

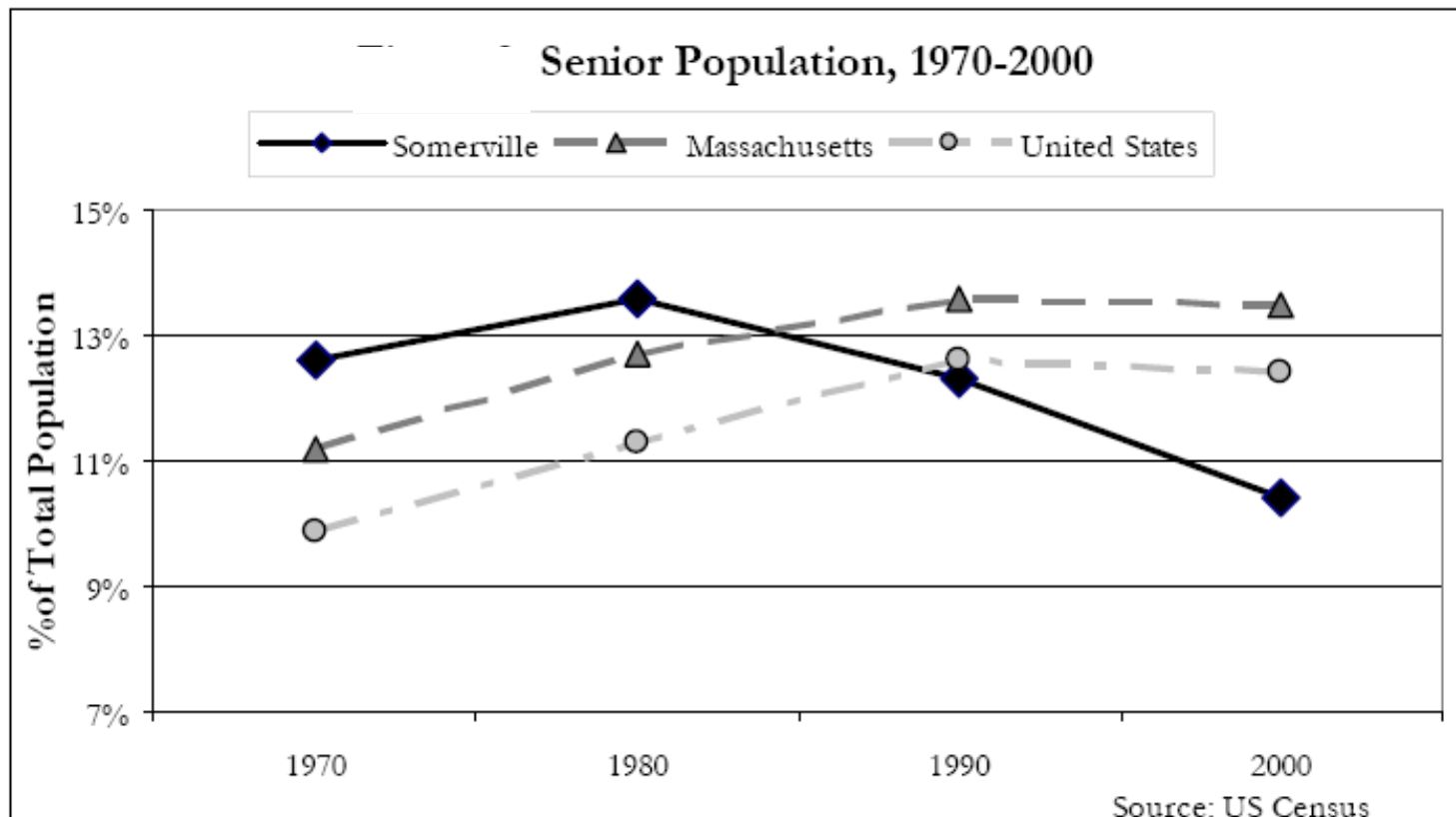
# **Senior Housing Zoning Amendment**

**Joint Public Hearing  
Land Use Committee of the Board of Aldermen  
and  
Planning Board  
December 3, 2009**

Monica R. Lamboy  
Executive Director  
OSPCD

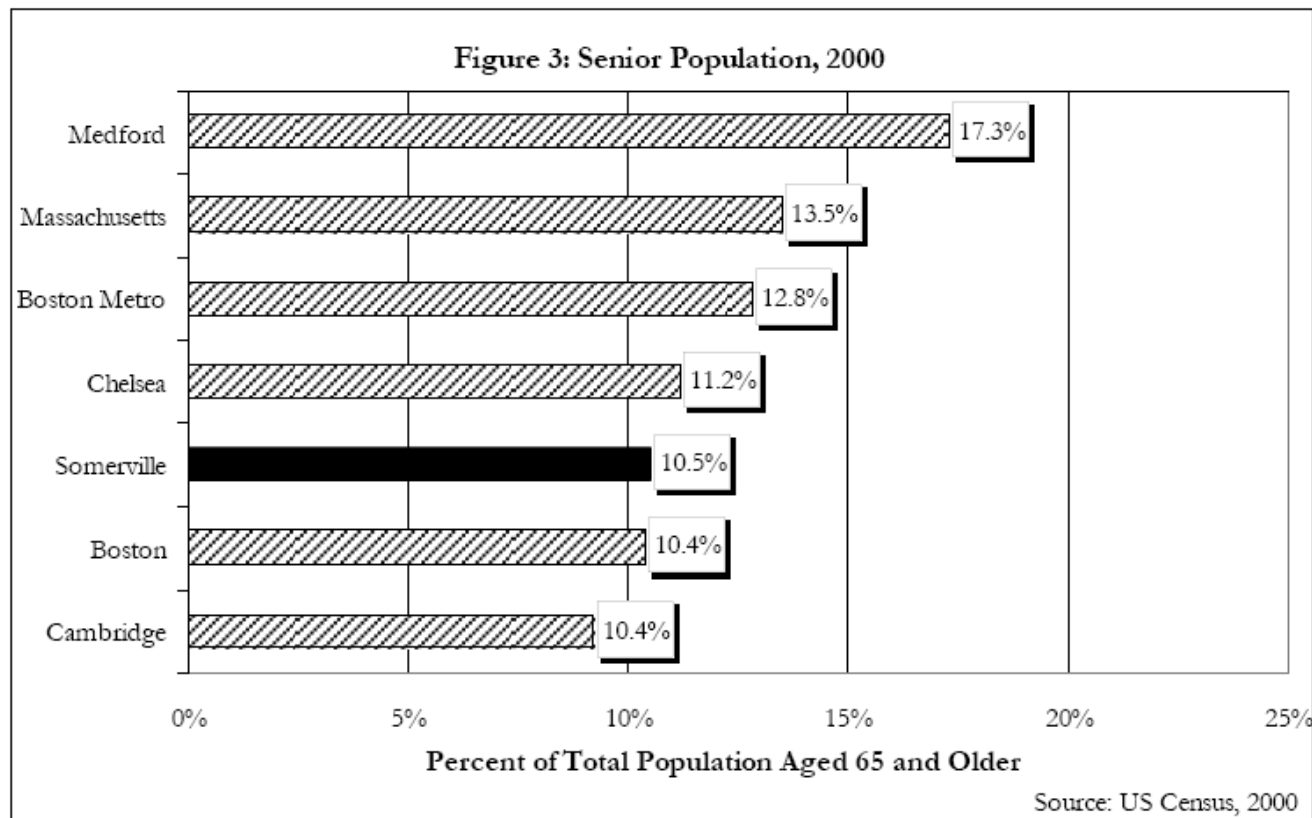
# Population Trends

- Senior population peak in 1970 (10,788 residents)
- As of 2000, only 8,099 seniors – 25% decline
- Contrary to trends in MA and USA



# Population Trends

- Somerville is below the State and National average
