoted by the channelized right turn lanes and accommodate existing and projected traffic volume conditions. The Route 128 northbound entrance-ramp is proposed to be modified to provide a direct access and egress to the Riverside station, and to eliminate the weaving section with the Route 128 northbound exit-ramp to the Massachusetts Turnpike. The scope of the proposed improvements are described in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

#### **Grove Street at Route 128 northbound ramps intersection**

Improvements to this intersection will include the installation of a three-phase actuated traffic control signal. The signal will provide an advance phase for eastbound Grove Street traffic, as well as an exclusive phase for all turns from the exit-ramp. Roadway modifications will include elimination of the channelized right-turn lanes on the westbound Grove Street approach and the Route 128 exit-ramp approach to the intersection. The eastbound Grove Street approach will be restriped to provide an exclusive left-turn lane and an exclusive through lane. The westbound approach will consist of an exclusive through lane and an exclusive right-turn lane. The northbound exit-ramp approach will be reconfigured to provide a shared left-turn/through lane and an exclusive right-turn lane and could require additional reconstruction along the ramp to improve operations. Each approach lane will be 12 feet wide. Grove Street east and west of the intersection will taper back to the existing cross section.

#### **Route 128 Northbound Entrance-Ramp**

The Route 128 northbound entrance-ramp will be modified to provide a new direct access/egress drive to the Riverside station. This new driveway will be located approximately 500 feet north of the Grove Street intersection. To accommodate this new access drive, the northbound



RIZZO ASSOCIATES, INC



Grove Street / Route 128  
Ramp Alternatives

Ramp Access to  
MBTA Station



entrance ramp's merge area with the Route 128 northbound frontage road will be shifted approximately 700 feet to the north. The existing merge point and acceleration area between the northbound entrance-ramp and the frontage road will be eliminated and a new yield point will be constructed at the current location of the Recreation Road exit from the frontage road. The existing exit from the frontage road to Recreation Road will be eliminated and Recreation Road traffic would use the Grove Street off-ramp from Route 128 northbound. The low volume of traffic using Recreation Road would have an insignificant impact when added to the Grove Street off-ramp.

### **Traffic Operations**

Peak hour traffic operations in the traffic study area were assessed from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The qualitative analysis is based on field observations made during peak traffic periods, while the quantitative analysis is based on calculated intersection operating levels of service as described in greater detail below.

### **Level of Service Criteria**

Level of service is a term used to describe the quality of the traffic flow on a roadway facility at a particular point in time. It is an aggregate measure of travel delay, travel speed, congestion, driver discomfort, convenience, and safety based on a comparison of roadway facility capacity to travel demand. Operating levels of service are reported on a scale of A to F, with Level of Service A representing the best operating conditions and Level of Service F representing the worst operating conditions. Level-of-service A represents free-flow conditions with little or no traffic delays, while Level of Service F represents a forced-flow condition with long delays and traffic demands exceeding roadway capacity.

Level of Service C is often cited as a design standard for rural roadways and Level of Service D is often used for urban roadways. However, when trying to establish minimum "acceptable" level-of-service thresholds for existing roadways a number of factors must be considered. These would include existing operating levels of service at other similar and nearby facilities; the duration of the peak traffic periods; the feasibility and cost of providing traffic mitigation; and, applicable state and local regulations.

Roadway operating levels of service are calculated following procedures defined in the 1994 *Highway Capacity Manual*, published by the

Transportation Research Board. For both signalized and unsignalized intersections, the operating level of service is based on travel delay. Delay can be measured in the field, but is generally calculated as a function of the traffic volume; quality of traffic progression; the green ratio; the cycle length; the volume to capacity (v/c) ratio; and the capacity of each intersection approach, as appropriate for signalized intersections. Delay at unsignalized intersections is calculated for the side street or minor street approach and for left turns from the major street. Delays at unsignalized intersections are generally influenced by the traffic volume levels on the major and minor streets. The delay-based level-of-service thresholds provided in the 1994 *Highway Capacity Manual* are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Intersection Level of Service Criteria

Level of Service	Average Delay per Vehicle (Seconds)	
	Signalized	Unsignalized
A	≤ 5.0	≤ 5.0
B	> 5.0 and ≤ 15.0	> 5.0 and ≤ 10.0
C	> 15.0 and ≤ 25.0	> 10.0 and ≤ 20.0
D	> 25.0 and ≤ 40.0	> 20.0 and ≤ 30.0
E	> 40.0 and ≤ 60.0	> 30.0 and ≤ 45.0
F	> 60.0	> 45.0

Source: *Highway Capacity Manual*, Special Report 209, Third Edition, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, Washington, DC, 1994.

### Observed Traffic Operations

Field observations of traffic flow in the study area generally confirm the findings of the level-of-service analysis for existing conditions. During the morning and evening peak commuter periods, there are few if any traffic problems in the study area. During the morning peak hour when there is a sudden surge in traffic entering the Riverside station driveway, traffic will queue up behind vehicles waiting to turn left into the station driveway. A detailed survey of observed queues at this location conducted from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM on February 12, 1997 (see Appendix) noted a maximum queue of six vehicles over the entire two-hour period. Away from the Riverside station area, traffic on Grove Street generally flows freely.

There was some traffic congestion observed on Route 16 at its intersection with Concord Street during the evening peak hour. This congestion occurs in the westbound direction and is generally attributable to a lane drop on Route 16 heading westbound into Wellesley. The signalized Concord

Street and Route 16 intersection in Newton does not appear to be a cause of traffic congestion.

### **Future Roadway Operating Conditions**

Anticipated future roadway system operating levels of service were calculated based on the projected 2002 and 2017 design year traffic flows and analysis procedures defined in the 1994 *Highway Capacity Manual*. The capacity analysis results are shown in Table 5. Anticipated 2002 and 2017 peak hour intersection operating levels of service are significantly better with the proposed roadway improvements in place.

In 2002, with the proposed improvements in place at the Route 128 northbound ramps and Grove Street intersection, the level of service for the overall intersection is expected to improve from LOS D and C to LOS B during the weekday morning and evening peak hours, respectively. The intersection is expected to continue to operate at LOS B during the peak hours in 2017.

At the Riverside station driveway and Grove Street intersection, the left turn movements from the driveway to Grove Street eastbound presently operate at LOS E during the morning peak hour due to the magnitude of conflicting through and left turning traffic flows on Grove Street. The left turn demand from the driveway, however, is relatively light, only 45 vph during the morning peak hour. With no improvements, the peak hour intersection levels of service are expected to degrade to LOS F by 2002. With the proposed improvements in place, which will provide a new entrance to the station from the Route 128 northbound entrance-ramp and remove left-turn entering traffic from Grove Street, left turns from the station driveway onto Grove Street will operate at LOS D during the peak hours in 2002 and at LOS E during the peak hours in 2017.

**Table 5 Intersection Operating Levels of Service**

Location/Peak Hour	1997 Existing Conditions		2002 Without Improvements		2002 With Improvements			2017 With Improvements		
	Delay <sup>a</sup>	LOS <sup>b</sup>	Delay	LOS <sup>c</sup>	V/C <sup>d</sup>	Delay	LOS	V/C	Delay	LOS
<b>ROUTE 128 NB RAMPS AT GROVE STREET</b>										
<i>Weekday Morning</i>										
Eastbound left turn	3.2	A	3.4	A	0.76	14.1	B	0.78	15.4	C
Eastbound through	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.60	7.7	B	0.71	9.4	B
Westbound through	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.63	13.5	B	0.74	15.6	C
Westbound right turn	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.18	10.0	B	0.21	10.1	B
Northbound left/through	13.9	C	22.1	D	0.26	9.9	B	0.27	10.0	B
Northbound right turn	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.63	13.1	B	0.74	15.9	C
Overall intersection	0.5	A	0.5	A	0.69	11.2	B	0.78	12.9	B
<i>Weekday Evening</i>										
Eastbound left turn	3.7	A	4.7	A	0.67	11.9	B	0.69	14.6	B
Eastbound through	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.20	3.1	A	0.25	3.2	A
Westbound through	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.69	8.2	B	0.80	10.6	B
Westbound right turn	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.30	5.1	B	0.34	5.3	B
Northbound left/through	11.4	C	17.6	C	0.26	13.4	B	0.27	13.5	B
Northbound right turn	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.50	15.2	C	0.62	16.9	C
Overall intersection	0.6	A	0.7	A	0.65	8.5	B	0.75	9.9	B
<b>RIVERSIDE STATION DRIVEWAY AT GROVE STREET</b>										
<i>Weekday Morning</i>										
Left turn into station	4.5	A	5.2	B	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.0	A
Left turn from station	44.8	E	>45.0	F	25.5	D	41.7	E	41.7	E
Right turn from station	4.4	A	4.9	A	4.7	A	5.3	B	5.3	B
Overall intersection	2.9	A	28.3	D	1.1	A	1.4	A	1.4	A
<i>Weekday Evening</i>										
Left turn into station	3.8	A	6.3	B	0.0	A	0.0	A	0.0	A
Left turn from station	18.2	C	>45.0	F	24.0	D	39.3	E	39.3	E
Right turn from station	5.3	B	9.8	B	8.7	B	11.1	C	11.1	C
Overall intersection	2.2	A	3.8	A	1.9	A	2.4	A	2.4	A

<sup>a</sup>Average delay in seconds per vehicle.

<sup>b</sup>Level of service.

<sup>d</sup>Volume-to-capacity ratio.

