

Article 45
Front Yard, Transition, and
Screening Areas

March 4, 2020

Public Hearing

Why This Change?

- We should treat commercial areas along streets (streetscapes) consistently within each zoning district.
 - But currently some rules depend on whatever happens to be across the street.
 - Setback
 - Screening
 - Landscaping
- We can't have a sensible streetscape if the rules are different for each lot as you move down the street.

Building Setback (A)

| | CB | CM |
|--|----|--------|
| Minimum front yard in feet | 0 | 25 |
| Minimum side and rear yard adjacent to, or front yard across the street from a residential district in feet | 30 | 100(f) |

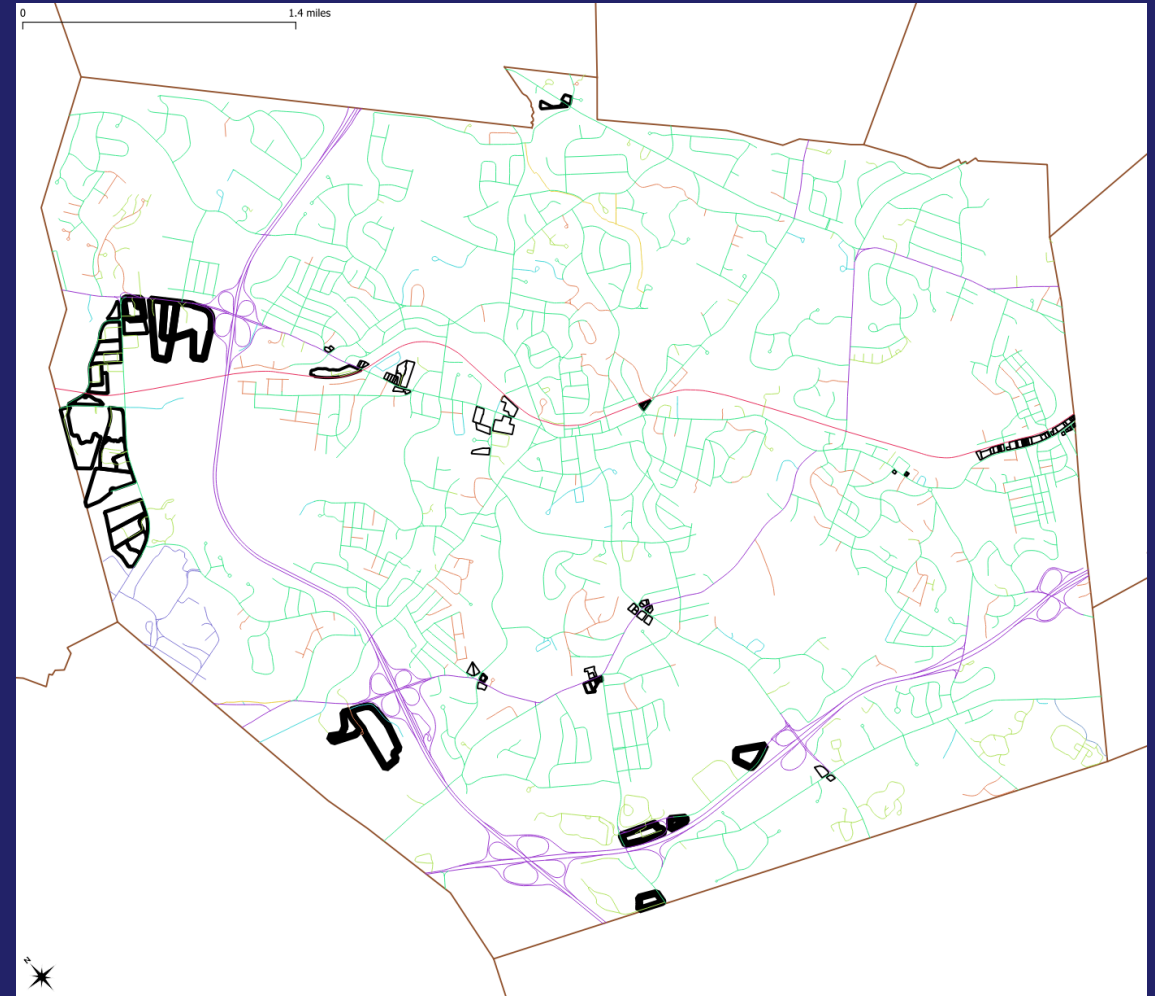
- Eliminate additional building setback from the street when a lot is across the street from a residential district in CB and CM districts.
- This rule affects only tiny portions of the districts.
 - CB:
 - 73 Waltham Street
 - 1775 & 1789 Massachusetts Avenue (across Edison Way)
 - CM:
 - 60 Westview Street
 - 121 & 125 Hartwell Avenue
 - 20 Maguire Road (across Westview Street)
- All these lots were already developed when this rule was added.
- For none of these buildings would it be desirable to provide the additional setback.

