

North Massachusetts Avenue Improvement Study
Public Mtg#2 4/29/10
Meeting Comments Grouped by Topic Area

Retail

Why is outdoor seating connected to parking requirements?

Bars, and restaurant uses etc. would create more noise associated with outdoor seating, how would it be regulated?

In favor of outdoor seating.

Is there room for a larger tenant on Mass Ave? ex. YMCA

It is hard to get money invested for new retail. Is it possible to allow a use that's not retail on first floor but could be retail later?

Focus on attracting retail to certain areas where it would be most appropriate.

What has been done to attract businesses to vacant storefronts?

Would businesses even be interested in a business association?

Like the notion of retail nodes.

Retail nodes should be thought of in the context of walking routes.

Are there any plans to put a bistro at the former Marino's site?

Zoning/Urban Design

What consideration is given to walkers/ disabilities when allowing outdoor seating?

Would outdoor seating be located in the public way? Is it required to be roped off?

According to existing ordinance only a narrow space is required for other users if there is outdoor seating would this amount to a privatization of public space?

Would potential zoning to discourage gas stations etc. be retroactive?

What is the process from discussions about zoning changes to actually enacting them?

It is important to protect low density districts from uses within the BA2 zone which in some cases seems to extend too close to existing low density housing. There seems

to be a preference for retail on the ground as opposed to residential. Not support for 4-5 stories residential uses right on the avenue, which is related to inclusionary zoning issues.

Some do like the 4 story buildings and believe that there needs to be a certain density to support retail.

Is it possible to limit the number of parking permits per household?

Can zoning address that concerns with the design of some parking lots Ex: Parking in front of building, Pemberton Liquors?

Providing zoning incentives can't compel changes. There probably needs to be higher density to get uses desired. Parcels on Mass Ave in other parts of the city allow higher density.

Don't necessarily want to see Mass Ave here resemble Manhattan, with tall buildings which can block the sun and create too much shade.

Would like to see apartments above retail.

What is the status of the Rounder Records site? Currently looks like a big block.

Rounder Warehouse had an agreement w developer that went back on his word and sold the warehouse to housing developers and current plans for four story building with no retail.

What are notification and public process requirements for a situation similar to redevelopment of Rounder Records?

Thought Rounder Records would have retail on the ground floor, people need to have a way of becoming more aware of these types of processes.

How does a house or building become historical?

Streetscape

Bikes help support retail and additional bike parking is useful to attract patrons.

Mass. Ave should be more bicycle friendly. Other parts of Mass Ave consist of a single lane in each direction (Central Square).

Can requests be made for bike racks?

More needs to be done for bikes and pedestrians. People don't like standing on median.

The existing sidewalk bike ban currently stops at Cogswell/ Russell. It should extend to the Arlington Line.

Is it possible to create grants for parking lot improvements (similar to EDD retail grants)?

Parking lots are not just an aesthetic issue but also have stormwater impacts.

The City should charge additional money for extra parking permits.

Some people need extra cars.

Parking requirements may actually encourage people to drive to establishments.

Signal for the walk light at route 16 is too short.

Crossing the Avenue is difficult.

Street trees and plantings look nice, but a significant number seem to die. More should be done to maintain them

Trees help address stormwater issues, provide shade, and nice aesthetics.

Flowers at entry to city would be nice.

The gateway area should look better.