### Queue Analysis

A queue analysis was conducted for the proposed signalized intersection of Grove Street and the Route 128 ramps, using the MassHighway queue analysis software program. The results of the queue analysis for both the 2002 and 2017 conditions are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6** Queue Summary—Grove Street at Route 128 Northbound Ramps

Movement/Peak Period	2002 Conditions				2017 Conditions				Available Storage (Feet)
	Average Queue		95 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Queue <sup>a</sup>		Average Queue		95 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Queue		
	Vehicles	Feet <sup>b</sup>	Vehicles	Feet	Vehicles	Feet	Vehicles	Feet	
<b>GROVE STREET</b>									
<i>Weekday Morning:</i>									
Eastbound left turn	5	137	11	270	5	142	11	278	500 <sup>c</sup>
Eastbound through	8	207	15	383	11	273	19	481	500
Westbound through	7	175	13	332	9	217	16	399	320 <sup>d</sup>
Westbound right turn	1	34	3	74	2	41	4	90	320
<i>Weekday Evening:</i>									
Eastbound left turn	2	63	5	134	2	67	6	143	500
Eastbound through	2	47	4	102	2	61	5	130	500
Westbound through	11	265	19	470	14	344	23	580	320
Westbound right turn	3	69	6	145	3	82	7	172	320
<b>ROUTE 128 EXIT-RAMP</b>									
<i>Weekday Morning:</i>									
Northbound left/through	2	61	5	131	3	63	5	135	400 <sup>e</sup>
Northbound right turn	6	151	12	293	8	195	15	365	400
<i>Weekday Evening:</i>									
Northbound left/through	2	47	4	102	2	49	4	107	400
Northbound right turn	3	86	7	179	4	111	9	225	400

<sup>a</sup>The 95<sup>th</sup> percentile queue is the queue that will be exceeded only 5 percent of the time.

<sup>b</sup>Assumes 25 feet per vehicle.

<sup>c</sup>Approximate distance to Route 128 southbound exit-ramp.

<sup>d</sup>Approximate distance to hotel driveway.

<sup>e</sup>Approximate length of ramp.

As shown in Table 6, under 2002 conditions, the average queues expected on the Grove Street approaches will range from 1 to 11 vehicles. There is adequate storage to accommodate these expected queues. However, the

95<sup>th</sup> percentile queue lengths on the westbound approach are expected to reach 19 vehicles, or 470 feet, during the evening peak hour. The driveway to the hotel is located 320 feet from the intersection and therefore would be blocked occasionally during the weekday evening peak hour. The queues on the Route 128 northbound exit-ramp are expected to range from 2 to 15 vehicles during the weekday peak hours, with sufficient storage available to accommodate these expected queues.

### Traffic Signal Warrant Analyses

Traffic signal warrant analyses were conducted for the Grove Street intersection with the Route 128 northbound ramps in accordance with the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*<sup>2</sup>. The analyses were conducted to determine if the redistributed traffic volumes would meet the minimum volume requirements of the MUTCD to justify installation of a traffic-control signal. The following specific warrants from the MUTCD were included:

- Warrant 9, Four Hour Volume
- Warrant 11, Peak Hour Volume

The traffic signal warrant analyses are summarized in Table 7. This analysis assumes the proposed lane geometry of the intersection and an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of major street traffic of greater than 40 mph. Based on anticipated traffic volume conditions, traffic control signals are warranted at the intersection.

<sup>2</sup> Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices; Federal Highway Administration; Washington, DC; 1988.

Table 7

**Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis: Grove Street at Route 128 Northbound Ramps**

Time	Traffic Volumes (vph <sup>a</sup> )		Warrants Satisfied	
	Major Street <sup>b</sup>	Minor Street <sup>c</sup>	9 <sup>d</sup>	11 <sup>e</sup>
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	990	373	YES	YES
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	933	342	YES	YES
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	779	267	YES	YES
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	977	306	YES	YES
SIGNAL WARRANT MET			YES	YES

<sup>a</sup>Vehicles per hour.

<sup>b</sup>The major street is Grove Street and the volumes are the total of both the eastbound and westbound approaches to the intersection under 1996 average month conditions.

<sup>c</sup>The minor street is the Route 128 northbound ramp and the volumes are the total approach volume under existing conditions.

<sup>d</sup>Warrant 9, Four Hour Volumes, is met when, for each of any four hours of the day, plotted traffic volumes fall above the appropriate curve shown in Figure 4-8 on page 4C-12 of the MUTCD.

<sup>e</sup>Warrant 11, Peak Hour Volume Warrant, is met when, for one hour of the day, plotted traffic volumes fall above the appropriate curve shown in Figure 4-6 on page 4C-10 of the MUTCD.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The proposed roadway improvements and signalization will provide many benefits to the local roadway system. Signalization and geometric modification of the Grove Street and Route 128 northbound ramps intersection will help to lower vehicle speeds on this section of Grove Street, while reducing the high speed merging situation currently experienced eastbound on Grove Street east of the intersection. The lower speeds will also provide for safer and easier pedestrian crossings of Grove Street in the vicinity of the Riverside station. The new direct access to the Riverside Station from the Route 128 entrance-ramp will benefit the area by reducing the volume of traffic on Grove Street between the ramp intersection and the station driveway. Left turns into the station driveway will be eliminated, thereby reducing the number of vehicle turning movements and conflicts at the intersection, and improving the level of service of the intersection. The new access drive will also allow buses to have a direct access to the station from Route 128, without having to travel on Grove Street in front of the station. This new access drive would reduce bus travel times and improve circulation patterns within the MBTA Riverside Station.

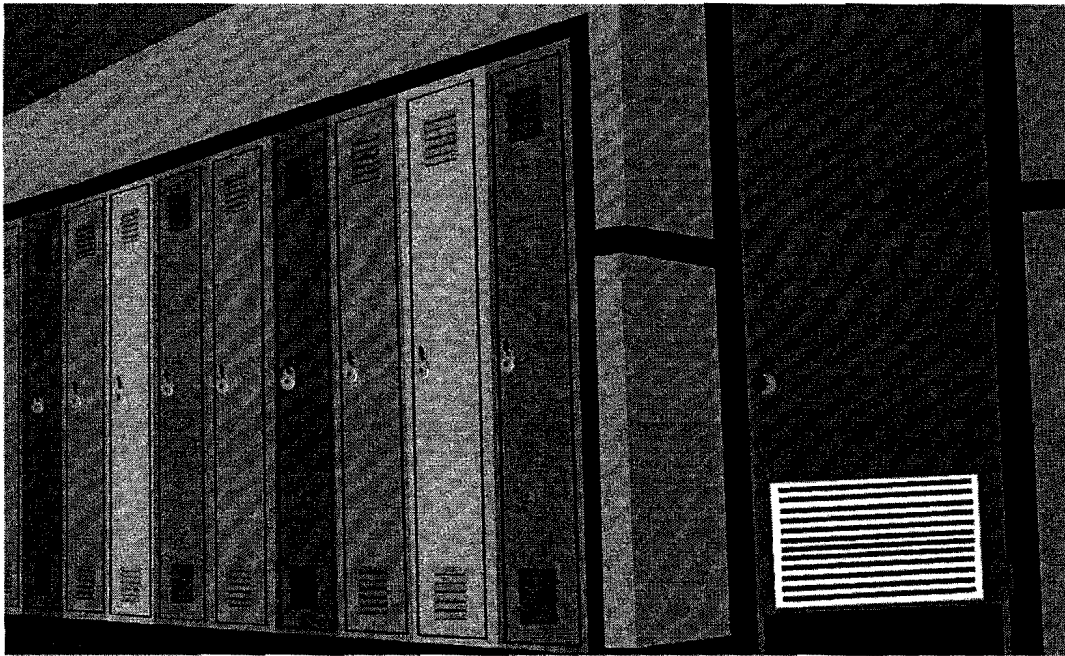
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John A. Gison, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459

# Enrollment Analysis Report

2011-2012 to 2016-2017



**Newton Public Schools**  
100 Walnut Street, Newtonville, MA 02460

**NOVEMBER 2011**



**David Fleishman  
Superintendent**

**Sandra Guryan  
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer**

**Acknowledgements:**

**Susan Dzikowski, Director of Finance  
Sean Mannion, Senior Budget Analyst  
Julie Kirrane, School Information Specialist  
Danielle Niro, Administrative Assistant**

reflects the official 2010 Census released by the United States Census Bureau in April 2011.<sup>1</sup> Appendix C, Table 7 compares City of Newton data from the 2010 United States Census to the 2000 United States Census by age range; the 1990 Census is also shown.

On a national and regional level, the 2010 Census reported 308.7 million people in the United States, a 9.7% increase from the 2000 Census population of 281.4 million. The increase of 9.7% over the last decade was lower than the 13.2% increase for the 1990's and is most comparable to the growth during the 1980's of 9.8%. Nationally, 24% of the United States population is under 18 years of age, 6.5% of which accounts for children under 5 years old. This reflects a national school age demographic of 17.5% of the total population.

At the state level, the population of Massachusetts grew by 3.1%, a much lower rate of growth than reported for the nation as a whole. Though the Census Bureau continues to rank Massachusetts very low in expected population growth from 2000 to 2030, Newton's enrollment projections are not typical of Massachusetts as these continue to increase over at least the next five years. State-wide, Massachusetts now has a population of over 6.5 million residents. Of these residents, approximately 1.4 million are under 18, accounting for 21.7% of the Massachusetts population. Of this group, 5.6% are children under age 5. In comparison, Newton has almost identical statistics with 21.6% of the population under age 18, and 5.3% of children under age 5. The state and local school age demographics are 16.1% and 16.3%, respectively. As this data indicates, Massachusetts and the City of Newton have a lower school-aged growth rate than the nation as a whole.

### **Housing Complexes**

Both Avalon residential communities have increased in student population for the second year. Avalon at Newton Highlands, a 294-unit apartment complex opened in 2003, is fully rented with a population of 85 students enrolled in the Newton Public Schools this year versus 74 students last school year and 64 students in the year prior. Eight kindergarten students entered Countryside this school year and four students entered Angier as a result of the new Angier-Countryside buffer zone established in June 2011. There are 14 private school students residing at the complex.

Avalon at Chestnut Hill, a 204-unit apartment complex opened in 2006, is 100% leased with 73 students from the development enrolled in the Newton Public Schools. In November, 2010, there were 66 students enrolled in Newton Public Schools versus 49 students in the prior year; seven kindergarten students entered Memorial-Spaulding this school year. Fourteen students attend private school.

Arborpoint at Woodland Station, a transit-oriented 180-unit rental complex, opened in 2007. As of November 2011, the complex is 97% leased. Currently, there are 41 students from the development enrolled in the Newton Public Schools as compared to 40 students one year ago and 43 students in November 2009. Currently, there are no private school students living at Arborpoint. Total enrollment by school for each residential community is shown in the following table.