- Projections over the next 30 years in MA show that seniors will rise to 20% of the population



# Out Migration

Reasons for migration:

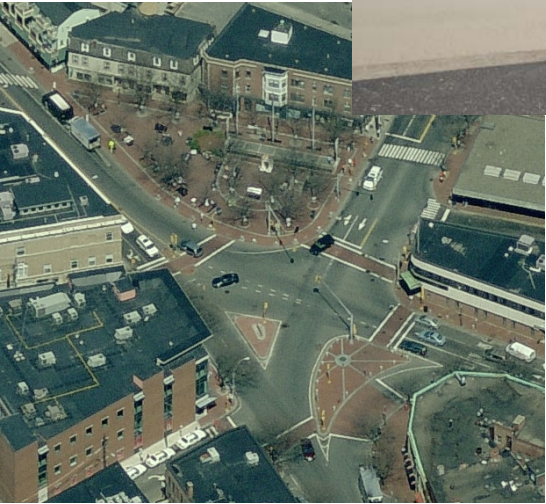
Loss to community:



Housing  
Environment



Accessibility



Family/Social Networks



Volunteering,  
Arts,  
Educational  
Opportunities



Living  
History



Purchasing Power

# Current Housing Options

Majority of dedicated senior housing is provided by public or nonprofit agencies - SHA or VNA. Other properties receive federal subsidy.