Screening (B-D)

Eliminate an ambiguous requirement for a 6' high 10'-50' deep 'effective visual screen' along the street when a lot is across the street from a different zoning district.

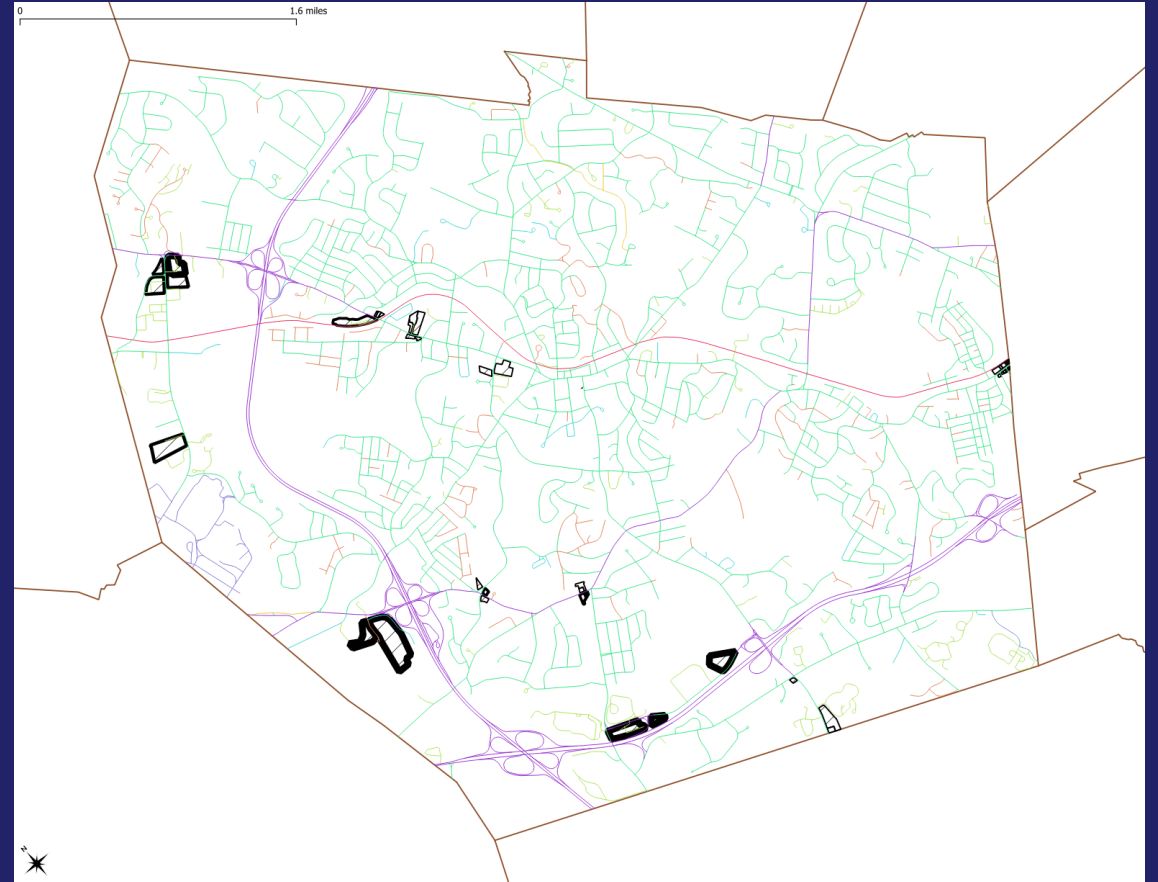
- Applies to all commercial districts except CB.
- It does not matter what different zoning district is across the street.
- Screening many uses is inappropriate.
- This requirement conflicts with the landscaping requirement.
- I can find no examples where conforming screening is actually provided.

No change to screening along adjacent lots.



Landscaping (E)

- Eliminate an ambiguous requirement for a 3' high 10' deep landscaped buffer along the street when a lot is across the street from another commercial zoning district.
 - It does not matter what other commercial zoning district is across the street.
 - This requirement conflicts with the screening requirement.
 - I have not identified any examples in Town where conforming landscaping is actually provided.



Practical Effect

- None of these provisions are currently providing any identifiable benefit.
- In all cases, they have either been ignored or their provisions have been waived.

Questions?