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau, Census 2010

School	Avalon at Newton Highlands	Avalon at Chestnut Hill	Arborpoint at Woodland Station	Total
Angier	4			4
Bowen		2		2
Cabot	1			1
Countryside	41			41
Mason-Rice		1		1
Memorial-Spaulding	3	40		43
Peirce			14	14
Williams			6	6
Zervas			1	1
Bigelow	1			1
Brown	8		2	10
Day			5	5
Oak Hill H	1	16	3	20
Newton North	1	1	8	10
Newton South	25	13	2	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>199</b>

Two smaller developments have been completed and occupied including 192 Lexington Street, with 10 affordable housing units, and 2148-50 Commonwealth Avenue, with two units. There are eight students in residence at 192 Lexington Street; six students attending Burr, one student attending Day and another enrolled at Newton North. There are three students living at 2148-50 Commonwealth Avenue, one each attending Burr, Day and North.

One additional project at 61 Pearl Street, with three affordable two bedroom units, has secured funding with occupancy estimated in spring 2012. There are two other projects that have recently reached the permit stage – six units at 244 Adams Street and three units at 439 Washington Street. There are three additional small projects that have not yet been permitted but have been approved recently or are in the approval stage: 152 Adam Street (5 units), 111 Elm Street (4 units) and 87-89 Waban Avenue (4 units). The proposed 16-unit project at 112-116 Dedham Street has been withdrawn.

The Riverside/MBTA site still remains in the concept stage. There is not yet a proposal in front of the City, though there is the possibility of a proposal in 2012; estimates are considered preliminary on the inclusion of up to 200 housing units. The Northland project - a large mixed use project on Needham Street at Oak Street and Kessler Woods at La Grange Street (62 units) did not come to fruition. The retail and office components of the Chestnut Hill Square project are currently under study with no housing planned to date.

### Real Estate Sales

According to data obtained from City of Newton records, residential property sales averaged approximately 1,119 per year over the past six years. (See Appendix D, Table 9.) Through the first eight months of 2011, real estate sales totaled 667 versus 716 for the same period one year ago. Appendix D, Table 9 shows the data by school district, making clear the differences in total property sales by neighborhood. Additional information is provided in Table 8 of Appendix D with properties listed for sale by school district in Newton as of October 2011; there are 12 more properties listed for sale in Newton this year versus last.

March 23, 2012

Aub Harden  
38 Vista Ave.  
Auburndale, MA 02466

Regarding: #400-11 and #400-11(2); A Business 5/Riverside Zone

Dear Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee,

I have been involved in this process since 2007, as a Council Member of the Lasell Neighborhood Association (LNA) and as a Member of the Steering Committee of the Riverside Station Neighborhood Coalition (RSNC). The comments that follow are my own personal views and do not necessarily reflect positions of the LNA or RSNC.

- Flexibility  
The zoning language should be as general as possible to allow for the evolution of project design so as to get to the best possible outcome.

There should be limits, and having been part of the negotiations with the developer and the neighborhood, I am comfortable with the proposed numbers **-for the project**. For the zoning changes however, I feel the limits should reflect the upper potential for the site and should be specified in a measurable, flexible way. From what I've heard, using a FAR measurement seems to be appropriate for the zoning language, while physical size- footprint, height, etc. seems to be more appropriate for the special permit portion of the process.

Specifying the number of buildings and the uses for specific buildings should not be in the zoning language, but should rather be set out in the special permit process.

- Direct Access  
From what we've heard from the developer and other informed people, the best way to alleviate the traffic problems is to keep as many cars as possible off of Grove St. Direct Access to 128, northbound and southbound, should be a goal. As getting this is problematic at best, and would not be possible in the timeframe for this development, I agree that an incentive should be created to encourage the developer, the City, and the State to sit down and make this happen. The Tier 2 language (as amended by Jay Harney) seems to be a good way to accomplish this.
- Uses  
I agree with comments from the March 22 public hearing that certain uses should be encouraged by including them by right. I encourage ZAP to use the information provided by the RSNC survey of the community when deciding which to include by right and which to allow only through the special permit process.
- Mitigation  
The time period for traffic monitoring should be increased to 5 years from 2.

Sincerely,



Aub Harden

## Philip B. Herr

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### MEMORANDUM

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To: Zoning and Planning Committee  
Planning & Development Board  
From: Phil Herr  
Date: March 23, 2012  
Re: RIVERSIDE ZONING HEARING on #400-11 and #400-11A.

---

Following is a more complete version of what I intended to convey at last evening's hearing. I was speaking to only three concerns:

- Is the proposed Zoning CONSISTENT with the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, including its Mixed Use amendment adopted last November?
- Would this proposed zoning accommodate the best KIND of mixed use development for this location?
- Is the SCALE of development allowed by this proposed zoning appropriate?

### CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A couple of things might make some think there is inconsistency between the proposed Riverside zoning and the *Comprehensive Plan*, but there really is not.

- First, the *Comprehensive Plan* calls for a mixed use development review process that among other things includes a carefully structured bringing together of all key interests in such development EARLY in the process, informed by use of objective metrics and criteria. The proposed zoning for this development obviously can't do that because the process of negotiating this development began three years before the Mixed Use element was adopted, and employed a very different process.

The proposed zoning does the best that could be done at this point to incorporate much of the process advocated in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Adopting the proposed zoning will make the future adoption of the process the *Plan* proposes easier and more likely than ever. That isn't inconsistency.

- Second, some desired qualities of mixed use centers are cited in the *Comprehensive Plan* but are not clearly articulated in the proposed Zoning. However, the very first of the criteria listed as requirements for a development to be approved under this Zoning (§30-24(i) (1) Criteria) requires this finding:

“The proposed Mixed Use Development is not inconsistent with the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* in effect at the time of filing an application for a Mixed Use Development...”;

Repeating all of the relevant language from the *Comprehensive Plan* would add at least a half-dozen pages to the Ordinance. My thanks go to the authors of the proposal for sparing us that extra regulatory bloat.

### **DOES THE PROPOSED ZONING ACCOMMODATE THE BEST KIND OF MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT FOR THIS LOCATION?**

- The Planning staff is saying “yes.”
- We are told the Developer is saying “yes.”
- Until last evening I understood that the Riverside neighborhood leadership was saying yes, and informal conversations suggests that may still be true.
- The Zoning and Planning Committee held working sessions to find consensus prior to approving a version for hearing, apparently indicating a tentative “yes.”

It would be difficult to disagree with that background. If done well, development consistent with this zoning can serve both the City and the neighborhood well, and would appropriately complement very different mixed use developments at Chestnut Hill and perhaps on Needham Street.

The popular image of mixed use developments involves a rich mixture of offices, housing, shopping, dining, entertainment and public uses, but the reality is often very different from that image, just as our village centers differ greatly among them, to the benefit of the City. That differentiation among village centers is celebrated in the *Comprehensive Plan* as part of what makes Newton the great place that it is. Different mixes of uses in developments are appropriate for different circumstances of location, market, and intentions. Chestnut Hill Square, when and if the promised housing is built, will closely fit the common stereotype for mixed use. Right from its beginning five years ago, the Riverside proposal has not fit that stereotype: the development has never been forwarded as being intended to serve anything for persons from beyond the near vicinity other than jobs and fiscal relief.

For five years that same basic quality has been proposed for Riverside and to my knowledge has never been seriously challenged by any group in the City, but that quality unquestionably is a key part of how it was possible for the developer and the nearby neighborhoods to have reached whatever degree of agreement that they have achieved.

There are other locations in the City where the popular image of a bustling mixed use center, entertainment and all, can potentially be more suitably developed than at Riverside. Given the slow rate of growth in this City and region, creating that type of mixed use center at Riverside would make the development of another one at a more suitable location within Newton much less likely. Housing and offices and a bit of retailing together with some open space sounds like an appropriate mix for this location, and a choice sensitive to the interests of those living nearby as well as for the City as a whole.

There is one legitimate concern about that mix of uses, which is that there will be relatively little interaction between the development and the rest of the City: this threatens to be a Route 128 place, with little connection with the rest of Newton. The *Comprehensive Plan's* Mixed Use Element, anticipating that possibility, suggests:

“Good-faith efforts should be made both during and subsequent to development to enhance the extent to which the entire [mixed use] center benefits Newton residents through targeted employee recruitment efforts, training or apprenticeship opportunities, or similar initiatives.”

At the permitting stage, sensitivity to that *Plan* statement will be important.

## **IS THE SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT ALLOWED BY THIS PROPOSED ZONING APPROPRIATE?**

Substantially reducing the allowed scale of this proposed development below the limits proposed in the draft zoning would jeopardize the feasibility of the development, so is virtually the same thing as denying the development altogether.

Increasing the allowable amount of development on that site might bring jobs and tax benefits to both the City and the region, and *maybe* the impacts of such an increase could be sensitively managed without harm to the vicinity. The Zoning amendment has been shaped with a format that makes it quite simple for a future amendment to allow more development should that prove appropriate at some later date: that would be a third step beyond the two being heard.

Such an increase might be appropriate provided that:

- adding more activity is shown to be feasible spatially on the site, in the marketplace, and in terms of impacts; and
- if at that later time at least two-thirds of the Aldermen support such change, after assessing the impacts of what has been authorized up to then.

For now, there is apparent agreement around the scale agreed-upon between neighborhood spokespersons and the developer and City staff. To further delay this process to allow time for the design and analysis of a larger development is difficult to justify. Perhaps the developer might be encouraged to configure the development at this time so as to possibly accommodate expansion at a later date should the market and the experience of impacts from this much development support such a departure. The current site plan, as depicted in the February VHB *Traffic Design and Impact Report*, does not appear to have that quality.

There is one further caveat about scale. The amount of impact mitigation being expected of the developer is very substantial in proportion to the scale of the project as now proposed. It is important that in the permitting process there are assurances that those mitigations are not contingent upon assistance from the City, or on some later additions to the allowed scale of the development.



## **SUMMARY**

The zoning proposal contained in #400-11 doubtless can be improved upon in a number of ways, as has been pointed out by others. With such improvements, it deserves adoption.

The zoning proposal contained in #400-11(2) received essentially no discussion last evening except in the Planning Director's introductory presentation. No action on it appears necessary at this point, certainly not approval.