15 Facilities Built  
1950s-1980s



Brady Towers



Weston Manor

New Senior Housing built  
under 40B – not  
subject to local zoning

VNA – Lowell St



VNA - Conwell Capen

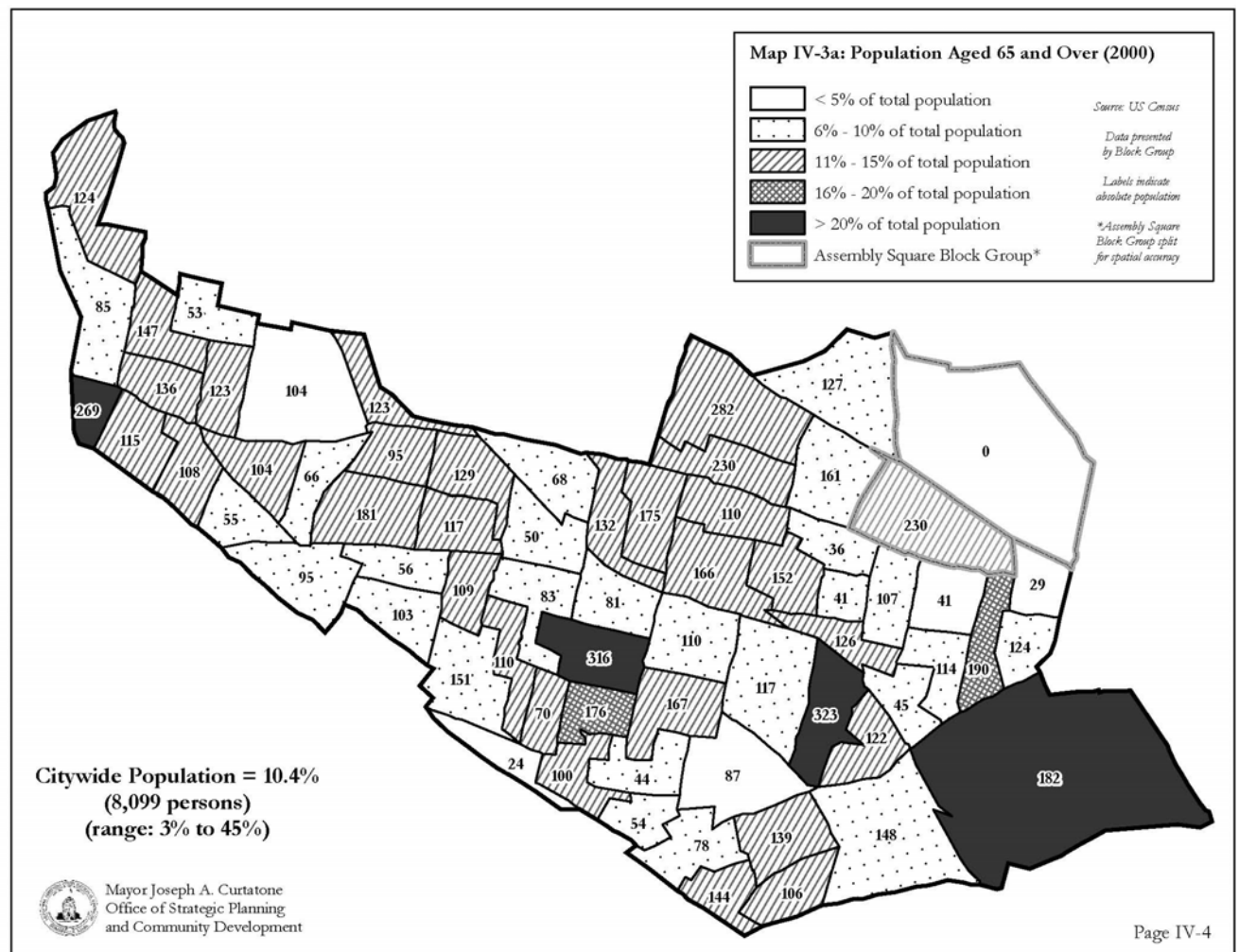


SHA – Capen Court

# Current Housing Options

Most seniors reside in private residences – Naturally Occurring Retirement Clusters found around Teele Sq, Ball Sq, & Winter Hill

- 2,800 (35.4%) live alone
- May have less access to goods and services than those living in age-restricted buildings



# Seniors' Expectations & Desires



- Social Activity in communal spaces



- Safety & security
  - Property Maintenance



- Access to home health care
  - Assistance with Nutrition & Medication



- In-house meals



- Mobility – exercise & transportation



Seniors in Somerville also desire...

- “Real” kitchens



- Storage

- Near current neighborhood / friends
- Open space on-site



- Access to shopping, doctor's office, drug store, hair dresser, etc.