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David A. Olson, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459

March 19, 2012

Alderman Marcia Johnson, Chairman  
City of Newton Zoning & Planning Committee  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

City of Newton Planning & Development Board  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Petition #400-11 & #400-11(2) – Proposed Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District

Dear Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee and Planning & Development Board:

These comments on the "February 27, 2012 Hearing Draft" (i.e., Attachment A to the Department of Planning and Development's March 16, 2012 Public Hearing Memorandum) are submitted on behalf of Woodland Grove Condominium, a nine-unit (including one affordable unit) building, with two stories above-grade, that has stood at 416 Grove Street, Newton for twenty-eight (28) years. Woodland Grove Condominium ("the Condominium") is located directly opposite the Hotel Indigo on Grove Street and is a direct abutter to the Riverside site.

The residents of the Condominium have been closely following the development and drafting of the proposed Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented Zoning District. They recognize the importance of Riverside area development for the City of Newton. Over the years, the Condominium and residents of nearby neighborhoods have worked cooperatively with the City and developers to create carefully planned, well-executed and financially successful development. And, it is their intent to continue to do that with development of the Riverside site.

The draft zoning must achieve a balance between the financial viability of development, the City's desire for increased tax revenue, and the adjacent neighborhoods' essential need to survive and prosper through a long period of disruptive construction and beyond.

Comments on specific provisions of the zoning proposal before you are as follows:

- 1) The structure of the proposal is a bit confusing in that one needs to read through several paragraphs before one realizes that as-of-right uses may be limited by the need to seek a special permit if the overall gross floor area of the "Mixed-Use Development" is 20,000 square feet or more.
- 2) Given that the Riverside site is one on which the City desires to have substantially more development than 20,000 square feet, why is there a separate new Section 30-13(f) for as-of-right uses? If the concern is that there needs to be at least one as-of-right use in the zone, then consider making it a "public use" just like the site's current zoning.
- 3) Section 30-13(g)(2) Intensity of Development – In order to integrate and mesh development in the new district with the surrounding land uses and established neighborhoods, the maximum total area of the office uses should be reduced from 225,000 square feet of gross floor area to 175,000 square feet and the maximum number of dwelling units should be reduced from 290 to 240 units.
- 4) Build-out of large, complex developments takes years. The Draft Environmental Impact Report submitted by B.H. Normandy for a substantially larger Riverside project lays out a 5-year construction schedule. For those living directly across the street that means noise, dust, and disruption for a period of 5 years. That is why it is imperative to include a provision in Section 30-13(g)(2) concerning "intensity of development". Those individuals living nearby the site deserve a finite description of what the City's vision is for development at Riverside. They need to be able to gauge, make decisions, and plan for the disruption well in advance.
- 5) It seems most unusual to prescribe a development parcel of 9.33 acres rather than 10 acres. It makes it overly clear that the zoning was crafted just for this portion of the area.
- 6) New Section 30-13(f)(1) uses the language "allow sufficient density to make development economically feasible". What does that mean objectively and how will it be analyzed and measured? There does not appear to be anything in the zoning proposal that requires an applicant to make a showing to that effect.
- 7) New Section 30-13(f)(2) allows just one of the uses to be constructed and maintained. How will the City get all of the uses that it wants to see in the development? Also, the language says "one or more of the purposes" which makes what is being said unclear. What is actually being spoken about is

“uses” as opposed to the “purpose” of the district (see Section 30-13(f)(1) which deals with the “purpose” of the district as opposed to Section 30-13(f)(2) which are the “allowed uses”).

- 8) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES allows “uses similar to or accessory to” those listed in the table. Suppose a heliport were deemed by the applicant to be accessory to an office building or an emergency medical care facility, it would appear that it would be allowed as-of-right and without requirement for a special permit. That would be problematic and would leave little leeway for controlling impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.
- 9) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – In addition, why include language that appears to override the clearly delineated uses listed in the remainder of the Table? “Uses similar to or accessory to the following” would create ambiguity concerning what is a use that is similar to those listed in the Table. And, the Table gives the “uses similar to” those listed in the Table a “by right” classification even if they are similar to uses in the Table that require a special permit. To provide clarity and avoid future conflict concerning what is allowed in the district, the words “similar to or” should be deleted.
- 10) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – What is the purpose of calling many of the listed uses “as-of-right” if you need a special permit for the development?
- 11) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – Under Category B “Retail Sales”, include the words “up to 5,000 square feet” as-of-right to distinguish it from the second to the last bullet in that category which requires a special permit.
- 12) New Section 30-13(g) – The language needs to be more precisely drafted. Couldn’t one just develop the land in discrete segments over a period of years by only applying for one use at a time? Moreover, if a residential use is not applied for, but one or two other principal uses are applied for, then, by definition, you would not have a Mixed-Use Development. In that case, what zoning approvals would be required for an office building for example?
- 13) New Section 30-13(g)(2) Intensity of Development – How does this section work with Table A? Also note that Section 30-13(g)(2)(d), which requires one use from each of three separate categories of uses, seems at odds with Section 30-13(f)(2) which only seems to require one use period.
- 14) Given the language of the current draft, how does the City ensure that a multi-use community center is included in the development? There does not appear to be anything stated in New Section 30-13(g)(1) or (2) that would require a multi-use community center. And, the proposed zoning does not establish any size limitation and no parking requirements are provided for “Community Use

Space". Some parameters need to be specified in the zoning for the proposed new District to control the size of facilities and their attendant parking needs.

- 15) New Section 30-15(v)(1) Setbacks – What governs side and rear setbacks for residential uses? Also, note that there is nothing (but there should be something) that prevents parking lots from being sited immediately adjacent to city streets. And, there should never be a set back of zero feet because no one knows how uses on adjoining properties will change over time.
- 16) Tables 1 & 3 of Section 30-14 Dimensional Requirements – “Lot Area per unit” means what exactly in the context of multi-story buildings? Why is the building height allowance 135 feet if it is only supposed to accommodate 10 stories? That would be an allowance of approximately 13.5 feet per story. Also, carefully review the minimum allowable lot area viz a viz a special permit mixed-use development to make certain that the minimum allowable lot area of 40,000 square feet makes sense in this context.
- 17) New Section 30-24(c)(7) Project Phasing – Building a project “in multiple phases over a period of time” could be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhoods and the ability of homeowners to sell their properties throughout a prolonged build-out. It could greatly inconvenience neighboring properties with noise and construction traffic for years. Also, it would make it difficult to properly track post-construction impacts. If there were phasing, when would the monitoring begin and for how long would it continue?
- 18) New Section 30-24(c)(8) Adequacy of Public Facilities – In the first full paragraph, need to use consistent terminology (see “applicant” vs. “petitioner”). Why specify that staff determines the project scope? It should be left open so that the Aldermen can determine how to get the job done. Are these the only items that you would want to have peer reviewed? What about school population impacts?
- 19) Later in Section 30-24(c)(8), it appears that there would be only a two-year post-construction (after full build-out) monitoring period for traffic. And, if city staff requests monitoring prior to full build-out, the total duration of all monitoring could nevertheless not extend beyond that two-year period for the entire development. The language needs to be revised to assure the ability to require early monitoring as well as monitoring after full build-out. And, there must be a clear and independent statement that the post-construction (after full build-out) monitoring must extend for a period of two years after full occupancy. [Note: In the proposed zoning text, this paragraph and the ones following it are not numbered for easy reference.]

- 20) New Section 30-24(c)(8) Post-Construction Traffic Study – [Note: In the proposed zoning text, this paragraph is not numbered for easy reference.] Depending on the allowed phasing, post-construction studies many need to be conducted for a period longer than two years. See comment 18) above. And, if post-construction studies are required at a point in time before completion of full build-out, there needs to be a way to determine whether the actual impacts for the component parts exceed original projections. Also, compare the language in i. with what is stated three paragraphs above it and make the sections consistent in requirements.
- 21) Page 13, second full paragraph, third line – Security may be forfeited “at the city’s election” means who in the city exactly? The entity who has the ability to do this should be specified.
- 22) Page 13, Post-Construction Traffic Study, iii. – As written, it appears that if one location (as opposed to the sum of all locations) has a problem needing mitigation, nothing could be done about it. The language needs to be revised to provide for all necessary mitigation. And why is the threshold for mitigation 110% of the original traffic projection? The trip reduction mitigation should achieve the amount of traffic that was originally projected for the project or less.
- 23) Section 30-24(i) Additional special permit criteria for a Mixed-Use Development in the Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District – Many of the criteria are totally subjective and use the word “appropriate” without any objective guidance being provided. A similar section for the PMBD District seems a bit more objective and similar language should be considered here.
- 24) Required Parking Spaces -- There need to be objective standards for the number of required parking spaces. Currently there are no standards.
- 25) Section 30-24(j) Additional Filing Requirements –
  - (1) b) – What does “project statistics, including zoning” mean?
  - (3) Final phrase -- “satisfies each criterion in this section” refers to which section?
  - (6) Why refer in this ordinance to review by specific staff members? The comment applies throughout this section on additional filing requirements. The specificity concerning traffic review is too specific for a zoning ordinance. It could, perhaps, be addressed in regulations. But what does the newly hired traffic peer reviewer suggest?

Throughout Section 30-24(j), some of the sub-sections refer to a peer review and others do not say anything. The Aldermen should be able to have everything peer-reviewed at their option. The language should be so revised.

- 26) New Section 30-19(d)(22) Parking Analysis – Since this section relates to a Special Permit which is under the exclusive purview of the special permit granting authority, only the Permitting authority should be able to make the final decision on whether there is sufficient parking for the uses. This should not be a delegable function. As stated in comment 23) above, there are currently no standards for the number of required parking spaces. There need to be objective standards especially if the authority to make the decision is given to someone other than the special permit granting authority.
- 27) Section 30-1 Definitions, new definition “Community Use Space” – Note that each of the enumerated uses would appear to be as-of-right in this proposed new zone, with no size limitation and no parking requirements. There need to be some parameters built into the proposed new District to control size of facilities and their attendant parking needs.
- 28) Section 30-5(a)(4) “Public Uses” – There need to be some parameters built into the proposed new District to control size of facilities and their attendant parking needs at a minimum.
- 29) Tier II - Section 30-15(v)(5) – Given the location of the Riverside site, direct access to and from an interstate highway is a logical development strategy that should be encouraged in the main body of the proposed zoning without the need to offer excessive incentives. The proposed allowance of substantially increased gross floor area and an FAR of 3.0 are not proportional to any benefit to be derived from direct highway access. And, there has been no demonstrable showing or empirical evidence to justify such an increase in density. But, clearly, there will be increased impacts to the surrounding neighborhood during the long build-out period and beyond. We request that the so-called “incentives” be deleted from this provision.

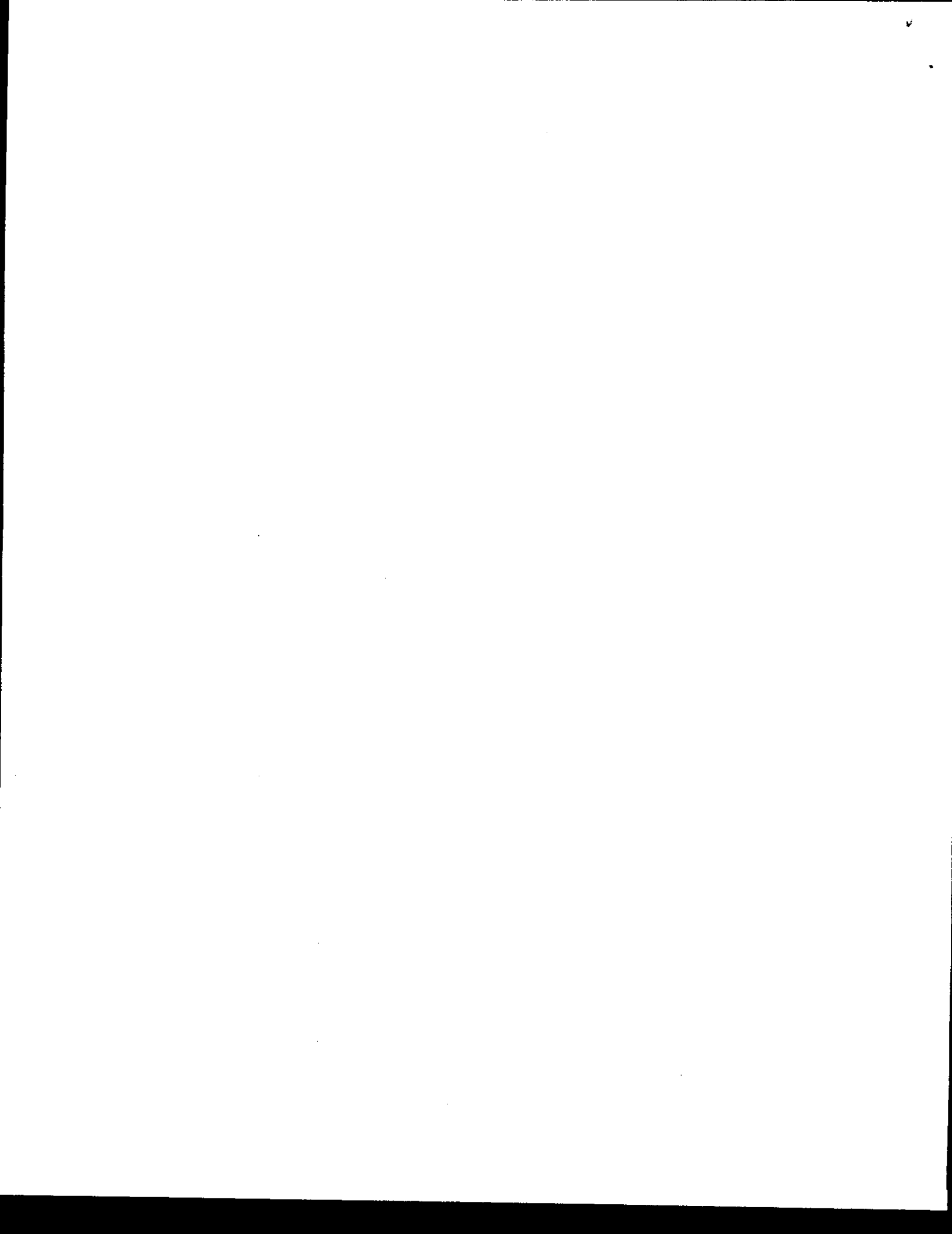
Thank you for your continued diligence in assuring that the zoning is crafted to fully assess and mitigate off-site impacts throughout build-out and after full occupancy.

Very truly yours,

Anette Seltzer Lewis

Anette Seltzer Lewis

cc: Lynne D. Sweet, Business Manager Woodland Grove Condominium  
Alderman Amy Mah Sangiolo





Alderman Lenny Gentile  
Alderman Jay Harney  
Alderman Ted Hess Mahan  
Alderman Ruth Fuller  
Candace Havens, City of Newton Director of Planning  
Rep. Kay Kahn  
Rep. Cindy Creem  
Mayor Setti Warren  
Newton Housing Authority

R. Bruce McVittie

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11 Norumbega Court  
Newton, MA 02466

Phone 617.964.8069  
bmcvittie@yahoo.com

*The following are my remarks to the Zoning and Planning Committee on 2012-03-22 concerning the proposed zoning for Riverside Station Development.*

Good evening.

My name is Bruce McVittie and I am a homeowner at 11 Norumbega Court and one of the closest neighbors on the Auburndale side of this project.

I have heard and read arguments that this project should be larger to increase the revenue for the City. I doubt many, if any, of those proponents live in the area that will experience the costs. So for those proponents, what's not to like? It's free revenue.

I'd love to increase the revenue from the Newton Center parking lot with a multi-story office building. For me, that would be free revenue. But that would come at a cost that the residents and merchants in that area are unwilling to bear. Other ideas are being pursued.

For Riverside, increasing the revenue would mean increasing the cost that Auburndale and Lower Falls must bear. Costs in terms of traffic, school crowding, an obstructed skyline, and potentially water, sewer and storm water, although I will focus on traffic. However, even without attempts to maximize the revenue from this site, I think this development is too large.

Yet, it appears that something is going to be built. So, the question becomes how large can we accept? And what can be done to manage the costs?

Given that the developer is prepared to accept this proposed development as an alternative to a massive 40B development over which the City would have little control or even influence, I am willing to accept it. But I would like to see some additional steps taken to manage the costs.

Specifically,

1. Manage the traffic impacts by managing the types of activities allowed. Although there are other examples in Table A of Allowed Uses, I will highlight specifically the medical offices use which would induce a steady stream of traffic for short appointments all day long. Please remove that and other similar uses from Table A of Allowed Uses
2. Please add a requirement that the developer explain what additional mitigation will be provided at the site and in the surrounding streets and intersections if their future traffic projections are incorrect.

Fifteen days ago, some of you and some of your colleagues questioned whether the traffic engineers on the Add-A-Lane project had considered all the traffic impacts and mitigated appropriately. You received the same assurances that the Riverside neighbors have been given and yet the Aldermen were still concerned and wondered about backup plans. And that was for a project allowing for 3% annual growth in traffic with 75% of the design nearly complete. The Riverside traffic study assumes 0.4% annual traffic growth along 128 and is nowhere near that level of design detail and is just a few miles north. Is it any wonder that the Riverside neighbors are concerned about the developer's traffic projections.

3. The post-construction traffic study and monitoring should continue annually for 5 years for all of the sites, streets and intersections throughout the traffic study area including the C-D road. Five years is being specified if mitigation is required, it should be required regardless.
4. The traffic monitoring should also consider the level of background and corridor traffic along Route 128 between Route 9 and Route 20. All the assumptions made as part of the study should be tested, and mitigated if proven incorrect.
5. Traffic monitoring should not focus solely on vehicle trips but also the actual level of service and weave conditions experienced in the affected traffic study area. That service levels may be bad under no-build conditions, shouldn't mean that it is acceptable to make them worse. If this happens, so should mitigation.
6. The proposed advisory council should also have a role in post-project traffic monitoring and be given greater authority. The developer and project owners should be required to address any concerns within a finite time period – for example 6 months. Would you please also explain how members are to be selected or appointed to that council.
7. And finally, the proposed incentive for a larger development is a great concern and is something that I oppose.

First, direct northbound access should have been included in the current proposal. For whatever reason it isn't.

Secondly, the analysis in the Public Hearing Memorandum from the Planning Department focuses on the reduced traffic over one short stretch of Grove Street and neglects impacts along the rest of the street including the narrow stretch in front of Williams Elementary School and the residential section in Lower Falls.

If you do decide to allow this arrangement, please tighten the language to ensure that

Direct access from 128 north and southbound does not require that traffic cross over or travel along any section of Grove Street. Direct access means from the highway (or the C-D Road) into the development and T-station.

Meaningful steps are taken to discourage traffic from travelling on the rest of Grove Street.

Thank you.

## Rebecca Smith

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Date sent: **Thu, 22 Mar 2012 20:58:28 -0400**  
From: **Nathan Phillips <nathan@bu.edu>**  
To: **rsmith@newtonma.gov**  
Subject: **Comments on Docket # 400-11**

Dear Alderman Johnson, Members of the Zoning and Planning Committee, Candace Havens, Eve Tapper, and Seth Zeren,

I am a resident of Auburndale who favors a higher density development, if it can be achieved without increases in motor vehicle traffic congestion and taller buildings. One way to achieve greater density without these negatives is to substitute building space for parking space. This would incentivize use of the excellent on-site transit connections.

The city has considered one way to increase density, by focusing on direct access from the highway. I am nervous about a strategy that increases density by allowing for an increase in motor vehicle traffic. As a transit oriented alternative, I would like to see the city assess how parking can be used as a lever to simultaneously increase density and decrease traffic.

In conjunction with an examination of impacts of the number of parking spaces on traffic and transit, market-based parking pricing, shared parking, and car shares should be considered in a comprehensive consideration of the role of parking in this development.

Thank you,

Nathan Phillips  
73 Charles Street  
Auburndale, MA 02466

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Nathan Phillips  
Boston University  
Department of Geography and Environment  
Center for Energy and Environmental Studies  
675 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215 USA  
617.353.2841 (office)  
617.997.1057 (mobile)  
[nathan@bu.edu](mailto:nathan@bu.edu)  
[www.bu.edu/geography](http://www.bu.edu/geography)

March 22, 2012

Docket item #400-11, Riverside/Mixed-Use 3 Zoning

Bill Renke, 142 Cornell Street, Newton Lower Falls.

Madam Chair, members of the Board of Aldermen and the Planning & Development Board, as most of you know, I am President of my village neighborhood group, the Lower Falls Improvement Association. In 2010 I was a Mayoral appointee to the Mixed Use Task Force, which helped draft the "Mixed Use Centers" amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan. This amendment was approved by the Board of Aldermen in 2011.