# Limitations of Current Zoning

- ❖ Only reference to Senior Housing is for reduced parking requirements
- ❖ 40B should not be the only vehicle for senior housing construction
  - Excludes private, for-profit developments
- ❖ Unique needs of seniors are not addressed
  - Affordability, reduced parking, small unit size and family size, design of site and buildings, amenities, landscaped areas
  - Dimensional standards encourage the construction of large units



# Best Practices

American Planning Association – “Housing an Aging Population” provided examples of efforts throughout the U.S. related to senior housing

- Most communities had robust ordinances allowing for increased number of units per acre, reduced amount of parking, established design criteria



# Planning for Increase in Senior Population



MAPC Metro Future  
Regional Plan

More housing choices and opportunities to downsize while staying in community



Somerville's 5 yr  
Consolidated Plan

Encourage the creation of new housing for seniors, both assisted living and independent



Change SZO to  
Address Needs

Establish a senior housing use with dimensions and design guidelines that address Seniors' needs

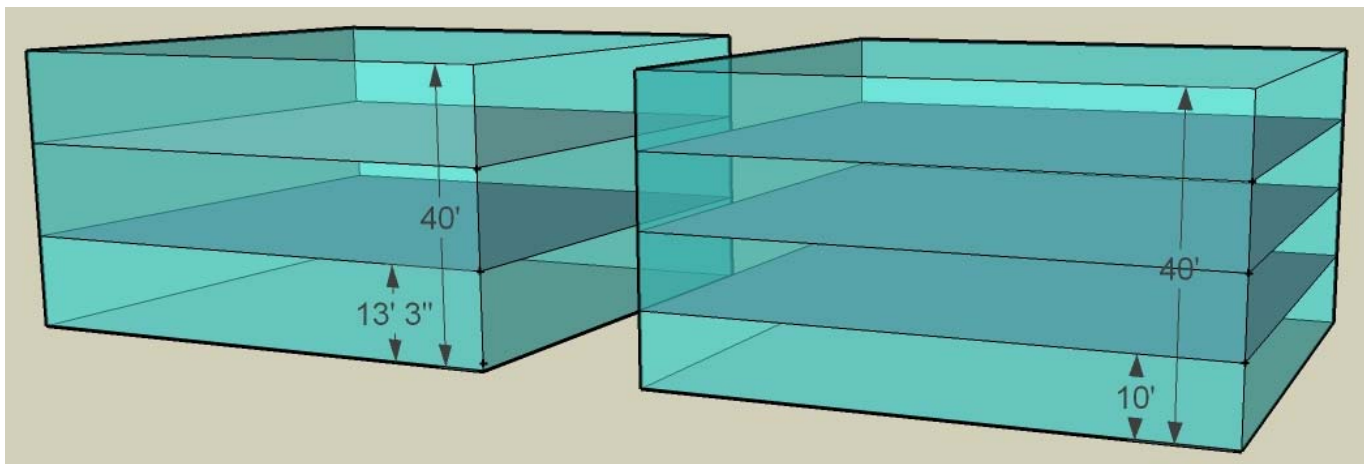
# Proposed Zoning Regulations

- ❖ Creation of new principal use – households age 62+, 17.5% of units affordable under City standards
  - Deed restrictions would be required
- ❖ Use Standards – Zoning Districts RC, NB, CBD, CCD, BA, ASMD, TODs – Special Permits required
- ❖ Design Guidelines – appearance of building, storage, amenities within units, outdoor space, common gathering space, social services, accessibility on-site and in the neighborhood, emergency care and response plans
- ❖ Parking – proposed parking reduction with 100% affordable in perpetuity. Assisted living facilities & congregate senior housing would need to provide parking for employees.

# Proposed Zoning Regulations

## Dimensions:

- Reduce lot area per dwelling unit (inc # units allowed) – smaller units within the same building envelope – smaller family sizes
- Increase landscaping by 5% in residential and 10% in other districts
- Max height would not change but max number of stories eliminated



# Proposed Zoning Regulations

## Dimensions:

	RC	NB	CBD	BA	CCD
Min lot area / dwelling unit					
1-9 units (s.f.)	450 875	450 875	450 875	450 875	450 600
10 + units (s.f.)	475 1000	475 1000	475 1000	475 1000	475 600
Max Height					
stories	NA 3	NA 3	NA 4	NA 4	NA NA
Landscaped area (% of lot)	30 25	20 10	20 10	20 10	20 10

Proposed  
Existing

## Parking:

Independent Senior Housing – 0.75 per unit, 0.40 by special permit, 0.25 by special permit if units are 100% affordable in perpetuity and professional parking study

Assisted Living / Congregate Senior Housing – same as above plus 0.25 per employee on largest shift



# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

# NEXT STEPS

- Public hearing of Land Use Committee & Planning Board
- Close public hearing / public comment period
- Planning Board recommendation to BoA
- Meeting of Land Use Committee
- BoA decision

# CONTACT INFO

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