I am speaking tonight as the co-founder and co-chair of the Riverside Station Neighborhood Coalition, founded in 2010 by the three neighborhood associations surrounding the Riverside site. The RSNC is an advocacy group dedicated to educating residents living near the Riverside MBTA Station of its proposed development, and advocating on their behalf.

You've heard from speakers who expressed the 2007 neighborhood visions for the development of Riverside. These thoughtful and engaging statements expressed the values our community considers important; the values our citizens desire. Although I am satisfied with the majority of the proposed amendment language, the massive size of the buildings allowed were never part of the vision.

After more than two years of discussion, consultation, and analysis, it is my belief that the item before us tonight reflects a project size that will generate more than 5000 new vehicle trips per day along a scenic road; more than the surrounding infrastructure can support. This volume will adversely affect the functioning of the Interstate highway, and local roadways up to a mile from the project site. Extensive mitigation measures will be required to address these issues; measures that will change the character of our neighborhoods for generations to come.

With a projected FAR of 2.4, the density allowed on the site will significantly exceed that of the adjoining Riverside Office Center. For almost two years, I have been advocating for a project approximately 30% smaller than that which is currently proposed; a project that would generate less than 4000 new vehicle trips per day. I understand that a zoning district with less density is not before us tonight, but I implore you not to approve a district with more.

That is all and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

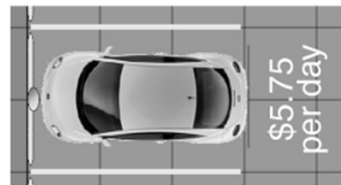
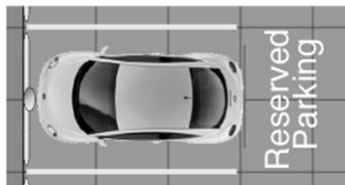
William Renke  
142 Cornell St.  
Newton Lower Falls, MA 02462  
[BillRenke@comcast.net](mailto:BillRenke@comcast.net)  
617-332-4426

# Aligning Incentives

Sean Roche  
March 22, 2012

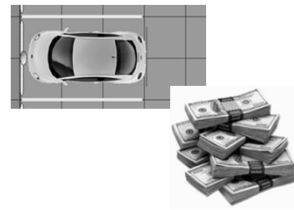
## Two parking spaces

- Controlled by Jordan
- Reserved for tenants
- “Free”
- Controlled by Mary-Beth Theresa Arnold
- Open to anyone
- Not free



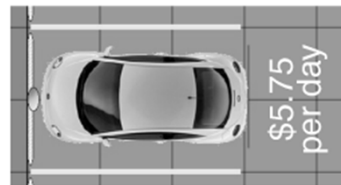
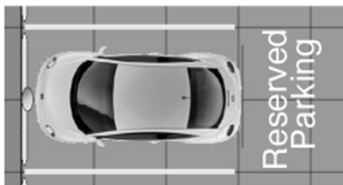
## Two parking spaces

- Long-term parking
- Two trips a day
- Supports 250 – 400 s.f. of office space
  - Lease revenue for Jordan
- Long-term parking
- Two trips a day
- Parking revenue to MBTA



## Other Players

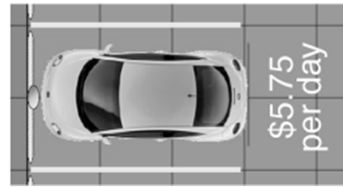
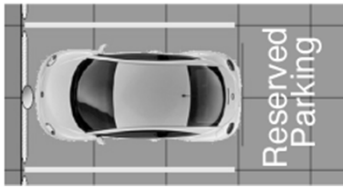
- Bob the boss
  - Parking is included in lease, no incentive to encourage not driving
- Carol the commuter
  - Infrequent site user, at best
- Colin the cube-dweller
  - No disincentive to drive





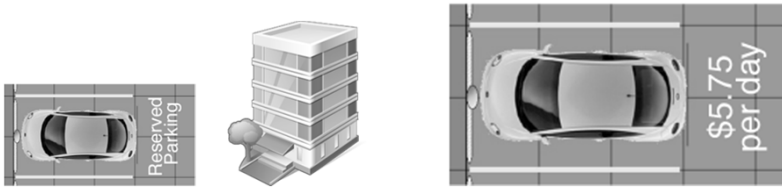
## Other Players

- Bob the boss
  - Parking is included in lease, no incentive to encourage not driving
- Carol the commuter
  - Infrequent site user, at best
- Colin the cube-dweller
  - No disincentive to drive



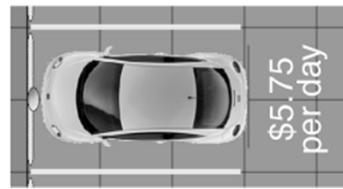
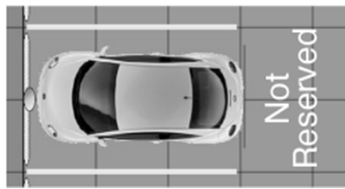
## Benefits to City of Newton

- Tax revenue on office space
- Bubkis



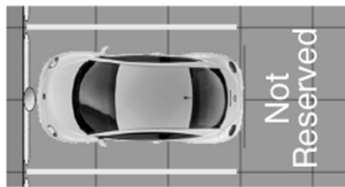
## Alternative Scenario

- All parking on site must be provided on the same terms to all users



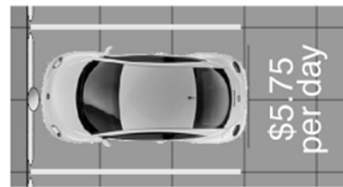
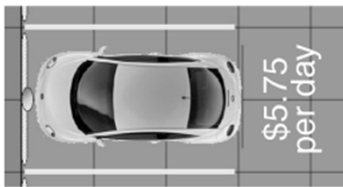
## Consequence

- Commuters will take free spaces



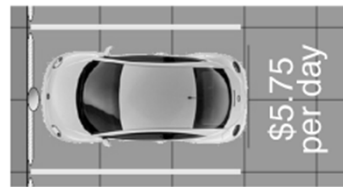
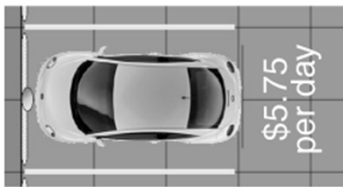
## Response

- Jordan needs to charge
  - Otherwise commuters will use up too many spaces



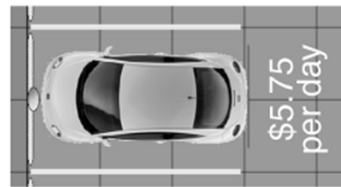
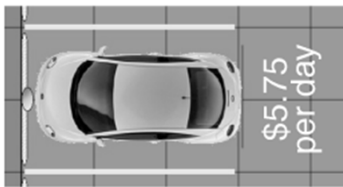
## Consequence

- Bob the boss
  - Parking no longer rolled into lease
  - Incentive to encourage not driving



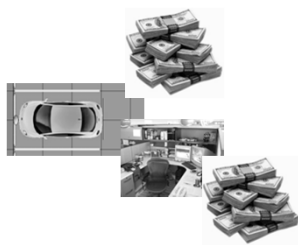
## Consequence

- Colin the cube-dweller
  - Partially covered by Bob or not, cost of parking part of decision to drive
  - Moving the cost to the decision-maker



## Consequence

- Space supports two distinct revenue streams
  - Parking
  - Lease
- MBTA
  - Missing out on a revenue stream



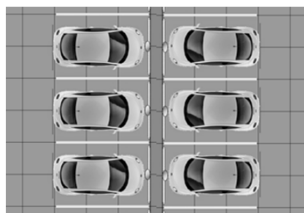
## Consequence

- MBTA
  - Use space to build a cubicle?
  - Parking and lease revenue?



## If MBTA took that route

- Not just one space/one cubicle
- More people in the development
- Some % will take the T
- No additional traffic
- Tax revenue to city



## Prescription

- Shared parking
  - No reserved parking on site
  - All spaces available to all users on exactly the same terms
- Allow for future development on site if no increase in parking

## What about ...

- The park-and-ride commuters?
  - Woodland Station
    - Excess capacity
    - Washington Street better suited to handle traffic
  - Not clear that park-and-ride is greener than office space near T
- Jordan's ability to attract tenants without free parking?
  - No other 128 development comparable
  - 128 and T

From: "Gary Rucinski" <gary@rucinskis.com>  
To: <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
Subject: Testimony at the Zoning and Planning Committee Public Hearing for the proposed Riverside zoning amendment  
Date sent: Thu, 22 Mar 2012 22:37:15 -0400  
Copies to: "Bill Renke" <billrenke@comcast.net>  
Forwarded by: "David A. Olson" <dolson@newtonma.gov>  
Forwarded to: Board of Aldermen 2012-2013, rsmith@newtonma.gov  
Date forwarded: Fri, 23 Mar 2012 09:43:48 -0400

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To whom it may concern:

Please distribute to the Board of Aldermen and the Zoning and Planning Committee. These remarks were made at the subject meeting, March 22, 2012:

When the Lower Falls Improvement Association first learned that the MBTA was soliciting neighborhood input on the prospect of developing the Riverside site, we brought several residents to the meeting. Looking back on the report four and a half years later I saw that it was still an accurate reflection of the concerns and hopes residents have for development at the site. To that end, if you have read the report you will not find a strident diatribe against any development at all. To the contrary, the residents of Lower Falls accept the need for development. But in accepting development, their standards include fundamental issues like direct access to Rt 128 and minimization of light pollution. But they also include "development in scale with existing residential character and density." The residents of Lower Falls in their report were asking for everyone—elected officials, the developer, the MBTA—to step up their game and give them a project that would be considered a good project. The residents of Lower Falls are on record as supporting development at Riverside but they want to be presented with more enlightened and forward looking alternatives, more in line with the town's goals. It will be hard to hit the pause button on this project at this time to go back and cover this ground. Getting things right sometimes requires making hard decisions. And that is what we're asking for.

Thank you.

Gary Rucinski  
40 Clearwater Rd.  
Newton, MA 02462

## Rebecca Smith

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Subject: **Riverside development**  
From: **Nancy Finn <nefinn@msn.com>**  
Date sent: **Thu, 22 Mar 2012 12:19:36 -0400**  
To: **"rsmith@newtonma.gov" <rsmith@newtonma.gov>**

Hi

I am unable to attend the meeting tonight. This project at riverside is too big for the neighborhood.

The on and off ramp should have direct access to the highway.like the liberty mutual building does.

Using the ramp from the highway would be a better fit for the neighbor hood.

The roundabouts are dangerous and do not improve the traffic flow.

This project will destroy the village communities of both lower falls and auburndale neighborhood. People will not go to th

Also widening grove st for this project is really a poor use of resources.

There are many office and apartment vacancies along the 128 roadway without buildings to stay empty too.

A small development three stories with parking underneath would be better.

We will not see tax money coming only people taxing our services.

Nancy Finn

Colgate road

Sent from my iPhone



RECEIVED  
Newton City Clerk

2012 MAR 22 PM 10: 19

March 22, 2012

Re: Petition #400-11 & #400-11(2) – Proposed Mixed-Use 3/4 Transit-Oriented District  
DAVID A. OLSON, CPC  
Newton, MA 02459

My name is Lynn Slobodin and I have lived at 61 Washburn Ave. for more than 30 years. Like many residents in my neighborhood I am **extremely concerned about the far reaching traffic impact that a development of the size proposed in this zone change will have on the already serious traffic problems in Auburndale.** I shudder to think about the impact of an even larger scale development on this parcel of land. The adoption of this zone, with some open space adjustments, will at least give the adjoining neighborhoods a small measure of protection as we go forward with this process.

**Currently Auburndale Square is often gridlocked during both the morning and the evening rush hours.** This gridlock encourages drivers to cut through small residential streets. It is not uncommon in the evening for the back-up from Auburndale Square to extend west on Comm. Ave. all the way to the Marriott Hotel, and south on Lexington/Auburn/Grove Street through two intersections. So many commuters currently speed down Auburn Street to avoid the back-up in the evening that Newton regularly pays a police officer to sit on that street to ticket speeders. **I think that even with the proposed size caps on the development these conditions will become more problematic.**

**It baffles me that some members of the Board of Alderman might think that the proposed zoning caps are too small, when**

- This zoning change will allow for a development that will be **50% larger than the ongoing development at Chestnut Hill Square, on a property that is about two acres smaller.**
- The developer of the Chestnut Hill Square project points out that his parcel is located on **"the region's most heavily traveled retail corridor"**. The zoning before us will be applied to a **mainly residential scenic road.**
- The tallest building at the Chestnut Hill development is **8 stories** and it is located in a **mostly commercial area that is across from a 10 story residential condo.** This zoning change would allow for a **10 story office building, one of the tallest buildings in Newton, and it will be built in a mostly 2-3 story residential area.**
- The Chestnut Hill Square development is required to have **"20% open space"**. The zone being proposed here only requires **15% open space, with only 50% of that open space to be accessible to the public.** I feel strongly that **this provision should be adjusted before this zone is created.**

In my opinion it is **impossible** for a development of this size on this parcel to, as the Planning Department has put it, **"cause no harm" to the neighborhood.** Yesterday I sat outside the adjacent Riverside Office Center, and I counted the cars that exited from 5 p.m. until 5:20 p.m. During this time period 250 cars exited with **30% of those vehicles turning left and going on towards Auburndale Square.** Imagine adding in 30% of the vehicles exiting the new development to the existing rush hour gridlock in Auburndale with no mitigation (as proposed by the developer).

Thank you for your consideration

## M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Planning and Zoning Committee  
FROM: Mitch Fischman  
DATE: March 22, 2012  
SUBJECT: **Riverside Zoning**

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I had a few comments and questions from last night's public hearing. I'm not sure I am able to make it to Monday night's meeting, but thought I would raise these issues in writing.

1. Spot Zoning

The League of Women Voters raised the spot zoning issue and it true that an unusual zoning is being proposed with specific acreage that exactly matches Riverside and a development number (i.e. specific number of units or sq.footage by land use that only applies to Riverside). I understand that the Law Department feels it can defend against this type of challenge, but if there is any way to make changes to the zoning text to defend against this possibility better, it should be considered.

2. Consideration by Land Use During the Special Permit Process

I listened carefully to the Land Use Chair provide his concerns about the lack of flexibility in the current zoning version that may hamper the Special Permit review of the Riverside petition by the Land Use Committee. As the Vice-Chair of that committee, and having been through many large special permits reviews over the past 10 years, there are invariably changes that are made during the land use review although as I understand adding square footage to the Wegman shopping use for the Chestnut Hill Square petition (after APPROVAL) was considered a small change not requiring an

amendment to the approved Board Order. For Riverside, It may be that adding a 10% flexible language to the specific requirements of the new zoning would provide for this flexibility as long as the city/developer can demonstrate that the offsetting traffic numbers are no greater than 10% (or perhaps less).

There is also another way of looking at the flexibility problem. As I understand, the Planning Department and perhaps the Law Department wanted to create a new baseline zone that would be better crafted to the proposed Riverside uses that would be more applicable than any of the existing zones available in the current ordinance. Once this new zone is accomplished and passed by the Board, then when the Special Permit application is filed and there is a possible need to modify the new zone's requirements, this could be considered as an accompanying text change along with the needed Map amendment (both to be considered by the Planning Board as well as the aldermen). This would then be using the Kessler Woods model or similar approaches used for other special permit petitions over the years that also required text amendment tweaking or more substantial zoning changes. I also believe that by the time the Special Permit is filed for Riverside a lot of the design, massing and use detail will be better known and more technically explored in the Planning and other Department Project Reviews.

### 3. Access from Equity Office Building (former Jordan Marsh site)

This may be more of a question during the Special Permit Review but former Alderman Bryson, I believe, raised the question as to whether the new Riverside access to the 128 roadway link would need to be plugged into a joint access to the Equity Property pursuant to the prior Board Order. I assume that the Riverside access may not be considered a full access under what may have been referenced in the prior Board Order, but wanted to ask that question.

4. Grove Street as a Scenic Roadway (Comment by Former Alderman Bryson)

This also may be more of a question during the Special Permit Review, but will Grove Street's designation as a scenic roadway compromise the developer's current plan to create more roadway width, new signals and left-hand turning slot(s)?

Cc: Board of Aldermen

**League of Women Voters of Newton Statement  
Public Hearing on Docket Item #400-11:  
Proposed Re-zoning of the Riverside MBTA Property  
Thursday, March 22, 2012**

The League of Women Voters of Newton stands firmly against Docket Item #400-11, for several reasons:

- The process that led to this docket item is highly problematic.
- The use of special zoning rules to design a specific development is antithetical to both the spirit and the language of the Comprehensive Plan and its recently approved Mixed Use Centers Element amendment.
- The proposed language of item 400-11 is too restrictive and should be revised to allow greater flexibility.

If approved as is, such flexibility will not be possible, and it will set a dangerous precedent for future large-scale projects here in Newton.

We recognize that a great deal of good work has been done so far. But in our opinion, the proposed Riverside development could—and should—be more directly aligned with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan previously approved by the Board of Aldermen.

As the Comprehensive Plan notes, Riverside presents a unique opportunity in Newton to set a new standard for large-scale, mixed-use, transit-oriented development. With access to several modes of transit, the development should effectively integrate various uses such as retail, offices, and residential units. These should be designed to draw together and enhance the adjacent neighborhoods through community and open space, as well as recreational areas along the Charles River. Given the right combination, a desirable destination in Newton could be created—a place for people to meet and be involved in their community.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for clear rules, consistency, and predictability in the use of zoning ordinances to help developers focus on creating the best design they can within reasonable and commonly understood boundaries, rather than on maneuvering through a Dickensian, and sometimes back-door process. In the case of Riverside, the proposed zoning ordinance cannot be commonly used throughout the city, and is instead an example of “spot” zoning, specific to this project and this site. This is not good policy and does not clarify or improve the situation for developers of future Newton sites.

The City should also more explicitly leverage state incentives, such as 40R and 40S “smart growth” zoning regulations. Applying the guidelines set forth in the Mixed-Use Elements amendment to the Newton Comprehensive Plan would help future large-scale, mixed use development proposals earlier in the process. Such tools would provide successful examples, and could also provide funding from the Commonwealth to help mitigate impacts.

The use of the Collaborative Impact Review provision, which brings together the City, developer, and neighborhood to assess potential impacts before a formal proposal is submitted, should also be considered. This process may help minimize the conflict that so often occurs when a large-scale development is proposed.

If Docket Item #400-11 were approved, it would “set the stage” for a similar process in different parts of the city, leading to other sub-optimal solutions, instead of what could be a model for our community.

The Planning Department has done a terrific job of including “impact zoning” for this site--work that could be part of a future zoning ordinance--to minimize the additional traffic and other negative impacts while allowing a properly designed and sized development that could add to neighborhood life. It is worth the effort to go back and use the City’s accepted zoning and process to get a better result.

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David A. Olson, CMC  
Newton, MA 02459

March 19, 2012

Alderman Marcia Johnson, Chairman  
City of Newton Zoning & Planning Committee  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

City of Newton Planning & Development Board  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

Re: Petition #400-11 & #400-11(2) – Proposed Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District

Dear Members of the Zoning & Planning Committee and Planning & Development Board:

These comments on the "February 27, 2012 Hearing Draft" (i.e., Attachment A to the Department of Planning and Development's March 16, 2012 Public Hearing Memorandum) are submitted on behalf of Woodland Grove Condominium, a nine-unit (including one affordable unit) building, with two stories above-grade, that has stood at 416 Grove Street, Newton for twenty-eight (28) years. Woodland Grove Condominium ("the Condominium") is located directly opposite the Hotel Indigo on Grove Street and is a direct abutter to the Riverside site.

The residents of the Condominium have been closely following the development and drafting of the proposed Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented Zoning District. They recognize the importance of Riverside area development for the City of Newton. Over the years, the Condominium and residents of nearby neighborhoods have worked cooperatively with the City and developers to create carefully planned, well-executed and financially successful development. And, it is their intent to continue to do that with development of the Riverside site.

The draft zoning must achieve a balance between the financial viability of development, the City's desire for increased tax revenue, and the adjacent neighborhoods' essential need to survive and prosper through a long period of disruptive construction and beyond.

Comments on specific provisions of the zoning proposal before you are as follows:

- 1) The structure of the proposal is a bit confusing in that one needs to read through several paragraphs before one realizes that as-of-right uses may be limited by the need to seek a special permit if the overall gross floor area of the "Mixed-Use Development" is 20,000 square feet or more.
- 2) Given that the Riverside site is one on which the City desires to have substantially more development than 20,000 square feet, why is there a separate new Section 30-13(f) for as-of-right uses? If the concern is that there needs to be at least one as-of-right use in the zone, then consider making it a "public use" just like the site's current zoning.
- 3) Section 30-13(g)(2) Intensity of Development – In order to integrate and mesh development in the new district with the surrounding land uses and established neighborhoods, the maximum total area of the office uses should be reduced from 225,000 square feet of gross floor area to 175,000 square feet and the maximum number of dwelling units should be reduced from 290 to 240 units.
- 4) Build-out of large, complex developments takes years. The Draft Environmental Impact Report submitted by B.H. Normandy for a substantially larger Riverside project lays out a 5-year construction schedule. For those living directly across the street that means noise, dust, and disruption for a period of 5 years. That is why it is imperative to include a provision in Section 30-13(g)(2) concerning "intensity of development". Those individuals living nearby the site deserve a finite description of what the City's vision is for development at Riverside. They need to be able to gauge, make decisions, and plan for the disruption well in advance.
- 5) It seems most unusual to prescribe a development parcel of 9.33 acres rather than 10 acres. It makes it overly clear that the zoning was crafted just for this portion of the area.
- 6) New Section 30-13(f)(1) uses the language "allow sufficient density to make development economically feasible". What does that mean objectively and how will it be analyzed and measured? There does not appear to be anything in the zoning proposal that requires an applicant to make a showing to that effect.
- 7) New Section 30-13(f)(2) allows just one of the uses to be constructed and maintained. How will the City get all of the uses that it wants to see in the development? Also, the language says "one or more of the purposes" which makes what is being said unclear. What is actually being spoken about is



“uses” as opposed to the “purpose” of the district (see Section 30-13(f)(1) which deals with the “purpose” of the district as opposed to Section 30-13(f)(2) which are the “allowed uses”).

- 8) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES allows “uses similar to or accessory to” those listed in the table. Suppose a heliport were deemed by the applicant to be accessory to an office building or an emergency medical care facility, it would appear that it would be allowed as-of-right and without requirement for a special permit. That would be problematic and would leave little leeway for controlling impacts to the surrounding neighborhood.
- 9) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – In addition, why include language that appears to override the clearly delineated uses listed in the remainder of the Table? “Uses similar to or accessory to the following” would create ambiguity concerning what is a use that is similar to those listed in the Table. And, the Table gives the “uses similar to” those listed in the Table a “by right” classification even if they are similar to uses in the Table that require a special permit. To provide clarity and avoid future conflict concerning what is allowed in the district, the words “similar to or” should be deleted.
- 10) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – What is the purpose of calling many of the listed uses “as-of-right” if you need a special permit for the development?
- 11) TABLE A: PRINCIPAL USES – Under Category B “Retail Sales”, include the words “up to 5,000 square feet” as-of-right to distinguish it from the second to the last bullet in that category which requires a special permit.
- 12) New Section 30-13(g) – The language needs to be more precisely drafted. Couldn’t one just develop the land in discrete segments over a period of years by only applying for one use at a time? Moreover, if a residential use is not applied for, but one or two other principal uses are applied for, then, by definition, you would not have a Mixed-Use Development. In that case, what zoning approvals would be required for an office building for example?
- 13) New Section 30-13(g)(2) Intensity of Development – How does this section work with Table A? Also note that Section 30-13(g)(2)(d), which requires one use from each of three separate categories of uses, seems at odds with Section 30-13(f)(2) which only seems to require one use period.
- 14) Given the language of the current draft, how does the City ensure that a multi-use community center is included in the development? There does not appear to be anything stated in New Section 30-13(g)(1) or (2) that would require a multi-use community center. And, the proposed zoning does not establish any size limitation and no parking requirements are provided for “Community Use

Space". Some parameters need to be specified in the zoning for the proposed new District to control the size of facilities and their attendant parking needs.

- 15) New Section 30-15(v)(1) Setbacks – What governs side and rear setbacks for residential uses? Also, note that there is nothing (but there should be something) that prevents parking lots from being sited immediately adjacent to city streets. And, there should never be a set back of zero feet because no one knows how uses on adjoining properties will change over time.
- 16) Tables 1 & 3 of Section 30-14 Dimensional Requirements – “Lot Area per unit” means what exactly in the context of multi-story buildings? Why is the building height allowance 135 feet if it is only supposed to accommodate 10 stories? That would be an allowance of approximately 13.5 feet per story. Also, carefully review the minimum allowable lot area viz a viz a special permit mixed-use development to make certain that the minimum allowable lot area of 40,000 square feet makes sense in this context.
- 17) New Section 30-24(c)(7) Project Phasing – Building a project “in multiple phases over a period of time” could be detrimental to the surrounding neighborhoods and the ability of homeowners to sell their properties throughout a prolonged build-out. It could greatly inconvenience neighboring properties with noise and construction traffic for years. Also, it would make it difficult to properly track post-construction impacts. If there were phasing, when would the monitoring begin and for how long would it continue?
- 18) New Section 30-24(c)(8) Adequacy of Public Facilities – In the first full paragraph, need to use consistent terminology (see “applicant” vs. “petitioner”). Why specify that staff determines the project scope? It should be left open so that the Aldermen can determine how to get the job done. Are these the only items that you would want to have peer reviewed? What about school population impacts?
- 19) Later in Section 30-24(c)(8), it appears that there would be only a two-year post-construction (after full build-out) monitoring period for traffic. And, if city staff requests monitoring prior to full build-out, the total duration of all monitoring could nevertheless not extend beyond that two-year period for the entire development. The language needs to be revised to assure the ability to require early monitoring as well as monitoring after full build-out. And, there must be a clear and independent statement that the post-construction (after full build-out) monitoring must extend for a period of two years after full occupancy. [Note: In the proposed zoning text, this paragraph and the ones following it are not numbered for easy reference.]

- 20) New Section 30-24(c)(8) Post-Construction Traffic Study – [Note: In the proposed zoning text, this paragraph is not numbered for easy reference.] Depending on the allowed phasing, post-construction studies many need to be conducted for a period longer than two years. See comment 18) above. And, if post-construction studies are required at a point in time before completion of full build-out, there needs to be a way to determine whether the actual impacts for the component parts exceed original projections. Also, compare the language in i. with what is stated three paragraphs above it and make the sections consistent in requirements.
- 21) Page 13, second full paragraph, third line – Security may be forfeited “at the city’s election” means who in the city exactly? The entity who has the ability to do this should be specified.
- 22) Page 13, Post-Construction Traffic Study, iii. – As written, it appears that if one location (as opposed to the sum of all locations) has a problem needing mitigation, nothing could be done about it. The language needs to be revised to provide for all necessary mitigation. And why is the threshold for mitigation 110% of the original traffic projection? The trip reduction mitigation should achieve the amount of traffic that was originally projected for the project or less.
- 23) Section 30-24(i) Additional special permit criteria for a Mixed-Use Development in the Mixed-Use 3/Transit-Oriented District – Many of the criteria are totally subjective and use the word “appropriate” without any objective guidance being provided. A similar section for the PMBD District seems a bit more objective and similar language should be considered here.
- 24) Required Parking Spaces -- There need to be objective standards for the number of required parking spaces. Currently there are no standards.
- 25) Section 30-24(j) Additional Filing Requirements –
  - (1) b) – What does “project statistics, including zoning” mean?
  - (3) Final phrase -- “satisfies each criterion in this section” refers to which section?
  - (6) Why refer in this ordinance to review by specific staff members? The comment applies throughout this section on additional filing requirements. The specificity concerning traffic review is too specific for a zoning ordinance. It could, perhaps, be addressed in regulations. But what does the newly hired traffic peer reviewer suggest?

Throughout Section 30-24(j), some of the sub-sections refer to a peer review and others do not say anything. The Aldermen should be able to have everything peer-reviewed at their option. The language should be so revised.

- 26) New Section 30-19(d)(22) Parking Analysis – Since this section relates to a Special Permit which is under the exclusive purview of the special permit granting authority, only the Permitting authority should be able to make the final decision on whether there is sufficient parking for the uses. This should not be a delegable function. As stated in comment 23) above, there are currently no standards for the number of required parking spaces. There need to be objective standards especially if the authority to make the decision is given to someone other than the special permit granting authority.
- 27) Section 30-1 Definitions, new definition “Community Use Space” – Note that each of the enumerated uses would appear to be as-of-right in this proposed new zone, with no size limitation and no parking requirements. There need to be some parameters built into the proposed new District to control size of facilities and their attendant parking needs.
- 28) Section 30-5(a)(4) “Public Uses” – There need to be some parameters built into the proposed new District to control size of facilities and their attendant parking needs at a minimum.
- 29) Tier II - Section 30-15(v)(5) – Given the location of the Riverside site, direct access to and from an interstate highway is a logical development strategy that should be encouraged in the main body of the proposed zoning without the need to offer excessive incentives. The proposed allowance of substantially increased gross floor area and an FAR of 3.0 are not proportional to any benefit to be derived from direct highway access. And, there has been no demonstrable showing or empirical evidence to justify such an increase in density. But, clearly, there will be increased impacts to the surrounding neighborhood during the long build-out period and beyond. We request that the so-called “incentives” be deleted from this provision.

Thank you for your continued diligence in assuring that the zoning is crafted to fully assess and mitigate off-site impacts throughout build-out and after full occupancy.

Very truly yours,

Anette Seltzer Lewis

Anette Seltzer Lewis

cc: Lynne D. Sweet, Business Manager Woodland Grove Condominium  
Alderman Amy Mah Sangiolo

Alderman Lenny Gentile  
Alderman Jay Harney  
Alderman Ted Hess Mahan  
Alderman Ruth Fuller  
Candace Havens, City of Newton Director of Planning  
Rep. Kay Kahn  
Rep. Cindy Creem  
Mayor Setti Warren  
Newton Housing Authority